

Redwood Writers Survey Results 2024

Redwood Writers members shared their input on things they love about the branch, and things they would like to see more of. Here are the results of that survey.

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Note: The Redwood Writers board will use this survey to help guide them as they plan future events and strategies for the branch over the coming years.

How can Redwood Writers help you as a writer?

Redwood Writers members expressed a desire for more networking opportunities, advanced craft talks, and critique groups to help improve their writing. Many requested workshops on poetry, flash fiction, screenplays, and publishing, as well as resources on eBook creation, audiobooks, and finding editors. Accessibility concerns arose regarding meeting times and formats, with some preferring more online content and others advocating for in-person interactions to foster community. Overall, members seek a supportive environment with opportunities for personal growth, feedback, and professional development.

What do you enjoy most about Redwood Writers?

Members enjoy the supportive community, camaraderie, and networking opportunities with fellow writers. The variety of events, workshops, and speakers are highly valued, along with the chance to improve their writing skills and participate in anthologies. Many appreciate the friendly atmosphere and the helpfulness of members in sharing advice, providing feedback, and offering encouragement to writers at all levels.

Any other comments or suggestions for the branch?

Members are grateful for the hard work of the board and volunteers, praising the new website and leadership. Many expressed the desire for more recordings of meetings, better support for volunteers, and clearer job descriptions. Some would like a greater focus on the craft of writing, traditional publishing, and poetry, while others appreciate the consistent communication and events. Several members suggested more short story contests and critique opportunities, while a few mentioned challenges with meeting times and hybrid access. Overall, there is enthusiasm for continued improvement and growth.

Events that RW should do more of (open ended answers)

Many members are interested in more book clubs featuring their own books, workshops, and talks on the craft of writing. Several suggested hybrid and Zoom meetings for those who cannot attend in person, as well as events to promote and sell books. There was also interest in onboarding sessions for new members and celebrating member successes at meetings. Some members feel that the current variety of activities is sufficient, while others who have moved or live far away miss the connection through virtual meetings.

Support needed (open ended answers)

The common need among these responses is for more specialized events and resources, particularly focused on meeting industry professionals (agents and publishers), receiving support (like online groups for camaraderie), and more balanced offerings between fiction and poetry events. Additionally, there is a desire for guidance on traditional publishing, feedback on contest entries, and practical advice such as creating a professional headshot.

Main Writing Goals (Open Ended Answers)

The main writing goals of Redwood Writers members include finding literary agents, learning about screenplay writing and marketing, and getting published, whether traditionally or through self-publishing. Many aim to share their stories with others, help people through their writing, and gain proficiency in the craft. Some seek motivation, marketing skills, or writing groups that fit, while others focus on fun and supporting others in finding inner balance and purpose.

To sum it up:

The biggest need among Redwood Writers members seems to be better access to industry professionals (such as agents and publishers) and more resources for improving their craft, including workshops on traditional publishing, screenplay writing, and marketing. Additionally, members are seeking more online and hybrid opportunities for connection and participation, especially for those who cannot attend in-person meetings.

To improve the Redwood Writers membership experience, the branch could:

1. **Offer More Hybrid/Online Events:** Many members prefer or rely on remote access due to distance, time conflicts, or personal circumstances. Hybrid meetings and more Zoom-based events could accommodate this need.
2. **Host Industry-Focused Events:** Members expressed a desire to meet agents, publishers, and learn more about traditional publishing. Bringing in professionals for workshops, talks, and networking could meet this demand.
3. **Expand Workshops on Craft:** Providing more workshops focused on the craft of writing, especially on poetry, traditional publishing, screenwriting, and specialized topics like audiobooks, would address members' desire for growth in their skills.
4. **Create More Opportunities for Book Promotion:** Members want more events focused on promoting and selling their books, even if they are not newly launched, such as book clubs featuring member books, celebration of new releases, and success stories at meetings.
5. **Improve Feedback and Support Systems:** Offering feedback on contest entries, headshot creation workshops, and providing support groups (for camaraderie rather than critique) would address various member needs for improvement and connection.
6. **Increase Focus on Community Building:** More interactive events like member onboarding sessions, networking opportunities, and social gatherings could help new and long-term members feel more connected to the group.
7. **Diversify Event Offerings:** Balancing events between fiction, poetry, and other writing forms like true crime or non-fiction would ensure all genres are adequately represented, keeping members engaged in their specific interests.

Is there a speaker or presenter you can recommend?

- Brooke Warner: Memoir
- Constance Hale: Word & Sentence choices: Sin and Syntax
- C.S. (Susanne) Lakin: Pillars of story/novel development
- Steve Hutchinson on ebooks
- Steve Hutchingson on AI audio
- Marion Roach Smith / memoir
- Joanna Penn / Self-publishing and Selling Direct
- Dan Janal / Write Your Book in a Flash
- Thomas Umstatt- Avoiding Marketing Overwhelm
- Terry Mc Govern/Stage Presence
- Topic: Planning vs Pantsing
- Speaker: traditionally published authors
- Speaker: Agents
- Rebecca Foust/ Poetry
- Joshua Mohr Fiction
- Noelle Oxenhandler/personal essay / nonfiction
- Sherril Jaffe / fiction
- Gillian Conoley/ poetry
- Nic Anslett speculative fiction
- Jordan Rosenfeld scene
- Alethea Eason speculative fiction
- Heather Chavez/\$400k advance first novel
- Grant Faulkner on Flash Fiction and Writing with Vulnerability (lives in Bay Area)
- Susan Goldsmith Woolridge on Poetry (Author of PoemCrazy, she lives locally)
- Catherine Graham- an award winning Canadian poet with a new collection out - could appear by Zoom
- Kathleen Schmidt/Branding & Publicity
- Claudine Wolk/ book marketing
- Jerry Jenkins
- Brenda Smit James
- Jenna Moreci
- Dave Kindlpreur
- Keywords and categories
- Iris Dunkle/writing poetry connected to history & place & organizing the work into a book
- Diana Dempsey/research and structure of historical fiction
- Vinnie Hansen/writing crime/ mystery
- Joseph Millar/ work as poetry source
- Steve Trenam
- Les Bernstein
- Paul DeMarco

- Shawn Langwell ~ sorry that I just missed meeting with Shawn & Crissy.
- kathy fish - flash fiction

Support needed (open ended answers)

- meeting agents publishers
- Online support group for comradery, not critique.
- More Poetry events. Now fiction events outnumber poetry manyfold.
- feedback on contest entries and how to create a headshot
- Have very limited free time.
- Continue what you are doing :)
- Information on traditional publishing

Presentation/Workshop Requests (Open ended answers)

staying motivated and self-compassionate while writing

Children's books

flash/prose poetry

Main Writing Goals (Open Ended Answers)

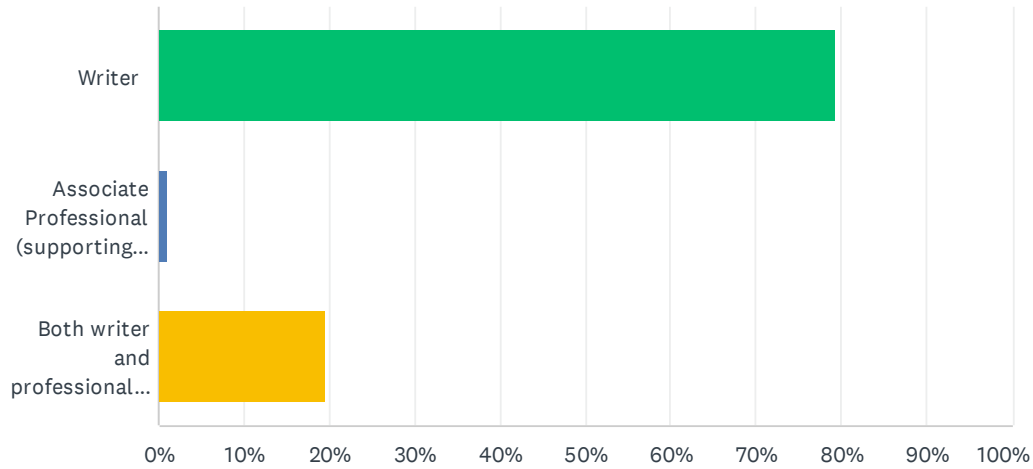
- find a lit agent for my novel in stories
- I would like to see speakers on how to write and format Screen plays and how to sell. Also AI audio books, formatting and options.
- Help people through my writing
- To teach marketing and speaking skills for authors
- get published
- Stories that need to be told
- have fun!
- Publish a novel with a traditional publisher
- help others find inner balance and purpose
- Self publishing support--knowledge sharing
- I would like to find a writing group that fits.
- Figure out how to get my book into more hands
- Share my writings with others
- Get published
- Motivation
- Marketing
- Learn from other writers' experience
- Writing True Crime story, confidential, not want publicity for myself, want Editor. Agent.
- Gain proficiency across the entire scope of the craft of writing.

Events that RW should do more of (open ended answers)

- Book Clubs that only feature members books with the author answering questions.
- meeting Agents publishers
- Segment at meetings Celebration/Announcement of new books and successes, Onboarding sessions for members
- More zoom meetings
- The available activities are many and varied. I don't need more.
- Workshops & Speakers on Craft
- I'm interested in craft workshops or talks, not in promotion/selling
- I'm doing about all I can now. That's mostly Writers' Circle.
- Make monthly meetings hybrid again so I can participate online
- Events to promote & sell books, even if we're not launched recently
- events on zoom for people who cannot attend in person
- I feel like the Club is already offering me the events and activities I desire.
- Interesting idea. Cannot drive at night.
- As I moved to Virginia, I cannot do any of these. I miss the ZOOM... never thought I'd say that.
- Have moved to South Bay, so connection is only remote
- Presentation on hybrid work

Q1 Are you a writer or a professional who works in a field that supports writers and publishing?

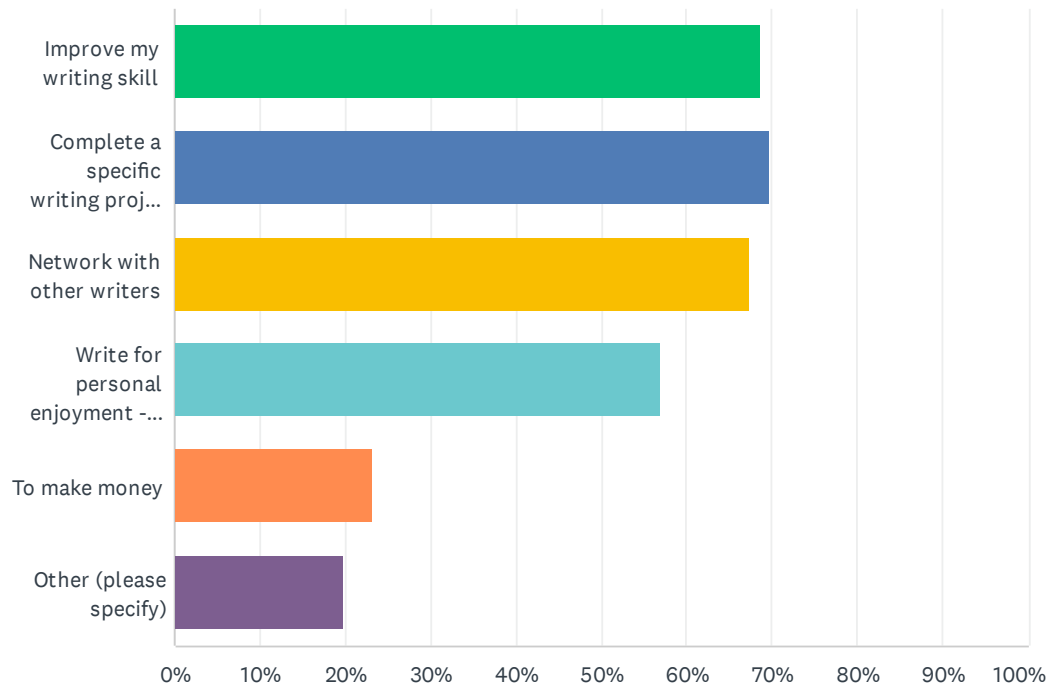
Answered: 87 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Writer	79.31%	69
Associate Professional (supporting writing and writers)	1.15%	1
Both writer and professional who works to support writers	19.54%	17
TOTAL		87

Q2 What are your main writing goals? Check all that apply.

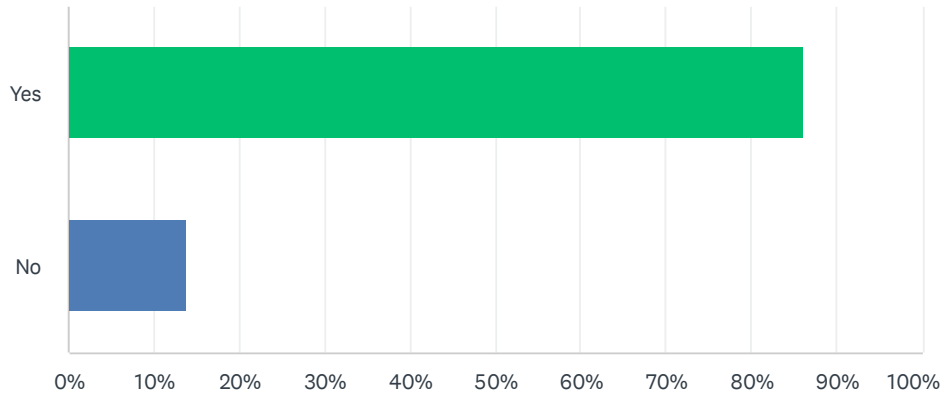
Answered: 86 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improve my writing skill	68.60%	59
Complete a specific writing project (novel, memoir, short story, poem, etc.)	69.77%	60
Network with other writers	67.44%	58
Write for personal enjoyment - being creative	56.98%	49
To make money	23.26%	20
Other (please specify)	19.77%	17
Total Respondents: 86		

Q3 Do you have published writing (books, stories, poems, essays, articles, etc.)?

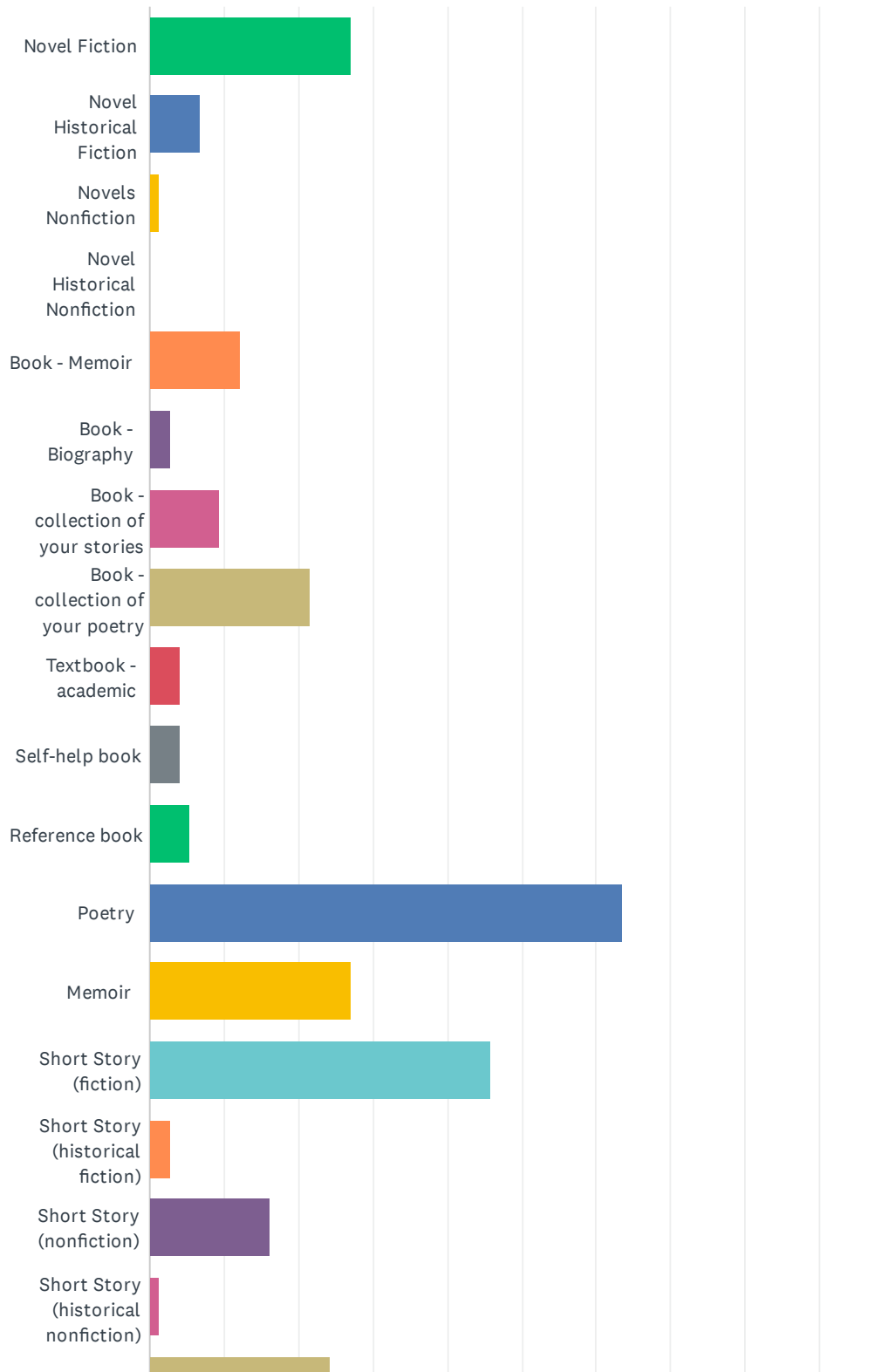
Answered: 86 Skipped: 1

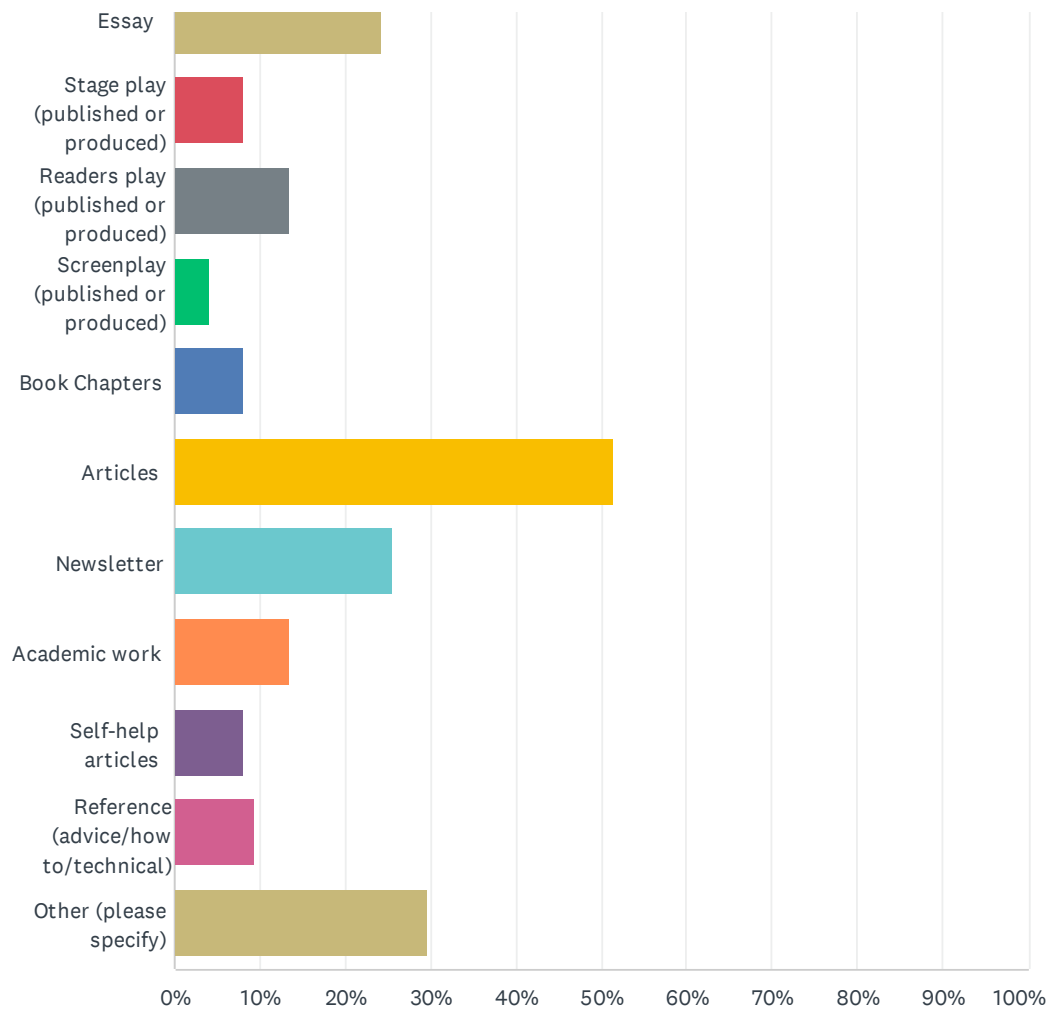


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	86.05%	74
No	13.95%	12
Total Respondents: 86		

Q4 Check all that apply. Do you have published works including published book(s) you have written and writing appearing in other books, anthologies, collections, newsletters, online sites, contest, blogs, etc., ?

Answered: 74 Skipped: 13

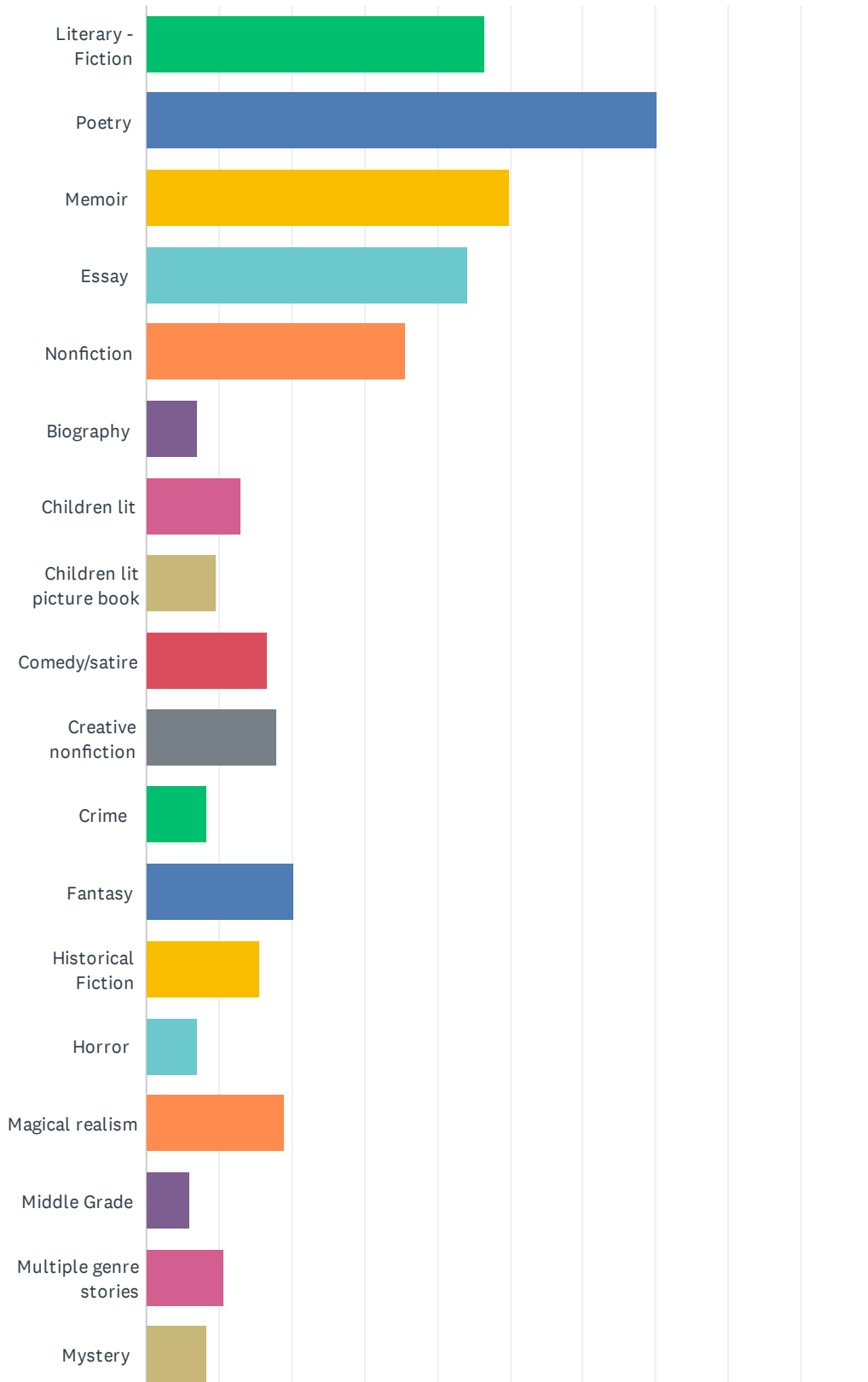


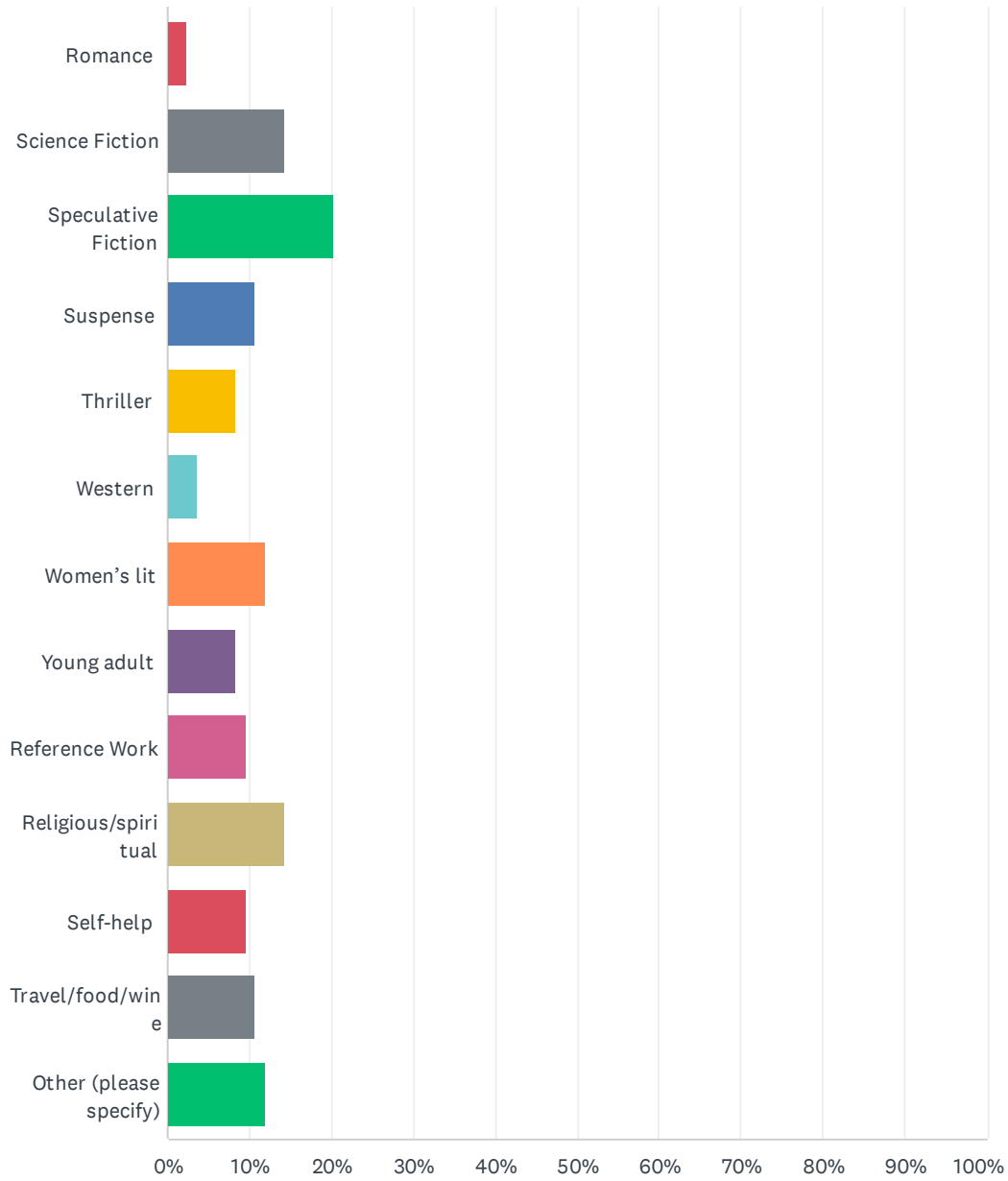


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Novel Fiction	27.03%	20
Novel Historical Fiction	6.76%	5
Novels Nonfiction	1.35%	1
Novel Historical Nonfiction	0.00%	0
Book - Memoir	12.16%	9
Book - Biography	2.70%	2
Book - collection of your stories	9.46%	7
Book - collection of your poetry	21.62%	16
Textbook - academic	4.05%	3
Self-help book	4.05%	3
Reference book	5.41%	4
Poetry	63.51%	47
Memoir	27.03%	20
Short Story (fiction)	45.95%	34
Short Story (historical fiction)	2.70%	2
Short Story (nonfiction)	16.22%	12
Short Story (historical nonfiction)	1.35%	1
Essay	24.32%	18
Stage play (published or produced)	8.11%	6
Readers play (published or produced)	13.51%	10
Screenplay (published or produced)	4.05%	3
Book Chapters	8.11%	6
Articles	51.35%	38
Newsletter	25.68%	19
Academic work	13.51%	10
Self-help articles	8.11%	6
Reference (advice/how to/technical)	9.46%	7
Other (please specify)	29.73%	22
Total Respondents: 74		

Q5 Please check all the genre in which you have written (published or unpublished). (OPTIONAL).

Answered: 84 Skipped: 3

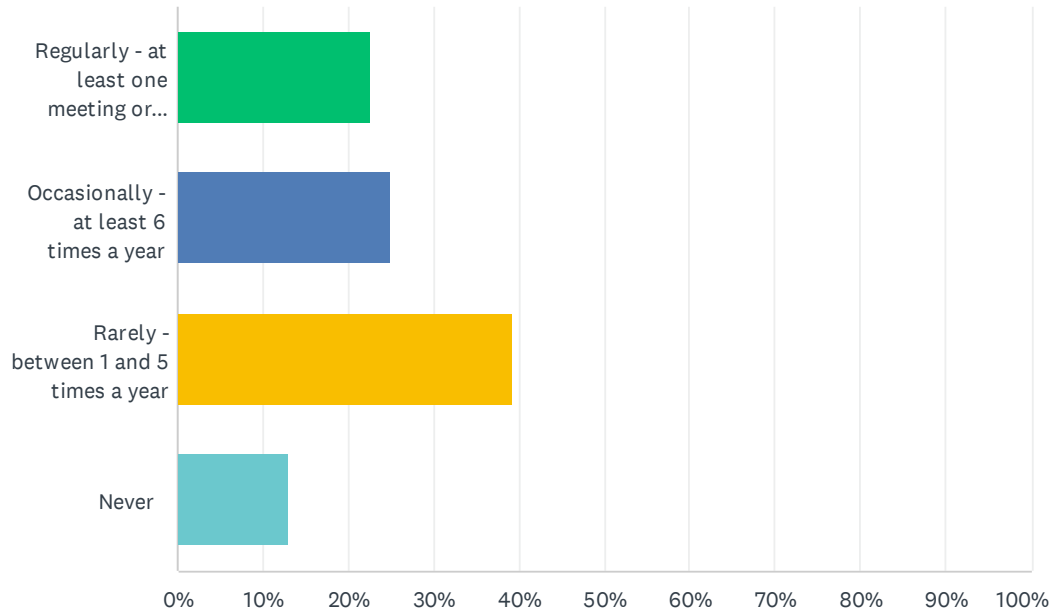




ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Literary - Fiction	46.43%	39
Poetry	70.24%	59
Memoir	50.00%	42
Essay	44.05%	37
Nonfiction	35.71%	30
Biography	7.14%	6
Children lit	13.10%	11
Children lit picture book	9.52%	8
Comedy/satire	16.67%	14
Creative nonfiction	17.86%	15
Crime	8.33%	7
Fantasy	20.24%	17
Historical Fiction	15.48%	13
Horror	7.14%	6
Magical realism	19.05%	16
Middle Grade	5.95%	5
Multiple genre stories	10.71%	9
Mystery	8.33%	7
Romance	2.38%	2
Science Fiction	14.29%	12
Speculative Fiction	20.24%	17
Suspense	10.71%	9
Thriller	8.33%	7
Western	3.57%	3
Women's lit	11.90%	10
Young adult	8.33%	7
Reference Work	9.52%	8
Religious/spiritual	14.29%	12
Self-help	9.52%	8
Travel/food/wine	10.71%	9
Other (please specify)	11.90%	10
Total Respondents: 84		

Q6 How often do you participate in (attend) a Redwood Writers meetings and events?

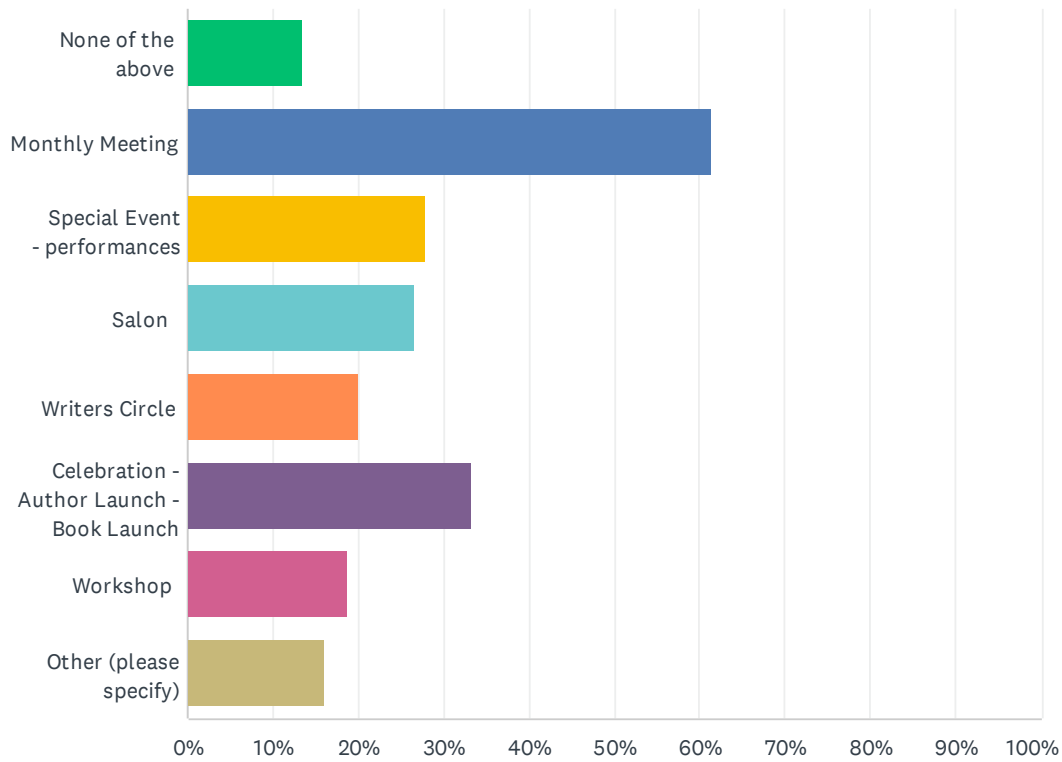
Answered: 84 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Regularly - at least one meeting or event each month	22.62%	19
Occasionally - at least 6 times a year	25.00%	21
Rarely - between 1 and 5 times a year	39.29%	33
Never	13.10%	11
TOTAL		84

Q7 In the past six months what have you attended? Check all that apply.

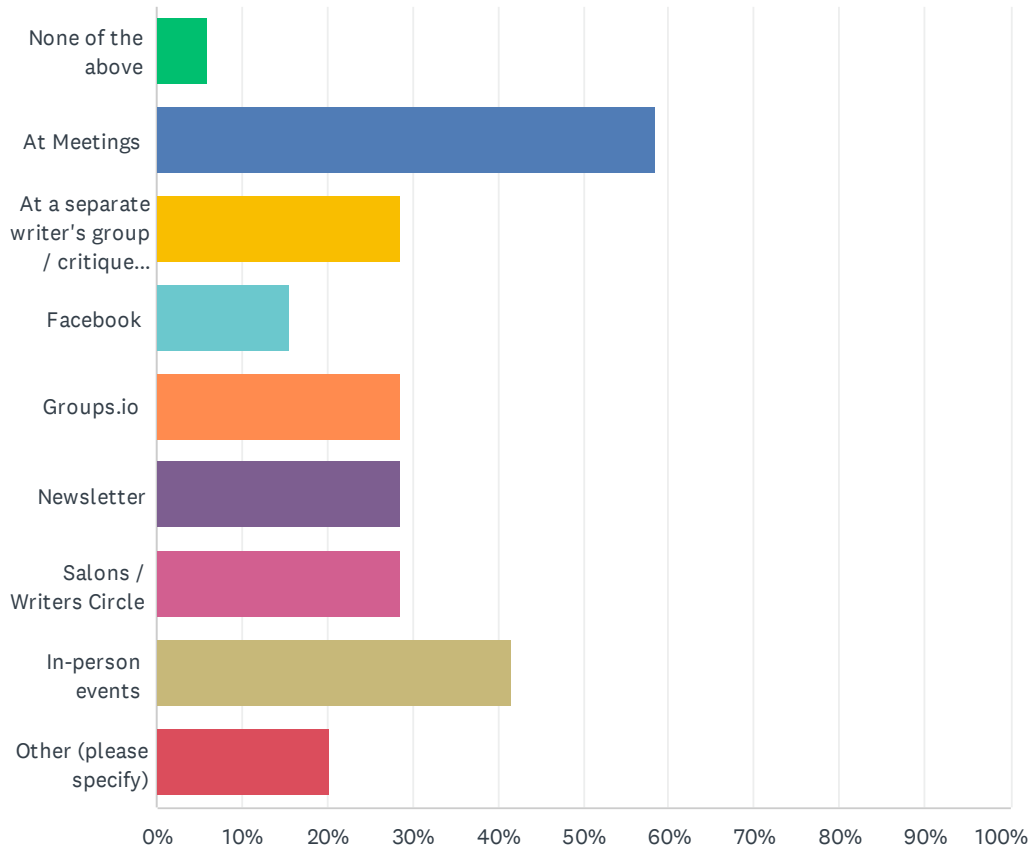
Answered: 75 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	13.33%	10
Monthly Meeting	61.33%	46
Special Event - performances	28.00%	21
Salon	26.67%	20
Writers Circle	20.00%	15
Celebration - Author Launch - Book Launch	33.33%	25
Workshop	18.67%	14
Other (please specify)	16.00%	12
Total Respondents: 75		

Q8 How do you connect with other members? Check all that apply.

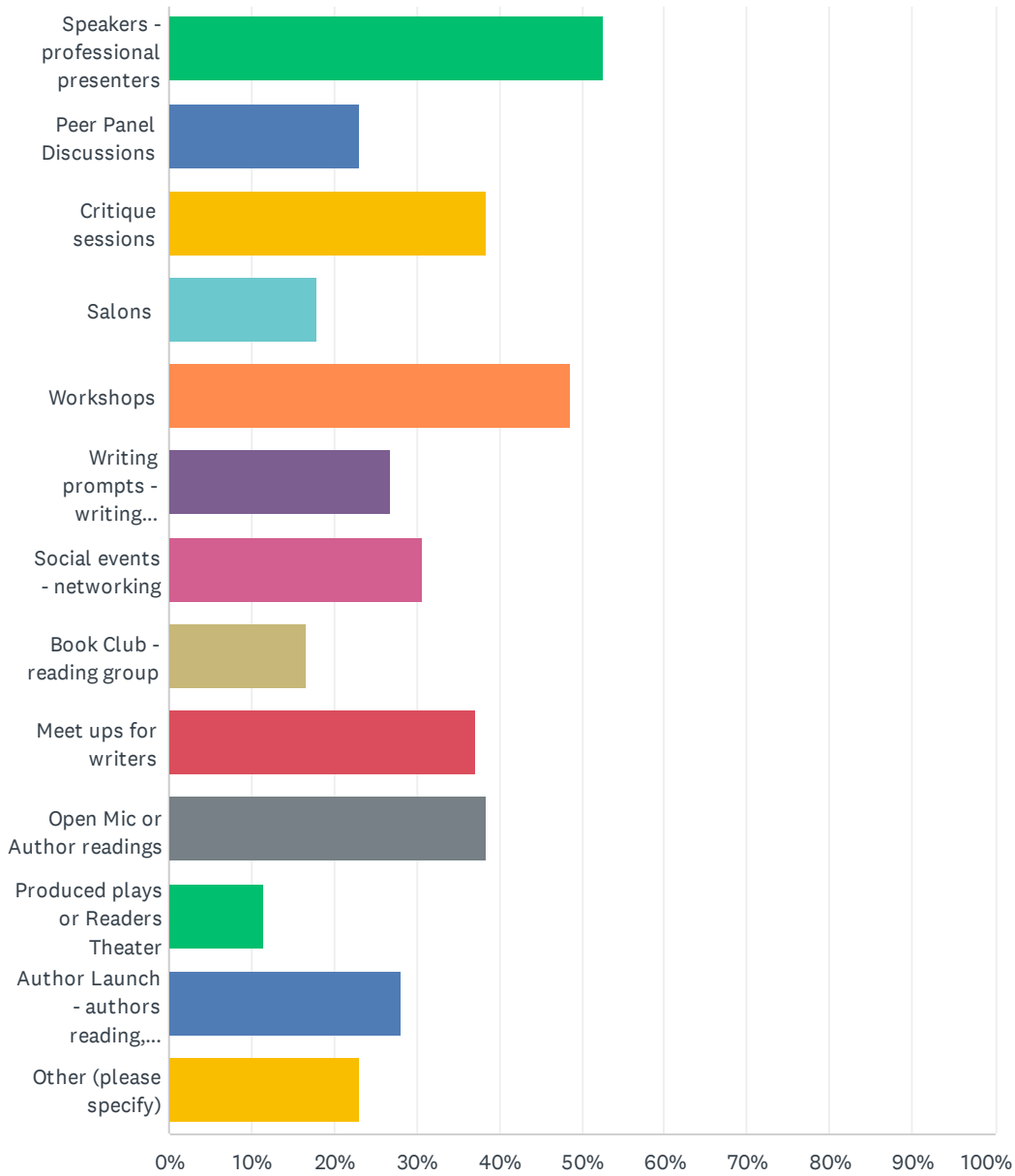
Answered: 84 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	5.95%	5
At Meetings	58.33%	49
At a separate writer's group / critique group	28.57%	24
Facebook	15.48%	13
Groups.io	28.57%	24
Newsletter	28.57%	24
Salons / Writers Circle	28.57%	24
In-person events	41.67%	35
Other (please specify)	20.24%	17
Total Respondents: 84		

Q9 What types of activities or events would you like Redwood Writers to offer more frequently? Check all that apply.

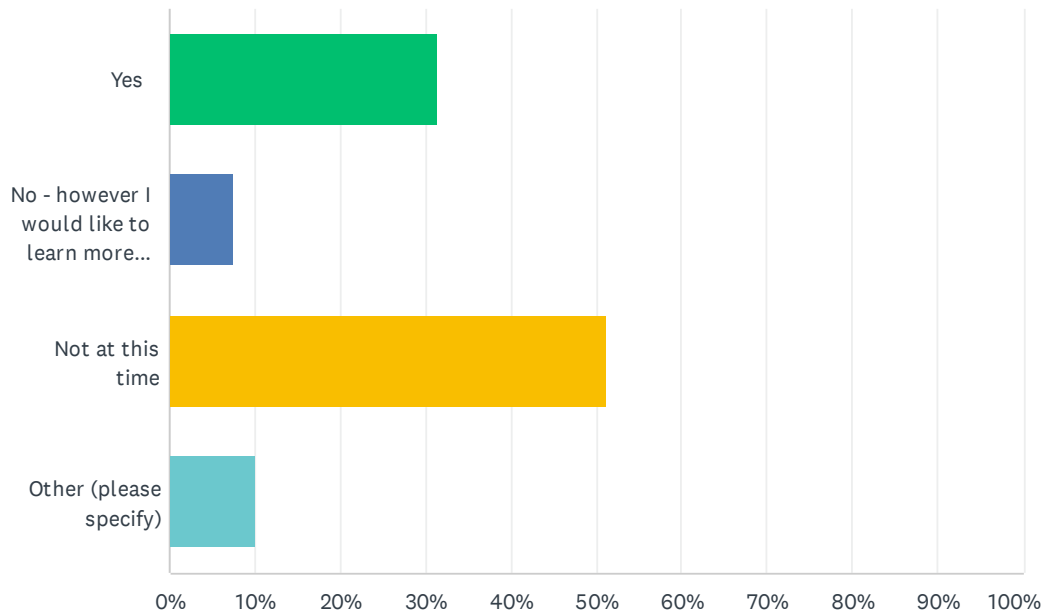
Answered: 78 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Speakers - professional presenters	52.56%	41
Peer Panel Discussions	23.08%	18
Critique sessions	38.46%	30
Salons	17.95%	14
Workshops	48.72%	38
Writing prompts - writing challenges	26.92%	21
Social events - networking	30.77%	24
Book Club - reading group	16.67%	13
Meet ups for writers	37.18%	29
Open Mic or Author readings	38.46%	30
Produced plays or Readers Theater	11.54%	9
Author Launch - authors reading, promoting, selling their books.	28.21%	22
Other (please specify)	23.08%	18
Total Respondents: 78		

Q10 Have you volunteered at a meeting or event?

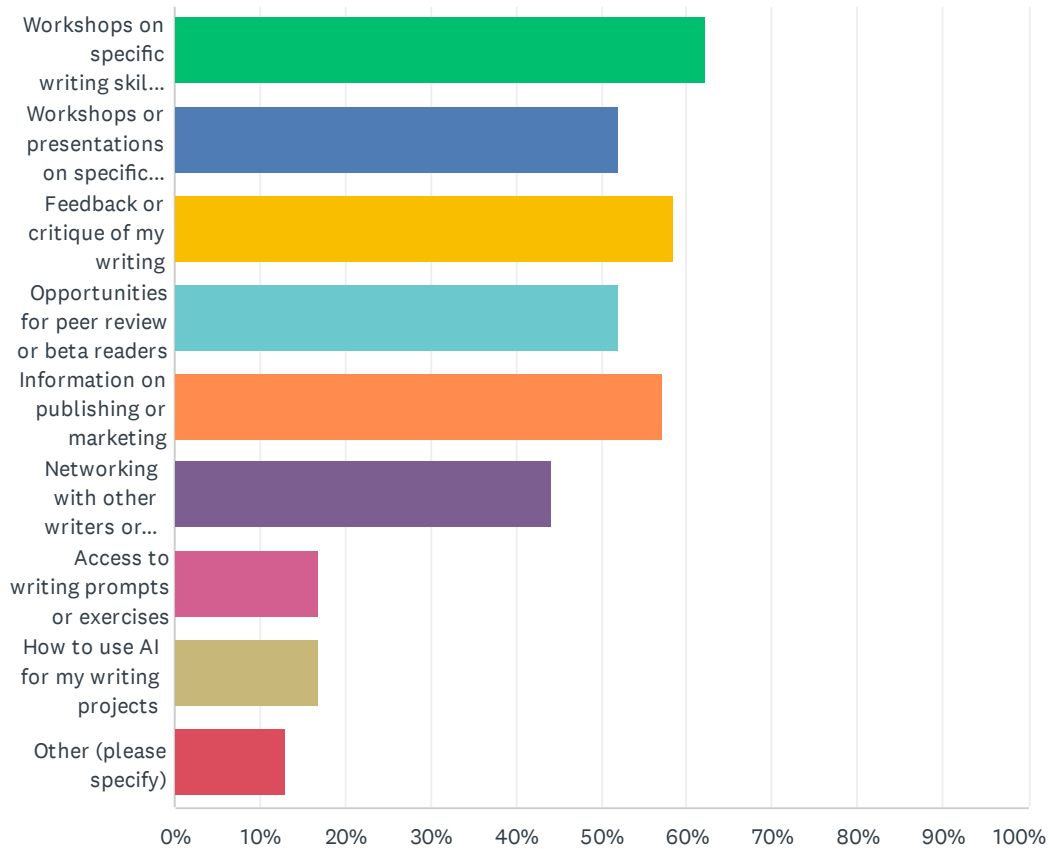
Answered: 80 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.25%	25
No - however I would like to learn more about volunteering	7.50%	6
Not at this time	51.25%	41
Other (please specify)	10.00%	8
TOTAL		80

Q11 What kind of support or resources would help you improve your writing? Check all that apply.

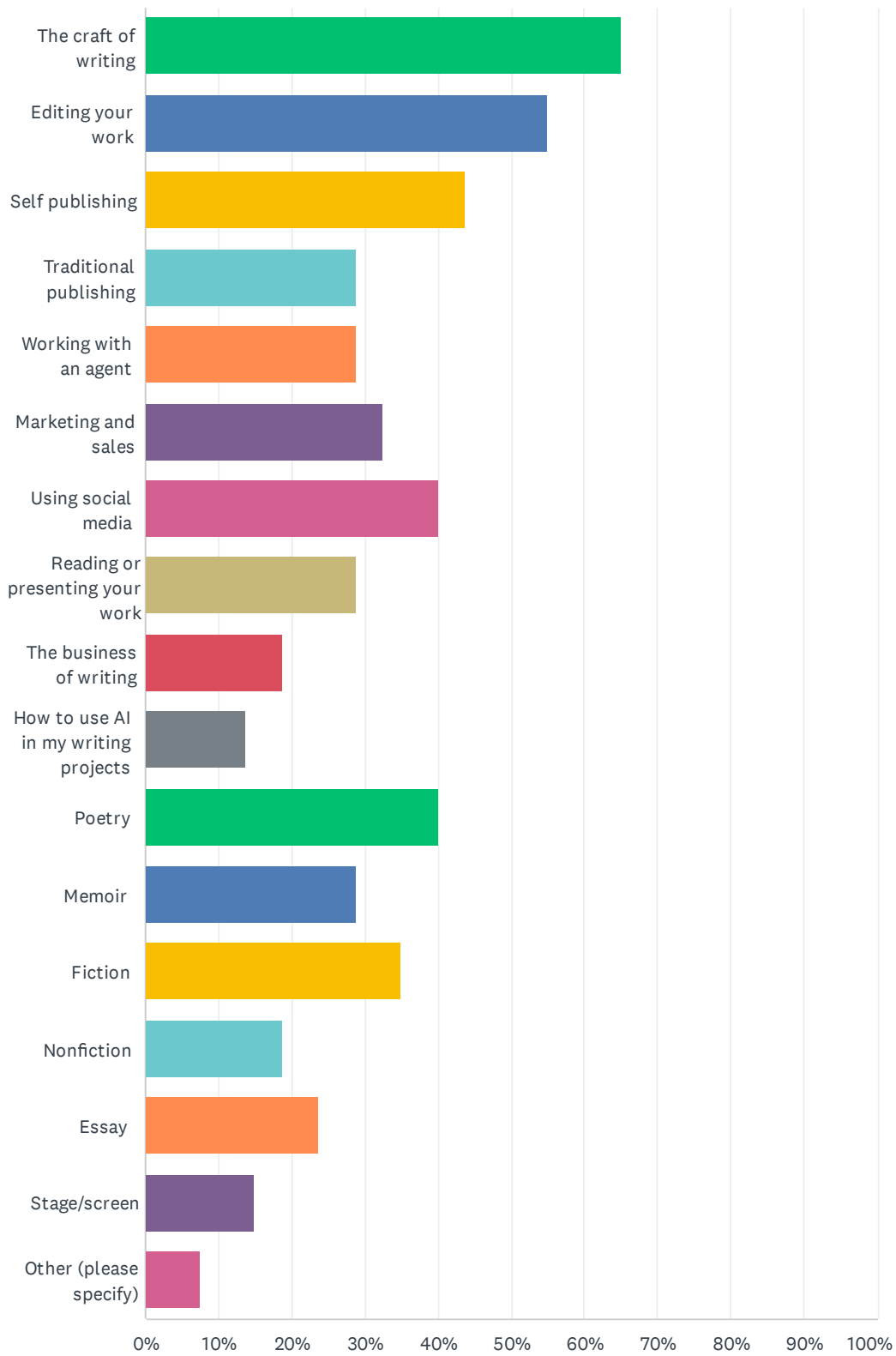
Answered: 77 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Workshops on specific writing skills - craft	62.34%	48
Workshops or presentations on specific genre	51.95%	40
Feedback or critique of my writing	58.44%	45
Opportunities for peer review or beta readers	51.95%	40
Information on publishing or marketing	57.14%	44
Networking with other writers or industry professionals	44.16%	34
Access to writing prompts or exercises	16.88%	13
How to use AI for my writing projects	16.88%	13
Other (please specify)	12.99%	10
Total Respondents: 77		

Q12 What types of presentation or workshop would you like to see? Check all that apply.

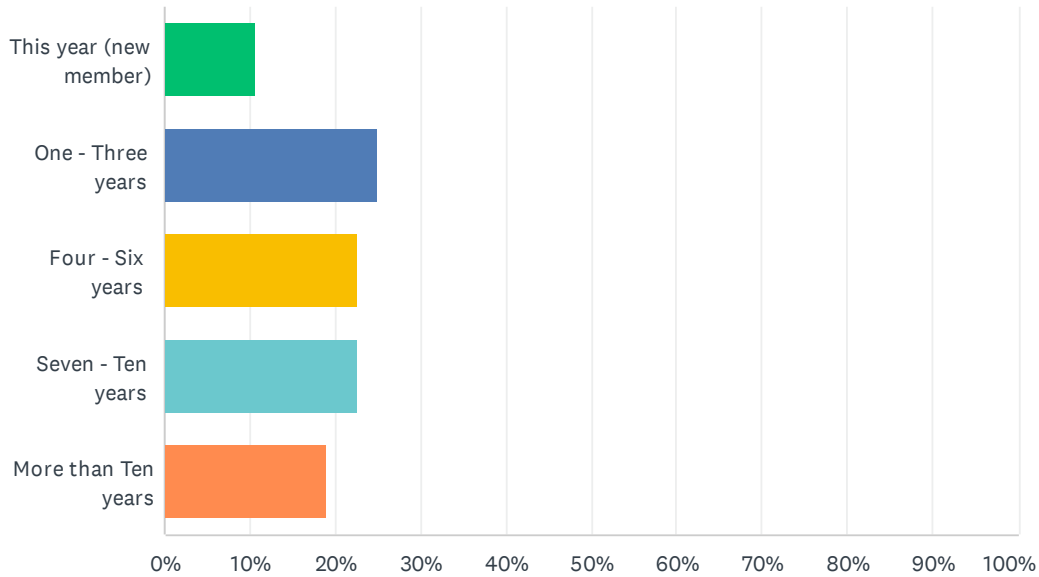
Answered: 80 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
The craft of writing	65.00%	52
Editing your work	55.00%	44
Self publishing	43.75%	35
Traditional publishing	28.75%	23
Working with an agent	28.75%	23
Marketing and sales	32.50%	26
Using social media	40.00%	32
Reading or presenting your work	28.75%	23
The business of writing	18.75%	15
How to use AI in my writing projects	13.75%	11
Poetry	40.00%	32
Memoir	28.75%	23
Fiction	35.00%	28
Nonfiction	18.75%	15
Essay	23.75%	19
Stage/screen	15.00%	12
Other (please specify)	7.50%	6
Total Respondents: 80		

Q13 How long have you been a member of Redwood Writers or another branch of the California Writers Club? Write the year.

Answered: 84 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
This year (new member)	10.71%	9
One - Three years	25.00%	21
Four - Six years	22.62%	19
Seven - Ten years	22.62%	19
More than Ten years	19.05%	16
TOTAL		84

Q14 How can Redwood Writers help you as a writer? Write your answer in the text box. (optional)

Answered: 35 Skipped: 52

Q15 What do you enjoy most about Redwood Writers? Write your answer in the text box. (Optional)

Answered: 45 Skipped: 42

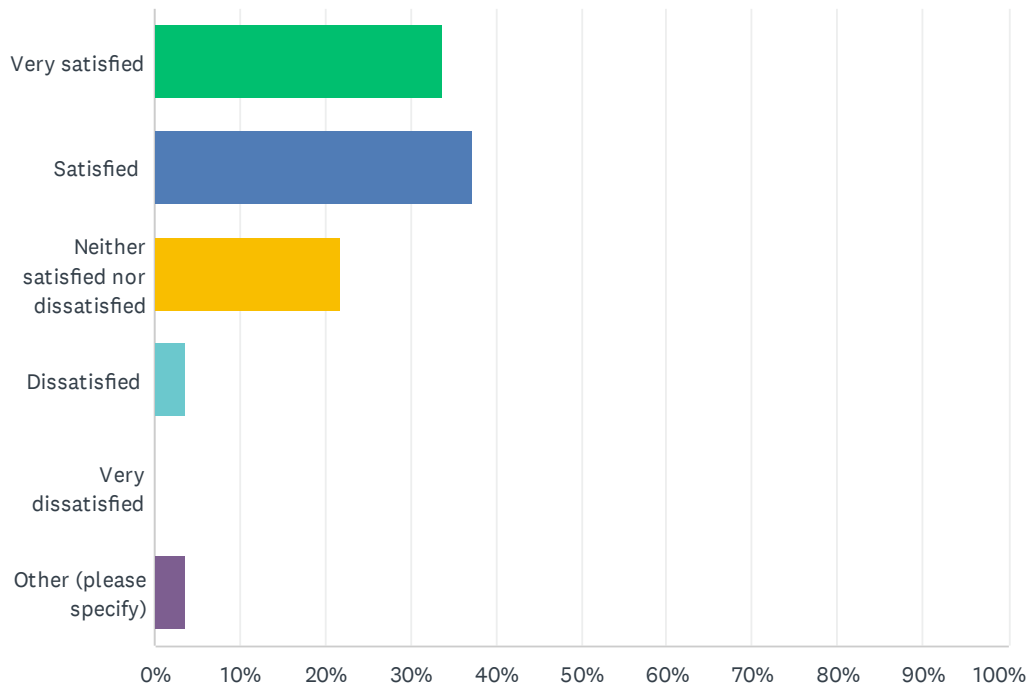
Q16 Is there a speaker or presenter you can recommend?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 68

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name / Topic	100.00%	19
Name / Topic	57.89%	11
Name / Topic	42.11%	8

Q17 How satisfied are you with the Redwood branch?

Answered: 83 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	33.73%	28
Satisfied	37.35%	31
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21.69%	18
Dissatisfied	3.61%	3
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	3.61%	3
TOTAL		83

Q18 Any other comments or suggestions for the branch?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 56