



STRAIGHT TALK
2022 Evaluation Report



THE STRAIGHT TALK 2022 SUMMIT

The Straight Talk Summit was held in Canberra on 14-18 August 2022. Over 50 women attended – representing every state and territory. The Summit was facilitated by Michelle Deshong and Carla McGrath and co-facilitated by Ebony Hickey, Rachel Cavanagh, Cherie Sibosado, Annette Simpson and Terri Reid.

The program intends to strengthen skills and build confidence to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to bring about change in their communities. Straight Talk provides opportunities for women to share and learn from each other, meet political representatives, and learn about the Australian political system. The program assists women in creating ongoing relationships and networks with other women and ongoing relationships with political representatives. The program also intends to raise the awareness and understanding of parliamentarians on the issues confronting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and their communities.

What we did this week

Monday

- Sharing issues in communities and workplaces
- Learning tools to address issues
- Visit AIATSIS and the Connections Experience

Tuesday

- Learning about the Australian political system and lobbying
- Trailblazer panel

Wednesday

- Tour of Parliament House
- Mock Senate Enquiry

Thursday

- Meeting Parliamentarians
- Celebrate Achievements
- Gala dinner

About this report

This document summarises the evaluation data that was collected on the final day of the Summit. Women were asked to participate in a workshop session where they identified the best parts of the week, their favourite sessions, and their goals. Women were also asked to complete a survey and share their opinions on the program. This report summarises what was told to us through the workshop and the survey.



THE BEST THINGS ABOUT THE SUMMIT

CONNECTION



You told us that feeling connected to a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women was one of the best things about the week. Being able to network with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is a key highlight of the week. You also enjoyed connecting with politicians.

Lots of laughing. Warm hugs. Sharing yarns. Learning more about the science of politics.

FEELING INSPIRED



You told us that being with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women was inspiring. People felt inspired by hearing the stories of the Trailblazers and also by some of the Parliamentarians.

Being inspired by other First Nations women and hearing stories from their and the work they're doing in their communities. Hearing from politicians who are relatable.

LEARNING ABOUT POLITICS



You told us that you valued learning about the Australian political system and that the workings of Government felt a lot clearer now.

Learning about the political system and doing this with 50 other incredible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women



The best sessions of the week

FAVOURITE SESSIONS OVERALL



You told us your two favourite sessions overall were the Trailblazer Panel and the small group visits with Parliamentarians.

FAVOURITE SESSIONS IN THE FIELD



Your favourite three sessions outside the workshop venue were the small group sessions at Parliament House, the tour of Parliament House, and the visit to the Connections Experience at the National Museum.

FAVOURITE WORKSHOP SESSIONS



Your favourite workshop sessions were the Trailblazer Panel, the two sessions on understanding the Australian political and electoral systems.



WHAT YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THE SUMMIT

You told us that you enjoyed learning in the workshops and that you also enjoyed learning from others, from parliamentarians, facilitators, and other co-facilitators, and from the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the room. You told us that you felt a sense of pride and well-being from being in a room with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, some of you told us that you feel you made new friendships and connections for life. Some of you told us that the week felt so rushed and that there was so much to take in over the week. Some of you told us that you would have liked more time to be able to process and synthesise the learnings during the workshop.

FACILITATION



98% of you told us that the lead facilitator was engaging and inspiring, displayed excellent knowledge of the subject matter, took time to explain things and was easy to understand. 95% of you told us that the co-facilitators were helpful, 90% said they were empathetic, 93% of you said the co-facilitators were inspiring, and 79% said the co-facilitators helped the groups work well together.

CULTURAL SAFETY



48.8% of you told us you felt extremely culturally safe and 39.5% of you told us you felt very culturally safe during the summit. 11.6% of you told us you felt somewhat culturally safe.

88% of you told us that you felt strong in culture and identity at the end of the week.

GROUP WORK



89% of you told us that you felt strength through connection with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

20.9% of you told us that you felt able to express yourselves in the workshops all of the time, and 41.9% of you told us you felt able to express yourselves most of the time. 32.6% of you felt you could only express yourself sometimes, and 7% of you told us that you felt that could not really express yourselves in the workshops.

Best thing this week was meeting strong black women, and having an environment of feeling safe, encouraged, and making new networks.

Time to build relationships and connect more. It was really fast paced and at times felt constricting. How can Aboriginal ways of knowing, being, and doing be better infused?

The empowering energy was alive. True acceptance for individual views that were acknowledged. All women were open-minded and transparent with sharing.

Facilitation

You told us that your experiences with the facilitators were very positive. You told us that you liked that the facilitators called out identity issues and lateral violence issues early on so that this did not distract from the work. The lead facilitator was praised for her facilitation style, knowledge, and passion for the work. The co-facilitators were also praised. Some of you told us you would have liked the co-facilitators to be more active in the small group work, helping to provide the diverse voices in the room with opportunities to contribute.

Lead facilitator was great at navigating different personalities and opinions. The no tolerance for lateral violence and identity discussions upfront set a good scene for a safe space.

Some women definitely take the floor and don't allow everyone to have a say. Some are a lot louder and outspoken, and I think it deters other women speaking up.

Cofacilitators worked well to make everyone welcome. They shared their knowledge and skills and support freely. I saw them giving really good support and feedback and encouragement. They were very responsive, kind, solid and powerful.



What you learned

You told us that the content of the workshops was great and that you learned practical skills for going home and making change. Some of you already had these skills but found that the Summit helped to strengthen and consolidate these skills. Many of you told us you felt that there was even more to learn.

NETWORKING



81% of you said you learned skills for networking.

I already had these skills. What I learnt was seeing it a different way for larger impact. I felt this was a once in a lifetime experience and am extremely grateful for the opportunity to participate, especially with strong and educated First Nations women. Also extremely inclusive!

POLITICS



86% of you said you learned about how the Australian political system and electoral processes.

I feel positive it's given me ideas that I can use and apply my skills with getting action for my community.

GENDER AND INTERSECTIONALITY



86% of you told us your learned about gender, intersectionality, and equality.

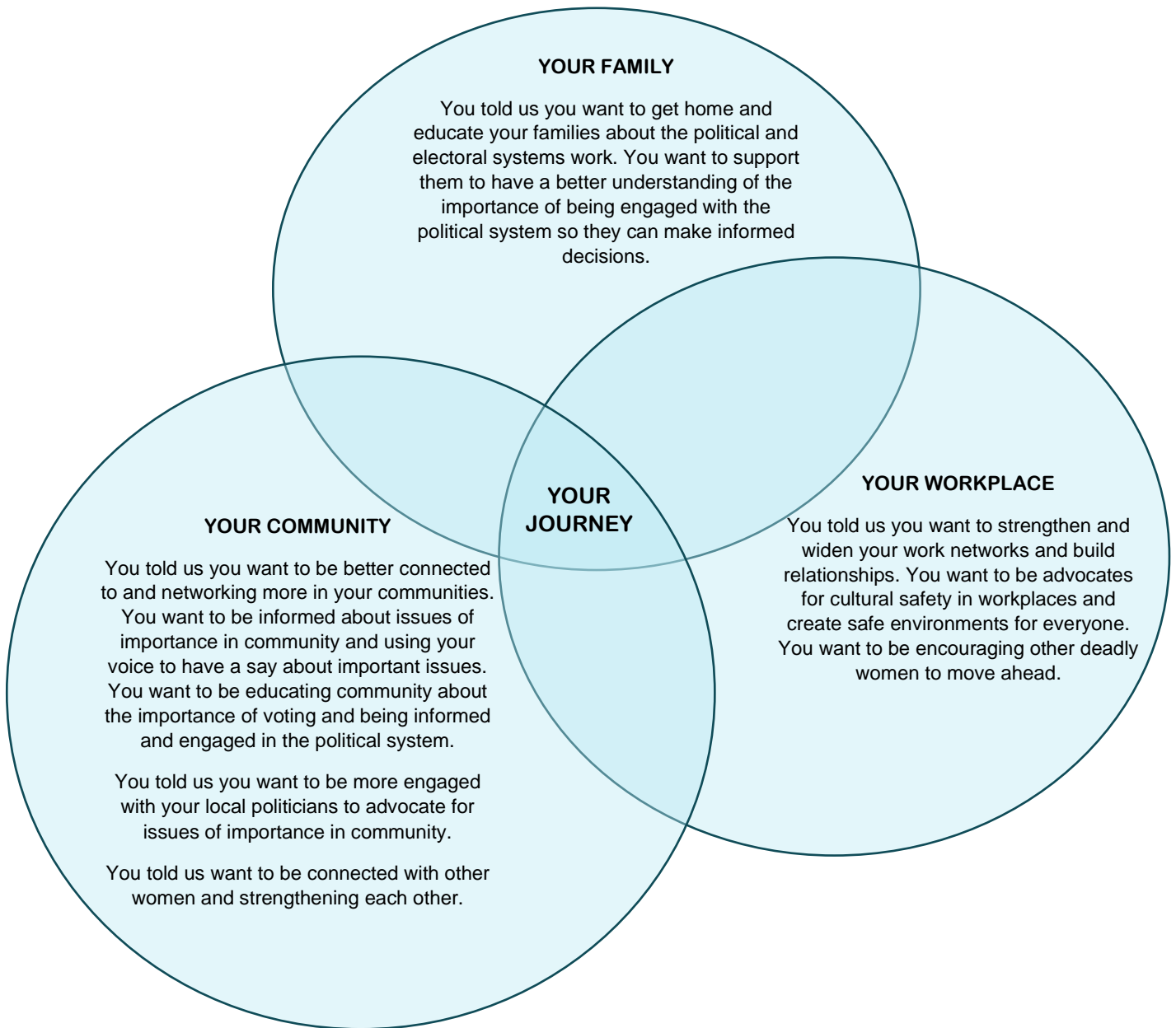
I learned about verbal tips and statements. Juicy tips from Michelle. Acknowledging we all have our own style. Hearing others share their ways of speaking up is powerful.



YOUR JOURNEY

91% of you told us you were excited to go home and use the tools and skills you learned in your communities. You also told us you want to become changemakers in your communities.

We asked you what you wanted to do with your family, workplace, and community when you got home. This is what you told us:



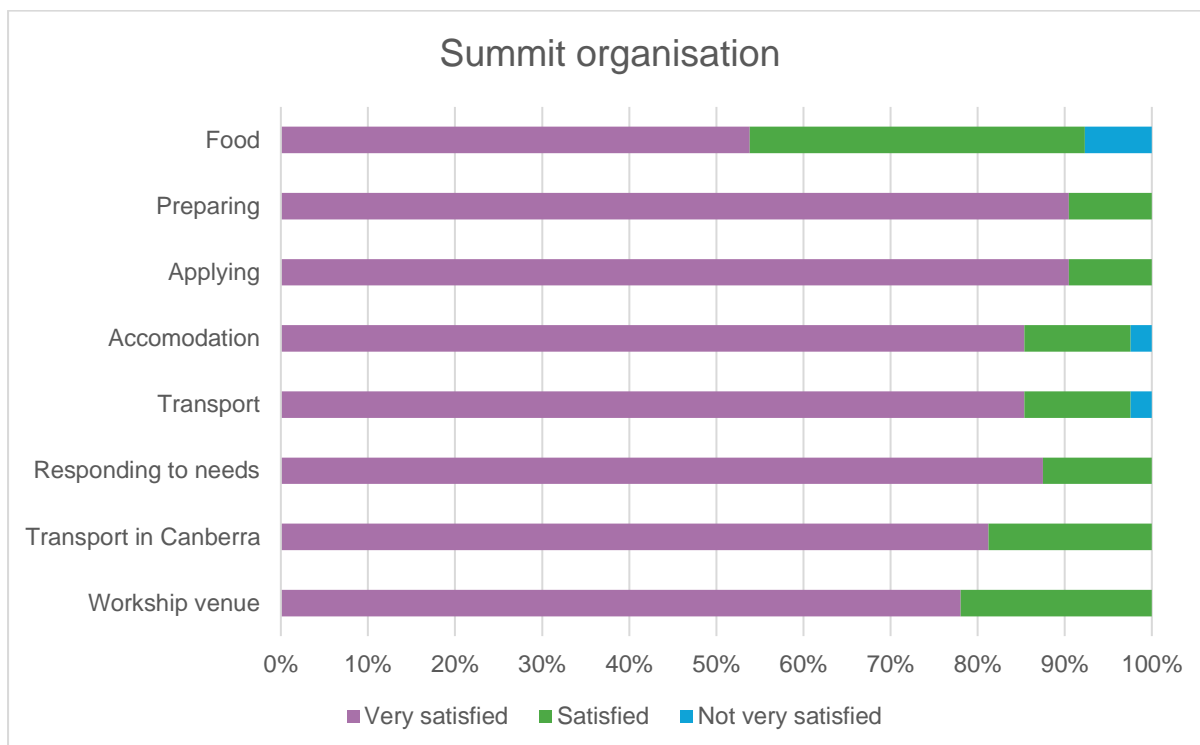
Amazing content. Initially felt like I didn't belong, but soon became emotional because I know I can go home and continue making change.

I have a new fire to complete my studies and be a change-maker within my family/community. I am confident that my voice matters.

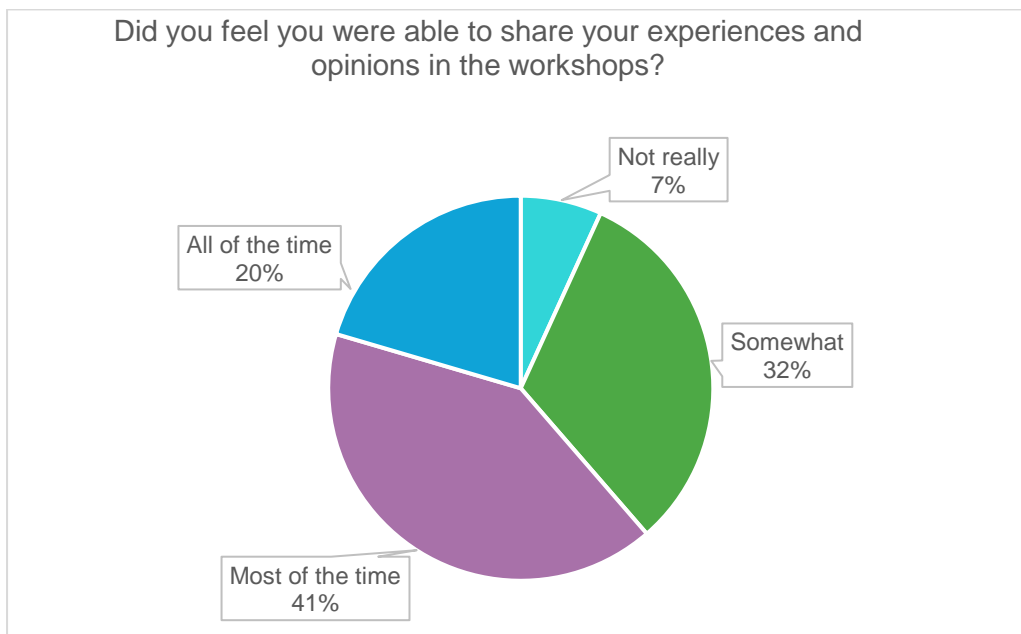
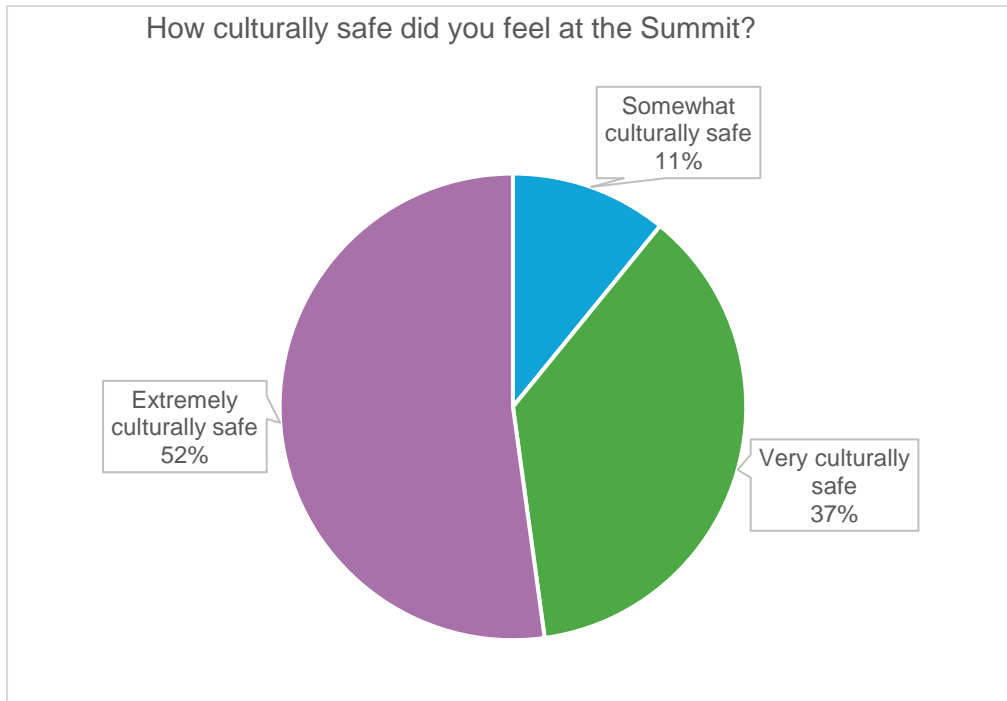
I feel a sense of courage to go back to my community and make change.

SUMMIT ORGANISATION

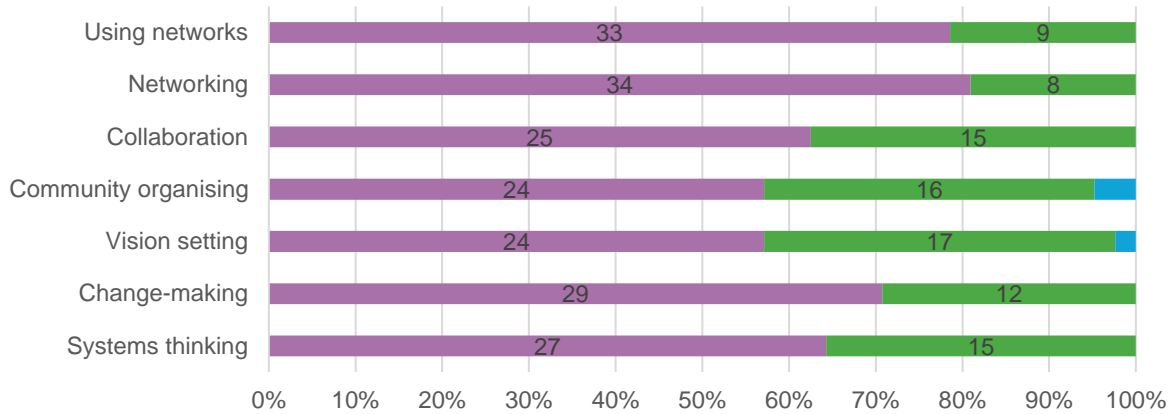
You told us that overall, you were very satisfied with how the Summit was organised. Based on your responses, we could improve catering and workshop venues for future Summits.



THE DATA



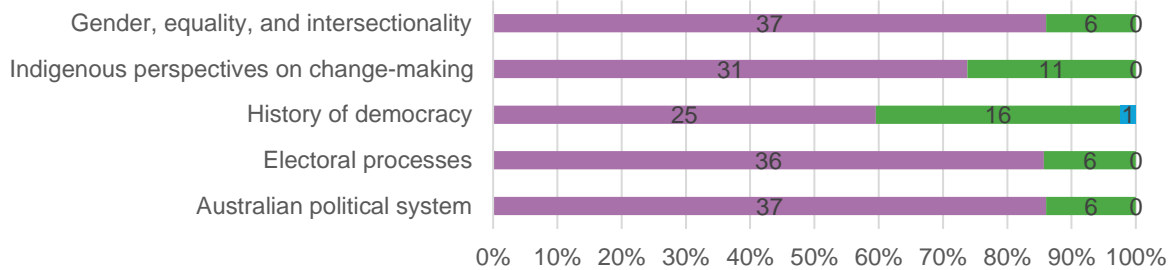
What skills did you learn during the week



	Systems thinking	Change-making	Vision setting	Community organising	Collaboration	Networking	Using networks
Very much so	27	29	24	24	25	34	33
Somewhat	15	12	17	16	15	8	9
Not at all	0	0	1	2	0	0	0

Very much so Somewhat Not at all

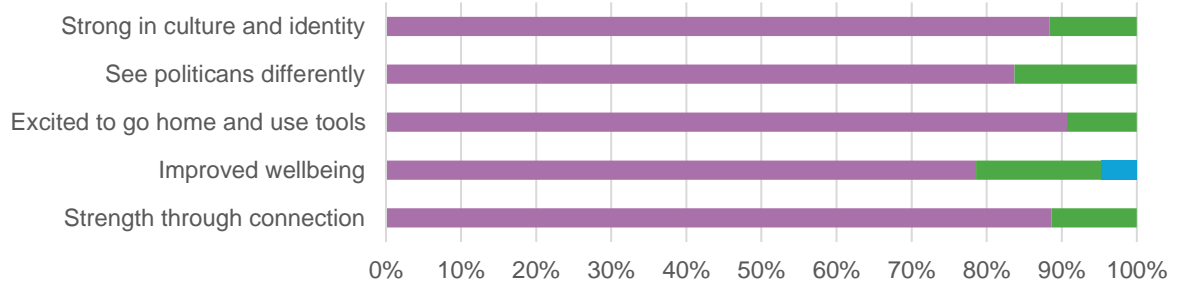
What knowledge did you gain during the week



	Australian political system	Electoral processes	History of democracy	Indigenous perspectives on change-making	Gender, equality, and intersectionality
Very much so	37	36	25	31	37
Somewhat	6	6	16	11	6
Not at all	0	0	1	0	0

Very much so Somewhat Not at all

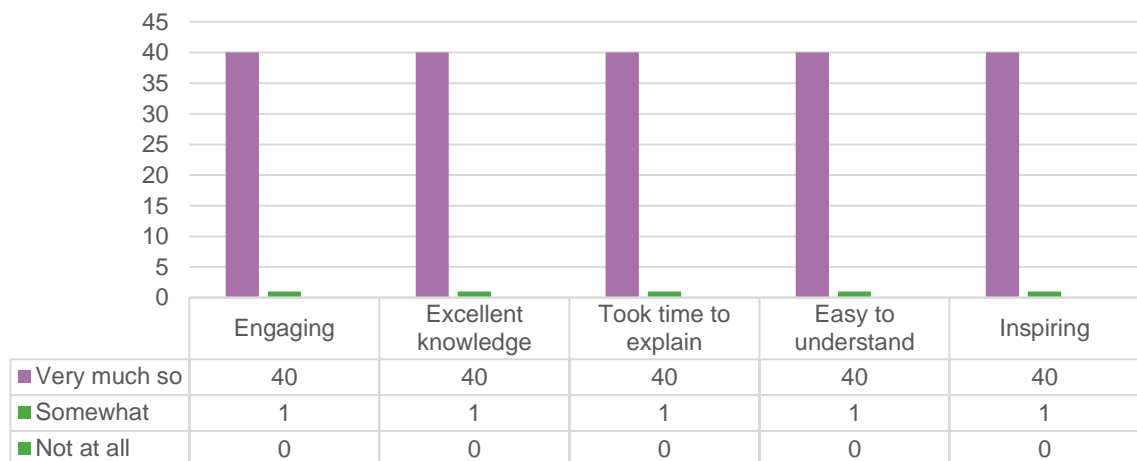
How you felt at end of the week



	Strength through connection	Improved wellbeing	Excited to go home and use tools	See politicians differently	Strong in culture and identity
Very much so	39	33	39	36	38
Somewhat	5	7	4	7	5
Not at all	0	2	0	0	0

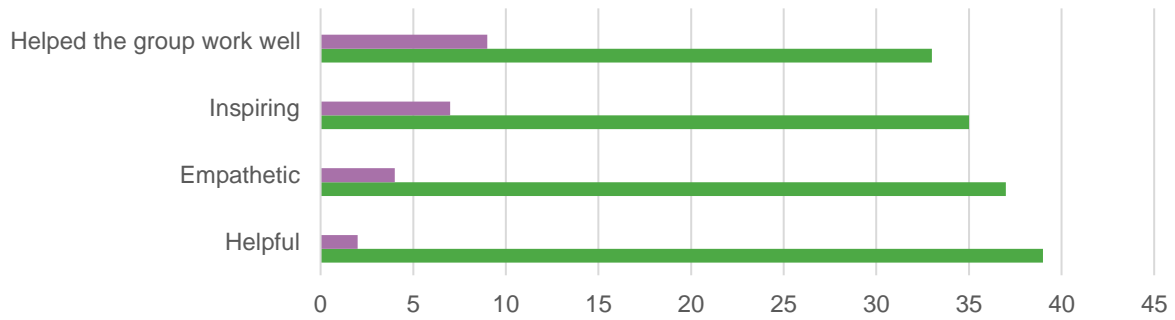
Very much so Somewhat Not at all

What did you think of the facilitation?



Very much so Somewhat Not at all

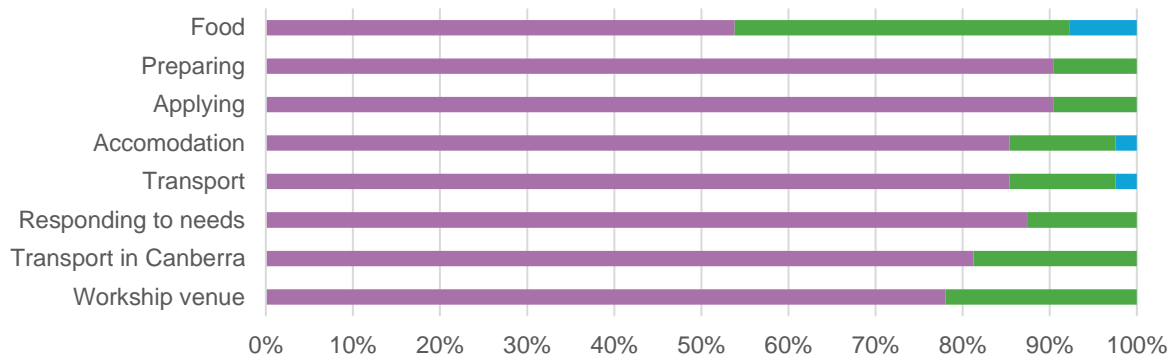
What did you think of the co-facilitation?



	Helpful	Empathetic	Inspiring	Helped the group work well
Not at all	0	0	0	0
Somewhat	2	4	7	9
Very much so	39	37	35	33

Not at all Somewhat Very much so

What did you think about the Summit organisation?



	Workshop venue	Transport in Canberra	Responding to needs	Transport	Accomodation	Applying	Preparing	Food
Very satisfied	32	39	35	35	35	38	38	28
Satisfied	9	9	5	5	5	4	4	20
Not very satisfied	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	4

Very satisfied Satisfied Not very satisfied