

Polar Postdoc Leadership Workshop Post-Event Survey Report and Results

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Executive Summary

Twenty postdoctoral researchers (or people in postdoc-adjacent positions) working in the Arctic, Antarctic and high alpine regions participated in the Polar Postdoc Leadership Workshop (PPLW) in May of 2023.

Post-workshop survey results were as follows:

- Best Part of PPLW: Most respondents shared that meeting people and networking was one of the best parts of the PPLW, and that having space to have conversations, ask questions, collaborate and connect generally with other postdoctoral researchers was a big highlight of the workshop. All respondents left with at least one to three new connections or research collaborations, and over 63% left with four or more.
- Most Useful Workshop Sessions: Participants found the 'NSF Funding Overview + Q&A' and 'What makes a great proposal' sessions to be the most useful sessions of the workshop.
- **Culture of Inclusion:** Participants strongly agreed that people showed general respect for one another and respected the expertise of others in the group. All participants felt that the contributions of all group members were valued.
- PPLW Product Outcome: At the end of the workshop, PPLW participants felt motivated to continue to work and innovate on ideas associated with the PPLW in a white paper of recommendations to the polar science community.
- Connection to Polar Community: While this was not evaluated prior to the workshop, all respondents felt some connection to the polar science community following the workshop.
- Improvements for the future: respondents shared that they thought the days were very long and indicated that more break-time would be helpful. Other respondents shared that they were excited about the possibility of connecting with mentors from even more disciplines and backgrounds.

Select participant reflections:

"I had a fantastic experience at the 2023 PPLW and expect that I will be able to look back in years and pick out specific ways that this week in Colorado affected my career. Thank you for creating a welcoming, fun environment to engage with large, important topics."





"Thank you so much for a wonderful meeting. You all did a great job!! Feeling very inspired from all the networking and discussions throughout the week."

"This was a great space for meeting like-minded but also a diverse group of people. The participants were mature and open-minded, which facilitated better individual and group dynamics and discussions. The covid precautions that were taken were appreciated. I appreciate that the break-out exercises didn't put anyone on the spot individually, which make them less stressful. The panels were all really informative. One million thanks for the Allen Pope and his presentation on NSF proposal writing. I appreciate the simple dinner recipes and that everything was pre-purchased and ready to go."

"I liked how the workshop involved many strategies to get us all collaborating. I feel like in some of these larger groups activities it is easy to find the people you most closely identify with and stick within those groups. We shuffled around quite a bit and had people who were intentional about working with everyone else. The sessions were varied and applicable. The speakers had good insights."

Introduction

The PSECCO Polar Postdoc Leadership Workshop (PPLW) was held in person at the University of Colorado Boulder from May 15th – 19th, 2023 for polar postdoctoral researchers or people in postdoc-adjacent positions (hereafter referred to as 'postdocs') to activate leadership skills. The workshop was supported by National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Polar Science Early Career Community Office (PSECCO). The PPLW was the fourth iteration of the Next Generation of Polar Researchers Leadership Symposium, a multi-day workshop including activities and speakers. The agenda for the meeting may be found in Appendix A at the end of this report. The objectives of the workshop included:

- Bringing together 20 US-based postdocs from across disciplines studying Antarctic and Arctic topics together from across the country to activate leadership skills that they can bring into their future careers.
- Engaging the future leaders of polar sciences with current and future polar science topics and accessing skills and training that give them the confidence to step into leadership roles in our field.





Participant Demographics

There were 20 respondents to the PPLW Post-Survey. Most participants (70%) identified as women 15% of respondents did not

as women. 15% of respondents did not
provide this information.

Gender Identity						
70%	Woman					
15%	Man					
15%	N/A					

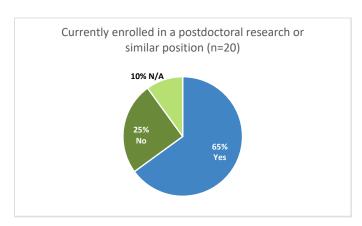
	Most participants identified as White
	(75%). Participants also identified as
	Hispanic or Latinx (10%) or Indigenous
	(5%). 10% of respondents did not
*	provide this information.

	Race and Ethnicity*
75%	White, Caucasian, European,
	or European American
10%	Hispanic, Latinx; Hispanic or
	Latinx American
5%	Indigenous
10%	N/A

Ten percent of participants indicated that they have a disability or are neurodiverse, while another 15% preferred not to answer.

Education and Experience, and Affiliation

Most respondents (65%) are currently enrolled in a postdoctoral research position or a similar position. Some respondents (20%) were affiliated with the University of Colorado Boulder, but most respondents (70%) were affiliated with different universities across the United States. 10% of respondents did not provide information regarding their postdoctoral positions or affiliation.



Evaluation Outcomes

The responses to each survey question are summarized below. Responses are grouped by topic or by question as appropriate. See <u>Appendix B</u> for a full copy of the evaluation survey.

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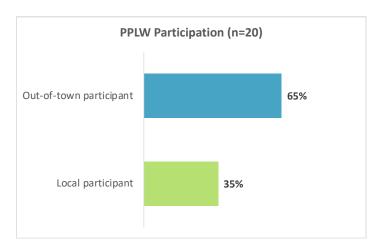




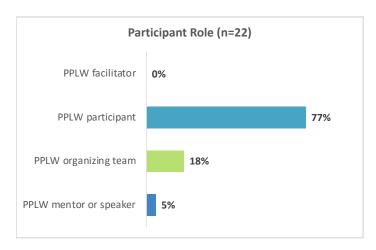
PPLW Participation

65% of PPLW participants came from out-of-town while 35% of participants were local. 77% of survey respondents were PPLW participants, 18% were part of the PPLW organizing team, and 5% were a PPLW mentor or speaker.

In which way did you participate in the PPLW?



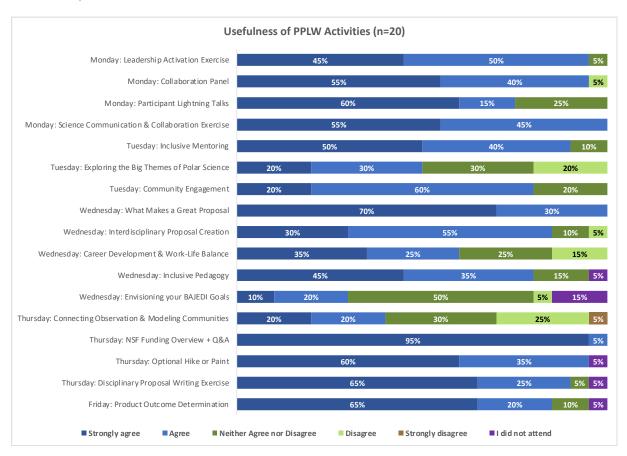
What best describes your role at PPLW?







To what extent do you agree that each of the following activities during the PPLW were useful to you?



In what ways could specific activities be improved?

Several respondents shared that they thought the days were very long, noting that the amount of information and activities taking place on each day made it difficult to stay engaged or energized. Several indicated that more break-times would be helpful for such a workshop in the future.

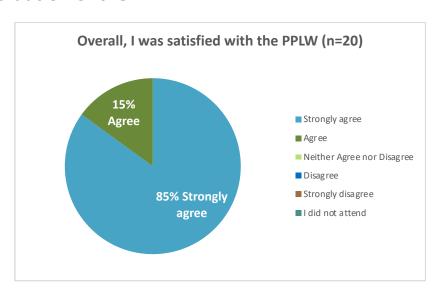
Many respondents indicated they would have liked to hear from a greater variety of career paths including more perspectives from tenure-track faculty, especially regarding work-life balance. Some respondents also indicated that hearing from a more diverse panel or set of speakers/mentors would have been more useful.

Several respondents shared that they thought specific discussion of BAJEDI goals needed more time, reflection, and discussion on how to put them into practice. Many respondents also indicated that the conversation around observations and modeling could have been more engaging and broadened.





Overall Evaluation of the PPLW



What were the best parts of the PPLW?

Most respondents emphasized meeting people and networking as one of the best parts of the PPLW. Many respondents shared that the discussions, sessions, activities, and panels were also interesting and applicable. Several respondents highlighted the value of having a space to connect with fellow postdocs and have conversations, ask questions, and collaborate.

Other respondents indicated that they enjoyed the question and answer session with NSF representatives, learning about proposals and funding, and having constant interactions with other people beyond sessions and discussions. One respondent said they appreciated that break-out sessions did not put anyone on the spot individually. Another respondent shared that they liked the many strategies used for encouraging collaborative work during the workshop.

How could the PPLW be improved?

Several respondents indicated that more breaks between sessions and personal time overall would help with engagement and energy throughout the workshop. Others shared that more diversity in panelists and participant disciplines would be helpful. One respondent suggested science and policies as a topic worth including more in future discussions. Another respondent shared that a few sessions were not relevant to their work and were conducted in a manner where they didn't learn much.

A few respondents suggested reducing the number of days spent at high altitudes, as well as surveying participants to pair similar wakeup times and reminding others to be mindful of people sleeping.





In which ways did the PPLW meet your expectations and in which ways did it not?

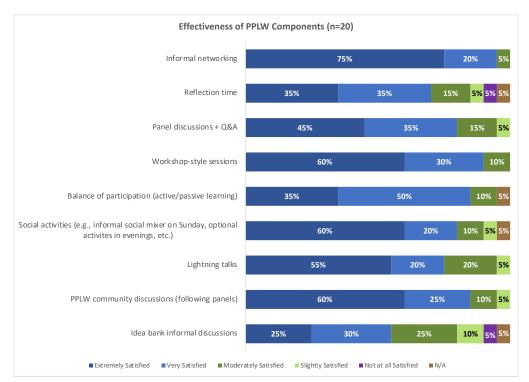
Many respondents shared that the workshop met and exceeded expectations in many ways, including meeting and learning from other participants, inclusive mentoring, science communication, and networking. Some respondents shared that the workshop made them feel more confident, empowered, and hopeful regarding where the polar sciences community is headed.

The organization of the workshop also met participants' expectations, including the usefulness of the sessions. Participants noted that they gained relevant information and skills from the workshop, and thought that the setting of expectations, coming up with interdisciplinary- and disciplinary-specific proposals, and resources shared for inclusivity and diversity, mentorship, and collaboration was done well.

Respondents shared ways that the PPLW did not meet their expectations as well; some noted that they felt an Arctic-dominated focus of the workshop and sessions and noted a lack of diverse backgrounds in Arctic and Antarctic discussions. One respondent shared that they expected to leave the workshop with a draft proposal and left with other useful skills instead. Another respondent said that the accomodations for the workshop were good but could be improved.

Evaluation of PPLW Activities and Logistics

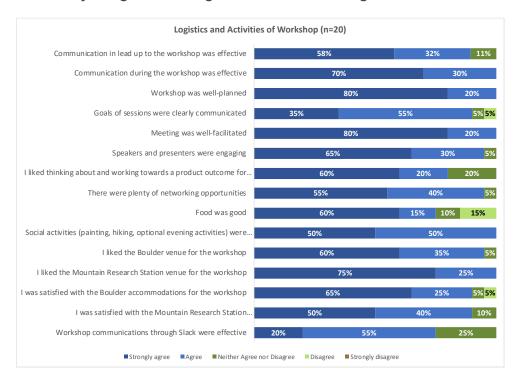
To what extent do you agree that the following parts of the PPLW were effective?







To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Would you like to elaborate on any of the previous statements?

Respondents shared that the noise levels and other logistics in the Mountain Research Station (MRS), the venue for four days of the workshop, were sometimes hard to manage with the number of people. Some noted that the MRS was hard to pack for, food could have been improved with more options, and living arrangements could be improved to be more accommodating in terms of accessibility and number of people sharing rooms.

Respondents also shared that the communication leading up to the workshop was mostly great, but that not everyone was clear on which different communication platforms to use during the workshop, between email, Slack, and WhatsApp.

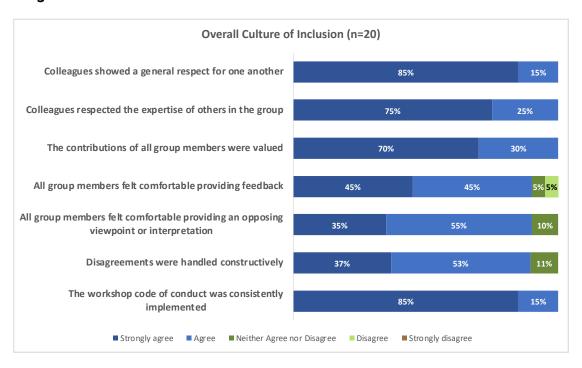
Respondents also indicated that discussing product outcomes more often throughout the workshop would be helpful to ensure an actionable plan. Other respondents shared that reflection time would have been more useful in the evening than morning, that the idea bank activity could have been allocated more time for discussion, and that session goals could have been expanded.



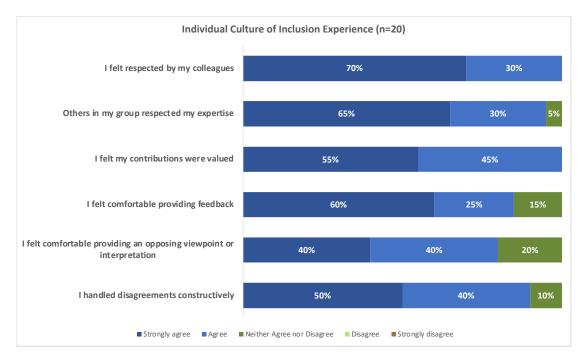


Culture of Inclusion

Thinking about the PPLW <u>overall</u>, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Thinking about <u>your own experiences</u> during the workshop, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

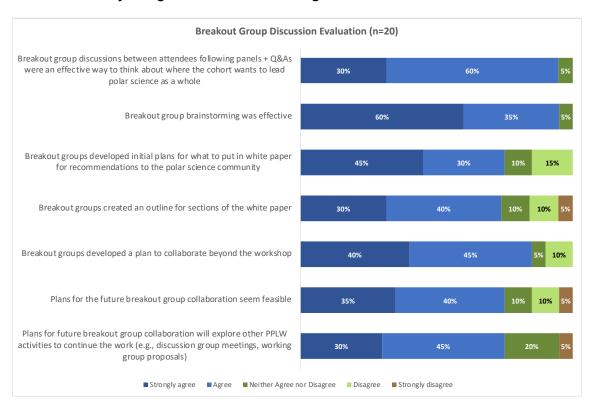




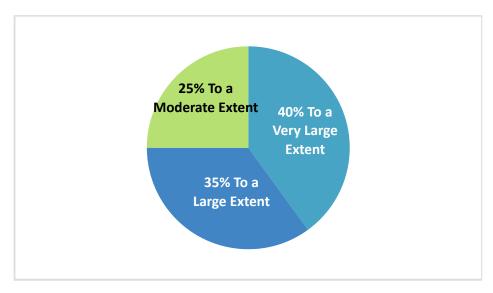


PPLW Breakout Group Discussion Evaluation

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



To what extent are you motivated to continue to work and innovate on ideas to be published in a PPLW white paper of recommendations to the polar science community?







Please provide any other feedback you have on the breakout group discussions.

Respondents indicated that breakout group discussions could have more structure, concrete goals, and preparation for discussion. One respondent shared that the lack of specific goals leading to open discussion was advantageous for them. Another respondent shared that as a quiet person, they appreciated the breakout group discussions as a time to contribute to the discussion.

Evaluation of Workshop Outcomes: Overall Impacts and Innovation

What impacts do you anticipate the PPLW will have over the next year?

Respondents indicated that they anticipate collaboration on future proposals and publications with resources from the workshop. Others highlighted the positive impact of meeting fellow postdocs with whom they hope to stay connected and creating a community to provide support and resources to other polar science postdocs.

In which ways, if at all, do you think the PPLW will lead to individual innovation and positive impacts on attendees' spheres of influence?

Several respondents highlighted that the workshop helped them gain confidence, a sense of belonging, and a sense of leadership that will help them contribute to the broader polar science community. Respondents shared they were excited to share new skills and knowledge with their peers, and they indicated they will continue collaborative work and efforts to improve the polar science community.

Respondents shared that the workshop demonstrated how much they could accomplish in a short amount of time with their collective skills and provided resources for individuals to use in implementing proposals. Respondents also shared about the positive impacts that they think the networking and support gained in this workshop will have in influencing the broader polar science community.

Please describe up to three new things that you will take away from the PPLW (e.g., skills, ideas, contacts, other resources, etc.).

Several respondents shared that the postdoc network and connections as well as relationships with mentors and collaborators are new things they are taking away from the PPLW. Many respondents also indicated skills regarding proposal writing and implementation as a new thing they are taking away from the workshop, as well as what they learned through the 'how to write a one-pager' exercise.

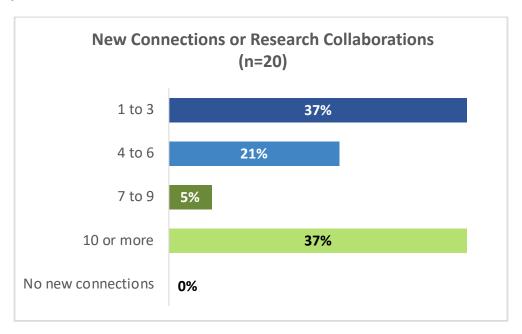
Respondents also shared new takeaways from the program including knowledge about funding, engaging with NSF representatives, collaboration skills, and innovative thinking. Some respondents shared that the ability to contact program officers is a resource they were made aware of.





Networking and Connection Building

How many new connections or research collaborations have you made during the workshop?



Please elaborate on the top two most important or exciting <u>new</u> connections or collaborations you have made during the workshop that you think will be impactful to your work. (Please include the names of people and their affiliations and/or organizations where appropriate)

Verbatim comments were as follows (n=18):

- Data model workshop with Devon and Jason
- Output paper and resources from workshop
- Discipline proposal idea (Sophie and Jason)
- I connected with a wonderful person in my disciplinary and regional field, which has a complementary research focus!
- I took away new ideas / emphasized existing ideas for interdisciplinary work in the field of ice-ocean interaction in shorter-than-geological time scales
- Potential collaborations with David Harning (CU) and Emily Tibbitt (UMass) on lipid markers from ice sheet surface microbes.
- Potential collaboration with Sophie Goliber (Buffalo) on course material on polar sciences aimed at reaching high school students that may not know that the polar sciences are even a thing that can be studied).
- Research collaboration Eva may be able to provide water from Greenland for a side project
- New friends who are also postdocs
- Developing glacier ice algae proxies to reconstruct when organisms colonized ice sheets from pro glacial lakes sediment records to understand past and future





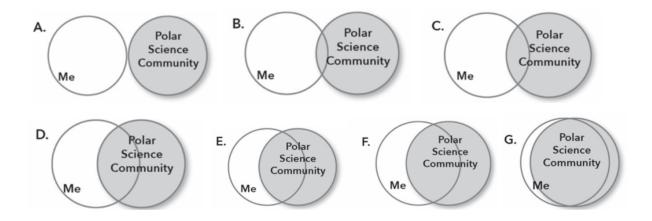
- albedo. Fun science that allows me to provide expertise and learn about a whole new field at the same time.
- Kiki Schulz—we work on such similar things on opposite sides of the Arctic! It will be great to collaborate going forward
- Angela—we have almost crossed paths so many times and our work areas are so similar!
- Allen from NSF. Just connecting with a program officer and learning that I can reach out to others was very enlightening. All the participants in general added to science community, even if I can't envision a collaboration in the short term, just feeling part of this community and a sense of belonging in my science path.
- Discussions with Allen Pope were extremely useful through the week. Also
 conversations with Marie on Antarctic work but also just trying to increase
 diversity in Antarctic science. There are many more but I'll stop here. This was an
 amazing opportunity
- I think the workshop product
- Speaking about his hometown, his culture and traditions, Saas taught me a lot about Indigenous communities. Working with him on the "one-pager" proposal, I realized the time, the efforts and the difficulty of designing a project with coproduction of knowledge and defining the outcome that will be beneficial for the local communities.
- Allen Pope, as a program officer at NSF, opened new perspectives on some research aspects, particularly in introducing more sustainability in research practices and field works. He provided resources and contacts.
- Not sure there was any one specific person I am likely to work with in the future, but the postdoc community was great!



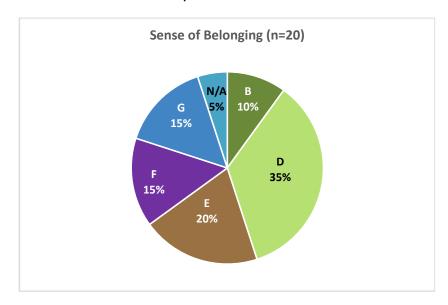


Sense of Belonging and Polar Science Community

Select the picture that best describes the current overlap of the image you have of yourself and your image of a polar science professional after having participated in the PPLW.



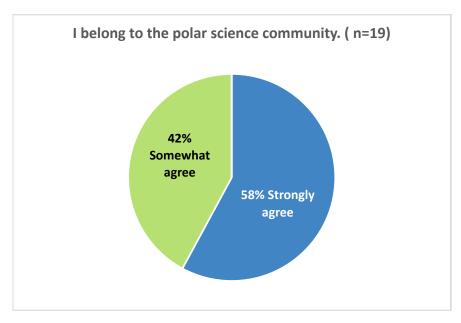
Respondent results:

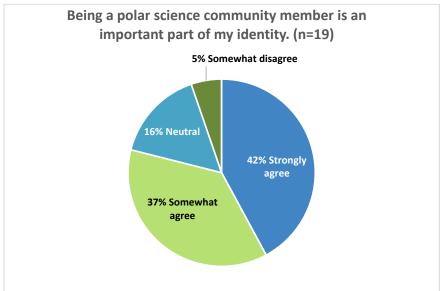






Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.





Additional Feedback

Respondents shared some final comments. Several respondents expressed finding the workshop very valuable and expressed their gratitude for the organizers, sharing that the workshop was very well organized.





Appendix A: Working Group Agenda

Overview of the PPLW agenda. A more detailed agenda can be found on the PSECCO PPLW OneDrive workspace for the workshop.







Appendix B: PPLW Post Event Survey

Thank you for joining us for the Polar Postdoc leadership Workshop (PPLW). The PSECCO leadership team would like to learn about your experiences at the workshop in order to better understand its impacts on postdocs in attendance and their feeling of agency in shaping polar science for the better through community leadership. Your feedback will help us to continue to improve future workshops as we continue to work towards building welcoming polar science community in the United States.

In which way did you participate in the PPLW?
O In-person, local participant
O In-person, out-of-town participant
NVI at boot de coil es como de la PDI N/2 Colort all thest areals
What best describes your role at PPLW? Select all that apply.
O PPLW mentor or speaker
O PPLW organizing team
O PPLW participant
O PPI W facilitator

Please provide your first and last name





To what extent do you agree that each of the following activities during the PPLW were useful to you?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I did not attend
Monday: Leadership Activation Exercise	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monday: Collaboration Panel		\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Monday: Participant Lightning Talks	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Monday: Science Communication & Collaboration Exercise	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
Tuesday: Inclusive Mentoring	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Tuesday: Exploring the Big Themes of Polar Science	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	0
Tuesday: Community Engagement	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Wednesday: What Makes a Great Proposal	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Wednesday: Interdisciplinary Proposal Creation	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Wednesday: Career Development & Work-Life Balance	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	0
Wednesday: Inclusive Pedagogy	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
Wednesday: Envisioning your BAJEDI Goals	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ





Thursday: Connecting Observation & Modeling Communities	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ		
Thursday: NSF Funding Overview + Q&A	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Thursday: Optional Hike or Paint	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ		
Thursday: Disciplinary Proposal Writing Exercise	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\circ		
Friday: Product Outcome Determination	0	0	0	0	\circ	\circ		
In what ways could speci	ific activities	be improve	d?					
Overall, I was satisfied w	Overall, I was satisfied with the PPLW.							
Strongly Agree								
Agree								
O Neither Agree or I	Disagree							
Olisagree								
O Strongly Disagree)							
What were the best parts of the PPLW?								
How could the PPLW be improved?								
In which ways did the PPLW meet your expectations and in which ways did it not?								





To what extent do you agree that the following parts of the PPLW were effective?

	Extremely Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied	N/A
Informal networking	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Reflection time	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Panel discussions + Q&A	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Workshop-style sessions	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Balance of participation (active/passive learning)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Social activities (e.g., informal social mixer on Sunday, optional activities in evenings, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lightning talks	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
PPLW community discussions (following panels)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Idea bank informal discussions	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?





	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Communication in lead up to the workshop was effective	0	0	0	0	0
Communication during the workshop was effective	\circ	0	0	\circ	\circ
Workshop was well-planned	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	\circ
Goals of sessions were clearly communicated	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Meeting was well-facilitated	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Speakers and presenters were engaging	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I liked thinking about and working towards a product outcome for the workshop	\circ	\circ	0	0	\circ
There were plenty of networking opportunities	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Food was good	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Social activities (painting, hiking, optional evening activities) were appropriate	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	\circ
I liked the Boulder venue for the workshop	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc





I liked the Mountain Research Station venue for the workshop	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I was satisfied with the Boulder accommodations for the workshop	0	0	0	0	0
I was satisfied with the Mountain Research Station accommodations for the workshop	0	0	0	0	0
Workshop communications through Slack were effective	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ

Would you like to elaborate on any of those statements? If no, write 'N/A'.

Thinking about the PPLW $\underline{overall}$, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Colleagues showed a general respect for one another	0	0	0	0	0
Colleagues respected the expertise of others in the group	0	0	\circ	0	0
The contributions of all group members were valued	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
All group members felt comfortable providing feedback	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
All group members felt comfortable providing an opposing viewpoint or interpretation	0	0	0	\circ	0
Disagreements were handled constructively	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc
The workshop code of conduct was consistently implemented	0	0	0	0	0





Thinking about **your own experiences** during the workshop, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt respected by my colleagues	0	0	0	0	0
Others in my group respected my expertise	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I felt my contributions were valued	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I felt comfortable providing feedback	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I felt comfortable providing an opposing viewpoint or interpretation	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
I handled disagreements constructively	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?





	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Breakout group discussions between attendees following panels + Q&As were an effective way to think about where the cohort wants to lead polar science as a whole	0	0	0	0	0	
Breakout group brainstorming was effective	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	
Breakout groups developed initial plans for what to put in white paper for recommendations to the polar science community	0	0	0	0	0	
Breakout groups created an outline for sections of the white paper	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	
Breakout groups developed a plan to collaborate beyond the workshop	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	
Plans for the future breakout group collaboration seem feasible	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ	
Plans for future breakout group collaboration will explore other PPLW activities to continue the work (e.g., discussion group meetings, working group proposals)	0	0	0	0		
To what extent are you motivated to continue to work and innovate on ideas to be published in a PPLW white paper of recommendations to the polar science community?						
To a Very Large Exter	nt					
O To a Large Extent						
O To a Moderate Exten	t					
O To a Small Extent						
O To a Very Small Exter	nt					

Please provide any other feedback you have on the breakout group discussions.





What impacts do you anticipate the PPLW will have over the next year?

In which ways, if at all, do you think the PPLW will lead to individual innovation and positive impacts on attendees' spheres of influence?

Please describe up to three new things that you will take away from the PPLW (e.g., skills, ideas, contacts, other resources, etc.).

How many new connections or research collaborations have you made during the workshop?

1 to 3

4 to 6

7 to 9

10 or more

I did not make any new connections or research collaborations.

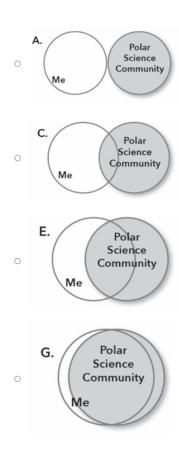
Please elaborate on the top two most important or exciting <u>new</u> connections or collaborations you have made during the workshop that you think will be impactful to your work. (Please include the names of people and their affiliations and/or organizations where appropriate)

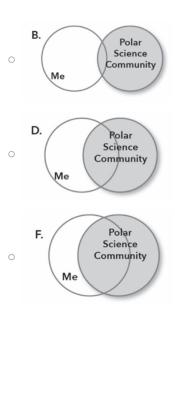
We are interested in learning about how your participation in the PPLW has shaped your perception of yourself as a member of the polar science community.

Select the picture that best describes the current overlap of the image you have of yourself and your image of a polar science professional after having participated in the PPLW.









Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I belong to the polar science community.	0	0	0	\circ	0
Being a polar science community member is an important part of my identity.	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ

Please share any other feedback you have about the PPLW for the PSECCO leadership team.



