

## EJ Training Needs Assessment Survey

July 2019

# Background

## Center for Environmental Excellence

- Developed in cooperation with FHWA to promote environmental stewardship and to encourage innovative ways to streamline the transportation delivery process
- Serves as a resource for transportation professionals seeking technical assistance, training, information exchange, partnership-building opportunities, and quick and easy access to environmental tools

## EJ Community of Practice

- Road Map recommended that EJ be added to the AASHTO Community of Practice (COP) forum
- COPs provide forums for invited professionals to discuss and exchange information, experiences, ideas, and best practices on a range of environmental topics related to the planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of highway and transit systems

# Background

- Environmental Justice Peer Exchange – Feb. 2016
  - Best practice exchange
  - Lessons learned
- Moving Environmental Justice (EJ) Forward in Transportation Planning and Project Development Peer Exchange – May 2016
- Environmental Justice Roadmap – Nov. 2016
  - Key takeaways from EJ Peer Exchange
  - Information on technical assistance needs and research gaps
  - Recommendations for FHWA and AASHTO
- Environmental Justice Webinar Series – Sep. 2017-March 2018
- Sponsored EJ CoP attendance at AMPO's 2017 annual meeting

# Introduction

- Center Task originating in the 2018-2019 Work Plan
  - Identify training needs
  - Prepare plan for addressing needs
  - Implement identified tasks
- Methodology
  - Questions formulated by FHWA and AASHTO
  - Sent to AASHTO's Environmental Justice Community of Practice in March 2019
  - 57 responses

# Survey Questions

1. Name
2. Title
3. Agency
4. How long since your last EJ-related training?
5. What type of information is needed to better address EJ as part of planning and project development?
6. What emerging or innovative issues would you most like to learn about?
7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...
8. What FHWA and FHWA-affiliated EJ publications and training resources are you familiar with?
9. What type of training is most appealing?
10. Does your agency offer training to consultants/contractors on EJ-related topics?
11. Other information you would like to share

# Summary



57 Respondents  
Majority from State DOTs

## Respondent Job Titles

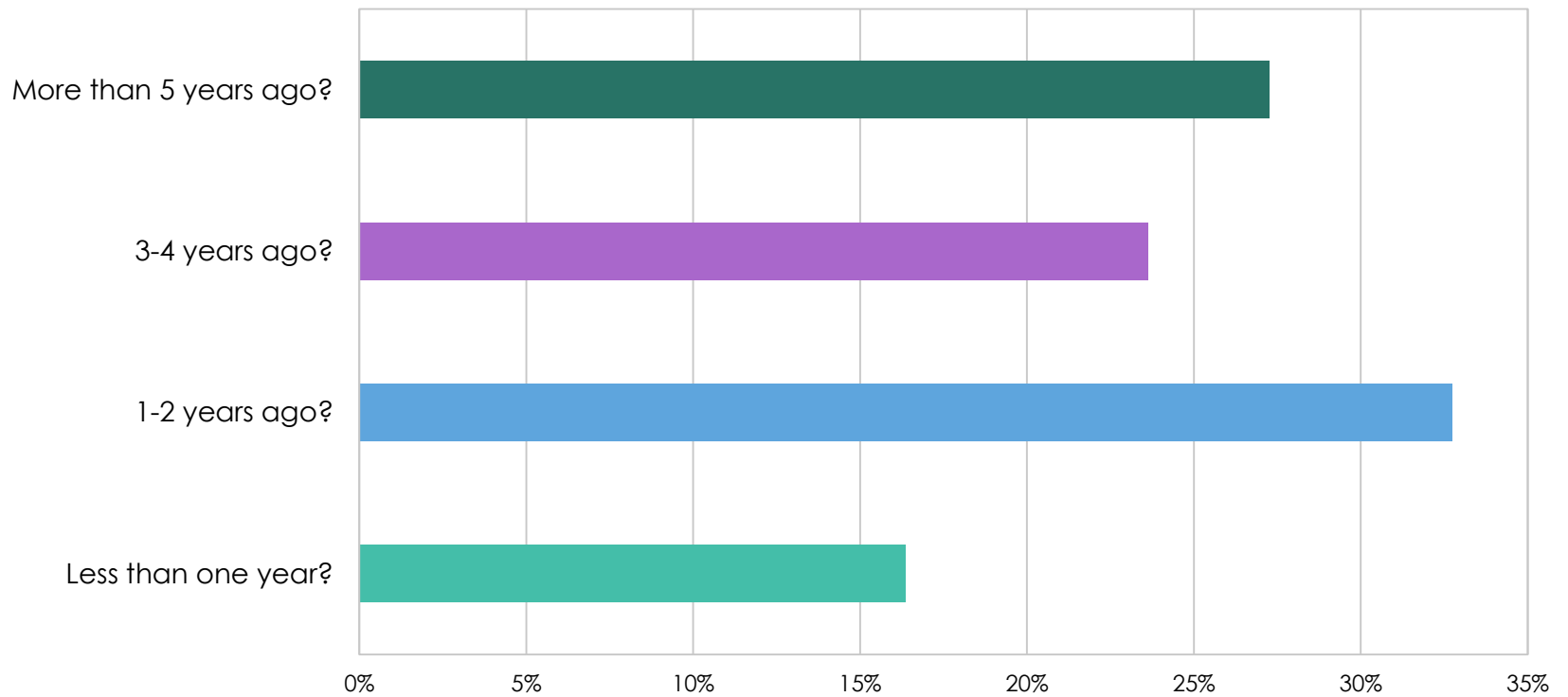
Environmental Manager  
NEPA Specialist  
Environmental Protection  
Specialist  
Environmental Planner  
Social Equity Planner  
Title VI Specialist

# Previous Survey Results

- Some questions were asked in earlier engagement with practitioners through the initial EJ Roadmap process and subsequent webinars
- Where possible, those responses will also be included as a reference about what resonated with respondents in 2016



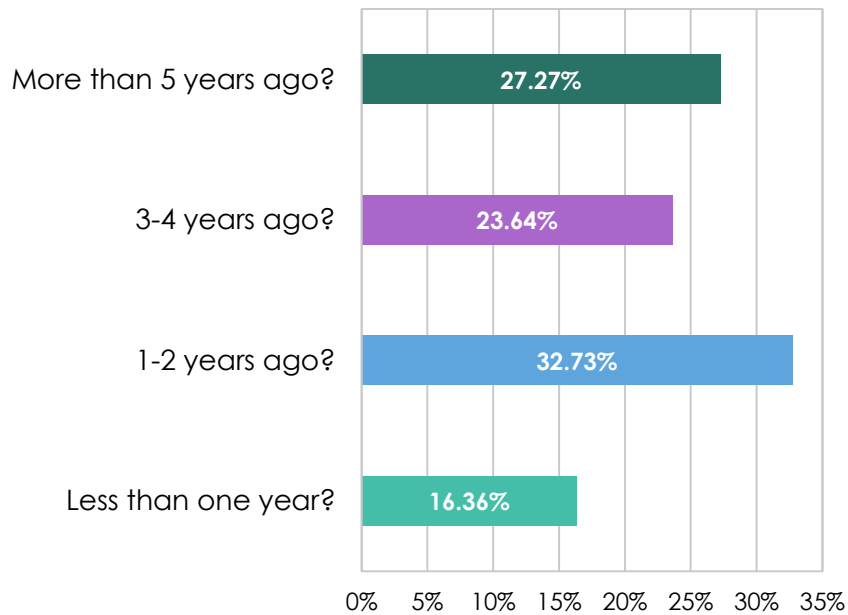
# Q4. How long since your last EJ-related training?





# Q4. Comparison with 2016

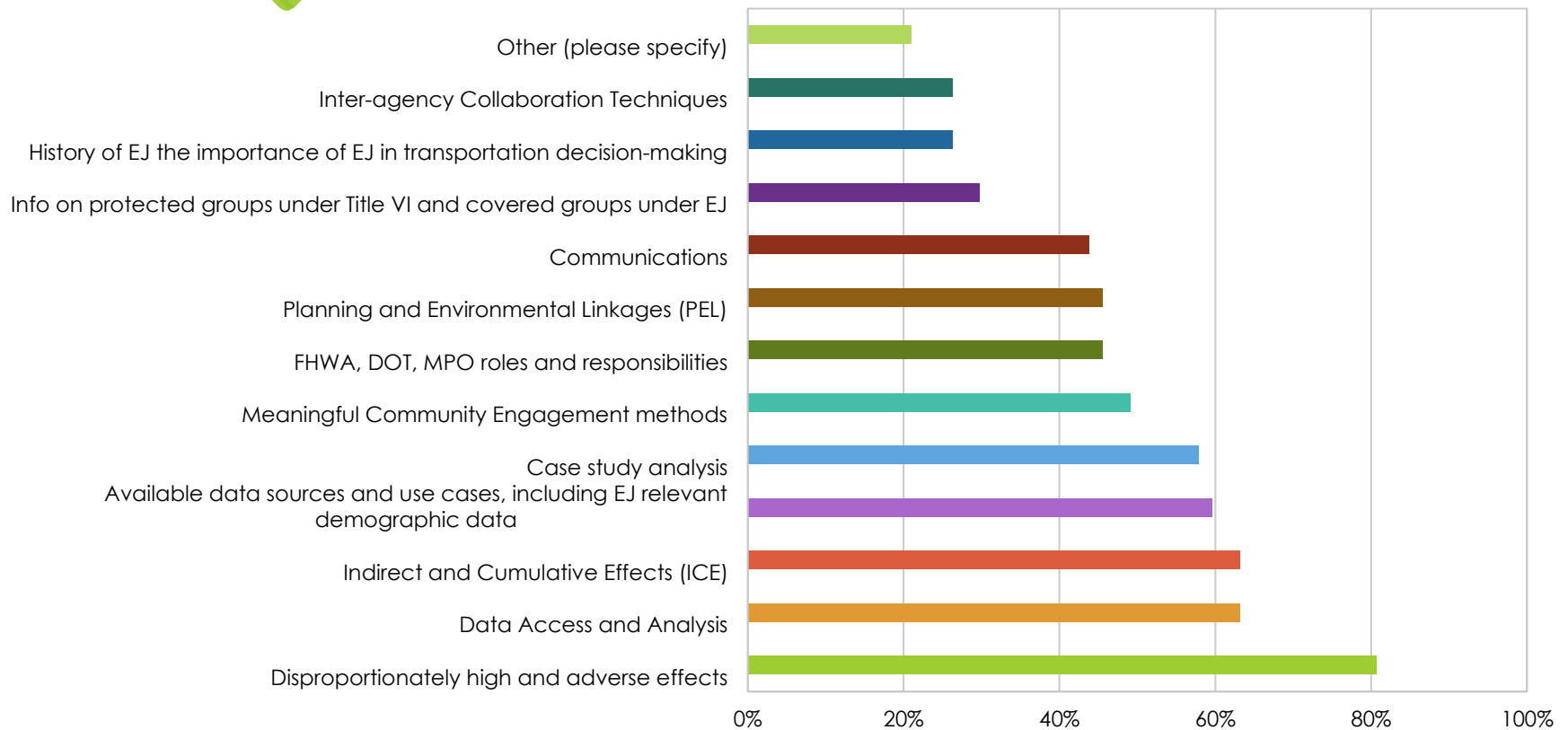
**2019**



**2016**

- >5 Years: 27%
- 3-4 Years: 12%
- 1-2 Years: 28%
- <1 Year: 38%

# Q5. What type of information is needed to better address EJ as part of planning and project development?



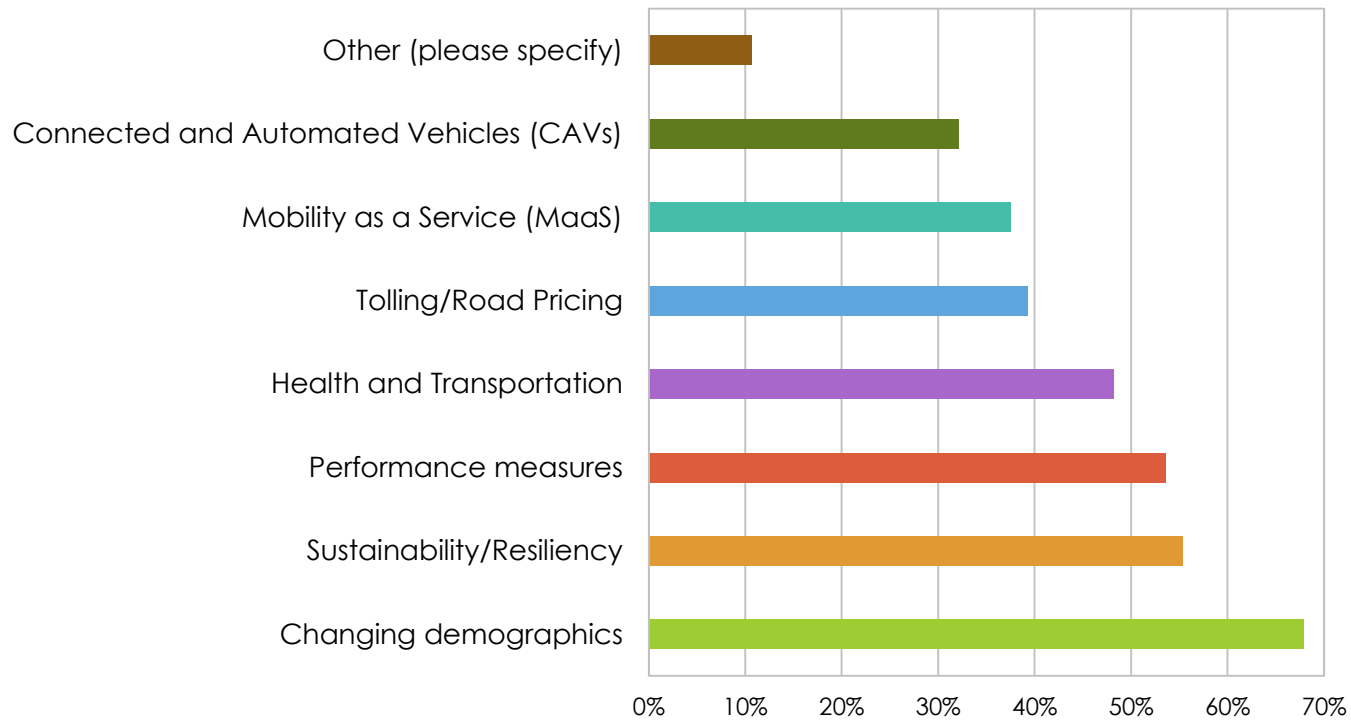
# Q5. What type of information is needed to better address EJ as part of planning and project development? – Other

- Changing **demographics**
- Community **feedback** about potential impacts
- **Methodology** for identifying EJ populations and assessing impacts
- Clarity on FHWA **methodology** regarding EJ requirements and states' compliance
- Examples of when **mitigation** is required and the different types
- In-depth training in **Indirect and Cumulative Effects** Analysis
- Emphasis on how to conduct **analysis** to support decision making

# Q5. What type of information is needed to better address EJ as part of planning and project development? – Other

- (Pre-) **mitigation** of EJ effects
- Use of **virtual public involvement** methods
- **Transportation funding** based on need
- Aligning EJ with **Title VI**

# Q6. What emerging or innovative issues would you most like to learn about?



## Q6. What emerging or innovative issues would you most like to learn about? – Other

- Navigating **policy changes** at the federal level, particularly in relation to communities with limited English proficiency
- **Gentrification** of urban areas and suburbanization of minorities
- **Homeless** Populations
- **State STIP** prioritization and project selection on the basis of demographics not just geography
- Virtual **public involvement**

# Q6. 2016 Comparison

## 2019

- Changing demographics – 68%
- Sustainability / resiliency – 55%
- Performance measures – 54%
- Health and Transportation – 48%
- Tolling / Road Pricing – 39%

## 2016

- Community Indirect & Cumulative Impacts – 69%
- Changing Demographics – 62%
- Health Impacts – 61%
- Tolling, Congestion Pricing, and Managed Lanes – 53%
- Climate Change – 29%



## Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...

### *Data & Data Analysis*

- Data (x3)
- Data analysis & improving data analysis (x2)
- Changing demographics
- Data collection
- Analysis steps
- Methodology for determining impacts
- Mitigation measures
- Training on how to utilize and present the data
- Consistency in identifying low-income populations

## Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is... *Data & Data Analysis (continued)*

- Combining EJ analysis with NEPA considerations
- Determining impacts at a large geographical level, such as state
- A national FHWA analysis/findings tool, similar to EPA's EJSCREEN

## Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...

### *Methods*

- Defining a "Population"
- Outreach techniques & methods to reach EJ populations
- Guidelines for deployment
- How to adequately evaluate EJ data (impacts, populations)
- Developing better methods and criteria for determining when an impact is disproportionately high and adverse
- Effective EJ mitigation
- Additional resources, tools and guidance on EJ

## Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...

### *Training*

- Training (x3)
- Knowledgeable practitioners

## Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...

### *Funding*

- Funding (x3)
- Lack of resources
- Determining how to use diverse fund sources

**Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...**  
*Communication*

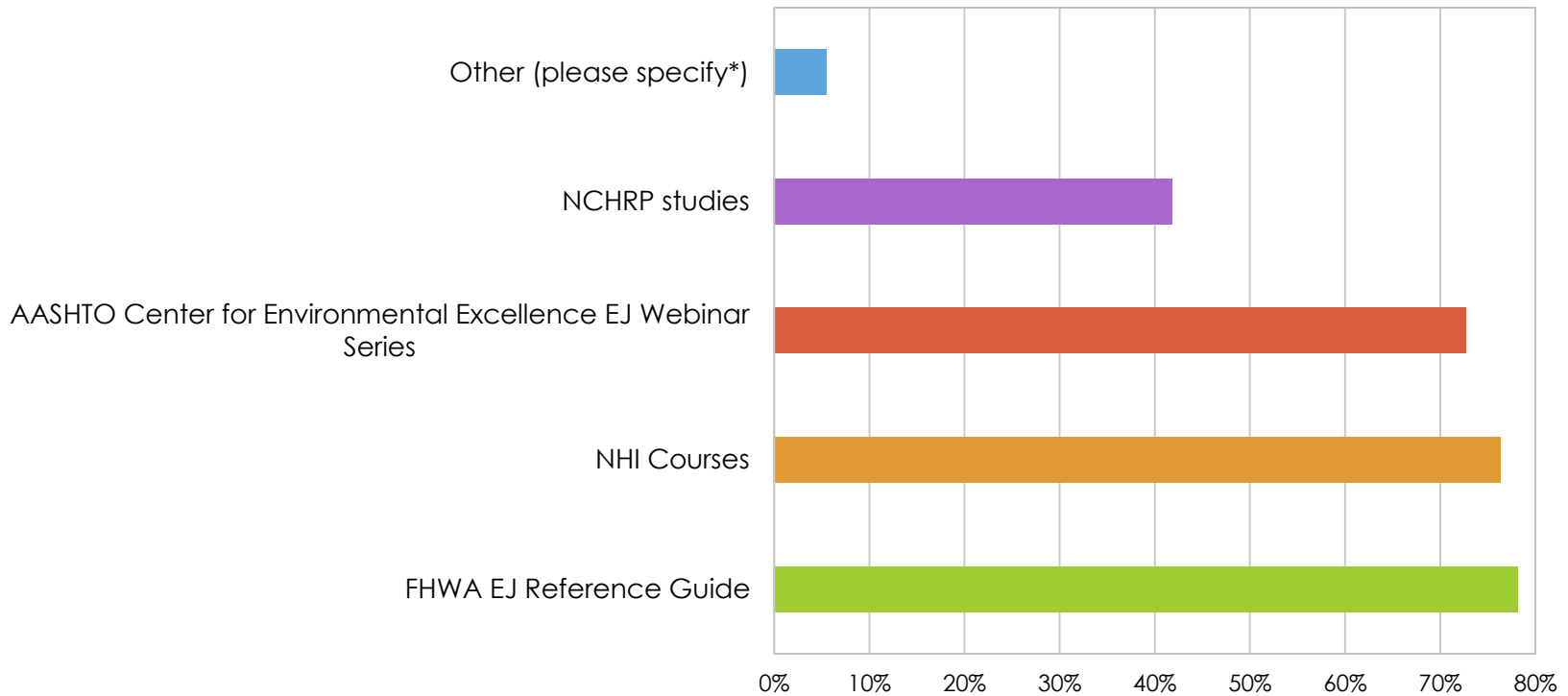
- Communication
- Effective communication resources and tools

**Q7. The biggest gap in resource development/state of the practice research is...**  
***Technology***

- Connected and autonomous vehicles



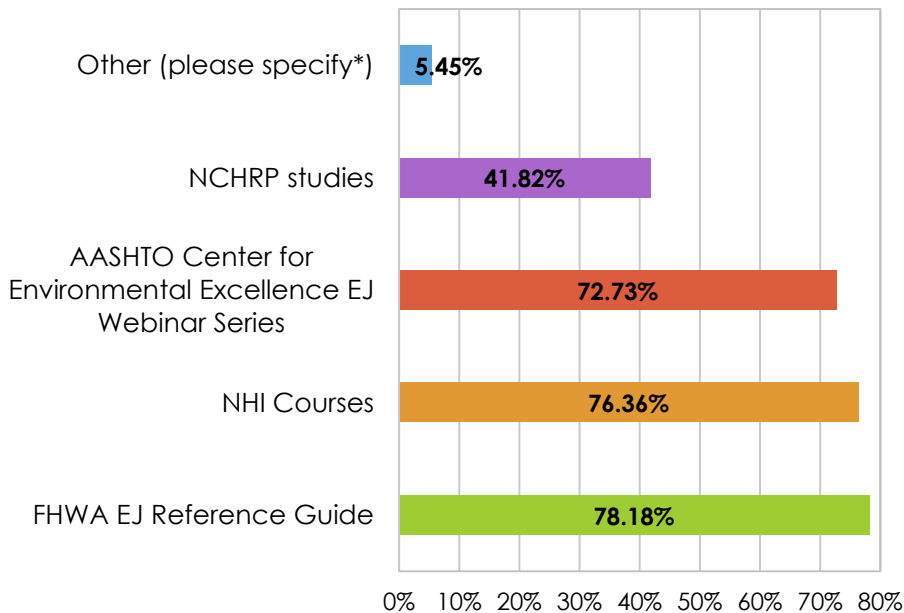
# Q8. What FHWA and FHWA-affiliated EJ publications and training resources are you familiar with?



\* FHWA EJ Analysis Course and Non-Discrimination Training by FHWA and FTA (2013 at PSU)

# Q8. 2016 Comparison

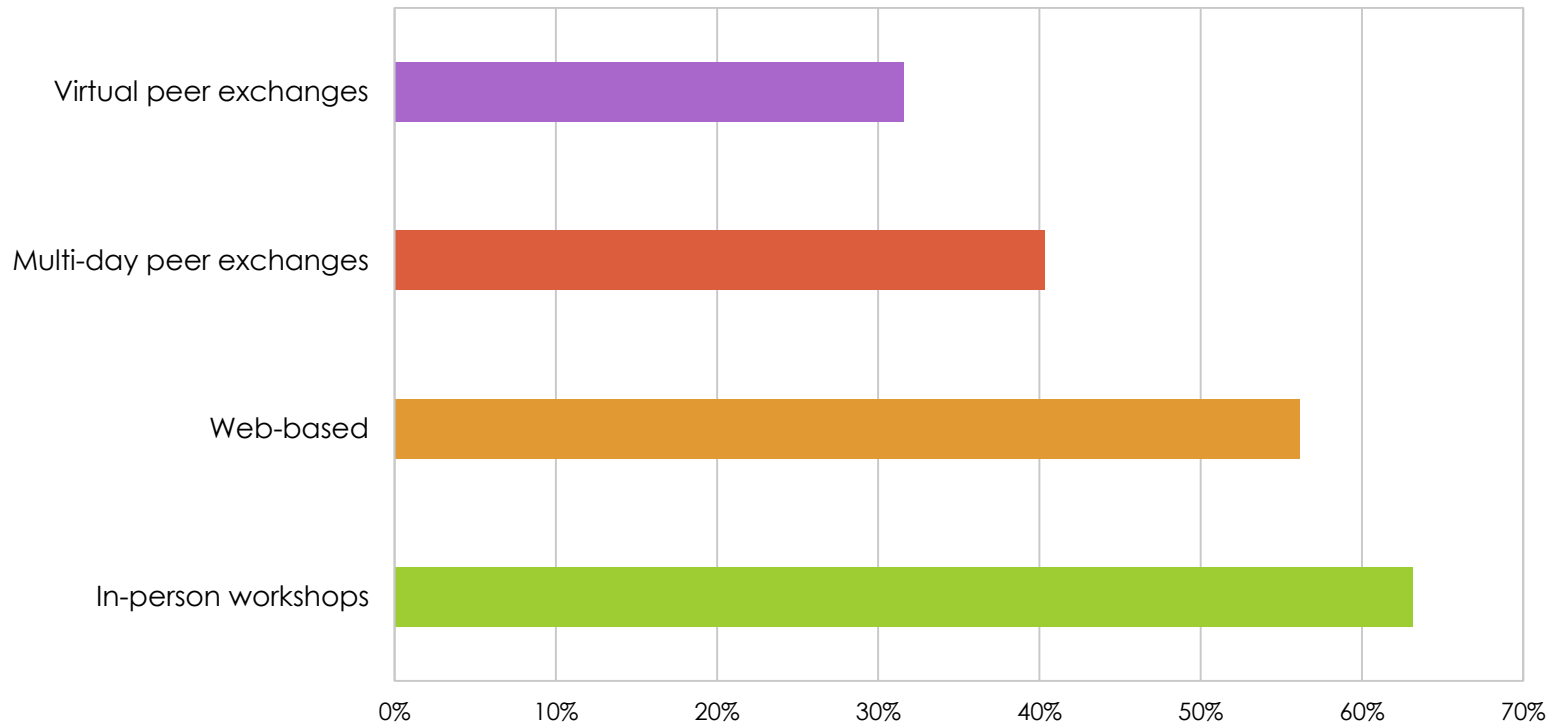
**2019**



**2016**

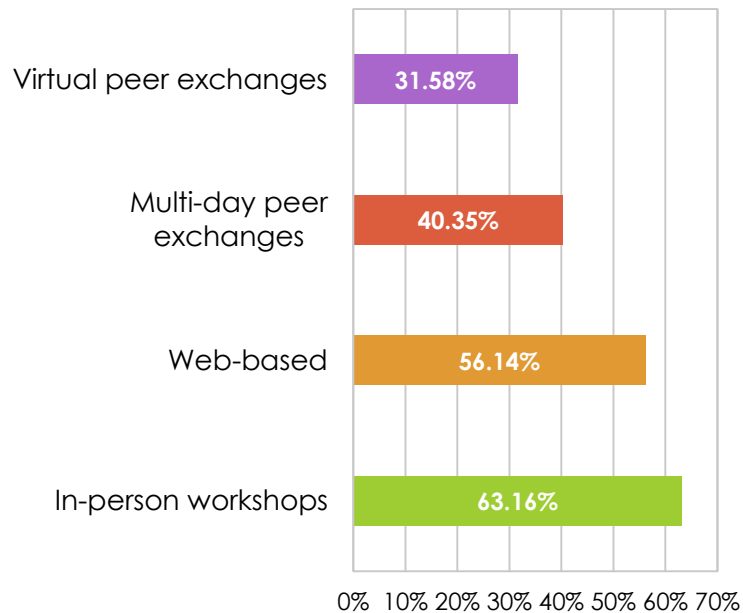
- The 2016 question asked the percentage of respondents that were familiar with the FHWA EJ Reference Guide
  - 53% Yes
  - 46% No

# Q9. What type of training is most appealing?



# Q9. 2016 Comparison

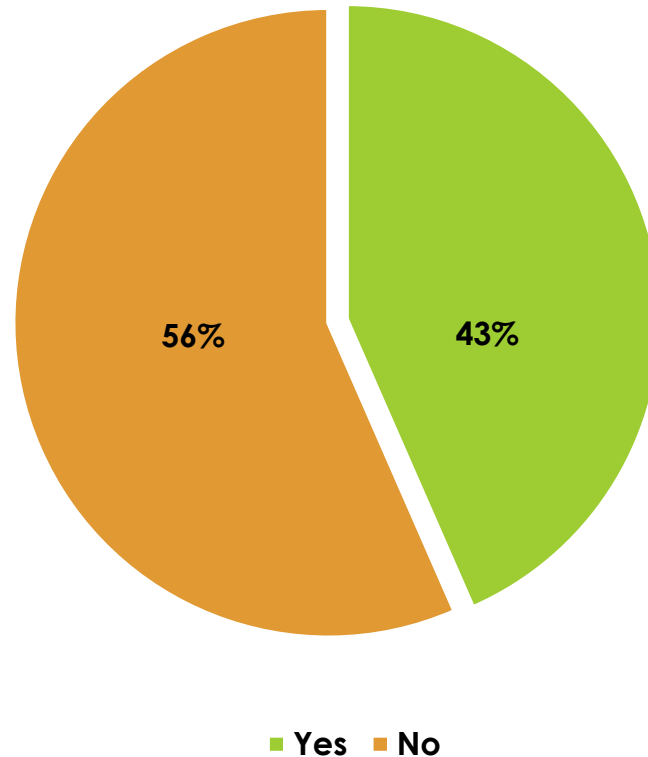
**2019**



**2016**

- In person: 48%
- Online resources: 28%
- Online discussion Forum: 24%

# Q10. Does your agency offer training to consultants/contractors on EJ-related topics?



# Q10. 2016 Comparison

## 2019

- 43% of agencies offer training to consultants/contractors on EJ-related topics
- 56% of agencies do not

## 2016

- Identified need to provide training for both practitioners and consultants
  - Consultants may have less strict travel restrictions
  - State DOTs could explore ways to allow more non-governmental staff attend NHI courses to reduce cost to states
- Increased training is important for expediting project delivery

# Q11. Other Feedback

- “At NDOT, we have an Civil Rights Coordinator. So, I am interested in learning more about EJ in the NEPA process so I am more aware of potential concerns.”
- “Through coordination with the FHWA Division Office, an EJ training is being offered to DeIDOT staff by the FHWA Resource Center this fall.”
- “What does Title VI analysis look like in a environmental document?”
- “EJ communities are particularly vulnerable to climate change. Transportation agencies should consider this in EN analysis.”
- “More discussion on EJ Analysis.”
- “We are trying to get NHI to host training for FRA staff in May, hope that happens, we really need assistance.”
- “Thank you for conducting this survey.”
- “ODOT is facilitating a FHWA-led EJ and Title VI training and workshop in April this year (2019). We have been working with FHWA resource center to provide a targeted training for ODOT's needs. At some time in the future, we do intend to be able to provide EJ training to our consultant partners.”



# Discussion & Next Steps

- Feedback
- Formulating short list of topics