

# The Current State of Grants Management: Challenges, Changes, & Opportunities

Annual Grants Management Survey Results

Trachtenberg School  
of Public Policy  
& Public Administration  
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**REI** SYSTEMS

**NGMA**  
National Grants Management Association

**March 26, 2025**

**Presented by:**

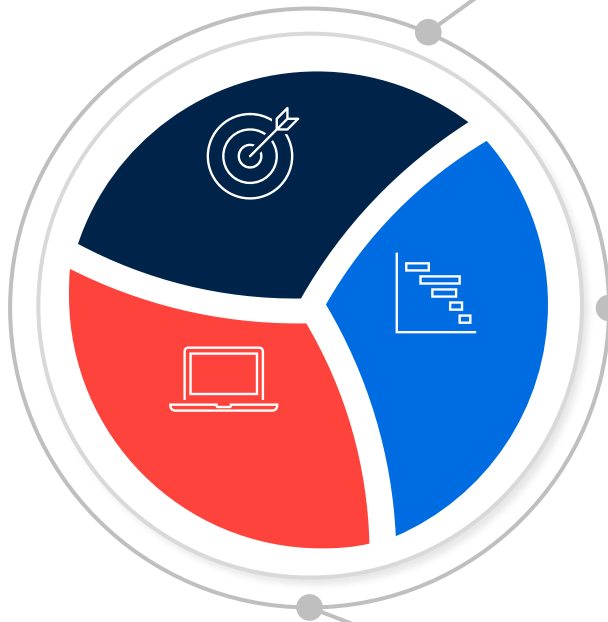
Heather Morgan

Jeff Myers

# Agenda

- Introduction
- About the Survey
- Key Take Aways
- **Panel:** Current State of Grants Management
- Closing Remarks

# Annual Grants Management Survey



## Purpose

Inform the grants community of crosscutting issues and trends to **help improve** grants management and to **support advocates** for better grants management.

## Survey Design

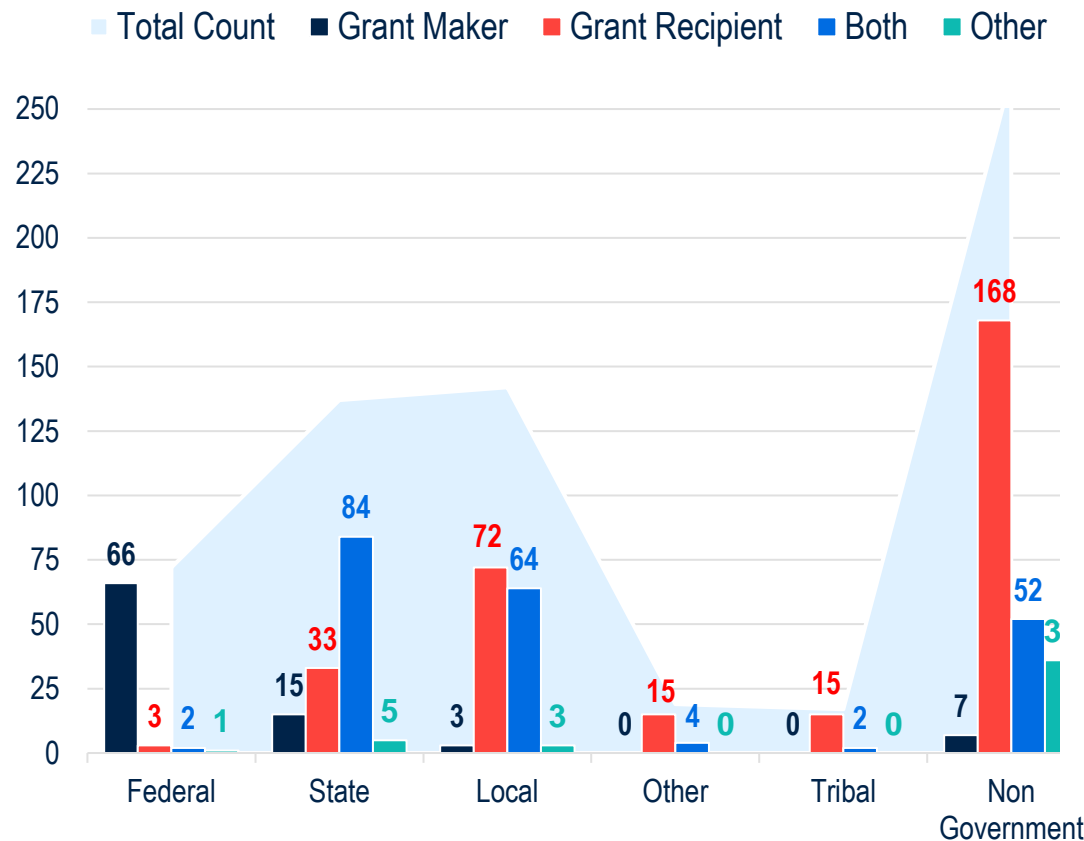
Collect both quantitative and qualitative data to identify key practices, major challenges, and related topics that could help inform the grants management community. Implement minor revisions annually to adjust to the changing environment. Maximize the opportunity to evaluate the trend of responses over time.

## Survey Administration

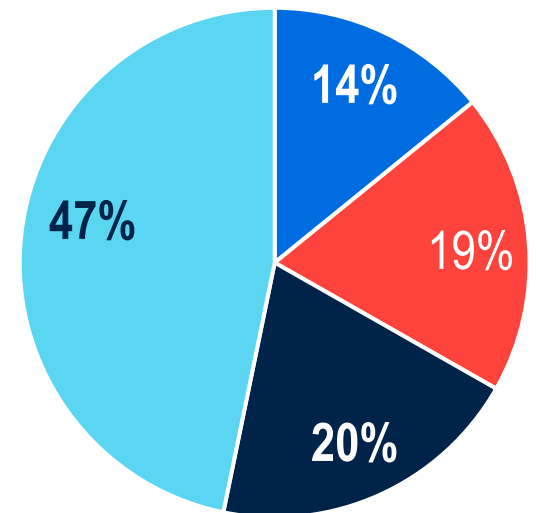
More than 15,000 professionals in grants management and related fields were invited to take the survey online.

# Respondents Included a Mix of Federal, State, Local, and Nonprofit Grants Managers

## 650 Responses



## Years of Experience



# Key Takeaways from Our Analysis

1

**Desire to improve efficiency through automation, modern technology, and streamlined processes**

2

**Artificial Intelligence starting to gain traction in Grants Management**

3

**Agencies continue to struggle with effectively measuring performance outcomes**

4

**2024 2 CFR 200 Updates bring positive changes while introducing several challenges**

5

**Retaining well-qualified staff continues to be a top priority**

6

**Accessible, comprehensive grants management training highly desired**



A background graphic featuring a network of white icons representing people, connected by thin white lines. The icons are arranged in a complex, interconnected web. The background is a dark blue gradient with large, overlapping circular shapes in lighter shades of blue. The text "Panel Discussion" is centered in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Panel Discussion

# Meet the Panel



## **Facilitator – REI Systems**

Jeff Myers, Sr. Director



## **National Grants Management Association (NGMA)**

Scott Sheffler, President



## **State of Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget**

Lori A. Beeler, Director, Grant Accountability & Transparency Unit



## **DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG)**

Jennifer Porter, Director, Executive Office of the Mayor



Jessica Harris, Administrative Officer



## **Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)**

Amy Harris, Director, Federal Fiscal Policy and Grants Management



Alyssa Ibanez, Program Supervisor

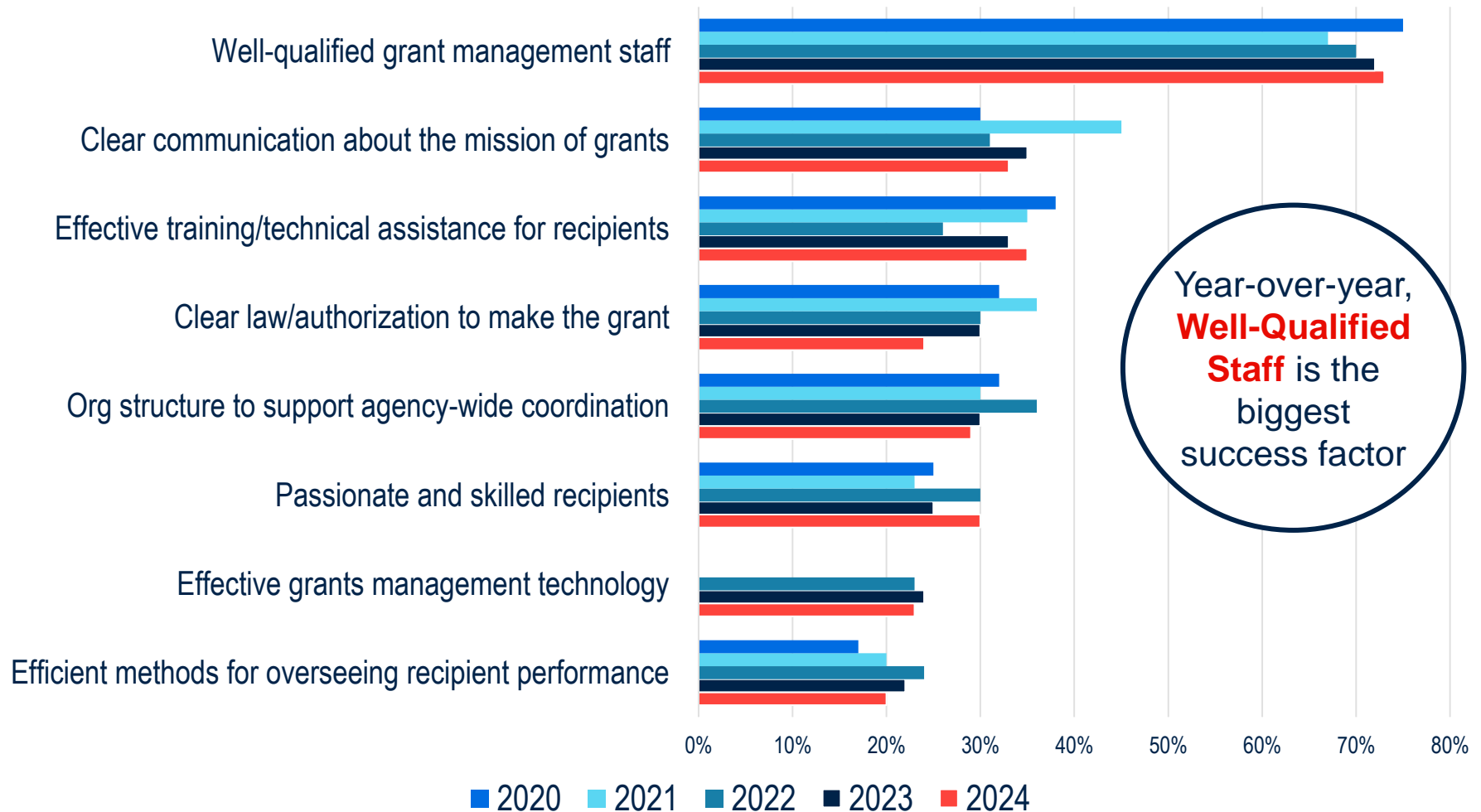
# Topic 1: Impact of Potential Cuts to Grant Programs

- What will you do if federal grant funding for your agency/programs is cut – say by 30%?
- What would the end of a major federal agency mean for your agency/program? (Please assume federal funding continues, but that the federal agency is eliminated) Are you doing any contingency planning?
- How can agencies apply more flexibility to how they are using their funding?
- In looking at the top successes and challenges from 2024, what impact will this current environment have to those?



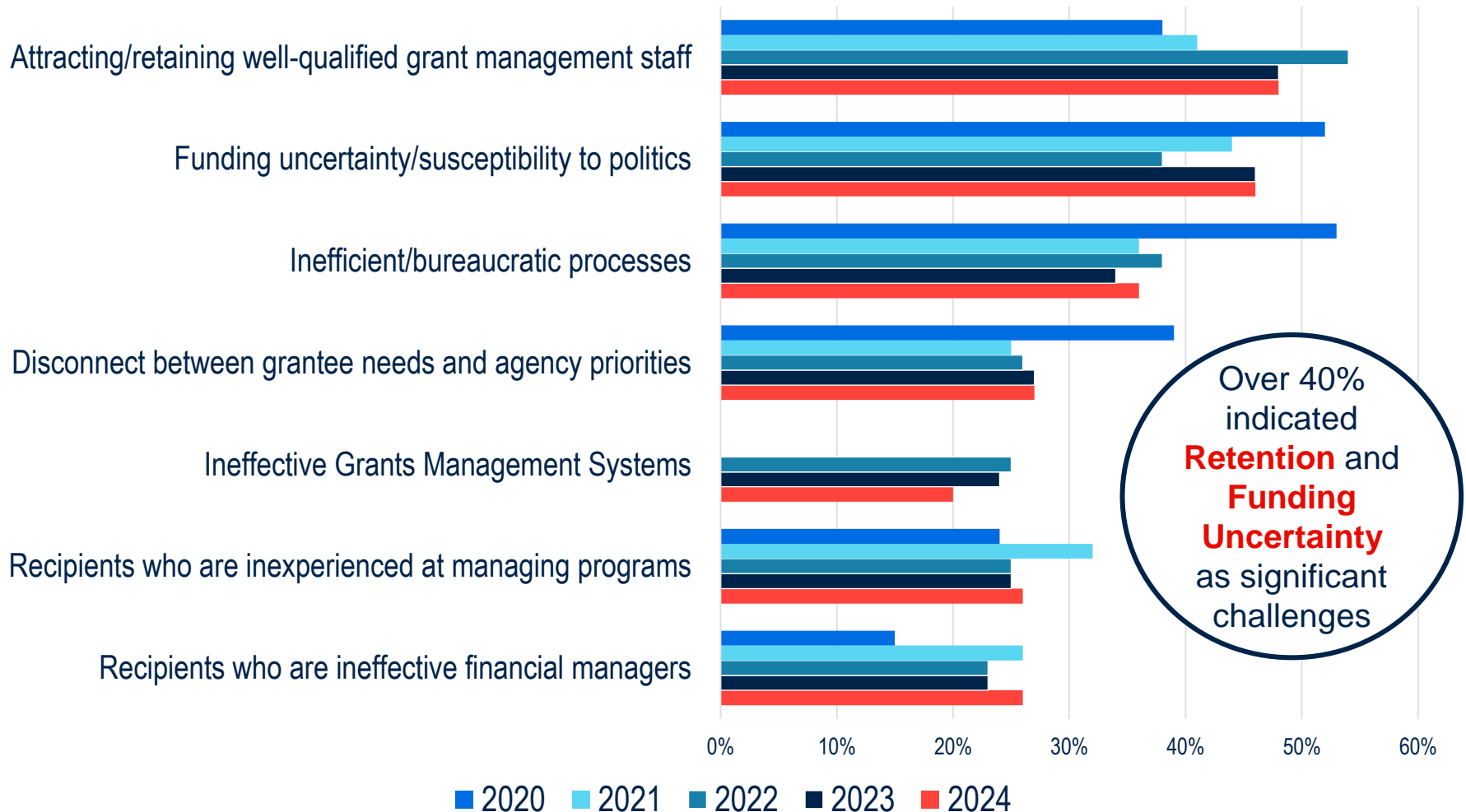
# Successes

6.1. What are the **most significant factors in the success(es)** your organization has had in grants management in recent years?



# Challenges

## 6.2. What do you think are the **most significant challenges** facing grants management?



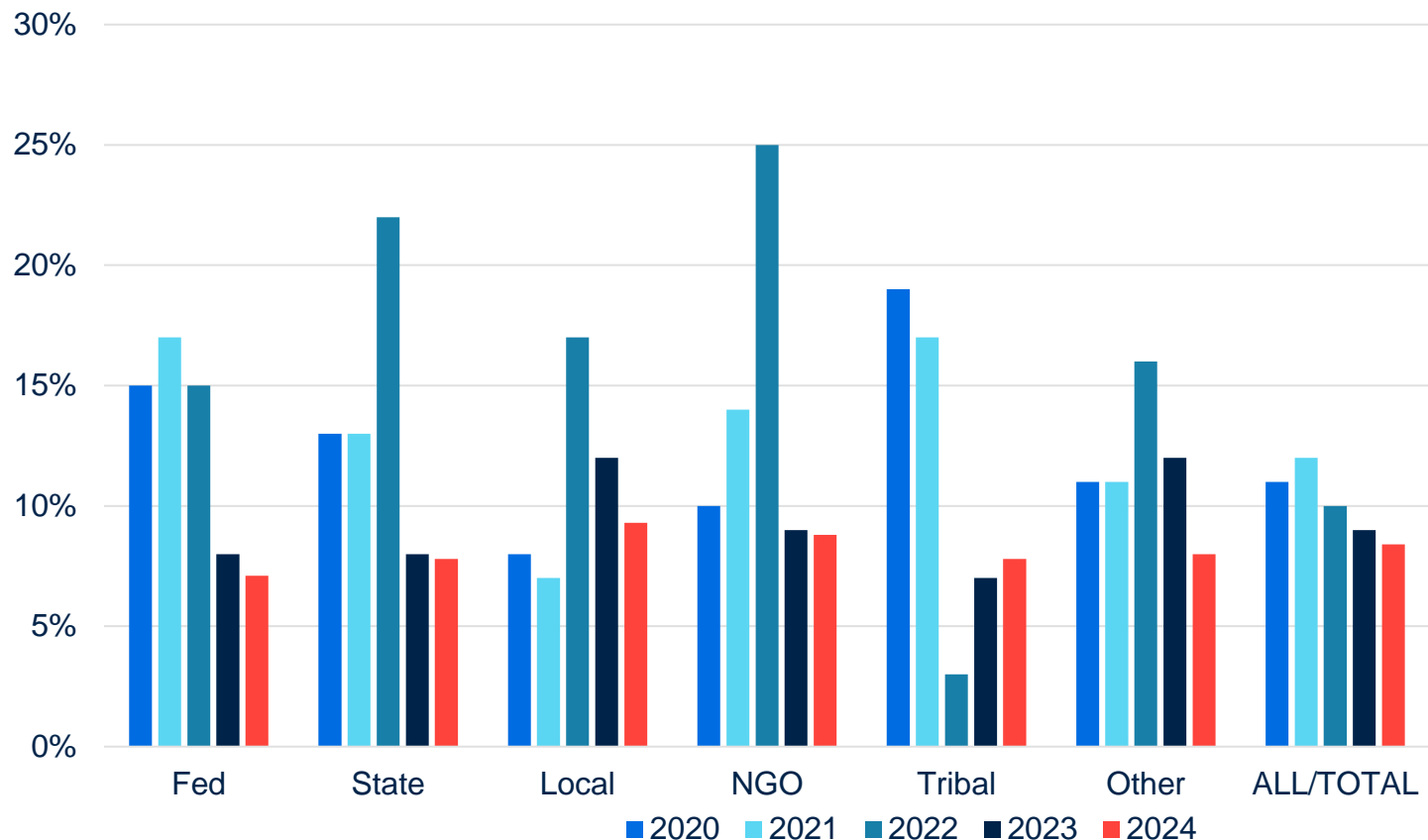
# Topic 2: Increasing Efficiency

- What technology has most improved your program/agency's efficiency? (Provide specific examples)? How did you measure success?
- Are you currently using, or do you have plans to use AI (can include pilots)?
- Are there specific examples where you have introduced efficiency through streamlining grant processes that others can learn from?
- With the increased focus on insight across government, can you share examples of how you have succeeded in reducing fraud/waste/abuse and provided strong oversight/compliance monitoring?

# Admin Spend Continues to See Improvement with Admin Budgets Below 10%

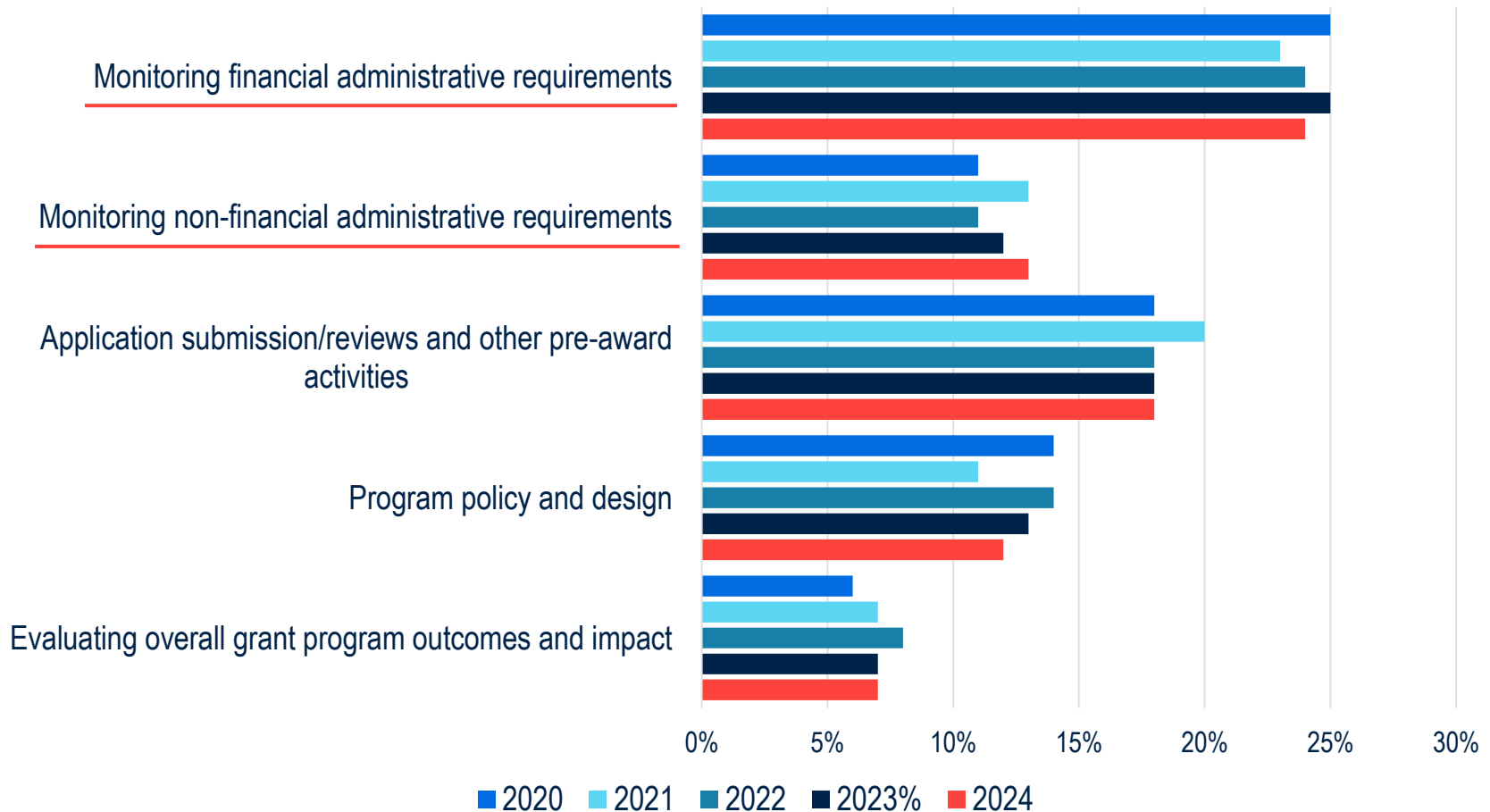
1.4. What **percentage** of the annual value of grants processed by your organization does [your organization's] administrative budget constitute?

*Admin spending as a percent of grant value*



# Compliance Monitoring Consistently Consuming over 35% of Grant Managers' Time

2.1. How much **time** do you spend on the following grants management activities?

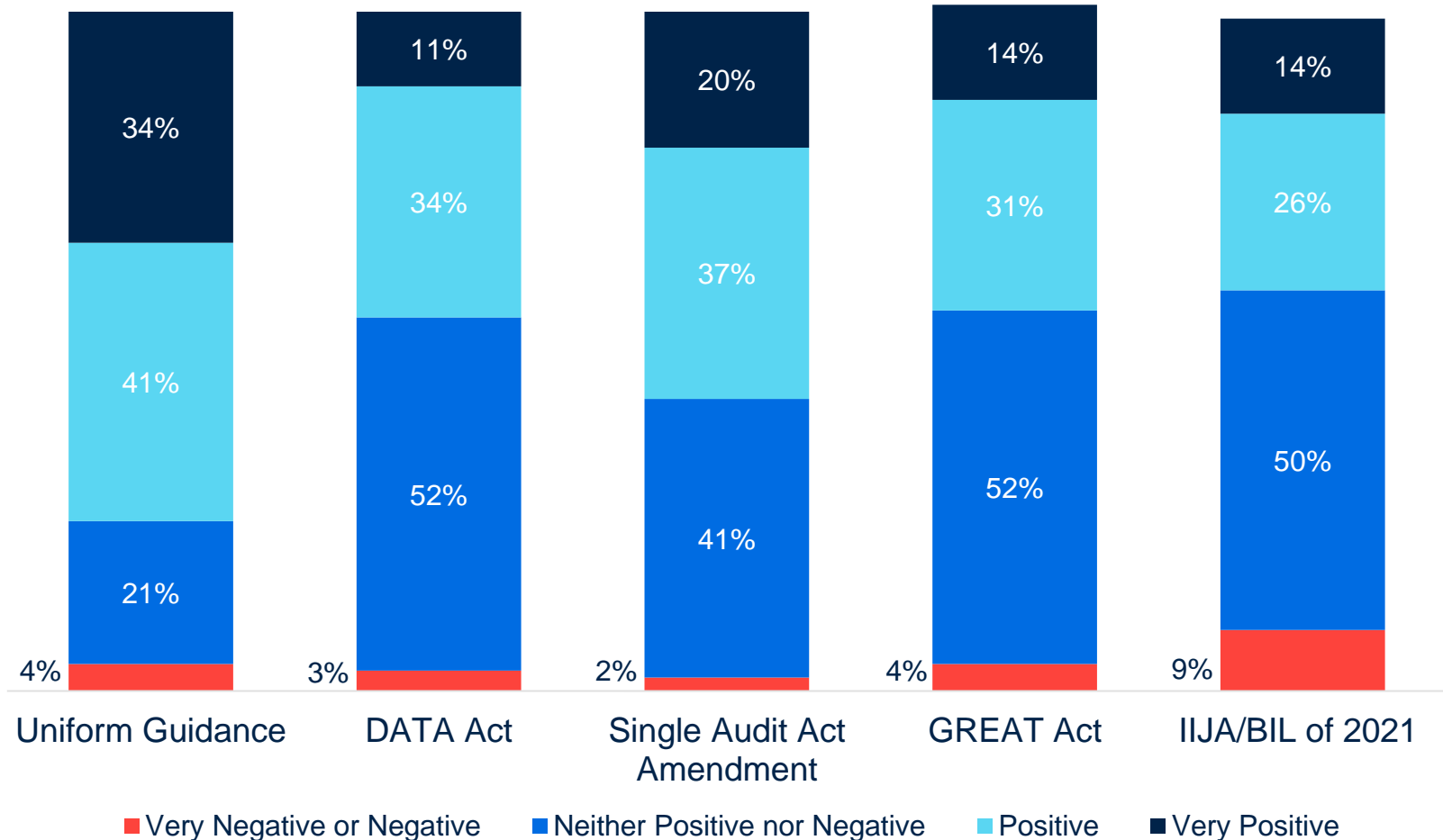




# Moderate Impact of Federal Legislation and Executive Directives on Grants Management

## Uniform Guidance Viewed Most Positive

5.1 Please rate the impact of each of the following federal legislative and/or executive branch directives on your **day-to-day grants management**.



# 2024 Updates to OMB 2 CFR 200

## Top 3 Most Impactful Outcomes

5.3 What do you feel will be the **most impactful outcomes** resulting from the 2024 Updates to OMB 2 CFR 200?

- 1 Reduced administrative burden on grantees and/or grantors
- 2 Simplification of NOFOs to reduce barriers of entry
- 3 Standardization of core data elements for reporting

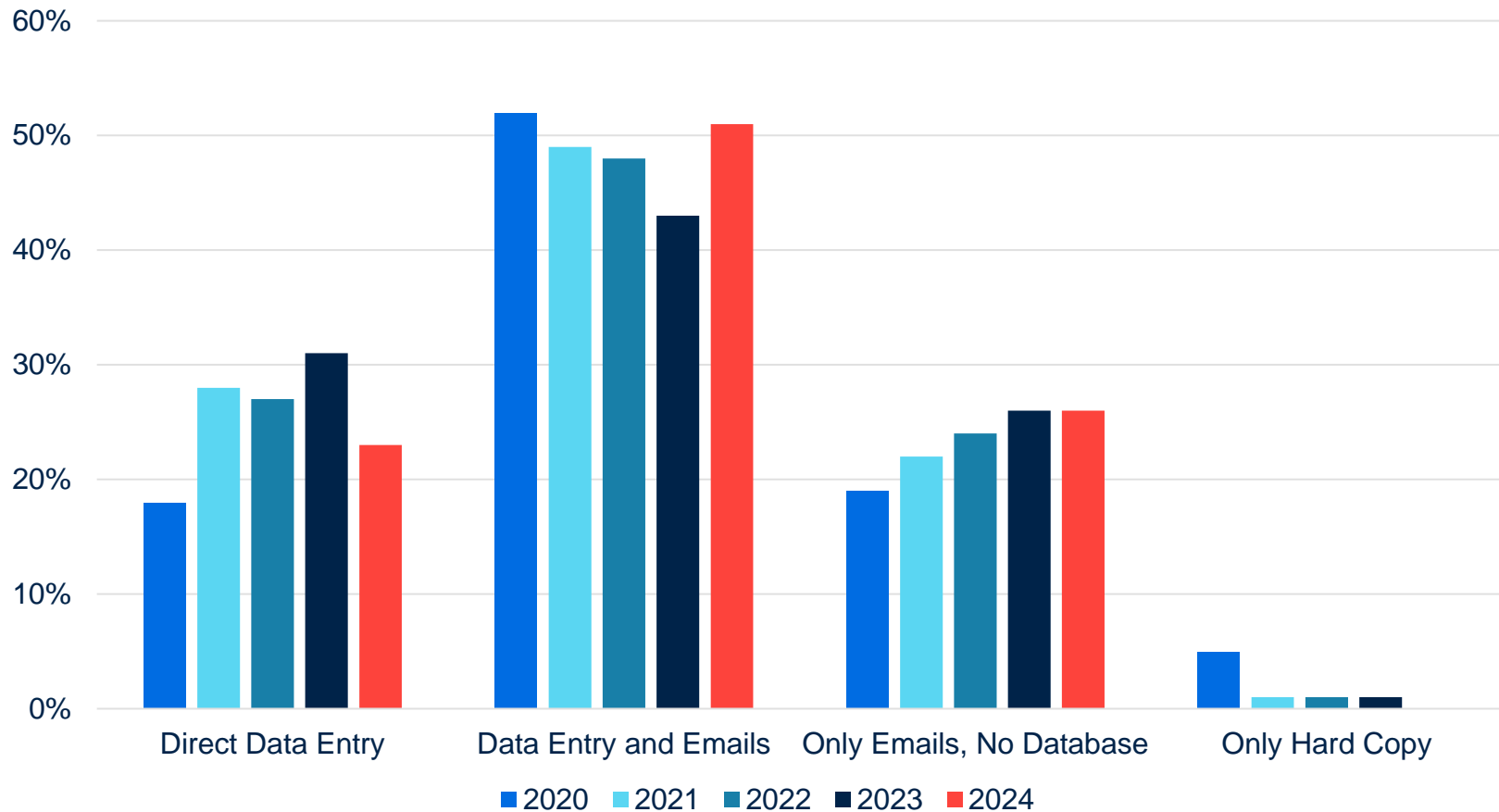
## Top 3 Challenges

5.4 What **challenges**, if any, has your organization faced in implementing and adhering to the latest OMB 2 CFR 200 updates? [Up to 250 characters]

- 1 Dissemination/education
- 2 Lack of clear guidance, open to interpretation
- 3 Timing for applying the new regulations

# More Focus Needed on Automated Grant Reporting

## 3.2 How would you describe the **method** used by your grantees to submit reporting?

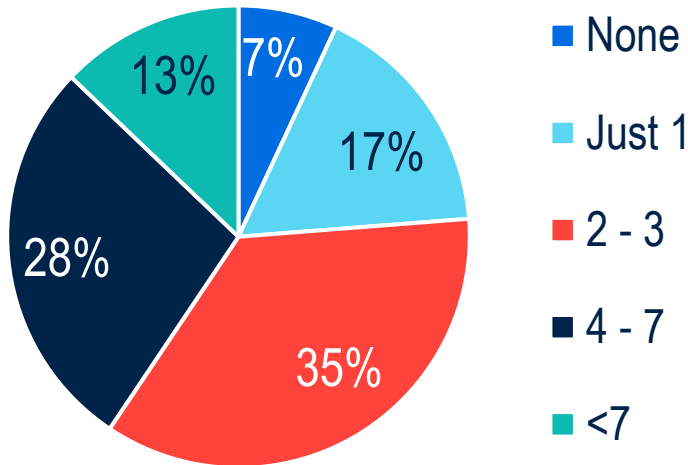


# Majority of Organizations using between 2-7 Grant Systems by 10 or Less Staff

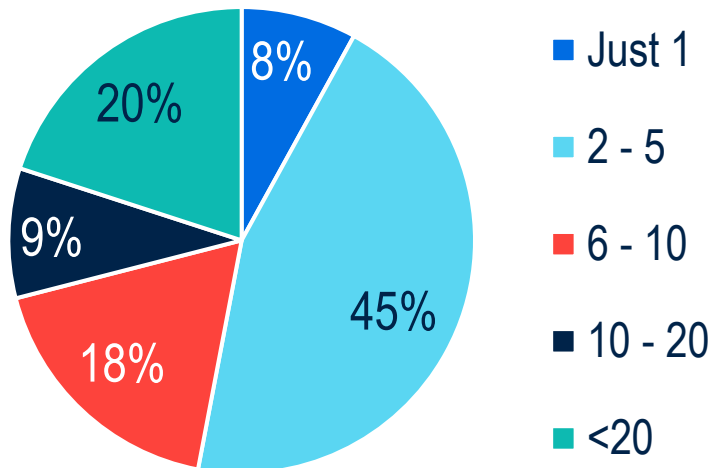
3.3 How many **unique** grant systems are you required to interact with?

3.4 How many staff members are **required** to interact with those grant systems?

## Count of Unique Grant Systems

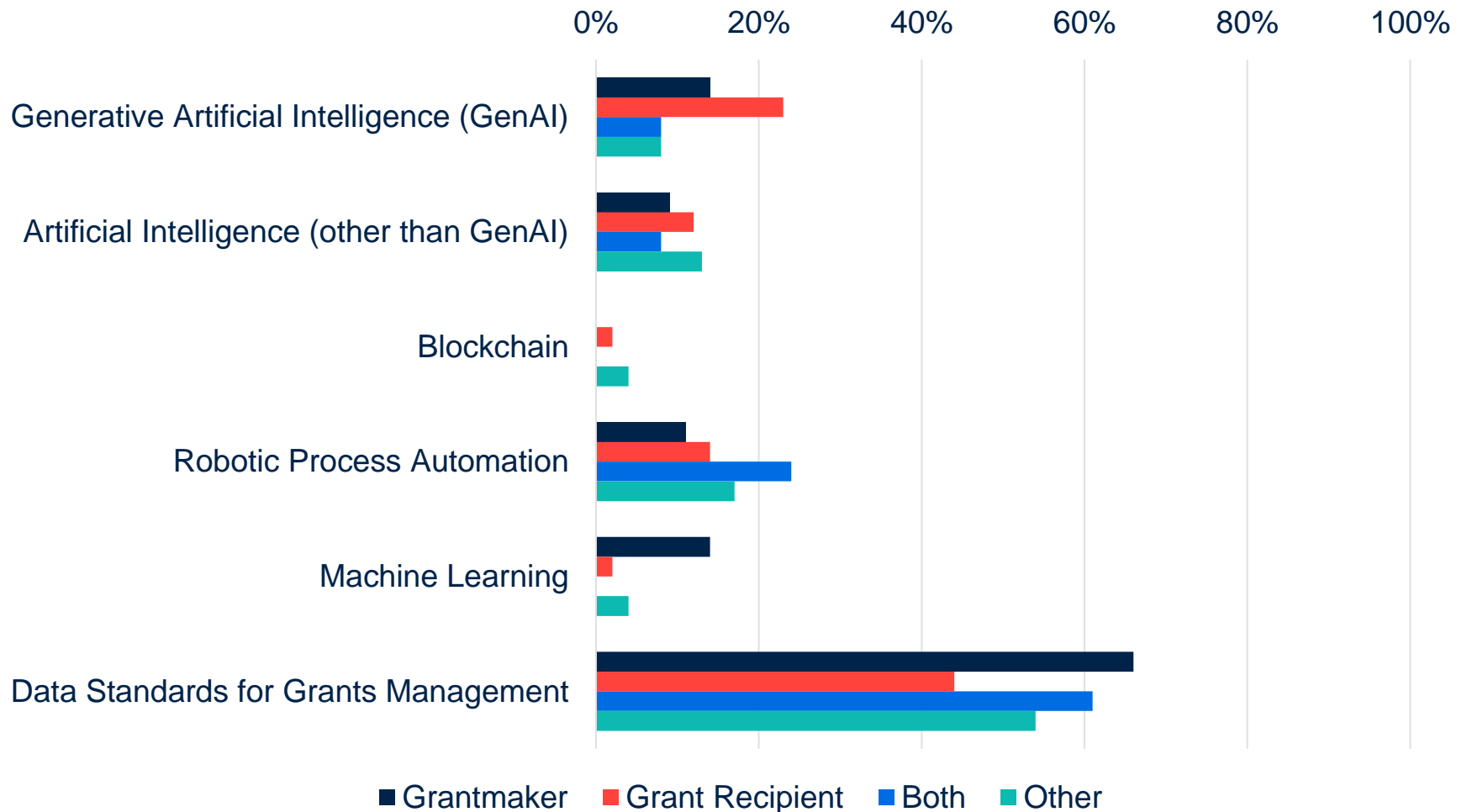


## Count of Staff Members Using Grant Systems



# Artificial Intelligence Starting to Gain Traction in Grants Management

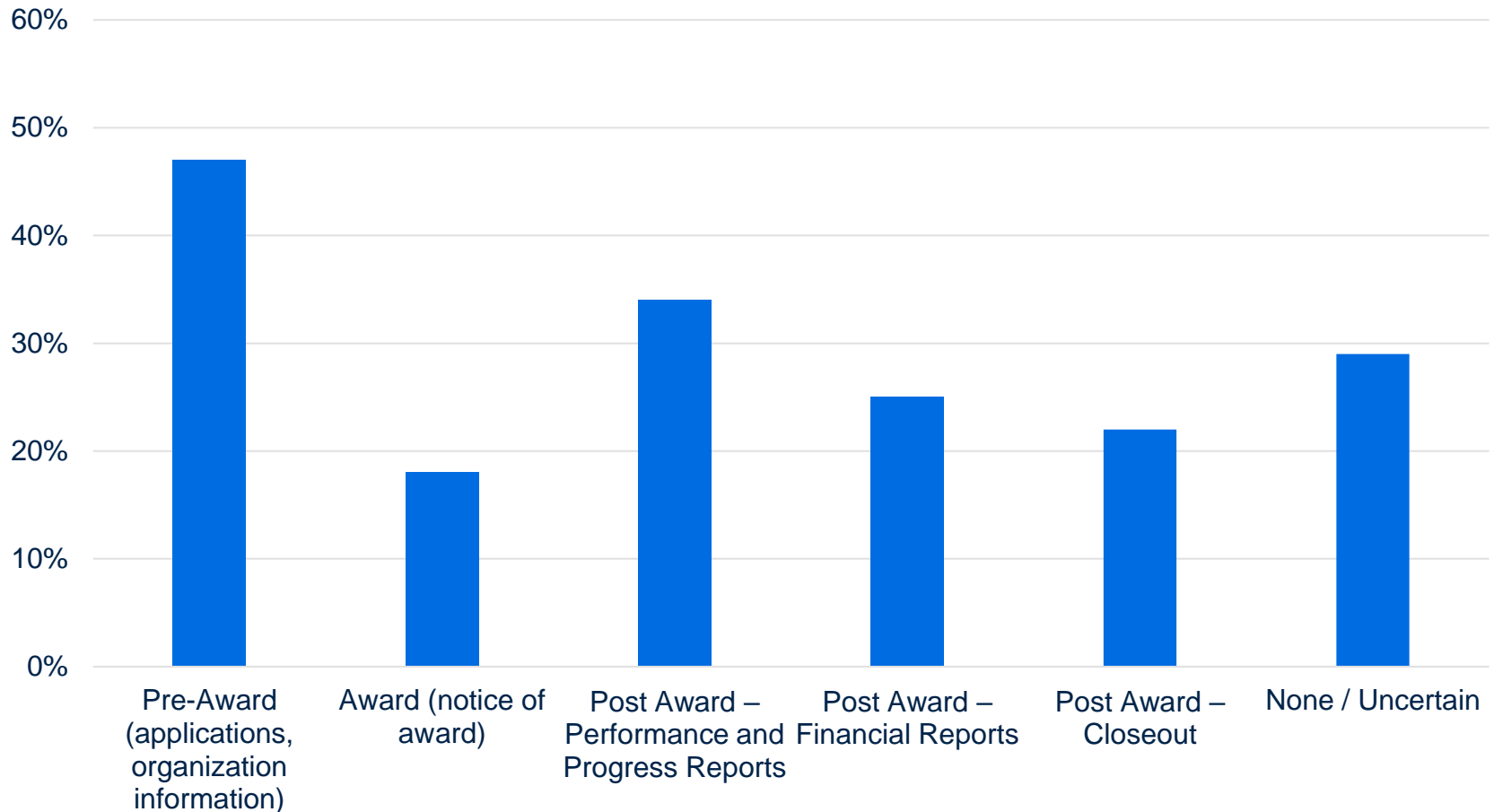
3.6 Do you currently **leverage** any of the following in your Grants Management Systems?





# AI Viewed as Promising Across the Grants Lifecycle

3.7 Which part(s) of the grants management lifecycle do you feel would provide (or has provided) the most **promise** for use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

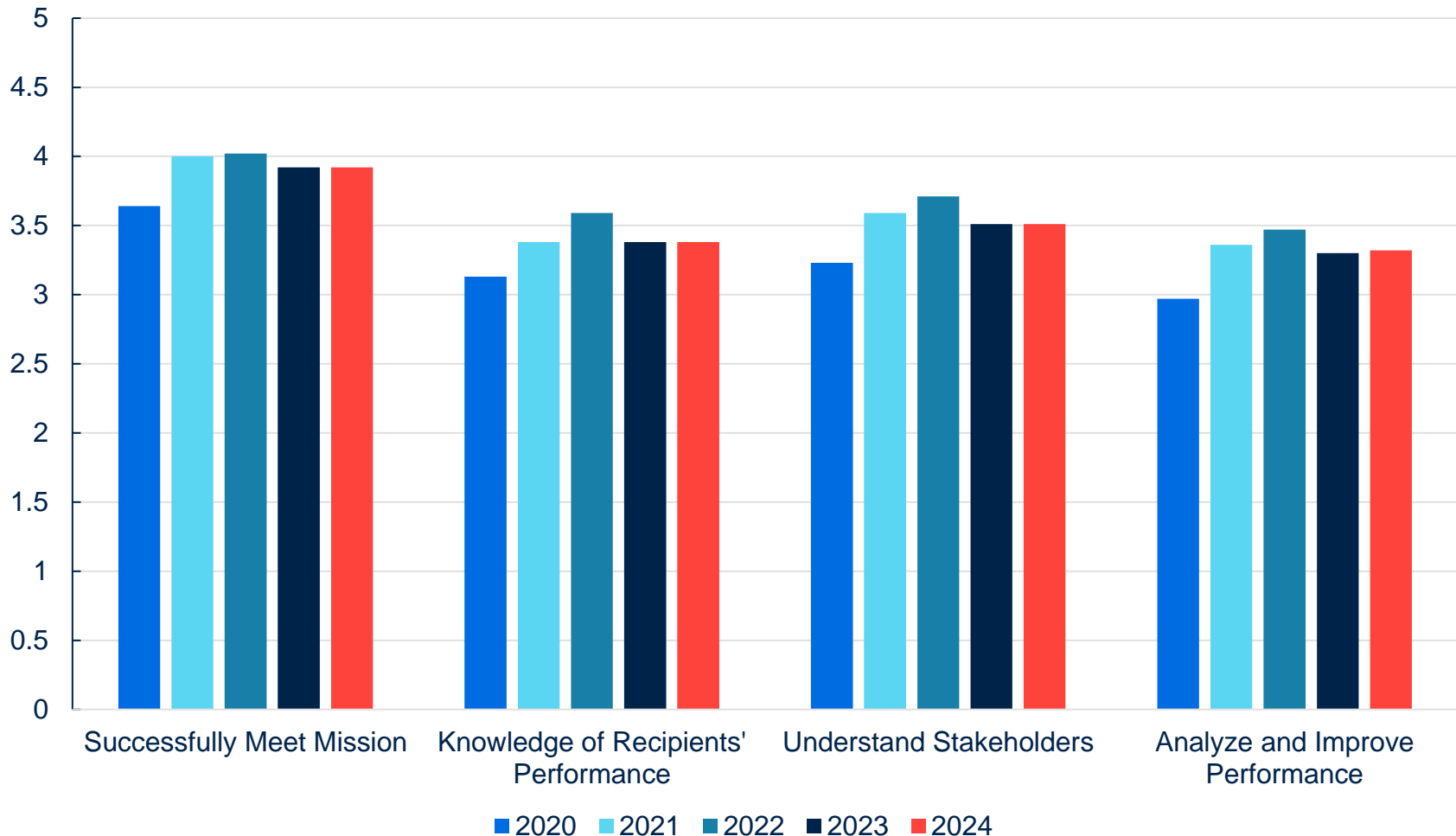


# Topic 3: Measuring Impact

- What should the grants community do to better communicate the value/impact provided by their program/agency?
- Measuring recipient performance outcomes is critical to demonstrating the value of grant investments. What challenges do you see with effectively measuring recipient performance outcomes?
- Compliance vs support? Can you share your experiences with building strong relationship with Grantees to help drive improved performance?
- Can you share specific examples of best outcomes & impacts based off compliances and/or program efficiencies?

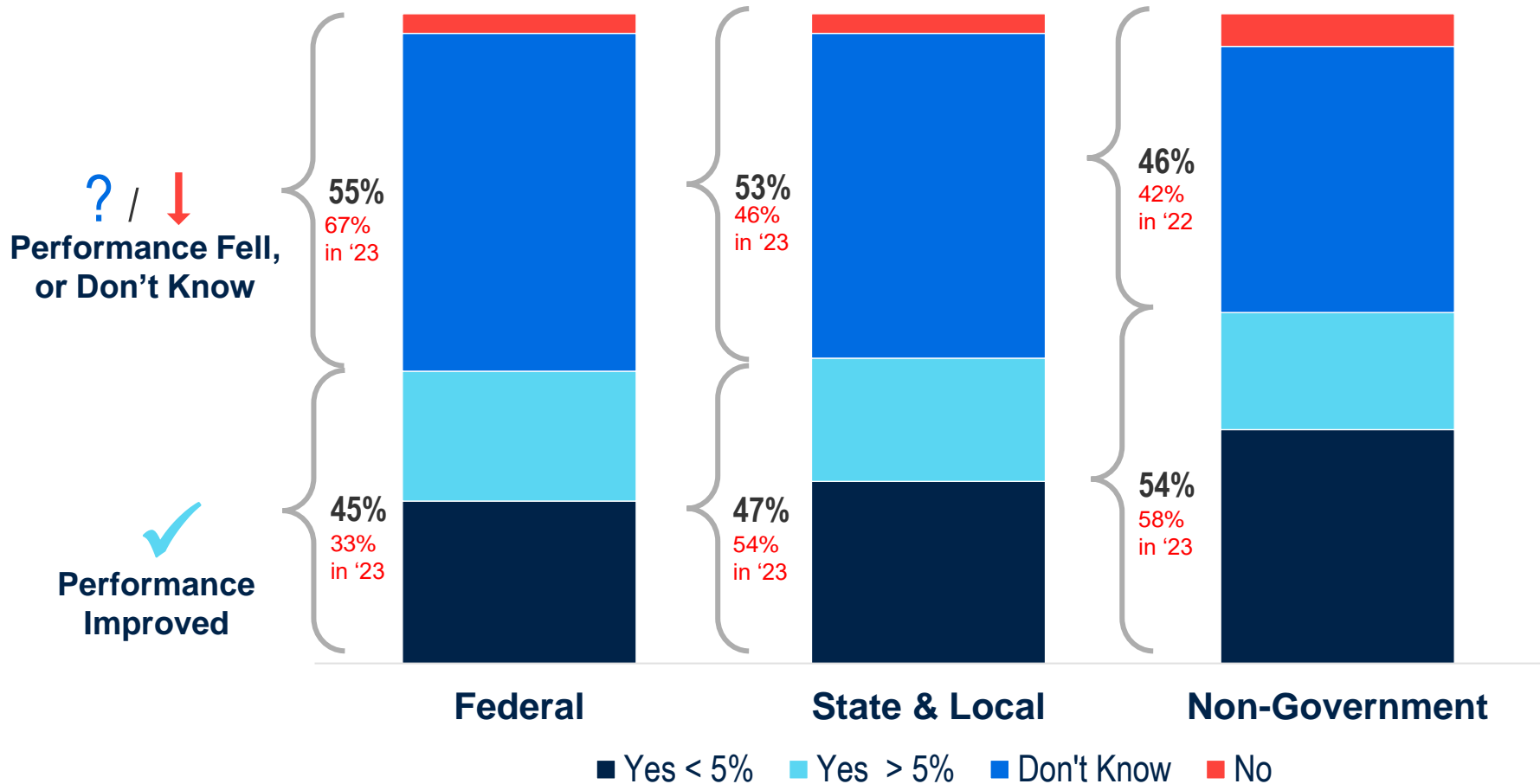
# Organizational Ability to Meet Mission Objectives Remains High

2.2. What is your assessment of how **well equipped** your organization and its operational environment is?



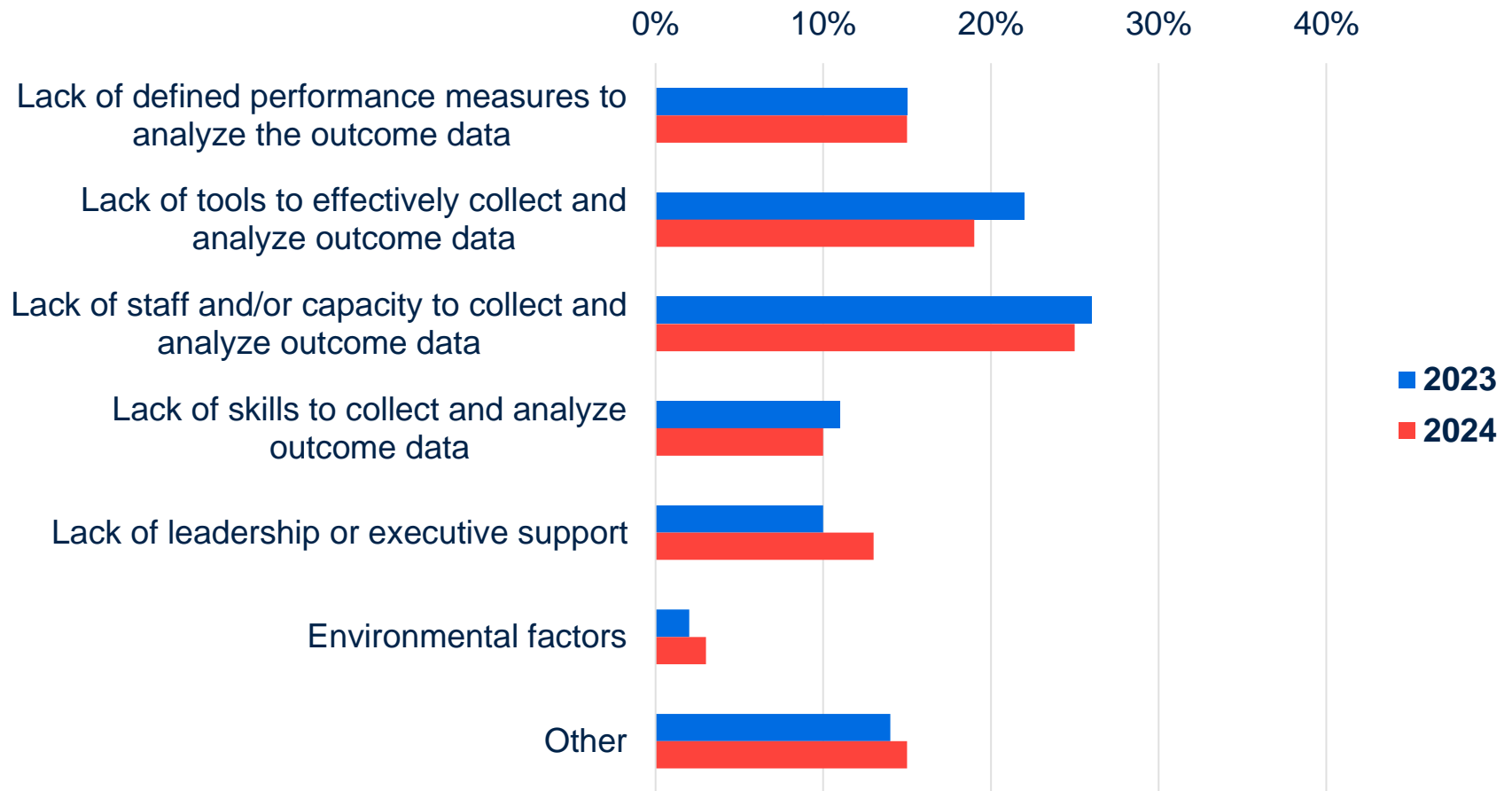
# Agencies Struggle to Effectively Measure Performance Outcomes

2.4. Have your organization's/your recipients' outcomes **improved** over the past 12 months?



# Lack of Staff and Tools are the Primary Reasons Agencies are Unable to Effectively Measure Outcomes

2.4b What **contributed** to the lack of improved outcomes or lack of ability to measure outcomes?





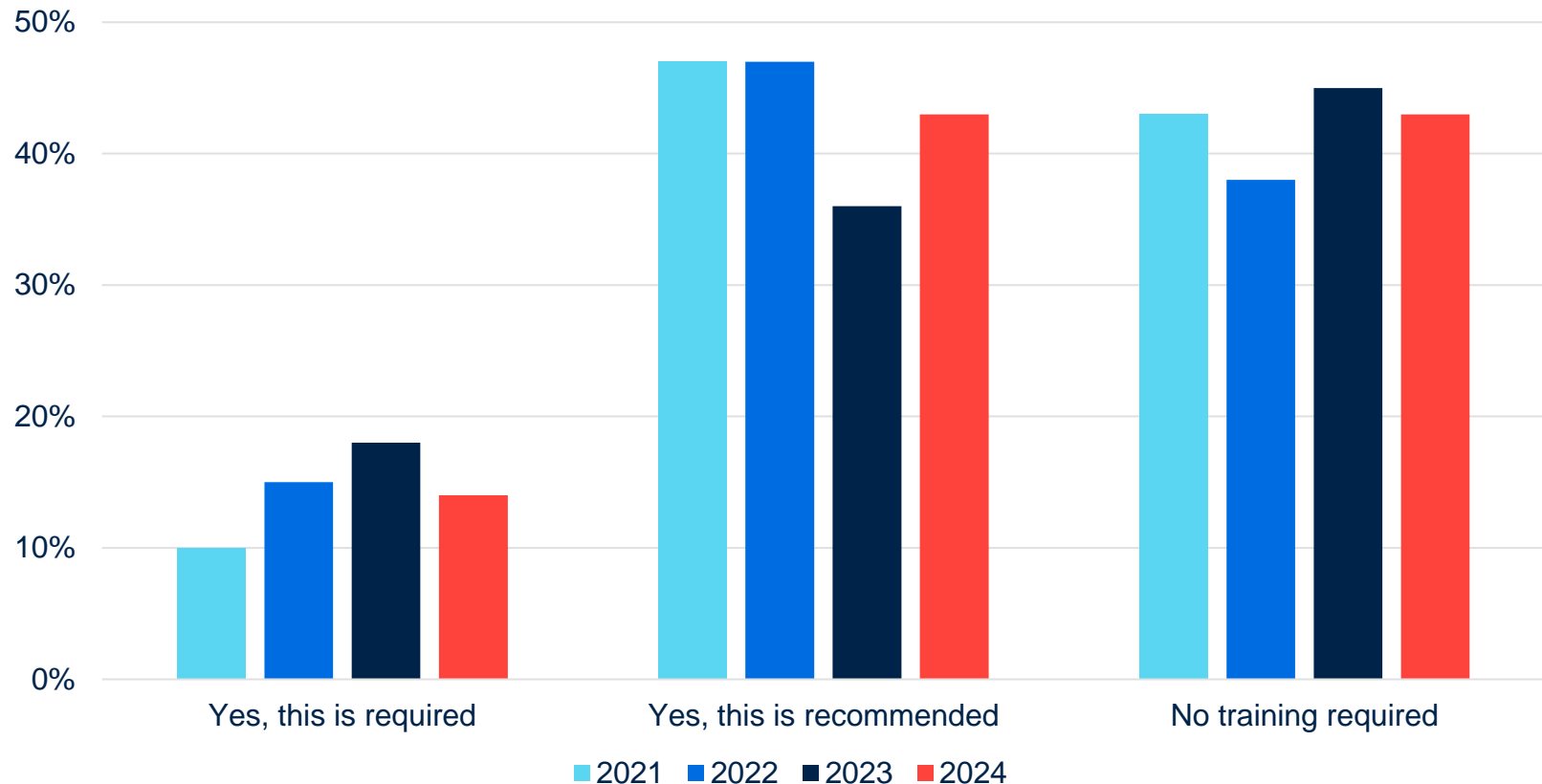
# Topic 4: Training & Retention

- What type(s) of training were most important in the recent past, and what do you foresee as the most important in the coming years?
- What training does your Agency provide to its staff and how effective is training in building capable grants officers/managers?
- How does automation/new grant systems impact retention and training?
- How would you make a pitch to a prospective recruit? Retaining staff?

# Despite Consistently Being Cited as a Top Priority, Over 40% Do Not Provide Training

While training certification requirements continue to slightly increase

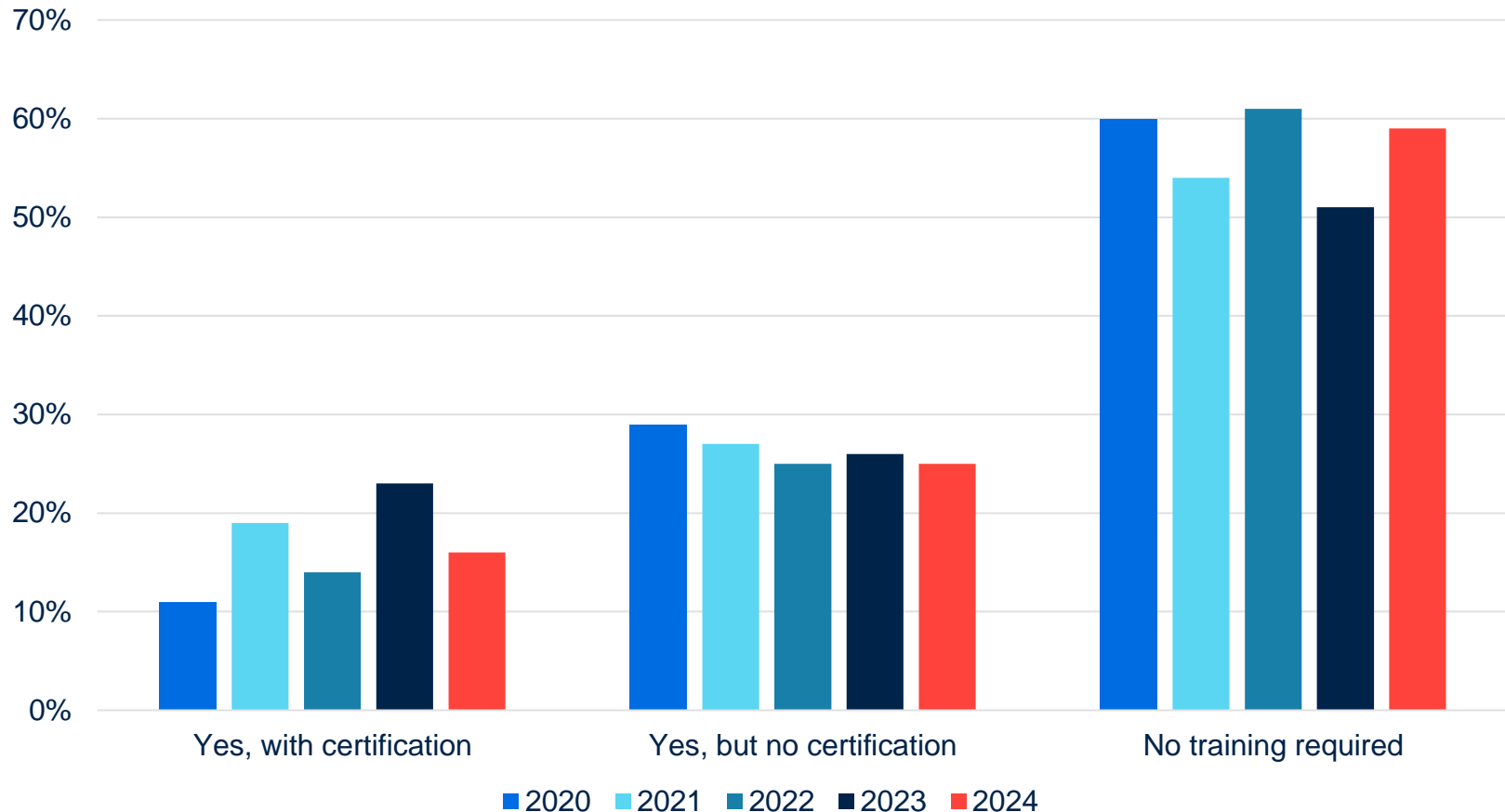
4.2 Does your organization provide **grant training** to grant recipients or sub-recipients?



# Less than 50% of Organizations Require Staff Receive Grants Management Training

Percentage Requiring Certification Has Decreased

4.1 Does your organization require **formal grant training** of your staff?

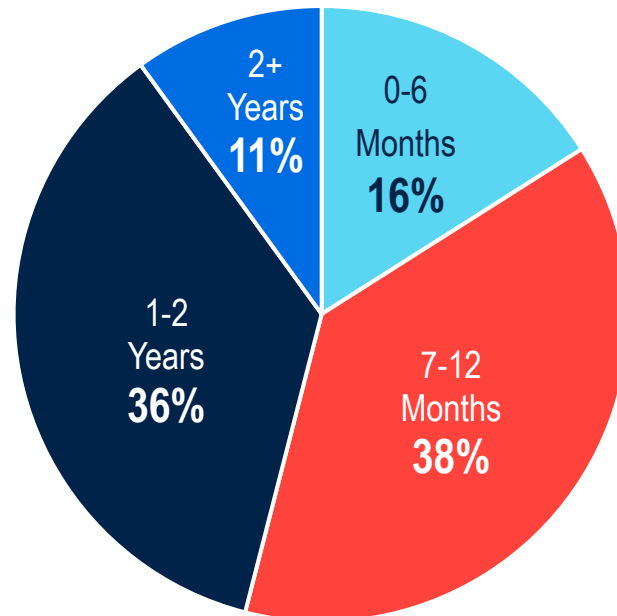


# Time to Fully Train New Resources Emphasizes Need to Retain Qualified Staff

36% Indicated It Takes Between 1-2 Years To Fully Train

4.7 In your estimation, how long does it typically take to **fully train** or ramp up a new resource to independently execute grants management actions?

## Duration Required to Fully Train



# Top 5 Areas Where Additional Training Needed

Comprehensive Grants Management Training Highly Desired

Q4.2 In which specific areas could your grants staff **benefit** from receiving additional training?

- 1 Full Lifecycle Grants Management
- 2 Regulations, Uniform Guidance, and Compliance
- 3 Monitoring - Subrecipients, Post Award Submissions, Performance Metrics
- 4 Financial Management - Budgeting, Reporting, Costs
- 5 Grant Writing



# Closing Remarks

# Thank you!



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