



LOUISVILLE, Kentucky  
The Galt House Hotel  
April 24 – 27, 2024

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Louisville skyline at sunset. The sky is a warm orange and yellow. In the foreground, a large steel truss bridge spans across the frame. In the background, the Kentucky State Capitol building is prominent, with its dome illuminated. Other city buildings are visible, some with lights on. In the top right corner, there is a decorative graphic of several concentric, curved lines in shades of brown and gold.

# Challenges and Priorities for Graduate Enrollment Professionals:

## Guidelines for Navigating the Post- Pandemic Educational Environment

# 2024 GEM Summit

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky  
The Galt House Hotel  
April 24 – 27, 2024



**Keith Ramsdell, MEd**  
*Vice President for Enrollment  
Management and Marketing*  
Ashland University



**Donald A. Resnick, MBA**  
*Global Higher Education Consultant*



**Pamela Kiecker Royall, PhD**  
*Head of Research, Marketing and  
Enrollment Solutions*  
EAB

# Research Overview

## Featured Surveys

### ➤ September 2023 Survey

- Data collection: 9/28/22–10/17/23
- Topic: Work environment and AI
- Contributors: 422

### ➤ November 2023 Survey

- Data collection: 11/23/23–1/2/24
- Topics: Value and enrollment metrics
- Contributors: 302

### ➤ February 2024 Survey

- Data collection: 2/19/24–3/4/24
- Topics: Enrollment forecasts and landscape
- Contributors: 280

## Comparative Data

### ➤ February 2023 Survey (Feb/Mar 2023)

- Topics: Enrollment and recruitment
- Contributors: 313

### ➤ November 2022 Survey (Nov/Dec 2022)

- Topics: Value and enrollment metrics
- Contributors: 340

### ➤ September 2022 Survey (Sept/Oct 22)

- Topic: Current work environment
- Contributors: 508

### ➤ January 2022 Survey (Jan/Feb 22)

- Topic: Work environment
- Contributors: 325

### ➤ October 2021 Survey (Oct/Nov 21)

- Topic: Enrollment metrics
- Contributors: 317

### ➤ February 2021 Survey (Feb/Mar 21)

- Topic: Mental health and wellness
- Contributors: 369

### ➤ December 2020 Survey (Dec 20/Jan 21)

- Topics: Enrollment metrics and DEI
- Contributors: 350

### ➤ October 2020 Survey (Oct/Nov 20)

- Topic: Perceptions of value
- Contributors: 424



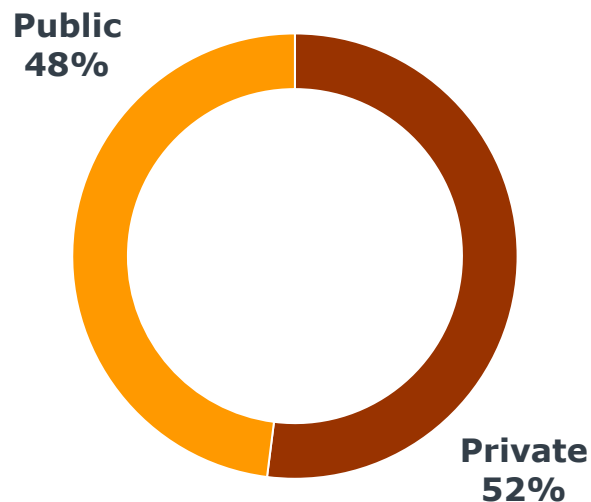
# Participant Profile

## 2023-2024 Surveys

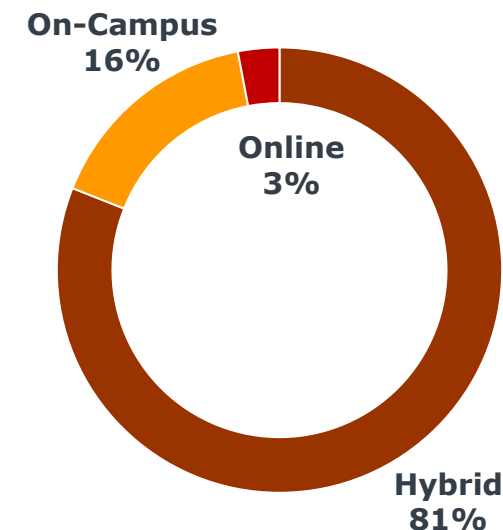
**647** unique participants

**438** unique institutions

Institution Type



Instructional Format

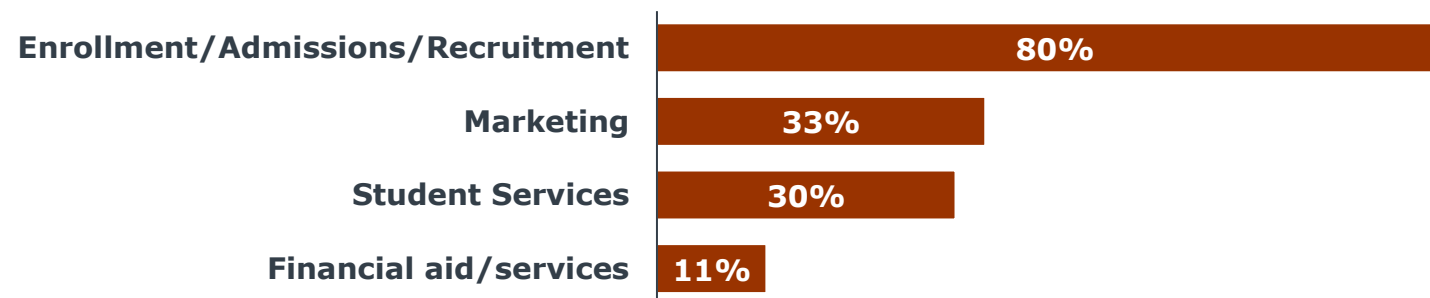


## Experience in Higher Ed

Range: 1-45 years

Average: 17 years

Unit/Function *(participants could select more than one)*



# Research Findings

Use of AI

Work Environment

Enrollment Metrics

Enrollment Forecasts

Future Landscape



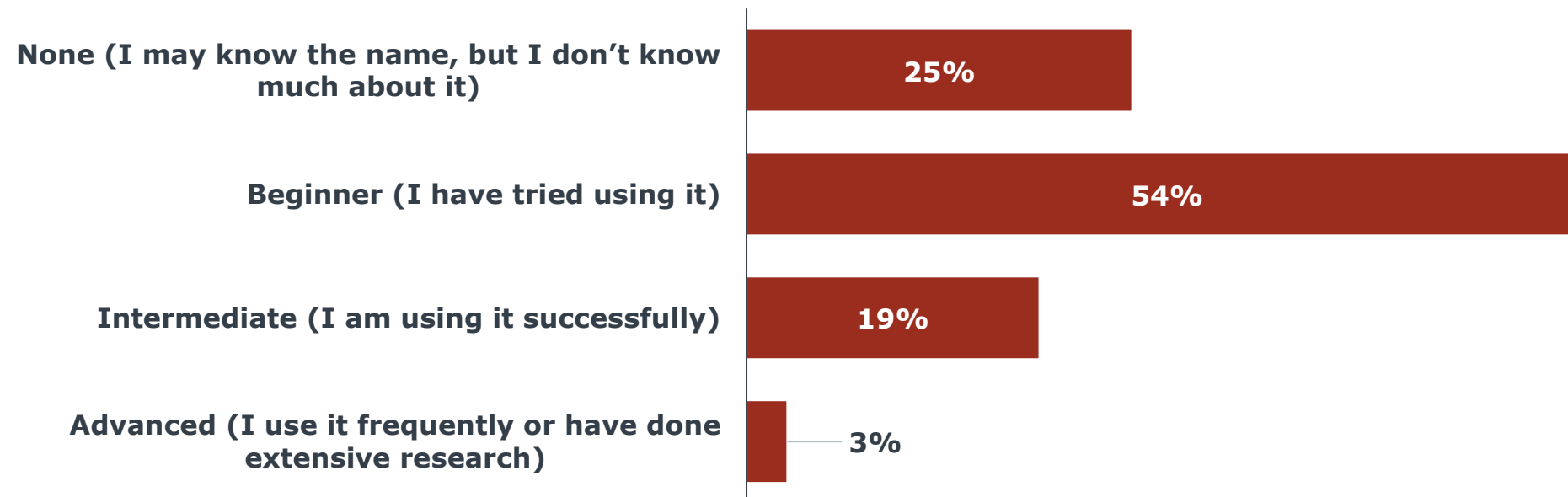
# Use of AI

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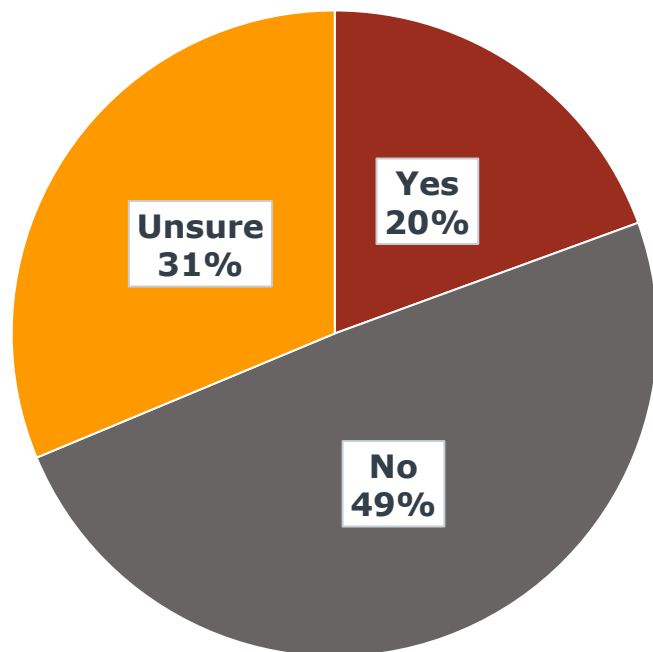
# Familiarity and Experience with AI

**Q. How would you categorize your level of familiarity with AI?**



# Institutional Use of AI

**Q. Does your institution use AI for its marketing and enrollment efforts?**



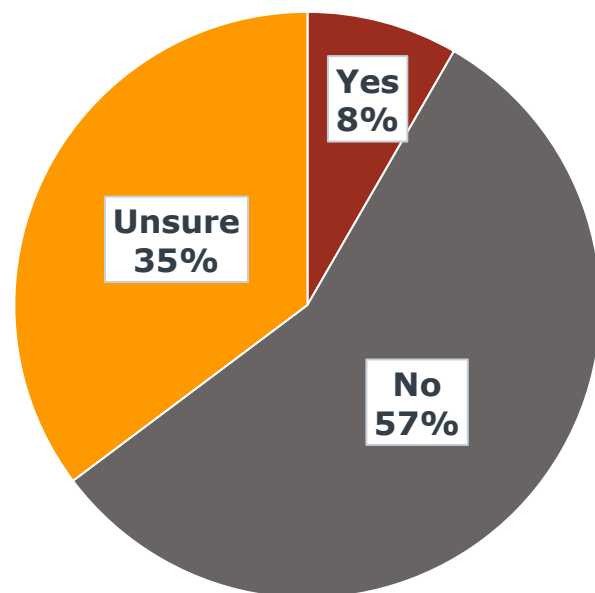
Those using AI have applied it in several ways:

- Content creation
- Copywriting
- Chatbots
- Communication plans

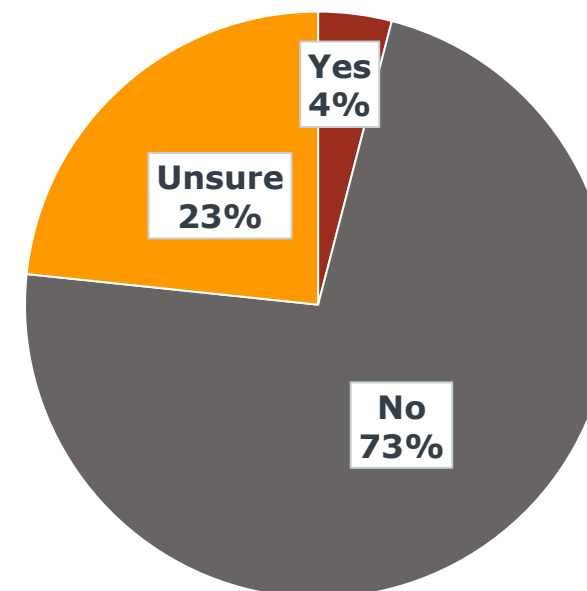


# AI Is Not a Current Priority

**Q. Has your institution made the adoption of AI tools a strategic priority?**



**Q. Does your enrollment team have a formal plan for using AI in recruitment and enrollment?**



# However, There Are Opportunities ...

Q. Which uses of AI in admissions do you find the most compelling? (Select up to three.)

	Percentage
Reducing time required to draft content	37%
Using next-generation chatbots	37%
Designing/optimizing communication flows	37%
Identifying the most promising new markets	29%
Improving our staff's ability to mine enrollment data	26%
Improving of models used to predict outcomes	20%
Automating the processing of transcript information	18%
Scaling holistic applicant review	12%
Reducing staff time required to train personnel	11%
Improving our financial aid optimization models	9%
Integrating previously siloed admissions data sets	8%
Ability to make proactive offers to students who have not applied	4%
Optimizing counselor-visit travel and scheduling	4%
Equipping admissions office staff with coding capabilities	2%

# ... And Concerns

**Q. What are your greatest fears concerning the use of AI in admissions? (Select up to three.)**

	Percentage
Cost of acquiring tools and training	36%
The character of admissions work will change in undesirable ways	33%
Exposure to legal risks	31%
Uneven playing field against institutions spending more in this area	30%
Introduction of bias in candidate assessment	27%
Admissions staff will be redundant/expendable	25%
Inadvertently sharing proprietary and/or protected information	24%
Compromising institutional brand	24%



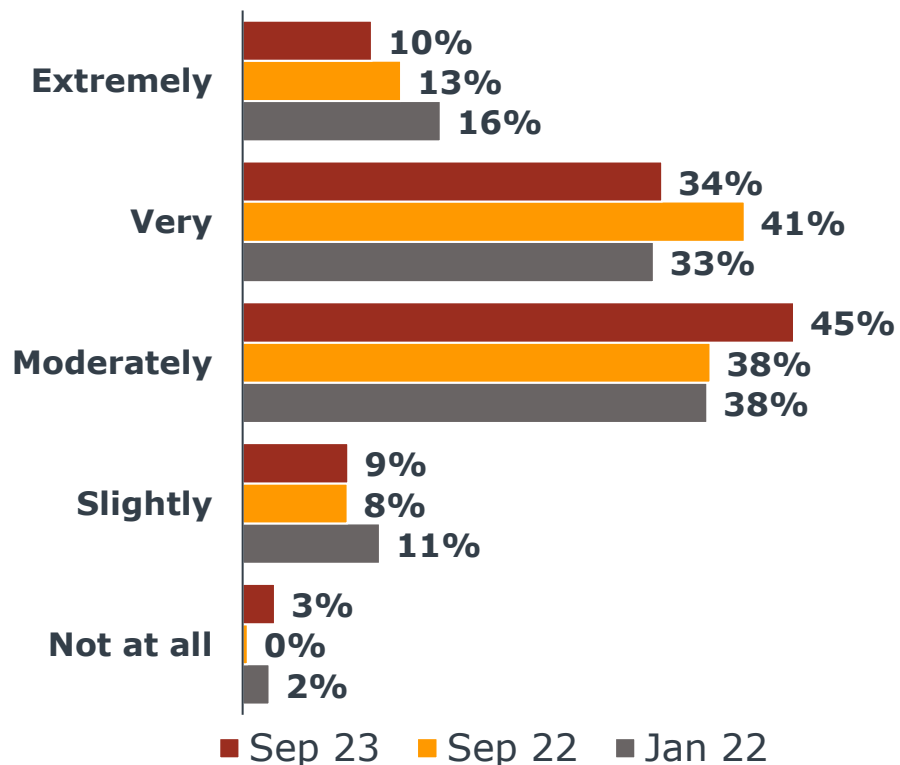
# Work Environment

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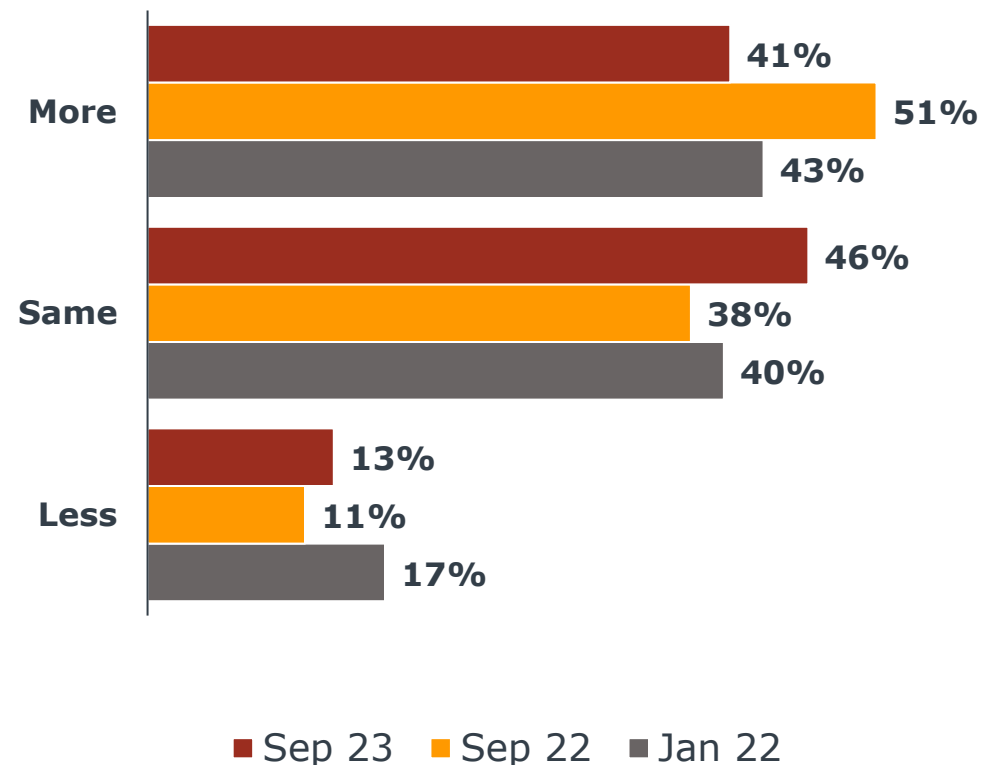


# Though Declining, Workplace Stress Remains

Q. Generally, how stressful is your work situation?



Q. How stressful is your current work situation compared with this time last year?



# Sources of Stress Remain the Same

Q. What factors are influencing the stressfulness of your current work situation? *(Select all that apply.)*

	Sep 23	Sep 22	Jan 22
Unfilled staff positions	45%	57%	60%
Heavier workload	45%	55%	60%
Unrealistic goals	43%	44%	29%
Low office morale	28%	39%	--
Mental health of colleagues, family, self	28%	19%	48%
Caring for children/family	18%	17%	18%
Conflict with/among co-workers	18%	17%	18%
Concerns about job security	16%	15%	15%
Mental health of students	16%	11%	23%
Zoom fatigue	14%	24%	52%
Lack of flexibility	13%	21%	21%
Pressure related to DEI	13%	15%	17%
Challenges due to hybrid work	13%	--	--
Physical working environment	7%	14%	19%
Remote work challenges	2%	6%	9%

**“Other” responses from 2023 survey:**

- Budget constraints
- Changes in programs/processes
- Lack of leadership
- Enrollment landscape
- Faculty inertia
- Politics on campus

# More Staff and Better Support Are Needed

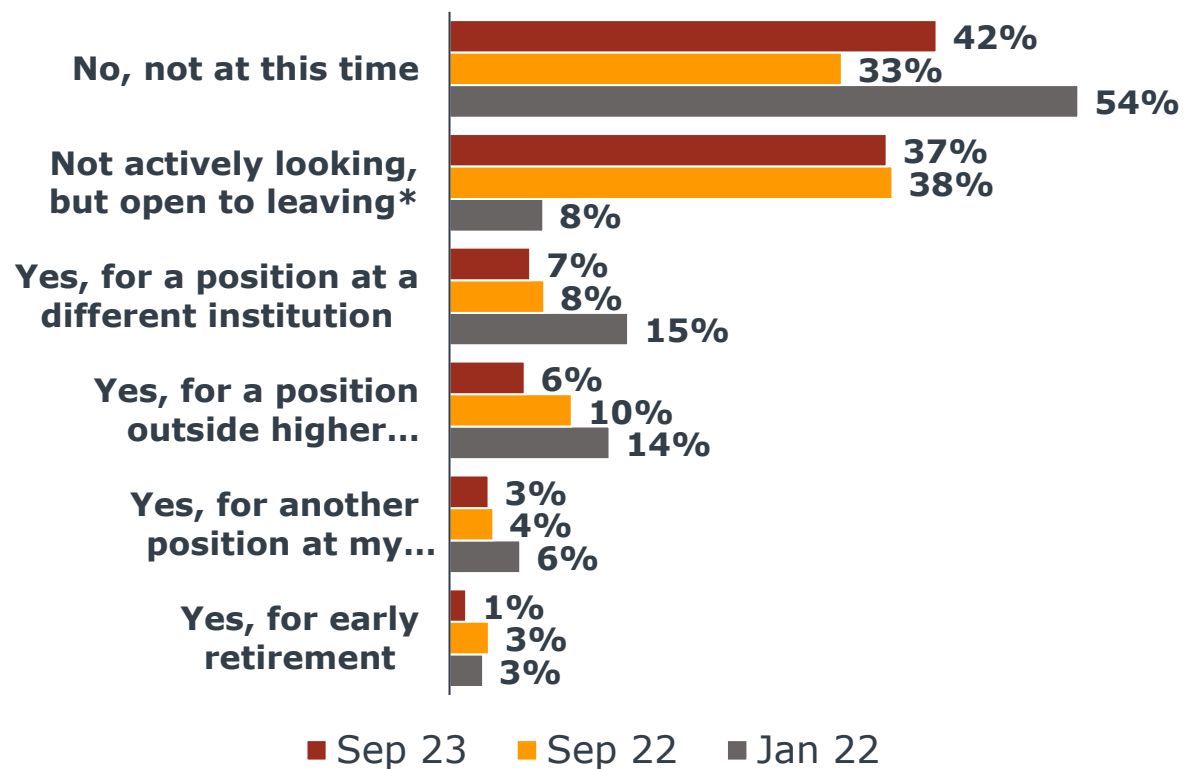
**Q. What would alleviate the stress you are feeling at work?**

	Percentage
Additional staff/filling vacant positions	39%
Better support/recognition from leadership	15%
More applications/enrollments	13%
Realistic goals	13%
More flexibility (e.g., remote, hybrid work)	12%
Better pay	11%
Better communication	9%
More resources	6%
More experienced staff	4%

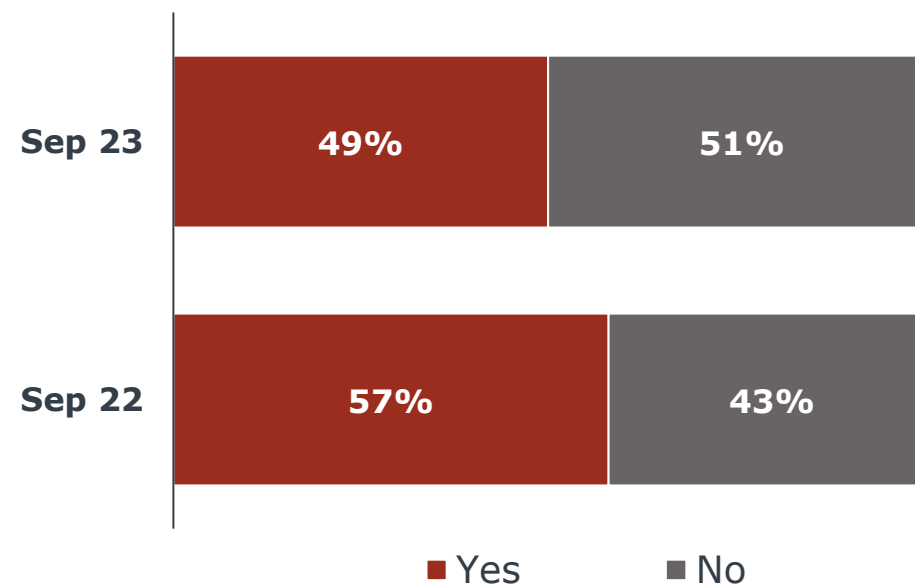


# Most Would Leave Their Current Position

Q. Are you considering leaving your current position?



Q. Are you aware of others on your team who are considering leaving their current positions?



\*Response option was added in the September 2022 survey; January 2022 percentage is based on the results of a content analysis of "other" responses.



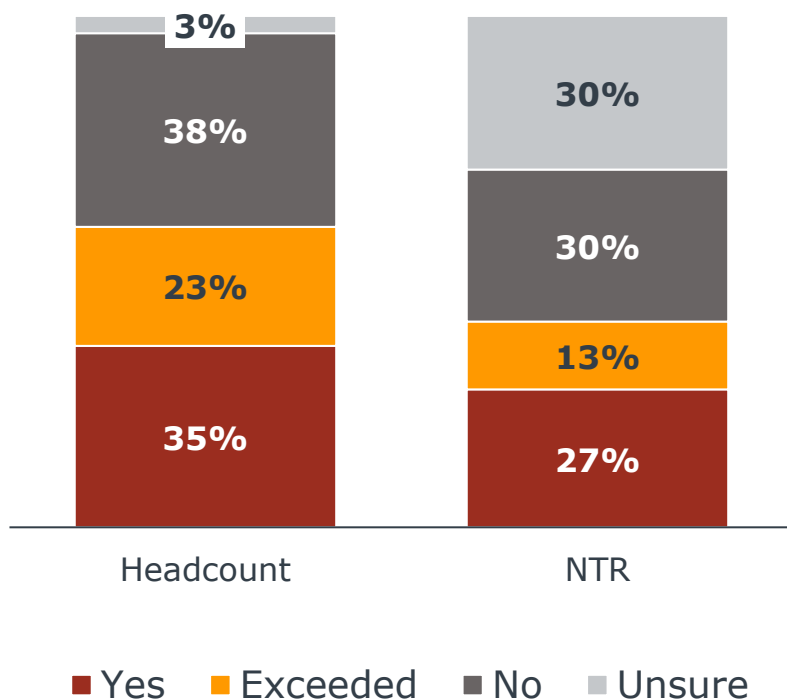
# Enrollment Metrics

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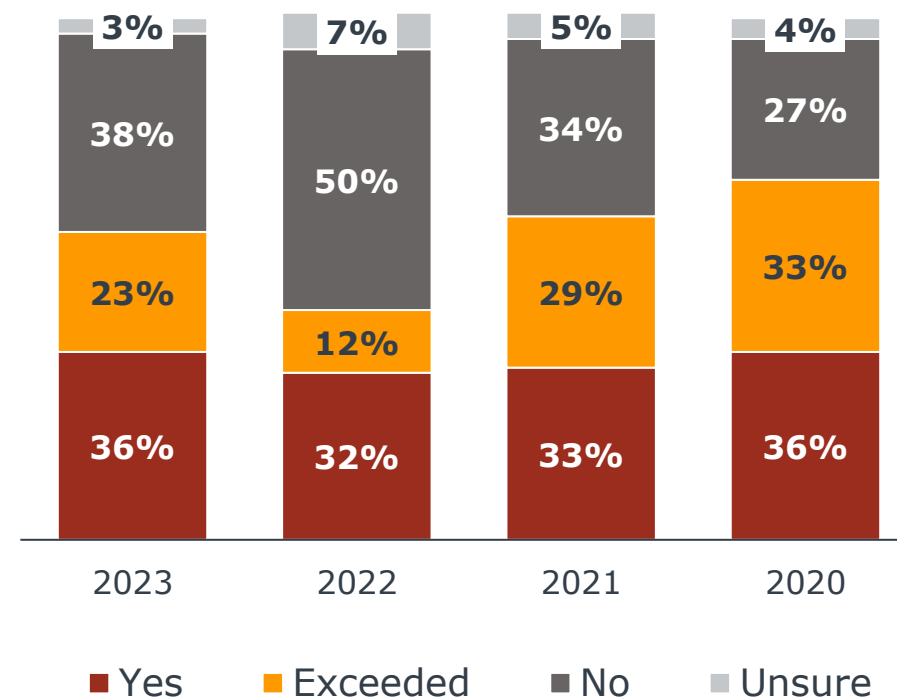


# Enrollments are Rebounding...

Q. Did you meet your 2023 enrollment goals?

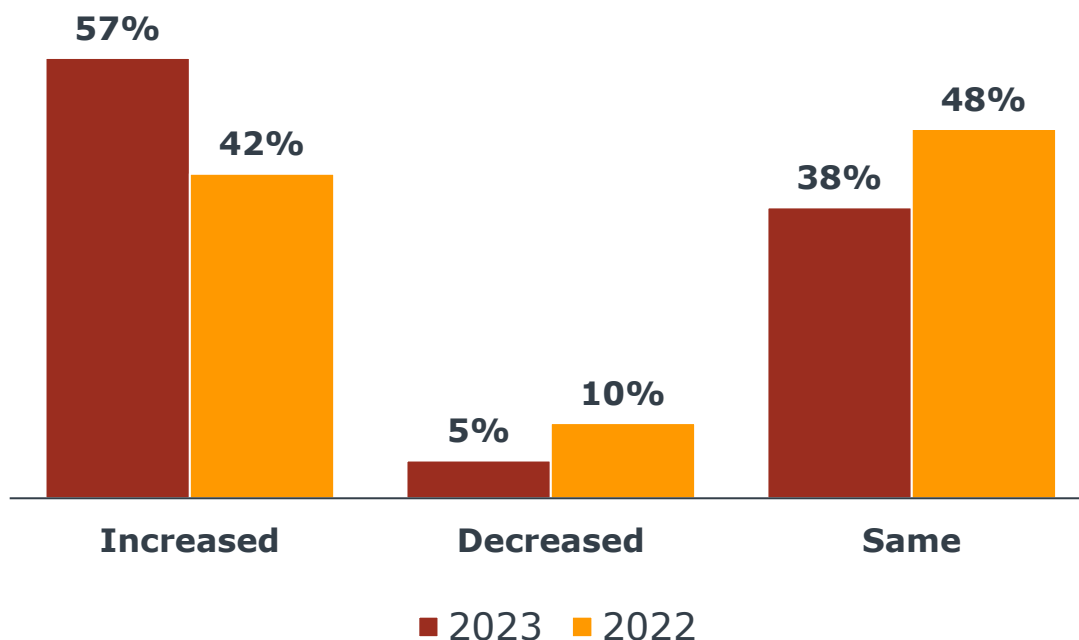


*Longitudinal Comparisons of Headcount Goals*

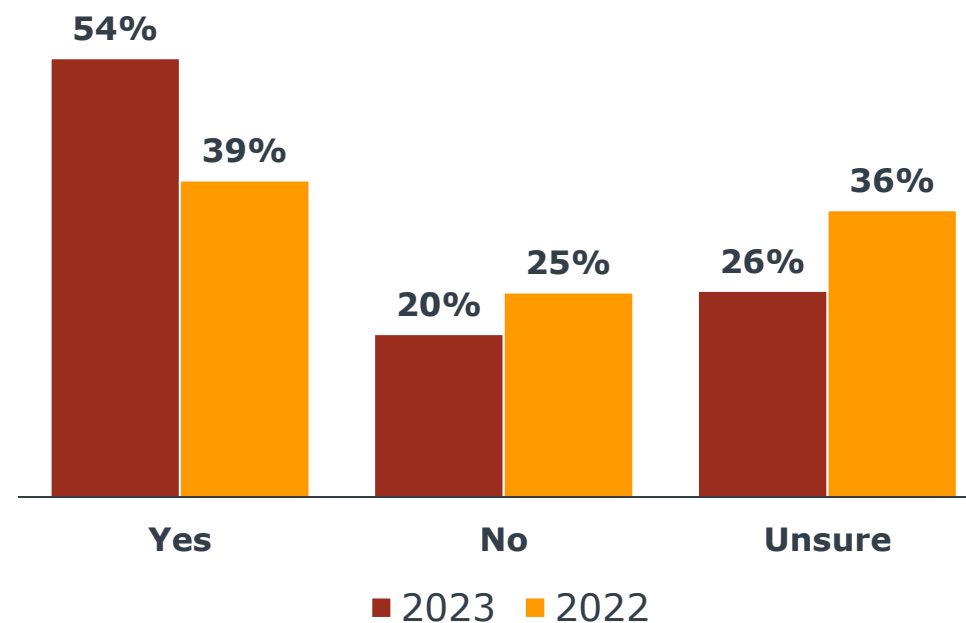


# ... And Look Promising for 2024

Q. Compared with last year, have enrollment goals for your unit increased, decreased, or remained the same?



Q. Are you on track to meet your unit's enrollment (headcount) goal for the next semester?



# Enrollment Objectives Are Evergreen

## Enrollment Priorities

*(respondents selected top 3)*

	2023	2022	2021
Higher enrollments in various programs	76%	65%	65%
More revenue/net tuition	56%	45%	48%
Greater ethnic/racial diversity	36%	51%	54%
Higher percentage of online students	17%	20%	20%
Higher percentage of international students	13%	13%	15%
More full-pay students	11%	16%	11%
Lower discount rate	9%	6%	5%
Higher percentage of out-of-state students	9%	5%	10%
Greater gender balance	8%	11%	11%
Lower percentage of international students	6%	7%	5%
Higher average test scores	3%	6%	4%
Lower percentage of online students	2%	2%	1%
Lower percentage of out-of-state students	1%	3%	1%



# Enrollment Forecasts

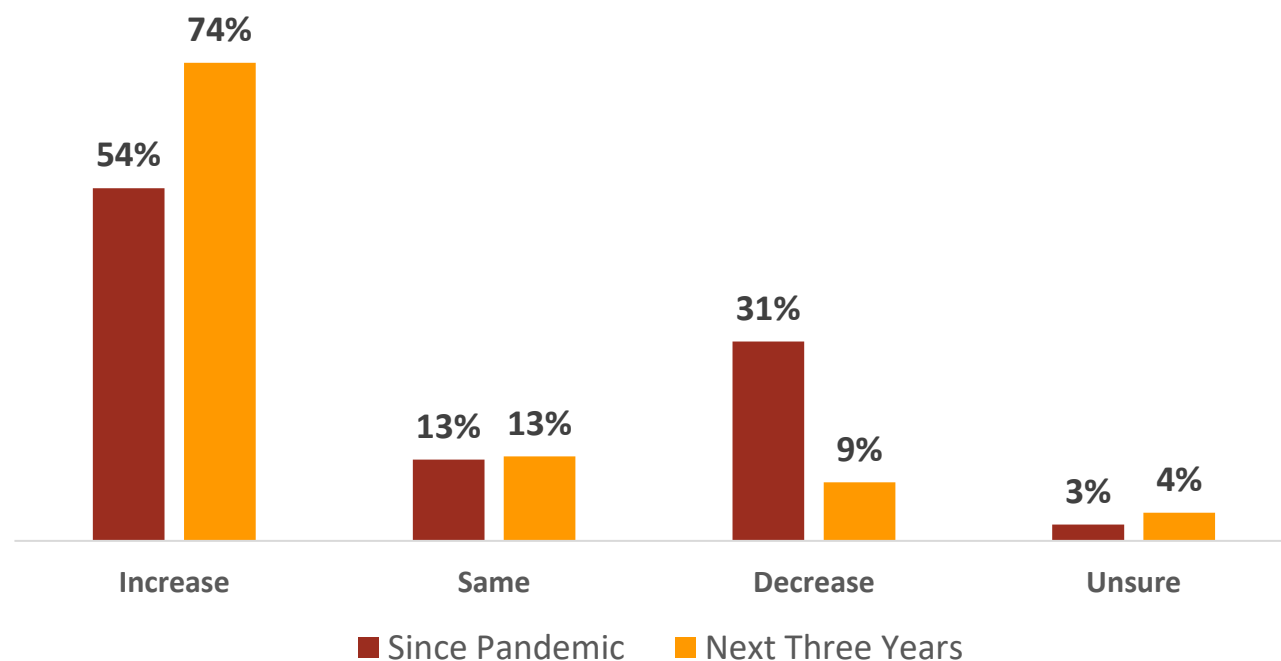
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# Positive Outlook for Enrollment

Q. How has your overall enrollment (headcount) tracked since the COVID-19 pandemic began (Spring 2020)?

Q. How do you expect total enrollment to track over the next three years?



More public institutions realized increases in headcount since the pandemic began (59% vs. 49% for privates); more private institutions experienced decreases (40% vs. 23% for publics).

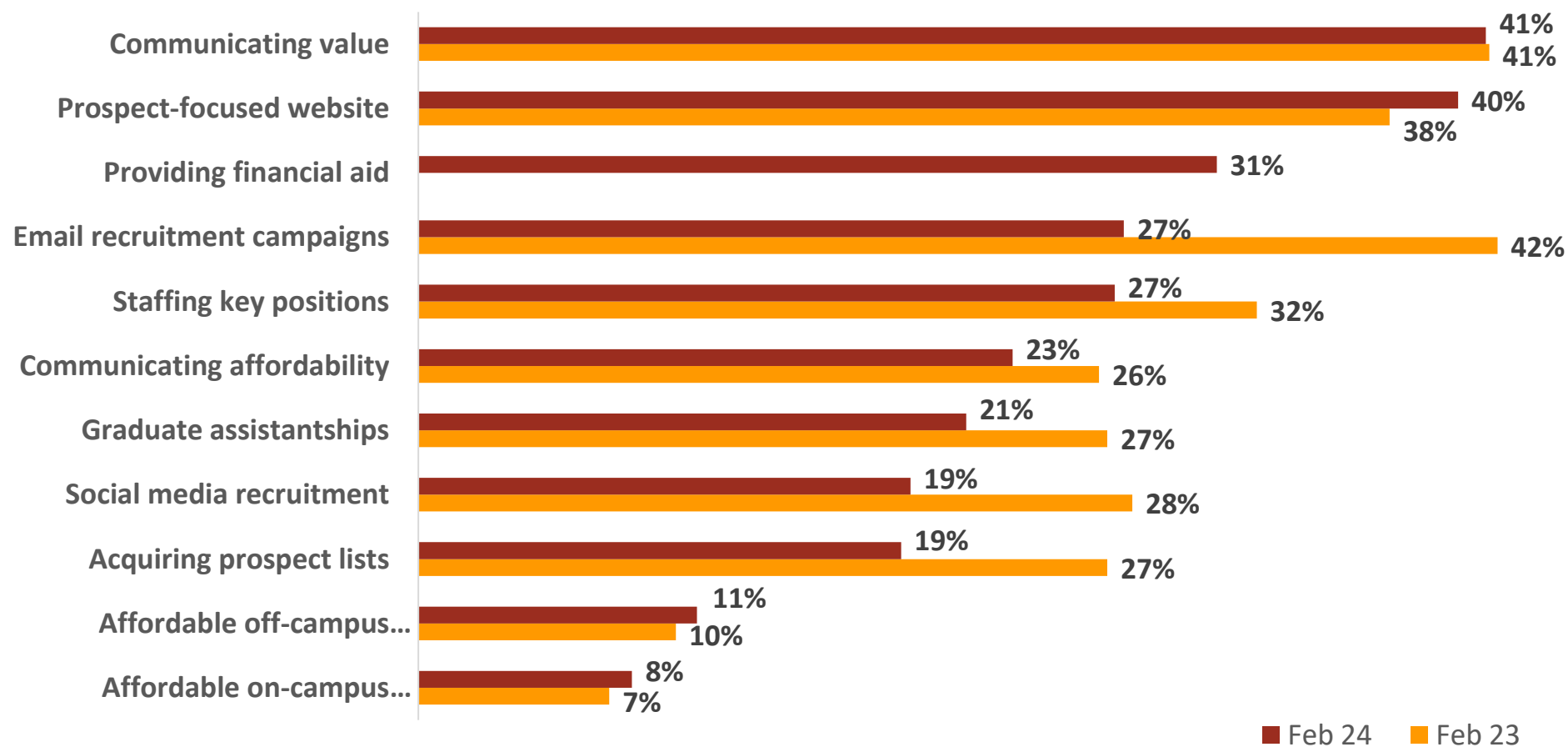
Most institutions, regardless of type, program modality, or size, expect their enrollment to increase over the next three years.



# Priorities Are Shifting

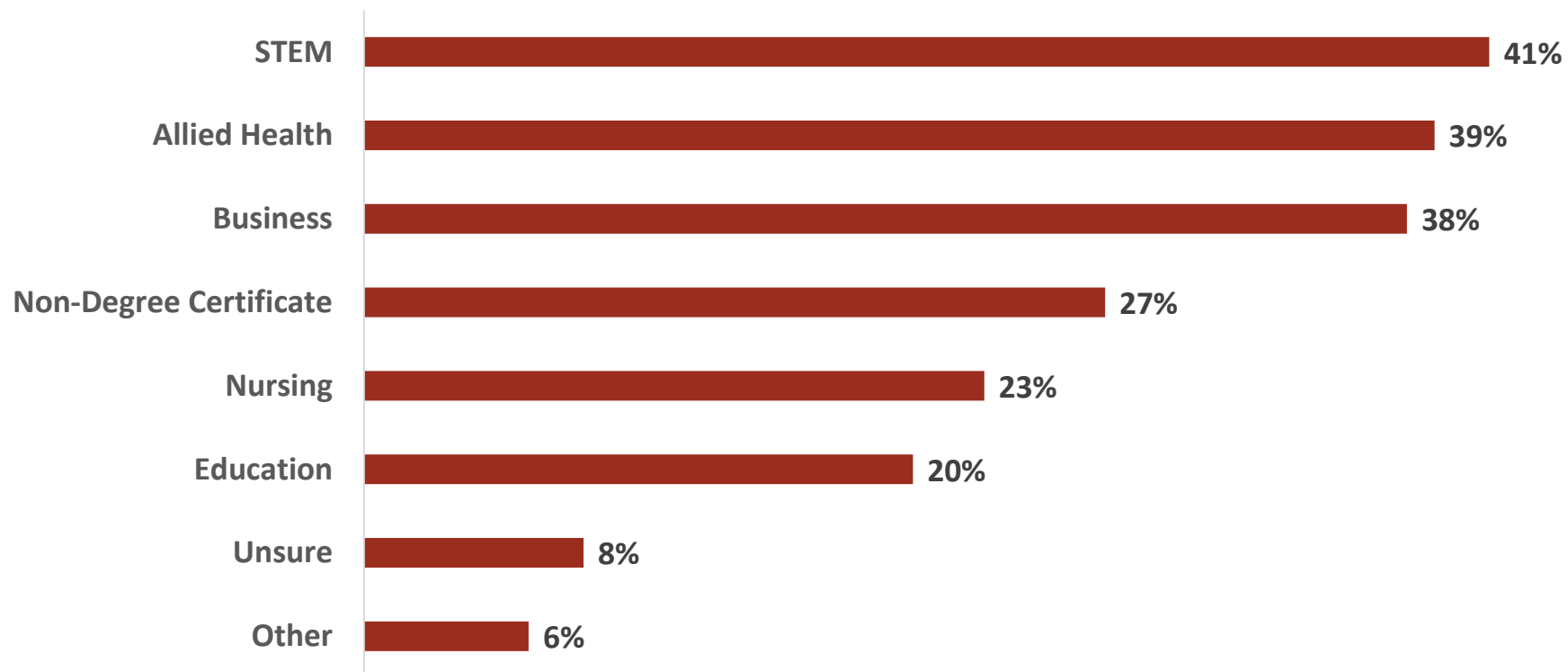
Indicate your top priorities for the next enrollment cycle.

*(Select up to three.)*



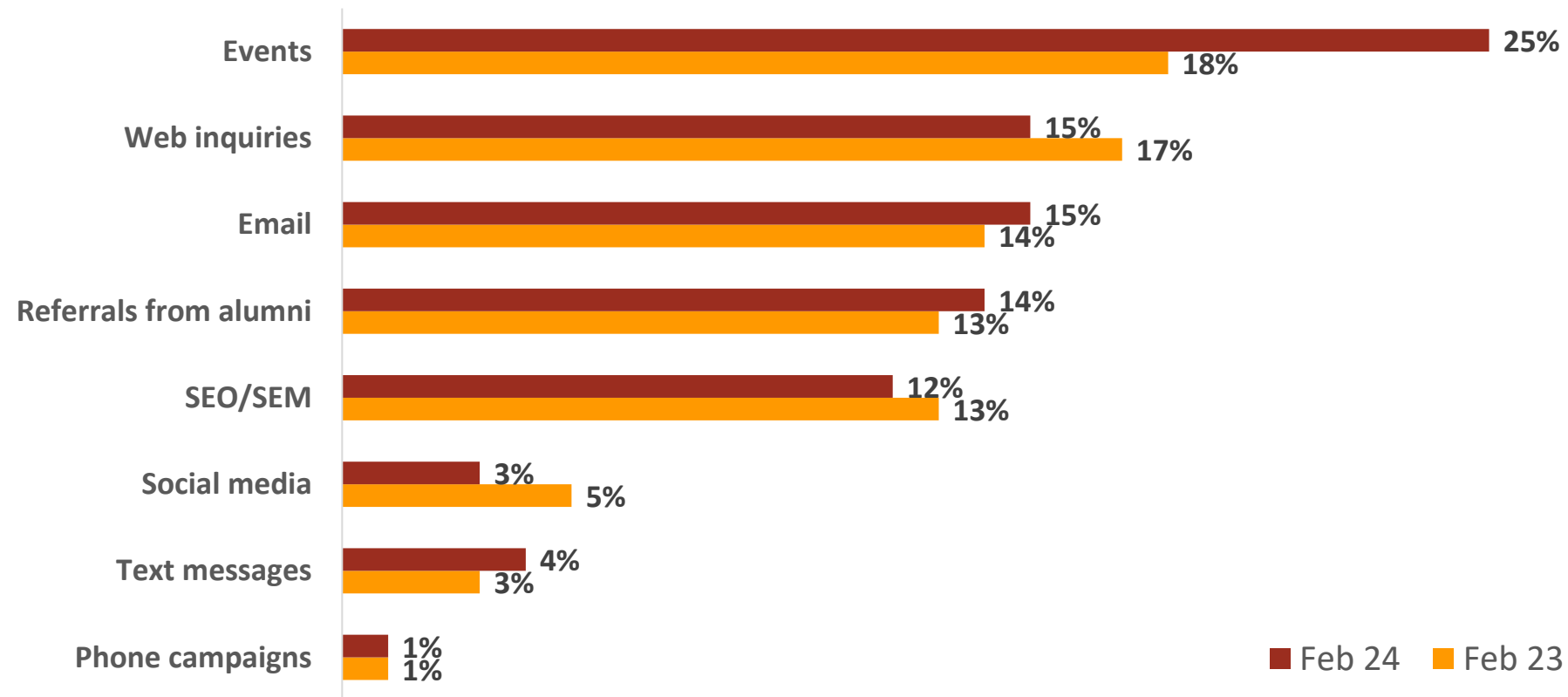
# Program Growth Potential Varies

**Q. Which of the following academic areas do you believe have the greatest potential growth at your institution?**  
*(Select up to three.)*



# Most Productive Recruitment Tools

Q. What student recruitment activity has provided the best outcome in terms of graduate/professional school enrollments?





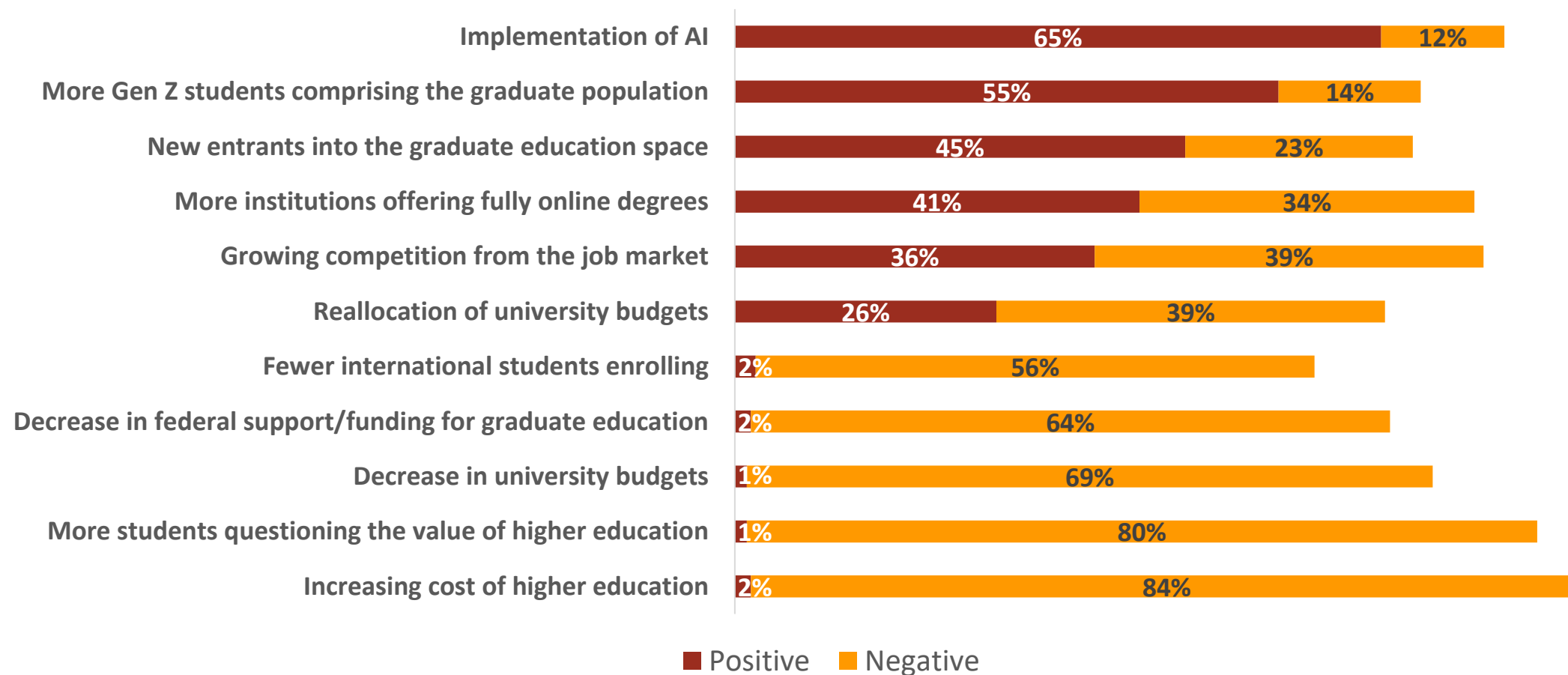
# Future Landscape

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# Trends with Impact

Q. Which of the following trends do you think will have the greatest positive or negative impact on graduate enrollment over the next 3-5 years?





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**Thank you!**