

# e-ScienceTalk

## REPORT ON SURVEY OF ISGTW READERS AND ANNUAL METRICS

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#### **Abstract**

This report provides results and analysis for the 2013 iSGTW readership survey, in which 113 readers filled in a multiple choice survey and provided comments. The respondents generally reported that they like the publication and that our content is pitched at a suitable level for them to understand. Respondents also reported that they are happy with the choice and breadth of topics covered. As with last year, the results from the survey suggest that further steps are needed to promote the events/announcements section of our site more effectively. A significant proportion of our readership describe themselves as working in the media and respondents told us that they had used our site as a source for story leads and for finding experts to contact when writing an article. This has the potential to significantly amplify our impact. The survey gives us the impression of a highly engaged readership, with the vast majority of respondents having forwarded an article or an issue and over half having saved or bookmarked an article or issue.

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## I. DELIVERY SLIP

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## II. DOCUMENT LOG

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3			

## III. APPLICATION AREA

This document is a formal deliverable for the European Commission, applicable to all members of the e-ScienceTalk project and its beneficiaries and collaborating projects.

## IV. DOCUMENT AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Amendments, comments and suggestions should be sent to the authors.

## V. PROJECT SUMMARY

Over the last 10 years, the European Commission and governments have invested substantial funds in distributed computing infrastructures. Scientists have access to state-of-the-art computational and data resources located around the world, putting European research into a leading position to address the greatest challenges facing us today, such as climate change, pandemics and sustainable energy. The advent of the European Grid Infrastructure, combined with the blurring of boundaries between grids, clouds, supercomputing networks and volunteer grids, means that a clear consistent source of information aimed at non-experts is now more important than ever, through dissemination projects that cross national boundaries.

### Objectives:

- e-ScienceTalk will build on the achievements of the GridTalk project in bringing the success stories of Europe's e-Infrastructure to policy makers in government and business, to the scientific community and to the general public.
- e-ScienceTalk will work with EGI-InSPIRE and other collaborating projects to expand the scope of the existing GridTalk outputs, and to report on the interactions of grids with e-Infrastructures such as cloud computing and supercomputing.
- The project will explore options for the sustainability of e-ScienceTalk's products.
- e-ScienceTalk will produce a series of reports aimed at policy makers to disseminate key policy issues underpinning grid and e-Infrastructure development in Europe. The project will also coordinate e-concertation activities.
- The GridCafé, GridCast and GridGuide suite of websites will cover new topics and explore novel web technologies; they will integrate closely with GridPP's Real Time Monitor, combining live views of grid activity with the human aspects of computing.
- The growing weekly publication, International Science Grid This Week (iSGTW) will bring news and events to the existing and potential e-Science community.

## VI. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

iSGTW has surveyed its readership using an online tool called Zoomerang<sup>1</sup>. This year's survey had 17 questions in total and was completed by 113 respondents. As with previous years, many of the questions are identical to the year before in order to help compare the results. This year, however, a number of the questions are also directly related to short and long-term impacts.

The results suggest that iSGTW has quite a dedicated audience, with a comfortable majority of respondents reporting that they read at least three out of every four issues. Meanwhile, a further third report that they read at least half of the issues.

The survey gives us the impression of a highly engaged readership, with 80 per cent of respondents saying that they have 'discussed or forwarded an article or issue'. Well over half of respondents also reported that they had saved or bookmarked an article or issue. Significant numbers of respondents report that they have attended an event based on information they have found on our site, or have themselves submitted an event or job announcement to our site. 15% of respondents also said that they had themselves contributed in some way to the newsletter at some point and 17% said they had used iSGTW to source an image. In addition, 13% of respondents reported that they had either cited or linked to iSGTW in a blog, paper, poster or talk.

Respondents reported that iSGTW is pitched at roughly the right technical level, is relatively easy to navigate, covers a good spread of topics and regions, and is a useful resource and informative resource for readers. Readers were also asked to tell us the topics which they most like to read about. The most popular topics were, roughly speaking, the same ones as in recent years. As far as academic subjects are concerned, 'physics and astronomy' once more proved to be the most popular choice and 'future computing technology' came out on top in terms of the infrastructure related topics. The consistency of the responses to this survey question over the last three years suggests that these results accurately reflect our readers' tastes. As such, we will continue using the results from this question to shape the proportion of articles we publish covering each of these topics.

Over two thirds of people felt that iSGTW has raised awareness of particular e-science tools, services, resources, projects, initiatives, and/or potential collaborators. Over a third of respondents reported that iSGTW has helped them with their research work and others reported that iSGTW had helped improve the exposure of their work and that iSGTW is a useful resource in terms of establishing new research collaborations. However, as with last year, only around half of respondents reported that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement and "I use iSGTW to keep informed about events and announcements". This result is disappointing, as we have been working to increase engagement with the announcements and events section of our website.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ND3SL2F>

Again, as with last year, around 10% of respondents have reported that they work in the media. This suggests that we have significant 'second order impact' through the articles which are inspired as a result of journalists and other communications workers reading iSGTW. Despite a reasonably high number of people reporting that they are involved in grid computing, only around half reported that they like to read about this topic. This suggests that the decision to broaden the range of computing topics we cover at iSGTW was a good one. Volunteer and cloud computing came out on top as the subjects respondents most like to read about. This is encouraging, as we have worked hard to increased coverage of volunteer and open computing over the last year. Despite the large number of respondents reporting that they like to read about volunteer computing, only one fifth reported that they are currently involved with such projects. As such, our coverage of volunteer computing has the potential to act as a way of mobilising people to become involved with these projects themselves.

In terms of the age demographic of our readership, the results are almost identical to those attained the last two years. Yet again, 31-40 is the largest category and the growth in readers aged 51-60 has continued. However, we still seem to be struggling to target younger, typical university-aged students, with just 10% of respondents saying that they are under 30.

Also, while the vast majority of our audience is male, the proportion of our audience which is female has held steady (at just under a quarter) from last year. This is up from just 15% in 2008 and 18% in 2011. We have been publishing articles which are specifically targeted at women in science and we also have a special section on women in the grid on our site, which we have promoted on suitable occasions using our social media accounts.

Finally, almost 90% of respondents say that they would recommend iSGTW. This suggests that the vast majority of our readers believe iSGTW to be a good quality publication.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

iSGTW has surveyed its readership on annual basis since 2007 [R1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7]. All the surveys have been conducted using an online tool called Zoomerang. In recent years, the surveys have been extended slightly to include more open-ended questions that can capture the publication's contribution and impact on the work of the e-science community. Each questionnaire has been relatively short and limited to a maximum of 20 questions. This year's survey had 17 questions in total with a combination of question-types including multiple choice, Likert-scale scoring and open-ended commentary questions. As with previous years, many of the questions are identical to the year before in order to help compare the results.

The survey questions were adapted based on a review of last year's analysis. For example, the 2013 survey did not include a question on how people receive the publication as it did last year. This was because practically all our survey respondents were subscribers so the question was not very illuminating and therefore redundant. Plus we can get a more accurate representation of traffic sources from Google Analytics, with a far greater effective survey sample size. We adapted question 6 (*Which one of the following sections of the iSGTW website do you regularly read or visit?*) and instead asked survey respondents to comment on how frequently they read the publication. This question was asked to ascertain the readers' level of engagement and if the frequency suited the readership. The survey also asked respondents to provide demographic details (e.g. their profession, age and gender) in addition to asking them to record subjects/topics that they would be interested in iSGTW covering (e.g. physics, astronomy, life sciences etc.). We also provided more room for them to add their own suggestions in question 3.

This year, a number of the questions directly related to short and long-term impacts. For example, readers were asked what actions they had taken as a result of reading iSGTW (question 4). This question was included as it gave us a lot of information last year and provided some thought-provoking responses. If they had cited the magazine, the question also asked respondents to include references i.e. a link to the blog paper, talk etc. Another impact question was included (see Q5) which asked whether people agreed with the statement "iSGTW helps increase the visibility for e-science projects". This is one of the key aims of iSGTW. A further impact question (see Q6) was included which asked whether iSGTW had raised awareness of specific products (tools, services, resources and projects) and provided space for people to give specific examples. Question 7 asked whether we had helped researchers with their own research which is a conceivable and potential long-term effect.

In question 8, we asked how likely people were to recommend the publication on to others, and their reasons for giving their score (question 9). We asked this question as we thought it would provide a more personal perspective. Also, one of the most positive and favourable indicators of success of any publication is a recommendation. However, it also gave people an opportunity to offer suggestions for improvements to extend our scope beyond the community. Most of the other questions remained similar to those asked in previous years, thus enabling us to assess our performance over a number of years.

At the end of the survey, participants were asked to enter their email address in the comment section if they wanted to be entered in the running to win a prize (an i-music hat). To increase the level of response, iSGTW tweeted the link to the survey eight times in May (2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>,

17<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>). There was also a spotlight on the 1<sup>st</sup> May. In addition, an email was sent out to subscribers as well as an announcement and the link was also shared on Facebook and Google+.

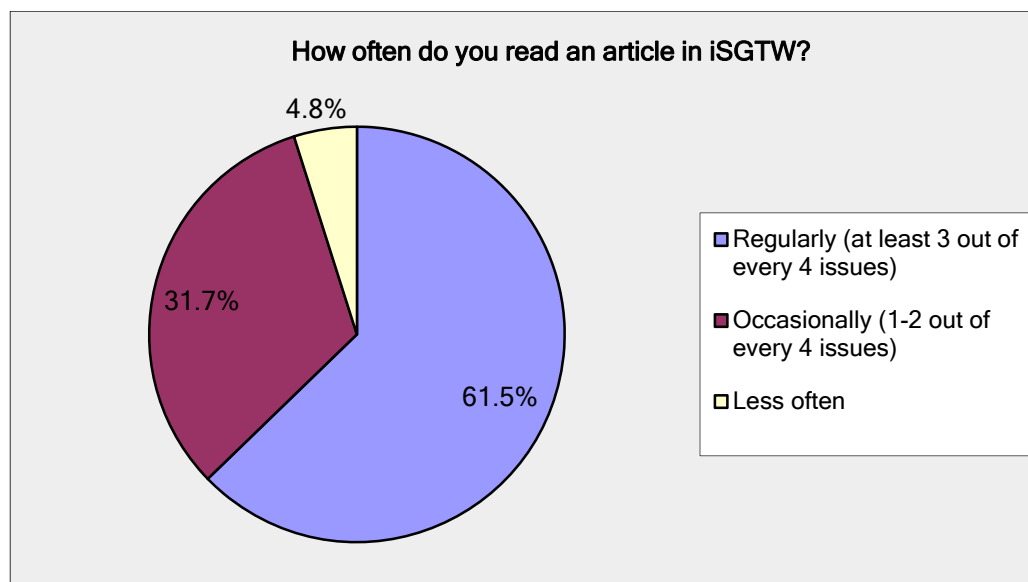
This year, we had a lower response at 113 compared to 226 people who completed our survey in 2012. However, it was similar to the response rate for 2011 (137 readers). As the survey had been adapted to be more qualitative with more open-ended commentary, the question of significance is not as fundamental to our analysis. Great efforts were made to increase the response rate, but unfortunately response fatigue is a well-documented phenomenon that occurs when survey participants become tired of the survey task. Only three of the surveys were left incomplete which indicates that attention was held during the survey completion. This suggests the length of the questionnaire, question ordering and survey design all worked well. Next time, it may be worth offering a more attractive gift to incentivise response.



## 2 QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES IN DETAIL

### 1. How often do you read an article in iSGTW?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Regularly (at least 3 out of every 4 issues)	61.5%	64
Occasionally (1-2 out of every 4 issues)	31.7%	33
Less often	4.8%	5
<b>answered question</b>		<b>104</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>8</b>



### Conclusions/Recommendations

These results suggest that iSGTW has quite a dedicated audience, with a comfortable majority of respondents reporting that they read at least three out of every four issues. Meanwhile, a further third report that they read at least half of the issues.

Of course, there is always room for improvement with these figures. Continuing to ensure that the newsletter is always sent out with an interesting/catchy title and making sure that the newsletter is always visually appealing, should help further improve these statistics.

However, these results suggest that the frequency of the publication (once a week) suits the readership giving them enough of an opportunity to catch up on the week's events.

2. Please mark each subject as “somewhat interested,” “interested,” or “very interested”. If you are interested in a subject not listed, please tell us in comments (Q10).

Answer Options	very interested	interested	somewhat interested	not interested	Rating Average	Response Count
physics and astronomy	55	30	16	2	1.66	103
life sciences (including health, medical and genomics)	42	36	26	2	1.89	106
humanities	16	24	45	15	2.59	100
Earth and climate sciences	35	37	27	5	2.02	104
social sciences	16	21	46	16	2.63	99
future computing technology	70	25	10	1	1.45	106
interoperability and standards	25	41	30	8	2.20	104
parallel programming	32	32	25	14	2.20	103
science gateways/portals/hubs	33	41	23	4	1.98	101
workflow management	12	33	36	18	2.61	99
open science/ open data	38	45	20	1	1.85	104
<b>answered question</b>						<b>108</b>
<b>skipped question</b>						<b>4</b>

### Conclusions/Recommendations

As with the previous two years, the topics have been split into two categories, the academic topics (physics and astronomy, humanities, etc.) and the infrastructure-related topics (workflow management, interoperability and standards, etc.).

The most popular subjects in each of these two categories remained the same as they have been for the last two years. As far as academic subjects are concerned, ‘physics and astronomy’ once more proved to be the most popular choice and ‘future computing technology’ came out on top in terms of the infrastructure related topics.

The consistency of the responses to this survey question over the last three years now suggests that these results accurately reflect our readers’ tastes. As such, we will continue using the results from this question to shape the proportion of articles we publish covering each of these topics. Thus, we will continue to publish a relatively high proportion of articles about physics and astronomy, life sciences, future computing technology, open science/open data, etc. and publish fewer articles on subjects such as humanities, social sciences and workflow management, etc. These results give us an indication that the readership has developed beyond the initial scope.

### 3. Are you interested in any topics not listed in questions 2?

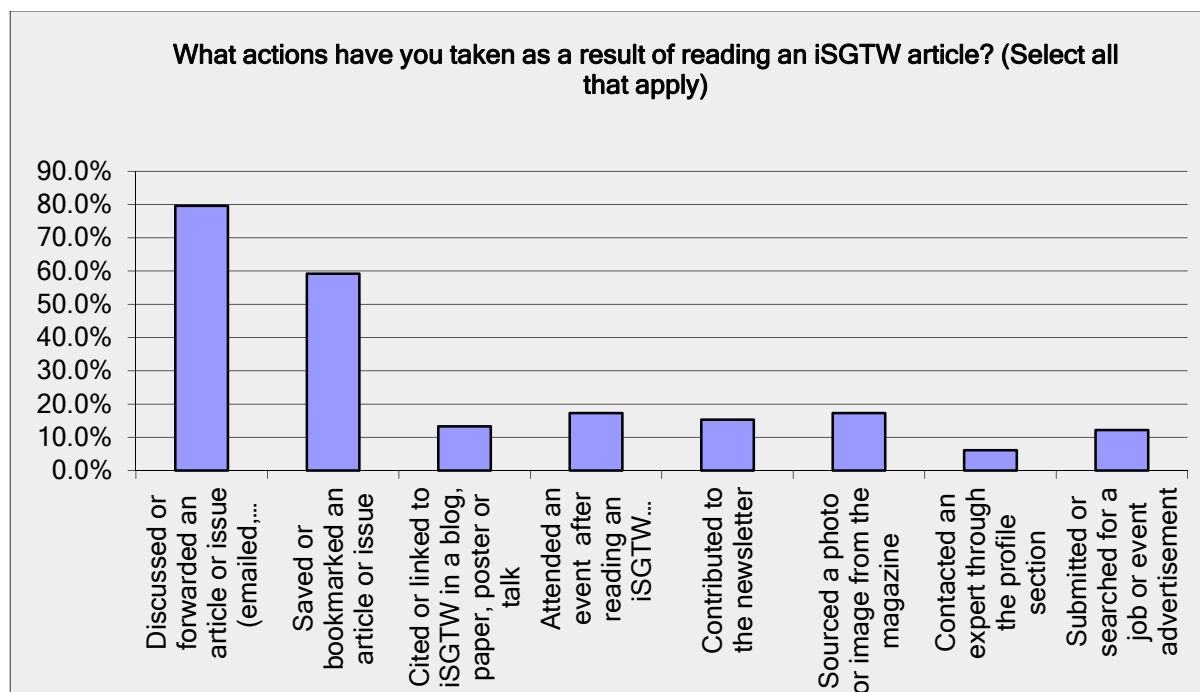
- citizen science, stem education (especially informal & k-16)
- Big Data
- Green IT, Communication networks (NRENs), Volunteer Computing
- High performance computing
- Security aspects in Grid
- Music/Arts and technology Grid computing Open projects
- Chemistry
- Current ICT activities - clouds, grids, supercomputers
- I am interested in knowing more on ongoing (successful) interdisciplinary synergies especially from HEP as (by far) dominant user of DCI I would appreciate also more articles on the trends in green data centers Finally I would also like to get more (detailed) infos on the evaluation of DCIs especially from users
- Policies
- grid and cloud computing integration
- Security for grid computing environment
- Scientific visualization
- Energy efficiency
- Big data
- visualisation
- IHM, large scale visualization, ambient computing
- As the iSGTW name suggests, it deals with Grid technologies, and yet this topic is not too prominent
- I'm interested in astronomy - could care less about physics.
- i assume you meant question 2. No.
- the list is representative

### Conclusions/Recommendations

Again, as with last year, there is very little overlap here and there are no topics suggested which stand out as particularly popular. Visualizations, energy efficiency, and citizen science each get a couple of mentions.

However, perhaps the most interesting comment is this one: "As the iSGTW name suggests, it deals with Grid technologies, and yet this topic is not too prominent." It is for exactly this reason that we have recently been considering changing our name, so as not to give the impression that we still solely write about grids (rather we now write about grids, clouds, HPC, and various other forms of scientific computing). However, after lengthy deliberation, we came to the conclusion that the value of the iSGTW 'brand' currently outweighs the potential benefits such a name change might possibly confer at the current stage in the project.

#### 4. What actions have you taken as a result of reading an iSGTW article? (Select all that apply)



Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Discussed or forwarded an article or issue (emailed, tweeted etc.)	79.6%	78
Saved or bookmarked an article or issue	59.2%	58
Cited or linked to iSGTW in a blog, paper, poster or talk	13.3%	13
Attended an event after reading an iSGTW announcement	17.3%	17
Contributed to the newsletter	15.3%	15
Sourced a photo or image from the magazine	17.3%	17
Contacted an expert through the profile section	6.1%	6
Submitted or searched for a job or event advertisement	12.2%	12
<b>answered question</b>		<b>98</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>14</b>

#### Citations below:

- <http://e-victorcastelo.blogspot.com.es> I usually cite iSGTW in my presentations:  
[http://tical\\_2011.redclara.net/doc/Victor\\_Castelo.pdf](http://tical_2011.redclara.net/doc/Victor_Castelo.pdf)
- <http://www.ubuntunet.net/august2012#predicting>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22942011> (citation 7 and 8)
- I link to relevant iSGTW articles at my <http://distributedcomputing.info> website for distributed computing projects in which the public can participate.

### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

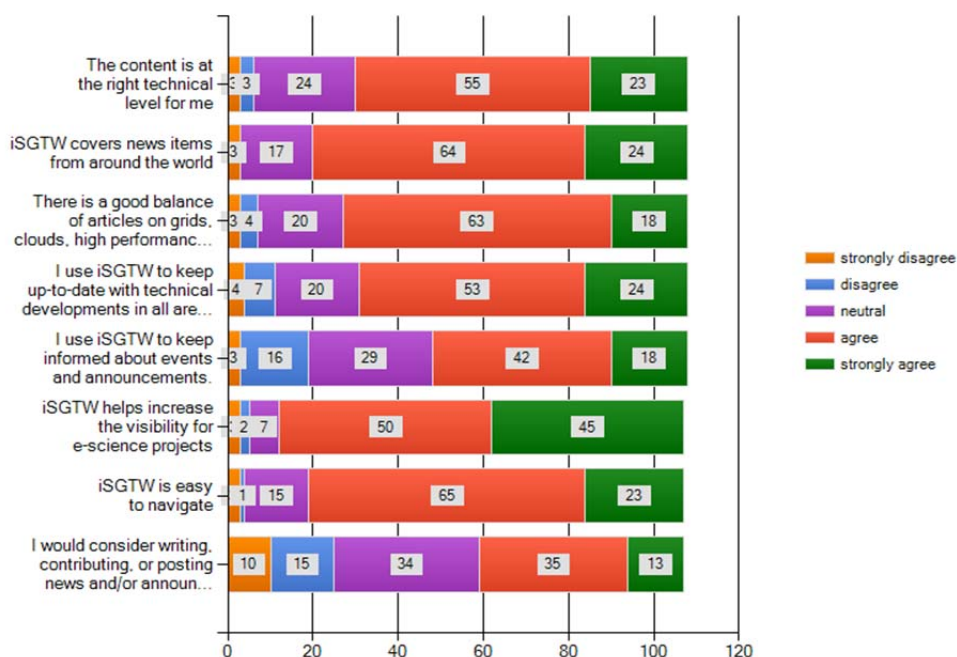
These results suggest that we have a highly engaged audience, with 80 per cent of respondents saying that they have 'discussed or forwarded an article or issue' (almost exactly the same figure as we received in last year's survey). Well over half of respondents also reported that they had saved or bookmarked an article or issue.

The results demonstrate iSGTW's impact, with significant numbers of respondents reporting that they have attended an event based on information they have found on our site, or have themselves submitted an event or job announcement to our site. In total 15% of respondents also said that they had themselves contributed in some way to the newsletter at some point and 17% said they had used iSGTW to source an image.

Finally, 13% of respondents reported that they had either cited or linked to iSGTW in a blog, paper, poster or talk. Links to some of these citations are also given.

## 5. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements.

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements.



Answer Options	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Rating Average	Response Count
iSGTW helps increase the visibility for e-science projects	3	2	7	50	45	4.23	107
The content is at the right technical level for me	3	3	24	55	23	3.85	108
iSGTW is easy to navigate	3	1	15	65	23	3.97	107
iSGTW covers news items from around the world	3	0	17	64	24	3.98	108
There is a good balance of articles on grids, clouds, high performance computing/supercomputing, and volunteer computing.	3	4	20	63	18	3.82	108
I would consider writing, contributing, or posting news and/or announcements to iSGTW.	10	15	34	35	13	3.24	107
I use iSGTW to keep up-to-date with technical developments in all areas of e-science/cyber-infrastructure.	4	7	20	53	24	3.80	108
I use iSGTW to keep informed about events and announcements.	3	16	29	42	18	3.52	108
<b>answered question</b>							<b>108</b>
<b>skipped question</b>							<b>4</b>

## Conclusions/Recommendations

### Percentage people who agreed or disagreed with the statements.

- **89% iSGTW helps increase the visibility for e-science projects**
- **82% iSGTW is easy to navigate**
- **81% iSGTW covers news items from around the world**
- **75% There is a good balance of articles on grids, clouds, high performance computing/supercomputing, and volunteer computing.**
- **72% The content is at the right technical level for me**
- **71% I use iSGTW to keep up-to-date with technical developments in all areas of e-science/cyber-infrastructure.**
- **56% I use iSGTW to keep informed about events and announcements.**
- **45% I would consider writing, contributing, or posting news and/or announcements to iSGTW.**
- 

Generally, these results are almost a carbon copy of those which we attained last year and they suggest that iSGTW is pitched at roughly the correct technical level, is relatively easy to navigate, covers a good spread of topics and regions, and is a useful resource and informative resource for readers. However, we did introduce one new question “iSGTW helps increase the visibility for e-science projects” and the majority (89%) agreed with this statement. This is perhaps the most encouraging finding from the analysis as it was one of the main impact goals of the project.

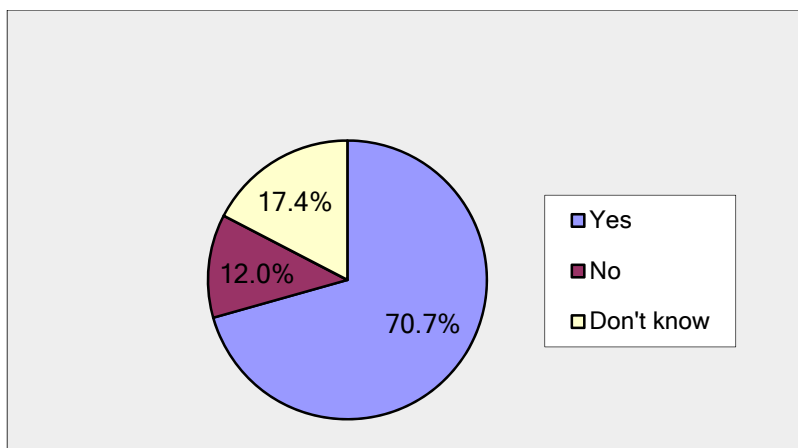
Roughly three quarters of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with all of the statements listed on the previous page, with the exception of just two. These were: “I would consider writing, contributing, or posting news and/or announcements to iSGTW” and “I use iSGTW to keep informed about events and announcements”.

Nevertheless, less than a quarter of respondents selected the categories ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ for the statement “I would consider writing, contributing, or posting news and/or announcements to iSGTW”. This suggests a much higher degree of user participation than common with most online communities based around news websites.

As with last year, only around half of respondents reported that they ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with the statement and “I use iSGTW to keep informed about events and announcements”. This result is disappointing, as we have been working to increase engagement with the announcements and events section of our website. We have been sharing announcements/events using our social media accounts and we have been linking to them from relevant articles. However, this has clearly only had a very limited effect. One possibility increasing the number of people who visit the announcements section of our website would be to tweak our homepage layout, so that this section appears above ‘the fold’ (possibly in the right hand-sidebar above the careers box).



6. Has iSGTW helped raise your awareness of any particular e-science tools, services, resources, projects, initiatives, and/or potential collaborators? (Please leave blank if you have no examples)



Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes	70.7%	65
No	12.0%	11
Don't know	17.4%	16
If you can think of an example, please do provide it:		18
<b>answered question</b>		<b>92</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>20</b>

Examples:

- galaxyZoo, ebird
- As example the model of expansion of CERN: <http://www.isgtw.org/spotlight/cern-computer-centre-expands>
- Zenodo repository. Most anything to do with astronomy.
- EGI project
- The Helix Nebula Project
- I have been interviewed several times about my sonification projects and that was really useful.
- articles on big data/data curation challenges
- WeNMR: recent use of Cloud services
- hubzero.org/
- HPC
- grid computing
- CERN, hard science
- Diffusion of information about events, projects and news in our region (Latin America)
- I actually don't remember - perhaps id did, but I can't think of any immediate example
- Can't remember any examples - I pick up links from many places but don't record the source



- I have used material from iSGTW for some of the science articles I have written recently.
- KM3NeT, "Minding Moby," and several others
- open data and open science, <http://www.isgtw.org/feature/nurturing-open-data-culture-cloudscape-v>; socio-economic studies, <http://www.isgtw.org/feature/placing-price-tag-e-infrastructure>. There are many other examples.

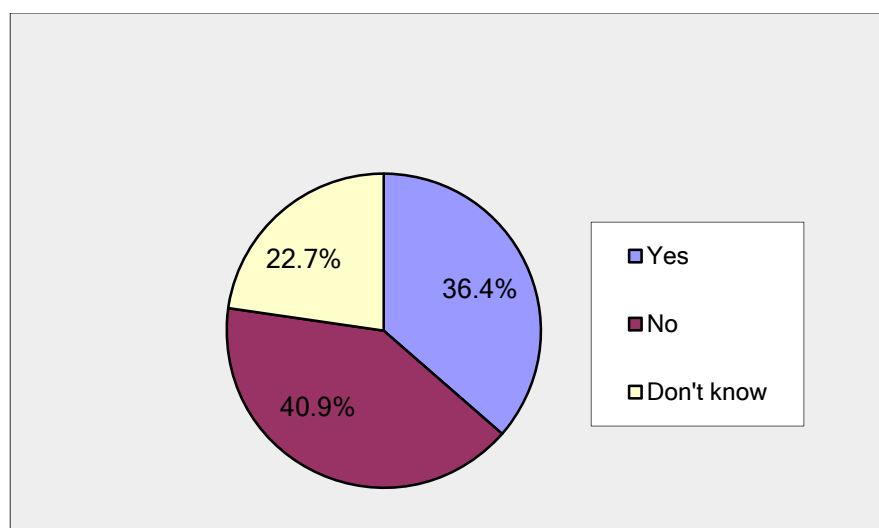
### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

Again, these results suggest that iSGTW has a significant positive impact, with some important European projects/initiatives having been listed by respondents, including: WeNMR, Zenodo (OpenAIRE), EGI, and Helix Nebula.

Over two thirds (70.7%) of people felt that iSGTW had raised their awareness of a particular e-science tools, services, resources, projects, initiatives, and/or potential collaborators. It was interesting (and motivating) to see that people remembered many of the articles we have published on the site. Many of the stories in the list of examples were not recent. This is very useful information for developing ideas for stories, as it is interesting to see what proved memorable for our audience.

**7. Has iSGTW helped you with your own research work e.g. generating ideas/finding future partners? (Please leave blank if you have no examples)**

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes	36.4%	32
No	40.9%	36
Don't know	22.7%	20
If yes, in what way:		13
<b>answered question</b>		<b>88</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>24</b>



**Unedited examples:**

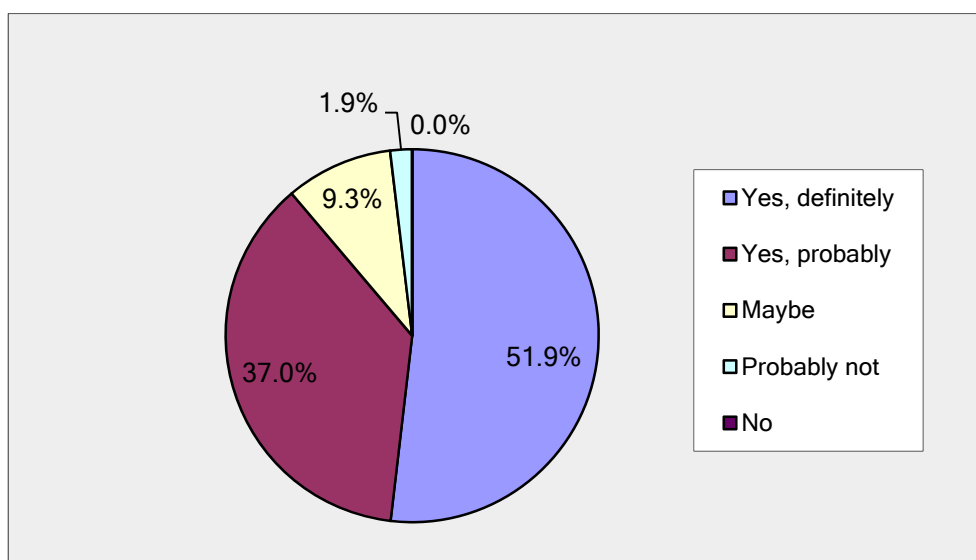
- published my research work
- always generating idea and real examples.
- EGI
- giving me the opportunity of knowing other researchers interested in the same topic
- Posting announcements and articles
- Giving visibility to our research
- Identification of possible competitors.
- Keeping track of international infrastructure projects to collaborate with.
- I'm a science writer. I have had occasion to contact people mentioned in iSGTW articles, simply because they were identified with a particular issue.
- In the development and proposition with new partners in Europe
- It may well be that some of our partners found information about our work in iSGTW, but they didn't mention it
- I am a freelance science writer, and iSGTW has provided me several story ideas.
- I have used iSGTW for an EC Tender Study, particularly for cloud computing and e-Science.

### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

Yet again, the responses to this question speak well to both our impact and the engagement of our audience, with over a third reporting that iSGTW has helped them with their research work. Among the responses, people reported that that iSGTW had helped improve the exposure of their work and that iSGTW is a useful resource in terms establishing new research collaborations. Perhaps most interestingly here, two respondents reported that they are science writers and that they have used iSGTW as a source for story ideas. This meshes well with the fact that once again this year around 10% of respondents have reported that they work in the media and suggests that we have significant 'second order impact' through the articles which are inspired as a result of journalists and other communications workers reading iSGTW.

**8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely is it that you would recommend iSGTW to others?**

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Yes, definitely	51.9%	56
Yes, probably	37.0%	40
Maybe	9.3%	10
Probably not	1.9%	2
No	0.0%	0
<b>answered question</b>		<b>108</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>4</b>



**Conclusions/Recommendations**

Almost 90% of respondents say that they would recommend iSGTW (answering either yes, definitely', or 'yes, probably' to the above question). This suggests that the vast majority of our readers believe iSGTW to be a good quality publication.

## 9. What is the single most important reason for you giving this score?

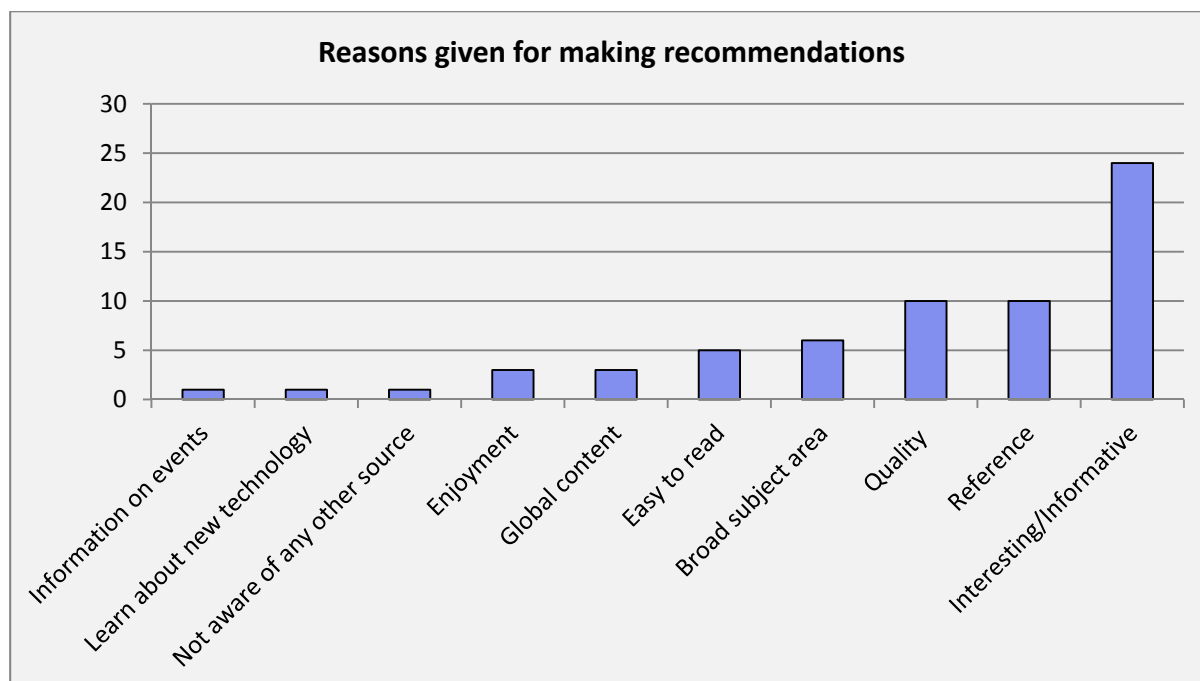
*Unedited responses below...*

- my enjoyment of the content
- The ability to read-up on research conducted globally
- The quality of the articles of the site.
- Because iSGTW maybe is one the best compendium of information about e-Science. Is the reference.
- Information density of the newsletter and the articles
- It's not only about computing but also covers different subjects such as physics, biology and sociology.
- iSGTW is a good starting point
- It has been of benefit for a long time.
- You are aware that what is happening in the world
- I like the fact that the articles touch on a wide-spectrum of scientific areas on a high-level.
- Professional, comprehensive, authoritative source
- Do not know any other people who is interested in grid computing
- There are usually some interesting topics
- Informative, highly relevant, very interesting! Always really current topics, saves me sifting through tens of other news resources. As know I will get the top ones here.
- great for the non-technical but interested reader
- Interesting news on e-Science topics
- General update on what is going on in the field
- Good source of information about what is going on in the science community
- It is a nice way to read about what it is going on
- not involved
- Information interesting for me are interesting for people working on the same topics
- Helpful information on e-Science/e-infrastructures
- up to date information
- It is good for staying up to date in the field of e-Science
- good value
- I am no longer working in science but use iSGTW to keep up to date in my previous field
- I find basically, in iSGTW, all the relevant information on the outcomes and evolution on Distributed Computing
- The large (broad) view on e-Science activities.
- Lots of interesting articles.
- It's true!!!
- I usually recommend iSGTW to colleagues
- a little to warm fuzzy feely .needs more hard hitting.
- A nice information medium, at the right level of information
- It is used a language non technical to describe examples or project
- knowledgeable and prompt information
- I find a really interesting article from time to time
- Rich content, varied subjects.
- The interesting information and the easy reading
- Work in eScience myself

- learn new computing technology
- For most of the people I work with, only a small fraction of the content will be relevant. And it's quite a bit of work to find that.
- informative, helpful, innovative
- Very Interesting articles
- I think the format is the right one. The access to further info is easy, fast and provide (usually) the necessary info for further deepening of contents
- The content that iSGTW covers
- Quality, relevant content.
- Credibility
- Honesty
- ISGTW is the one remaining source that looks at supercomputing as an academic enterprise.
- Very reliable information and links.
- I like e-science
- i wouldn't recommend it even to myself
- interesting articles
- Is a good media to share information in a high level with different scientists and research community.
- i find most of the published articles interesting
- I am not aware of any other Grid-related periodical
- I don't know? It comes in my email, so I look at it.
- I find iSGTW interesting--it also gives me some very good ideas for topics to discuss in my own articles.
- It is an important source of news about projects using distributed computing to solve problems in scientific research.
- Most of the news is old news - stuff I've already read somewhere else.
- Global overview
- Somewhat limited audience, but well written and very informative
- I find it useful and trustworthy.
- Generally enjoy reading it and learning about new developments.
- articles
- It is a great point to be exposed to a wide variety of topics.
- The value of the articles to the people i work with, who are mainly not scientists.
- new information for events
- I have been a subscriber since 2006. Coming from a non-technical, non-scientific background, it helps me (and other people with a similar background) to easily understand science using distributed computing.
- Some interesting information, but nothing vital and it's potentially yet another way to waste time.
- important information on a few pages
- Good source of information on technical infrastructures.

## Conclusions/Recommendations

Seventy one people replied to this question. Sixty four people (90%) gave reasons for recommending iSGTW to their colleagues. Below is a bar graph showing the reasons given grouped into ten categories.



Around 24 of respondents commented that the information provided in iSGTW articles was interesting. In fact, sixteen people described iSGTW with the words “interesting” and/or “informative”:

- *Information interesting for me and interesting for people working on the same topics*
- *I find iSGTW interesting--it also gives me some very good ideas for topics to discuss in my own articles.*
- *Informative, highly relevant, very interesting! Always really current topics, saves me sifting through tens of other news resources. As know I will get the top ones here.*
- *Great for the non-technical but interested reader*
- *Good source of information about what is going on in the science community*
- *It is a nice way to read about what it is going on*
- *It is an important source of news about projects using distributed computing to solve problems in scientific research.*

Many people describe iSGTW as an excellent reference resource, which explains why archived articles often have high page views even months/years after publication.

- *Because iSGTW maybe is one the best compendium of information about e-Science. Is the reference.*
- *I am not aware of any other Grid-related periodical*

People, who are new to the subject of e-science, also suggest by their comments that the publication strikes a good balance with regard to depth. Most mention that it provides the right level of technical content and find the articles easy to read.

- *I think the format is the right one. The access to further info is easy, fast and provide (usually) the necessary info for further deepening of contents*

Many cited the quality of the articles using adjectives such as 'credible', 'authoritative', 'reliable', 'honest' and 'truthful'. One individual even commented that "ISGTW is the one remaining source that looks at supercomputing as an academic enterprise".

Many people based their recommendations on two main attributes of iSGTW, namely (1) how they like that the publication covers such broad subject areas and (2) the global coverage. This makes the publication more universally appealing.

- *It is a great point to be exposed to a wide variety of topics.*
- *The value of the articles to the people I work with, who are mainly not scientists.*
- *The large (broad) view on e-Science activities.*
- *The ability to read-up on research conducted globally*
- *You are aware that what is happening in the world*

There were only seven neutral or slightly negative comments made by the readership. Some comments were more constructive than others (see below) in providing reasons for not recommending the magazine. However, there were only two remarks that the publication can address (#2 and #7). iSGTW initially chose the tone of a community newsletter rather than a more critical hard-hitting newspaper. It is currently part of the e-ScienceTalk project which reports on the successes of e-infrastructure projects. iSGTW also does try to include up-to-date information but it has its limitations (e.g. weekly frequency, lengthy review procedure and small team size) which mean that it is not always possible for the publication to always be the first to break e-science news. However, it is important to mention that the magazine has had a number of pick-ups in the mainstream media (e.g. sonification and Domenico Vicenza's work<sup>2</sup>).

1. *Somewhat limited audience, but well written and very informative*
2. *A little to warm fuzzy feel . Needs more hard hitting.*
3. *I wouldn't recommend it even to myself*
4. *For most of the people I work with, only a small fraction of the content will be relevant. And it's quite a bit of work to find that.*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2012-04/19/particle-physics-music>



5. *Not involved*
6. *Do not know any other people who is interested in grid computing*
7. *Most of the news is old news - stuff I've already read somewhere else.*

**10. Overall, how do you think iSGTW could be improved, for example in terms of layout, topics covered, design, etc?**

- give more exposure to student activities
- Nothing.
- Always it is possible the improvement, but the actual model and contents are fine for me.
- also cover small projects from the volunteer distributed computing section
- It would be better if you had a category part on the main page for different subjects like archaeology, earth sciences and art. The articles can be arranged with the category part.
- I would like the interface to contribute content to have more options to make my text look nice
- Design for smaller screens as well as large screens.
- The site could become a bit more interactive, making postings and commenting easier. The process to post announcements is a bit tedious.
- Covering more about fundamental sciences like grid computing and mathematics, computational physics. I would also love to see some applications to linguistic for example.
- More coverage from Boinc projects.
- It's good as it is.
- I think the site is too 'busy' - lots of different sections, photos which bombard the browser
- No it is OK as it is
- Nothing in my mind now
- I like it
- No idea
- it is OK with me
- I am not sure but it may already exist, but a simple procedure to retrieve past articles would be useful.
- More examples/samples...
- I am satisfying with current status, so don't know
- Maintaining the current format
- Don't know
- print option
- Maybe slightly more content
- It's already quite good. Might be the articles could contain more links (to scientific journal, to grupo homepages etc.). But this is already present sometimes.
- To me the magazine is very fine
- Beter layout
- things can always be improved, but ISGTW does not need much improvement
- for me is ok
- make it something watchable through flipbook, or pulse
- nothing
- Is easy to follow.
- Can't think of any improvement except of the already mentioned coverage of the Grid technologies as such
- Seems OK.

- I'm always interesting in seeing more articles about astronomy, astrophysics, and cosmology.
- It's fine.
- No suggestions - done well now.
- No major suggestions. Behaviour on mobile devices can be a little awkward. Have you considered changing the name? ;)
- The articles could be a bit more technical. For many I have to go off searching for more information if there were links for more technical background information on the subject it would greatly enhance the articles that do not go into enough depth.
- i like the way it has evolved.
- more topics covered
- I think that over time there should be more coverage of cloud computing and research in different disciplines, not just science, highlighting the benefits. I also think that it should cover the pioneering work of some NRENs, e.g SURFnet, NORDUnet, REANNZ, CANARIE, Internet2 and Janet. Business models for using cloud/grid etc. to ensure sustainability, as we seek to address economic pressures. Interoperability and standards are also important.
- Articles should be shorter - just the main points. Also, although the scientific results may be interesting they presumably aren't really the point, so the focus should be on the e-science.
- yes, however I have no proposal

### **Conclusions/Recommendations**

Several of the above comments focus on the design, layout and navigability of the site. While there are several valid issues raised here, the design of our site is not something we currently have the resources to make major modifications to. When we do, however, in the future, next change the template for our site, we would recommend that we conduct a targeted survey of our readership on this particular topic, so as to ascertain which design features people find useful and would like us to keep and which aspects of our website design are in most need of change. Focus groups looking at usability would also be advisable.

### 11. Tell us below about any interesting research you would like us to highlight.

22 people answered this question, giving the following recommendations (unedited)...

- Smaller national research groups all around Europe
- There is a German non-profit organisation that advocates volunteer computing and needs some publicity. See: [rechenkraft.net](http://rechenkraft.net) or [info@rechenkraft.net](mailto:info@rechenkraft.net)
- Nothing that I can think of at the moment
- Grid computing and mathematics
- Do not know
- SSH research infrastructures - issues about data curation also critical to their development
- astrophysics
- I would appreciate more articles discussing the academic approach to DCI (Objectives, Organisations e.g. EGI, OGF, middle wares, data centres) versus the private one (Google, Amazon,..)
- None as of yet...
- Space exploration. Advanced space propulsion and power systems (i.e. space nuclear systems). Spin offs generated from basic science labs (i.e. development of new technology or devices using the research generated in large scientific facilities).
- How Video Game Technology May Help Biologists Tackle Visualization Challenges. Link 1 :: <http://unitymol.sourceforge.net> Link 2 :: <http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0057990>
- The way to exaflops. Visualization
- open grid calculation
- There are some interesting projects on <https://www.nectar.org.au/news> that might be of interest to the ISGTW community
- use more American science writers, if possible.
- photovoltaic
- HCI research perhaps? (Human-Computer Interaction) Grid tools are notoriously bad in this area
- Judith Braffman-Miller 1149 Partridge Avenue St. Louis, Missouri 63130 USA
- Please continue to post news stories about public distributed computing projects (projects that I, as a lay person, can contribute to).
- I have a few suggestions in astro-informatics area. will check with researchers.
- Pioneering NREN work (as mentioned above), e.g. Advanced North Atlantic 100G Pilot (ANA-100G), announced in April 2013 and the Global CEO Forum of NRENs. Coverage of countries like Australia, New Zealand and Finland (e.g. Cloud Software Programme) as they are pioneering and focus a lot of business models.
- nano materials

### Conclusions/Recommendations

While one or two of these suggestions may provide interesting story leads for us to investigate, there aren't really any overarching conclusions we can draw from these wide-ranging suggestions.

## 12. What is your profession?

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Student	5.6%	6
Scientist/researcher (industry)	10.2%	11
Academic researcher	35.2%	38
IT professional (employed by industry)	13.9%	15
IT professional (employed by university/government, research facility)	29.6%	32
Funding body	1.9%	2
Media/communications	9.3%	10
Other, please specify	11.1%	12
<b>answered question</b>		<b>108</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>4</b>

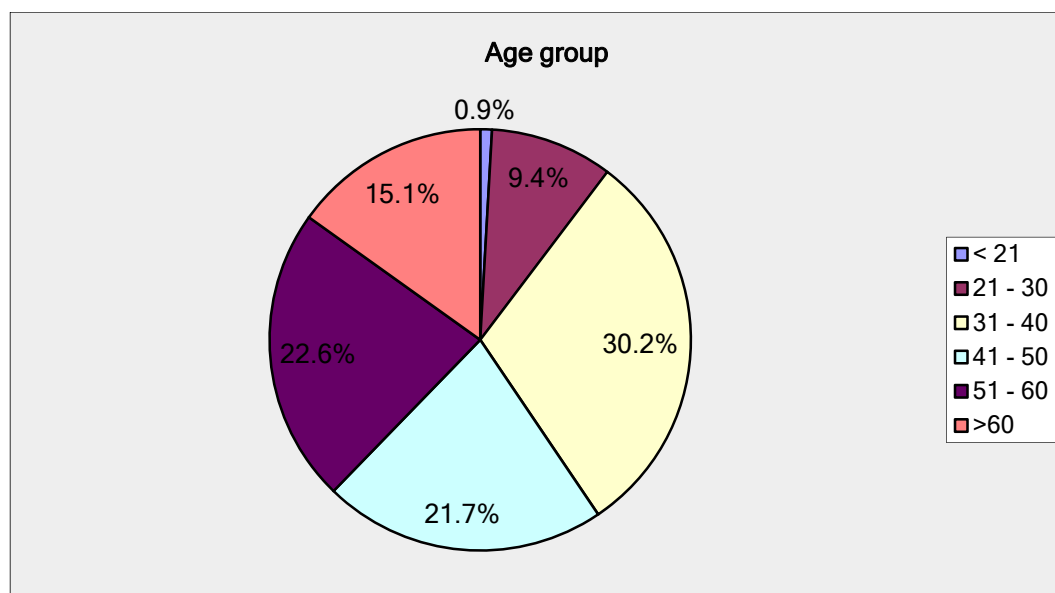
### Conclusions/Recommendations

Following a significant number of respondents in last year's survey who selected the category as 'other' and then identified themselves as working in science communication in the comments section, we decided to add a category of 'media/communications' to this year's survey. Similarly to last year, roughly 1 in 10 respondents report that they work in this area. As mentioned in the conclusions/recommendations section for question 7, this suggests that we have significant 'second order impact' through the articles which are inspired as a result of journalists and other communications workers reading iSGTW.

Other than this, these results show that around a third of our audience comes from the public research sector, with IT professionals and researchers from industry also being reasonably well represented. 'Students' is perhaps the category most in need of specific targeting. However, this is discussed in conclusions/recommendations for the next question, which deals with the most common age groups making up our readership.

### 13. Age group

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
< 21	0.9%	1
21 - 30	9.4%	10
31 - 40	30.2%	32
41 - 50	21.7%	23
51 - 60	22.6%	24
>60	15.1%	16
<b>answered question</b>		<b>106</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>6</b>

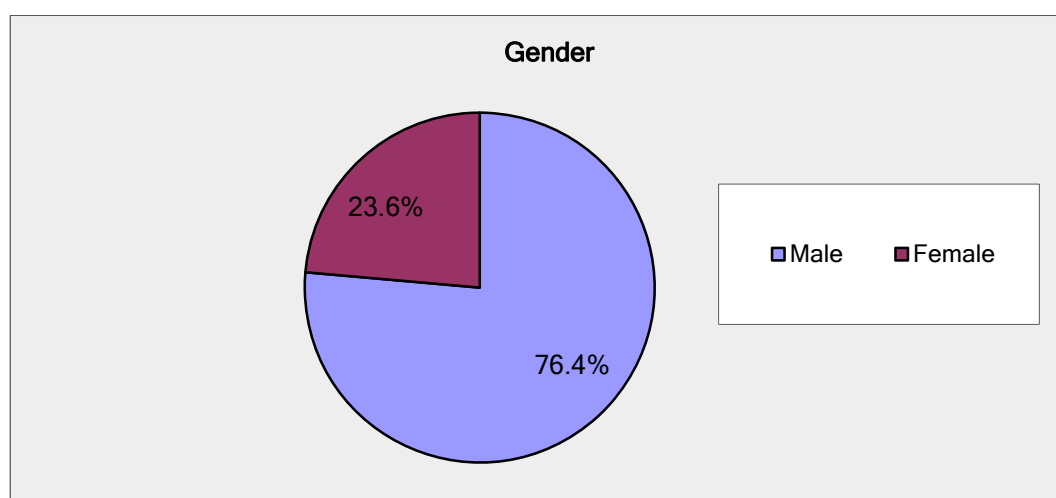


### Conclusions/Recommendations

These results are almost identical to those attained the last two years. Yet again, 31-40 is the largest category and the growth in readers aged 51-60 has continued. However, we still seem to be struggling to target younger, typical university-aged students, with just 1 in 10 respondents saying that they are under 30. As discussed in last year's readership survey, it is important to note that social media should not be viewed as a way of specifically targeting younger readers. Instead we have tried to increase our proportion of younger readers by increasing the number of articles dealing with issues and research specifically related to them and by trying to feature more research conducted by younger researchers, too. Our lack of success so far in driving up our young readership suggests that we need to further increase these current efforts, as well as developing new ways to attract a younger audience.

#### 14. Gender

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Male	76.4%	81
Female	23.6%	25
<b>answered question</b>		<b>106</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>6</b>

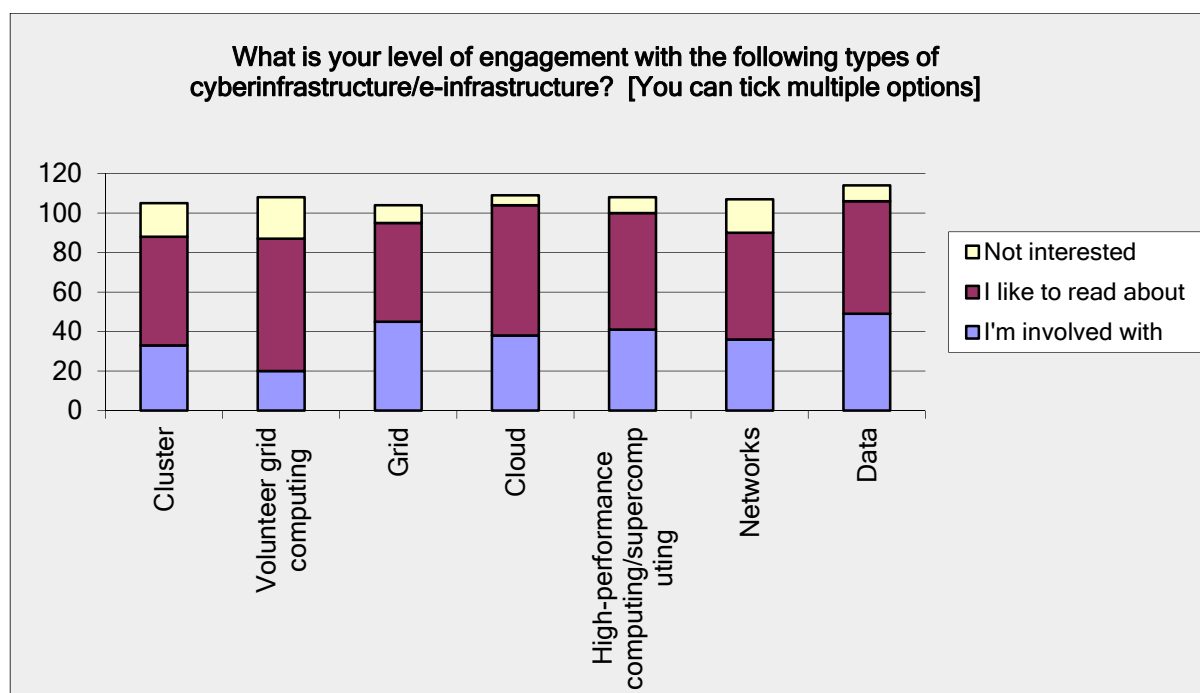


#### Conclusions/Recommendations

While the vast majority of our audience is male, the proportion of our audience which is female has held steady (at just under a quarter) from last year. This is up from just 15% in 2008 and 18% in 2011. We have been publishing articles which are specifically targeted at women in science and we also have a special section on women in the grid on our site. As mentioned in last year's readership survey, despite the significant progress we have already made, we feel that the most significant barrier to us making further progress towards addressing this gender imbalance is the fact that it reflects wider gender imbalances which exist both within the IT profession and within some areas of science as a whole. However, by continuing to highlight the work carried out by women in our field of computing, we hope to at least play a small part in redressing these wider gender imbalances.

**15. What is your level of engagement with the following types of cyberinfrastructure/e-infrastructure? [You can tick multiple options]**

Answer Options	Not interested	I like to read about	I'm involved with	Response Count
Cluster	17	55	33	100
Volunteer grid computing	21	67	20	99
Grid	9	50	45	99
Cloud	5	66	38	101
High-performance computing/supercomputing	8	59	41	100
Networks	17	54	36	100
Data	8	57	49	102
<b>answered question</b>				<b>106</b>
<b>skipped question</b>				<b>6</b>



Volunteer and cloud computing came out on top as the subjects respondents most like to read about. This is encouraging, as we have worked hard to increase coverage of volunteer and open computing over the last year. Despite the large number of respondents reporting that they like to read about volunteer computing, only one fifth reported that they are currently involved with such projects. As such, our coverage of volunteer computing has the potential to act as a way of mobilising people to become involved with these projects themselves.





In addition, we dedicate a significant proportion of our coverage to cloud computing, which also performed well in terms of the computing subjects people most like to read about on our site.

Finally, despite a reasonably high number of people reporting that they are involved in grid computing, only around half reported that they like to read about this topic. This suggests that the decision to broaden the range of computing topics we cover at iSGTW was a sound one.

**16. Is there anything further you would like to say?**

- thank you for the good work
- Congratulations
- Andrew, keep on the good job :)
- No
- Keep doing a fab job.
- Keep up the "good" work...
- not
- No
- You should increase coverage in Africa. Of course the challenge is on identifying research activities of the nature you focus on. Perhaps a strategy would be required.
- Thanks for your excellent work!
- ISGTW beats all the center newsletters (most of which are now moribund)
- No
- N/A
- You're doing a great job. This is a very important online journal.

**Conclusions/Recommendations**

With regards to the comment on increasing coverage in Africa, this is something which we are currently working on. We are now finalizing a content-sharing agreement with 'The Newsletter of UbuntuNet Alliance: Networks, Collaboration, Education', which focuses on this region.

### 3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey gives us the impression of a highly engaged readership, with the vast majority of respondents having forwarded an article or an issue and over half having saved or bookmarked an article or issue. The fact that our readership is highly engaged reflects the way in which most people come to our site, i.e. through our weekly newsletter, which we send out to subscribers via email. While our traffic from other sources, such as social media, has increased significantly over the last year, our email newsletter remains the largest single source of regular traffic to our site. As such, it is worth bearing in mind that the results of this survey are based on responses from a self-selecting group, which probably consists primarily of those who subscribe to our newsletter and who may have different needs and preferences to those who visit our site on an occasional, *ad hoc* basis.

Those who did fill out the survey, however, generally reported that they like the publication and that our content is pitched at a suitable level for them to understand. Respondents also reported that they are happy with the choice and breadth of topics covered. We will continue to use the feedback from this report to further hone our choices in terms of the research we choose to write about.

Additionally, a significant proportion of our readership describe themselves as working in the media and respondents told us that they had used our site as a source for story leads and for finding experts to contact when writing an article. This has the potential to significantly amplify our impact.

While we have been able to significantly increase the proportion of female readers on our site over the last few years to around one quarter and successfully maintain it at this level, we still have problems attracting younger readers (i.e. <30 years). We are continuing to work on this by providing more articles targeted at a younger audience and by linking together articles which we feel may be of interest to younger readers. We have also tried to include articles which give insight as to how one can enter a career working in fields related to scientific computing, in the hope that this will increase our early career stage readership. The results from this year's survey suggest that these measures have so far had little success, but we will increase our efforts further in the hope of improving this situation,

Finally, another persistent problem is that our events/announcement section is somewhat underused. We have been attempting to tackle this problem by linking directly to our event announcements from related articles and by promoting events/announcements through our popular social media accounts. As mentioned earlier in the report, one possibility for increasing the number of people who visit the announcements section of our website would be to tweak our homepage layout, so that this section appears above 'the fold' (possibly in the right hand-sidebar above the careers box).

In conclusion though, with the exception of these two issues, the publication seems to generally be performing very well in terms of impact, readership engagement, and general audience approval.

## 4 REFERENCES

R1	e-ScienceTalk iSGTW Readership Survey July 2008 <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/754">https://documents.egi.eu/document/754</a>
R2	e-ScienceTalk iSGTW Readership Survey December 2008 <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/753">https://documents.egi.eu/document/753</a>
R3	e-ScienceTalk iSGTW Readership Survey July 2009 <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/755">https://documents.egi.eu/document/755</a>
R4	e-ScienceTalk iSGTW Readership Survey January 2010 <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/752">https://documents.egi.eu/document/752</a>
R5	D3.4 Report on survey of iSGTW readers <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/767">https://documents.egi.eu/document/767</a>
R6	e-ScienceTalk iSGTW Readership Survey August 2012 <a href="https://documents.egi.eu/document/1327">https://documents.egi.eu/document/1327</a>