

# Annual Grants Management Survey

Results and Analysis

FEBRUARY, 2019



Reliable. Effective. Innovative.



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# REI Systems, GWU, NGMA



- **The National Grants Management Association** provides tools and resources for grants professionals to support and maintain high levels of grants management competency and to establish standards of excellence for grants managers. Visit [ngma.org](http://ngma.org)
- **The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration** is a focal point for public affairs education, research, and public service at the George Washington University. Visit [tspppa.gwu.edu](http://tspppa.gwu.edu)
- **REI Systems** provides grant management solutions, analysis and advice. We digitize government to produce healthier citizens, safer communities, and better lives. Visit [reisystems.com](http://reisystems.com)

# Introduction and methodology

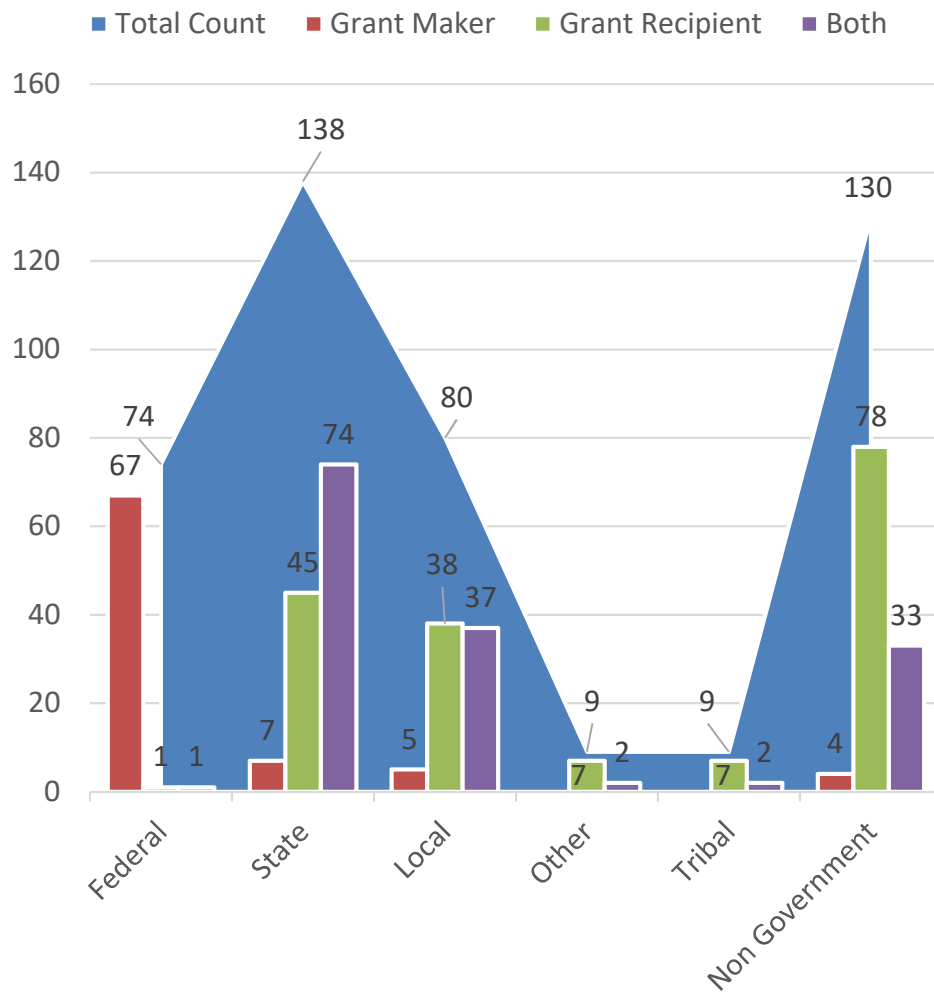


- **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the grants management survey and analysis is to inform the grants community of cross-cutting issues and trends so as to help improve grants management, and to support advocates for better grant management
- **SURVEY DESIGN:** GWU, REI, and NGMA developed a survey of grant managers in 2016 to help identify key practices, major challenges, and related topics that could help inform the grants management community. Few revisions were made to the survey for 2017 and 2018, so as to maximize the opportunity to evaluate the trend of responses over time
- **SURVEY ADMINISTRATION:**
  - During November 2018, we invited more than 5,000 professionals in grant management and related fields to take the survey online. Others (OMB, Grants.gov) also distributed the survey on our behalf
  - Those invited to respond included NGMA members, attendees of Grants Management Breakfast Forum events, and other grants professionals that REI and GWU have been able to identify. Those receiving the survey were encouraged to forward it to colleagues
  - Responses were anonymous

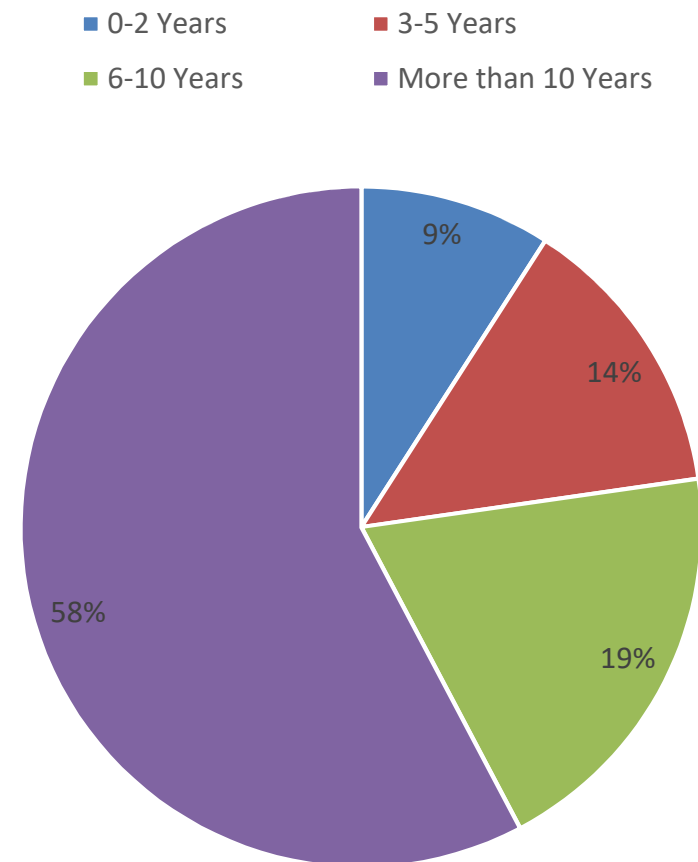
# Respondents included a mix of federal, state/local and non-governmental grant managers



## 440 Responses



## Years of Experience

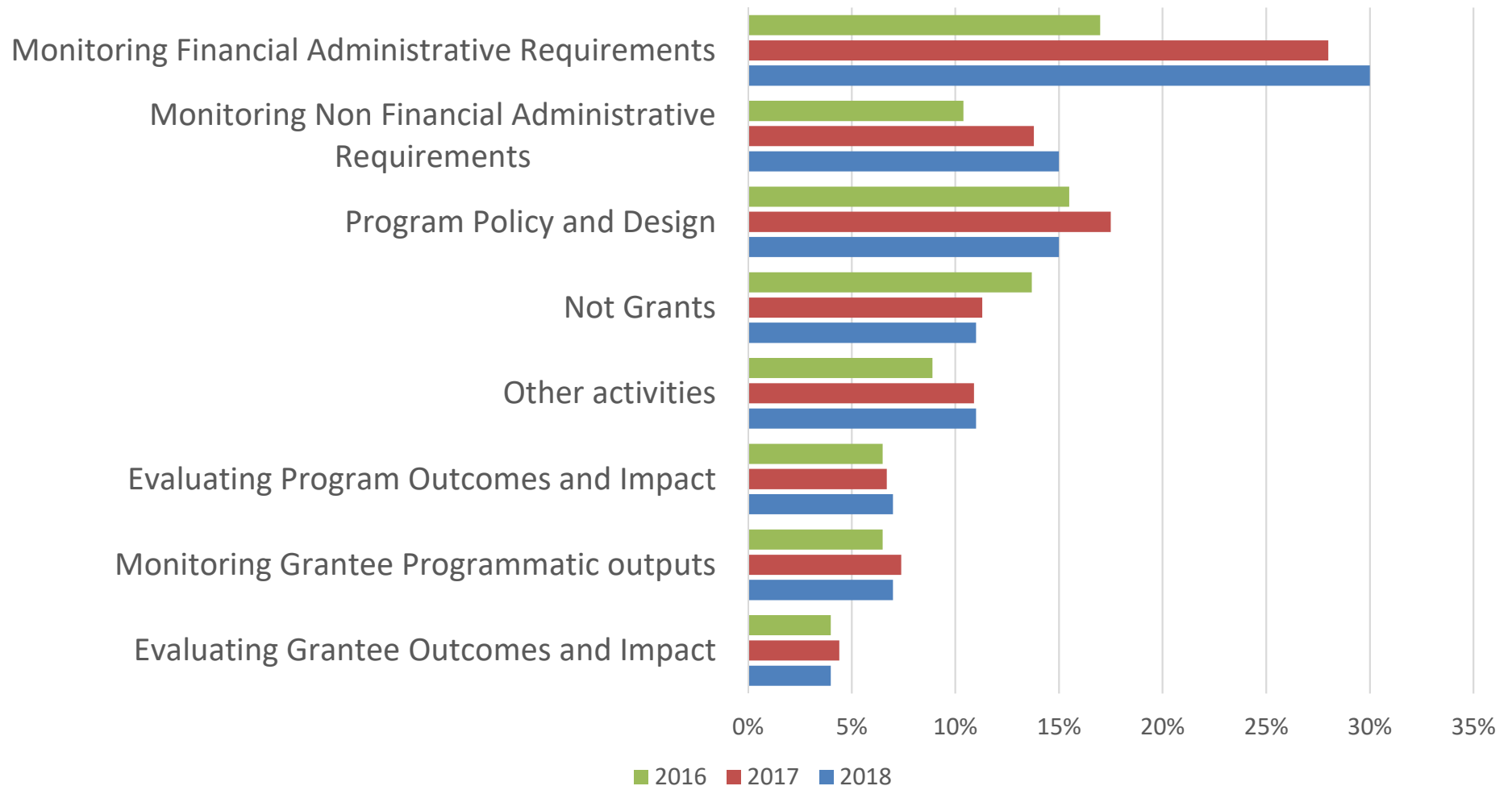


A modern office interior with a large glass skylight, white armchairs, and a reception desk with a 'REI SYSTEMS' sign.

# How grant managers spend their time

# Grant managers continue to spend the most time monitoring compliance

.. But less time helping improve performance



# Performance and grantee burden



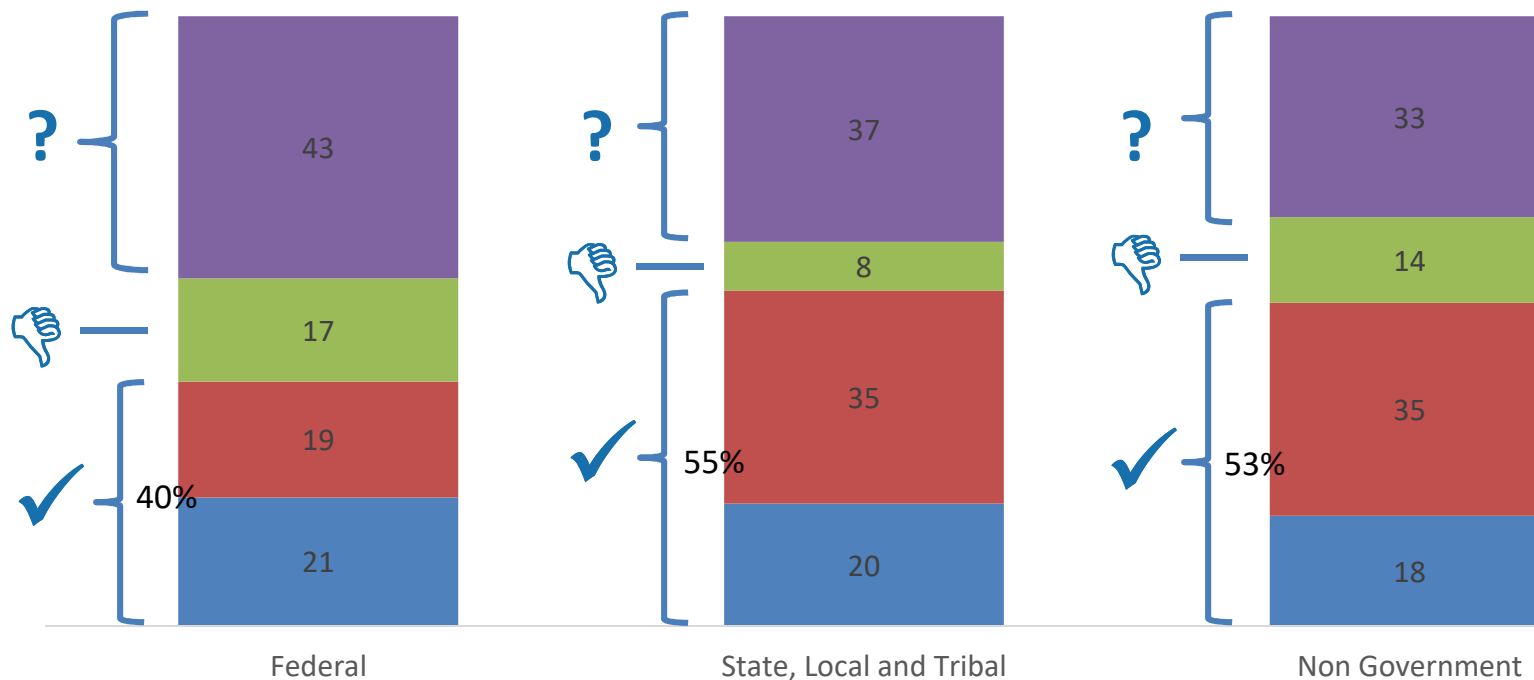
# Most S&Ls say performance improved. More Feds can't measure or don't know



Non-governmental entities fall in between

## Outcomes Improved over the last 12 months

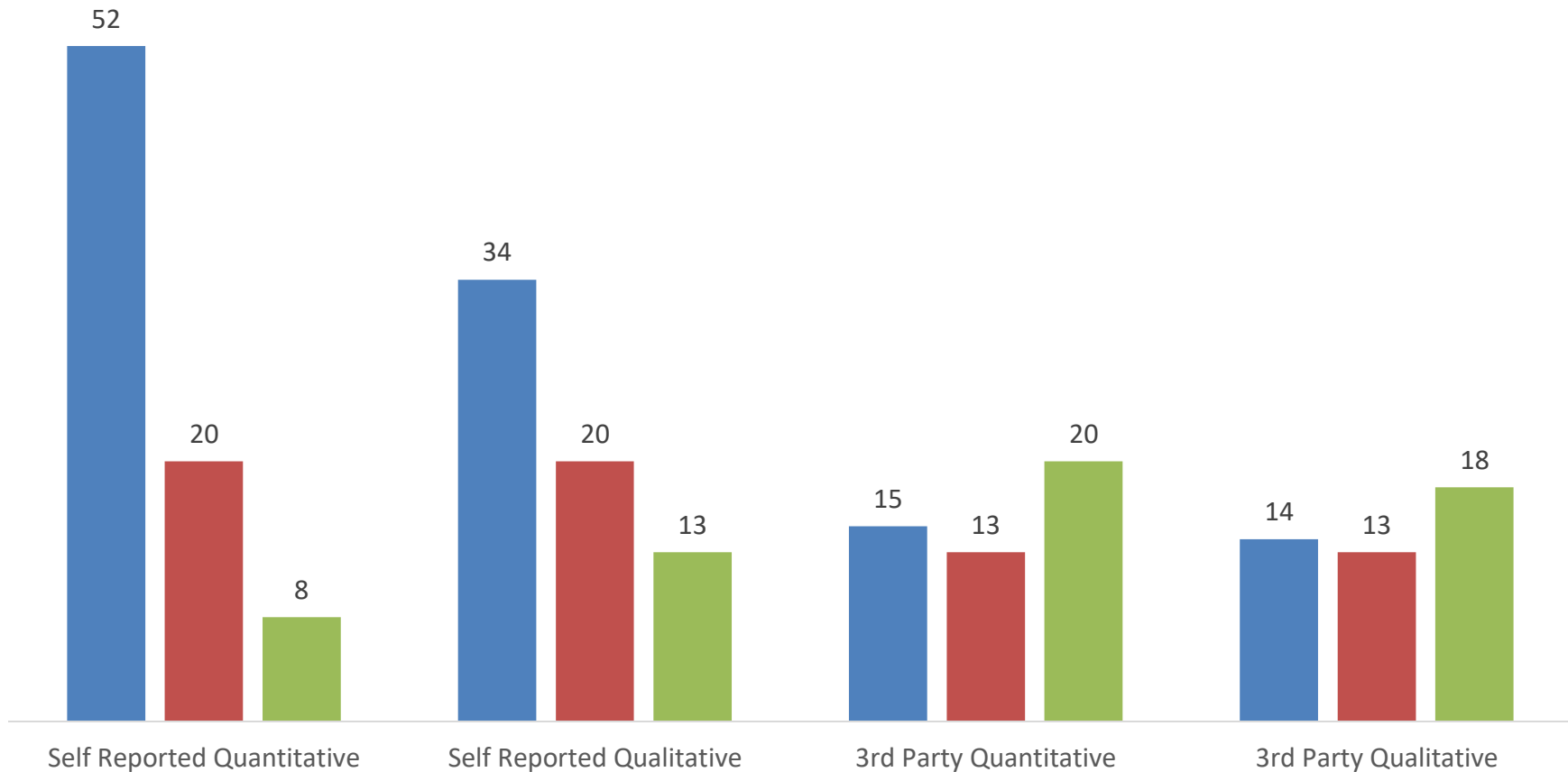
■ Yes < 5% ■ Yes > 5% ■ No ■ Don't Know



# Self reported quarterly data is the most common data collection mechanism



■ Quarterly ■ Annual ■ Episodic



# Financial Data collected is the most timely, useful and reliable



■ Timely ■ Useful ■ Reliable



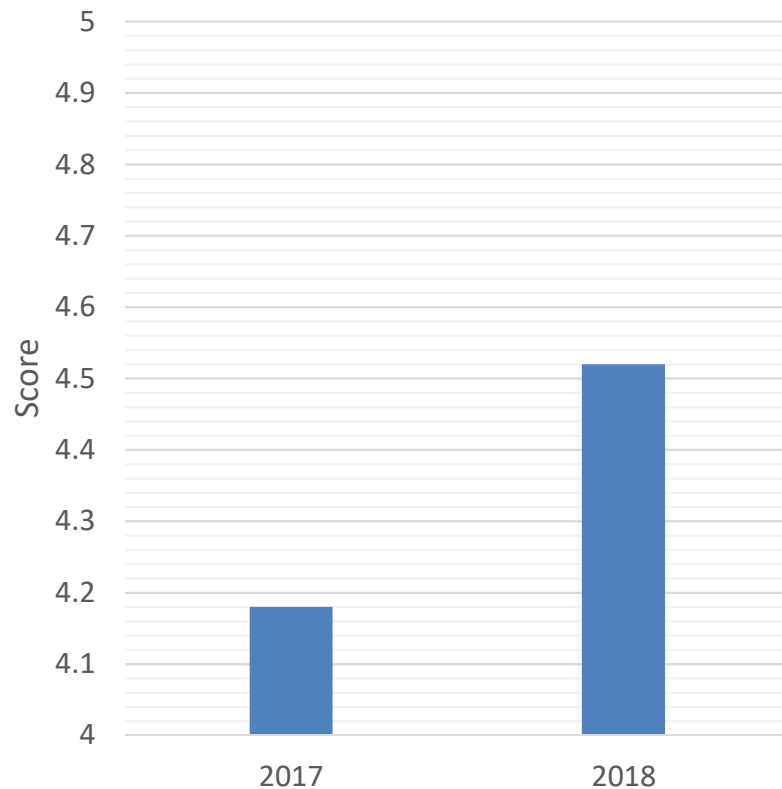
A modern office interior with a large glass skylight, white armchairs, and a reception desk with the REI SYSTEMS logo.

**Strongly supported issues – and those that are not...**

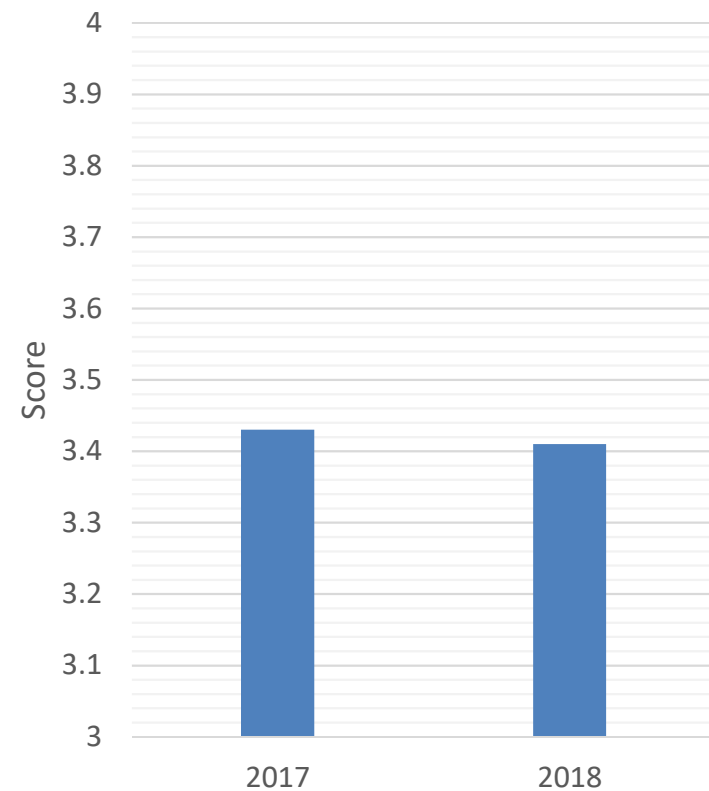
Of all survey topics,  
Respondents feel strongly about:



### STATES AND FEDS SHOULD SHARE DATA AND AUTOMATE INTERACTIONS MORE



### CURRENTLY USE A RISK-BASED STRATEGY TO MONITOR GRANTEES

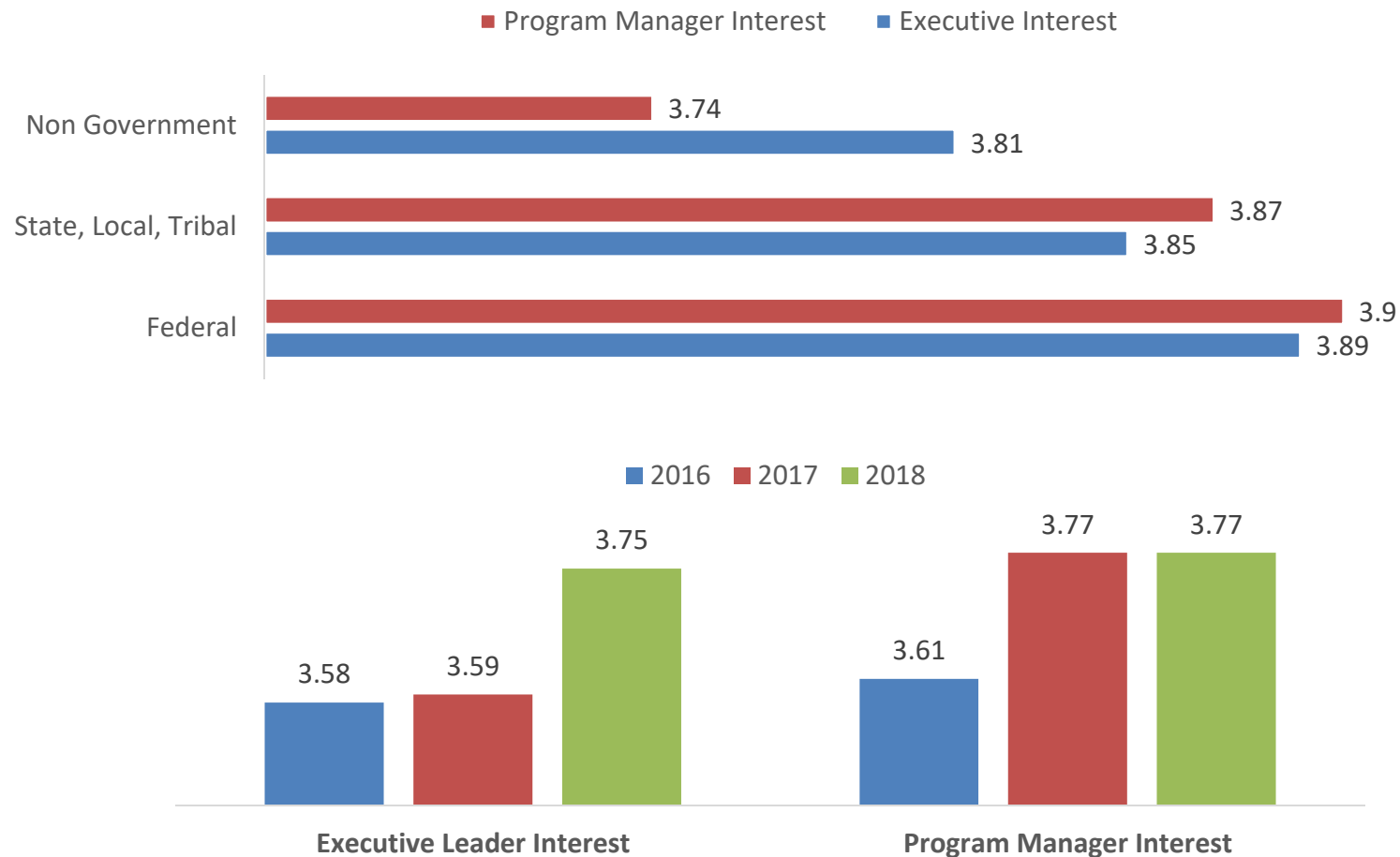


# Leadership is interested in data and analytics



Interest in data and analytics is higher across sectors and over time

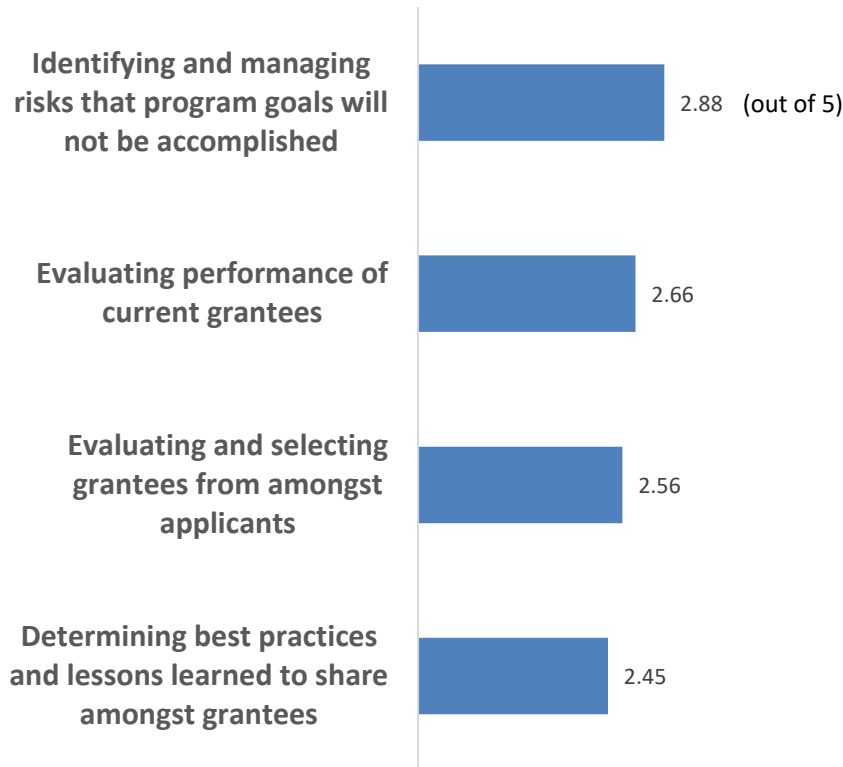
## Scores



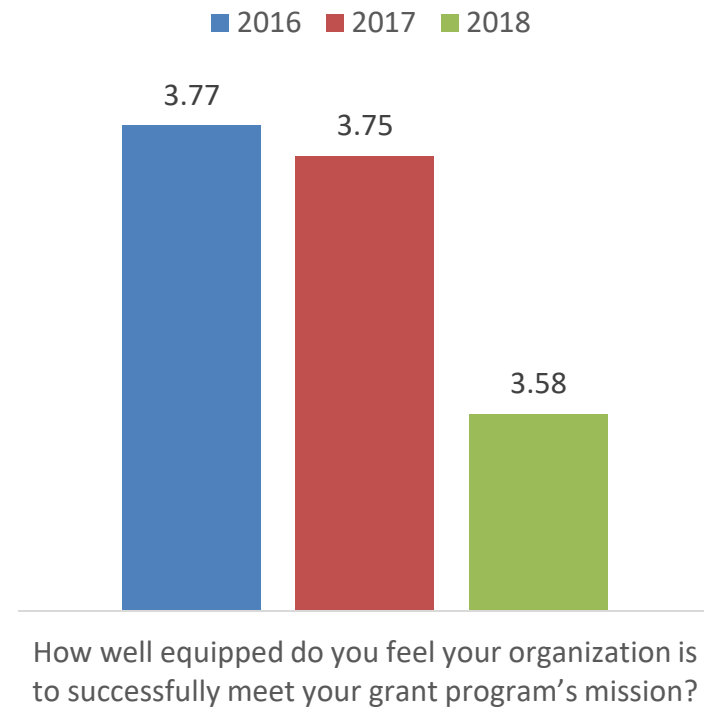
# Respondents also seek improvement



## DISSATISFIED WITH DATA AND ANALYTIC SKILLS AVAILABLE FOR...



## CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO MEET GRANT PROGRAM MISSION IS HIGH, BUT HAS SLIPPED A LITTLE



# Feedback mechanisms for grant making and reporting count on mandatory reports rely on the annual reporting process



- 79% of respondents rely mostly on the annual reporting process for feedback from grantees (score: 4.1/5)
- 60% rely heavily on ad-hoc email exchanges (score: 3.6/5)
- 35% of respondents rely on regular calls or site visits (score: 3/5)



# Grant Reporting automation still has some ways to go



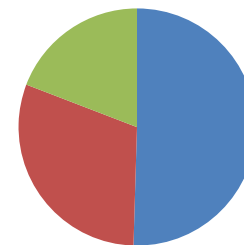
- 74% of respondents said grantees still email in some or all grants documents for reporting
- 32% have a centralized system, while 39% have a program specific system to report into
- 29% said that a lot of data re-entry (more than 50%) is needed into the Agency database(s)

# Satisfaction with Grants Systems is low



- Moderate satisfaction with **Access to Technology** (score:3.1/5) and **Usage of Technology** (score: 2.9/5)
- Most dissatisfaction is with the ability of grantees (score: 1.94/5) and sub-grantees (score: 1.38/5) to cover the **costs of the software** needed to report into the Federal grants management system.

— Breakout of score by Respondent type:



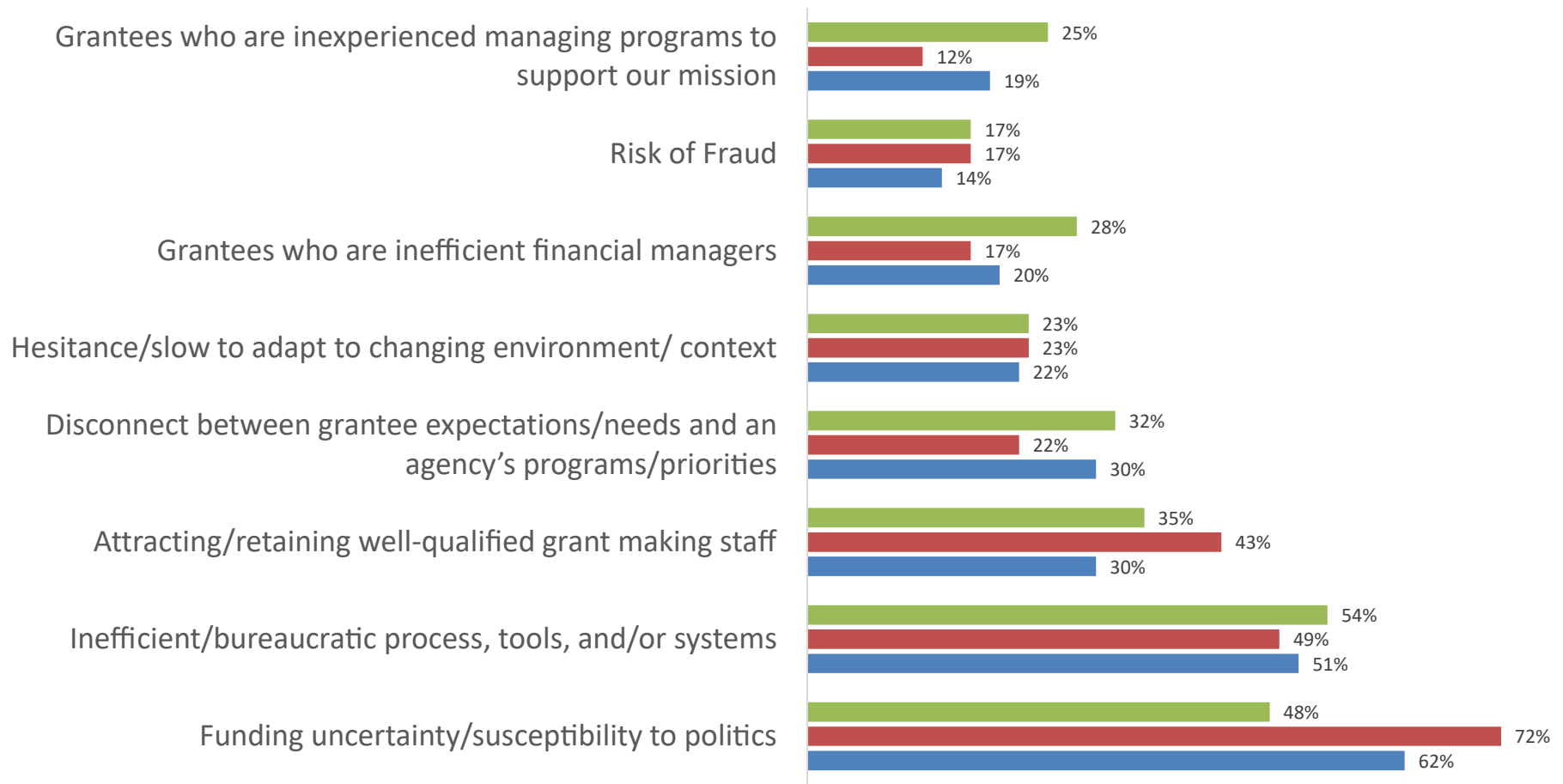
■ State and Local ■ Non Government ■ Federal

# Significant challenges and success factors

# Challenges are still daunting, but the uncertainty of 2017 has calmed a bit



■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018



# Qualified staff, tech assistance, and performance oversight are key to success



■ 2018 ■ 2017 ■ 2016



A modern office interior featuring a large, multi-paned glass skylight that allows natural light to fill the space. The room is furnished with several white, contemporary armchairs arranged in a lounge area. In the background, a reception desk is visible, with a sign that reads "REI SYSTEMS". The overall aesthetic is clean, bright, and professional.

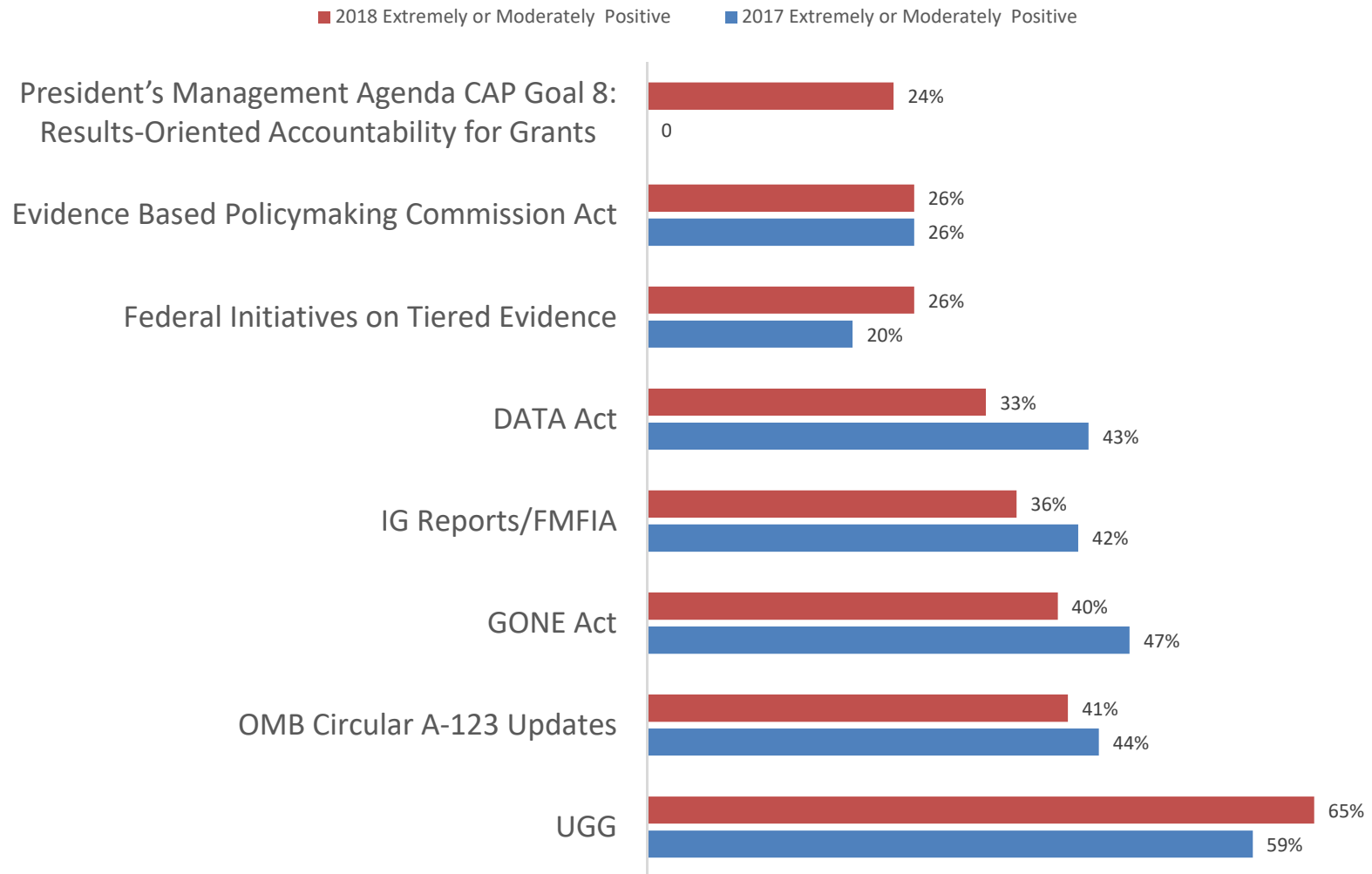
# Key Takeaways

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- Grant managers spend more time monitoring compliance than any other activity, and this increased in 2018
- 43% of federal respondents can't measure performance, or don't know if performance improved in 2018 (over 50% of state, local & NGO respondents say performance improved)
- Grant managers want data sharing/automated Fed-state interactions more than any other priority
- Grant managers aren't happy with access to technology, and costs of software needed to report to the Fed gov't

# Grants directives are well-received, though CAP Goal 8 is not yet mature







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