

Sharing is C(omp)aring: The Value of Cross-Institutional Data

Alex Lussenhop, Joe Heimlich, Ph.D., and Elisa Israel

Visitor Studies Association Conference

Saturday, July 22, 2017



INSTITUTE *of*
Museum and **Library**
SERVICES

Why are we (visitor studies professionals,
museums and other institutions)
interested in comparing data?

COVES

=

Collaboration for Ongoing
Visitor Experience Studies



COVES is designed to unite science centers in systematically collecting audience-level data, with a focus on institutional and field-wide improvement.



Why did we want to compare?

- How do we compare to other museums?
- How do these data enable us to improve the science center field?
- What is the broader context for our data?
- Compare: who visits, why they visit, what they do, and how they feel about the visit



Grant-funded timeline



→ Year 1: Project piloting ✓

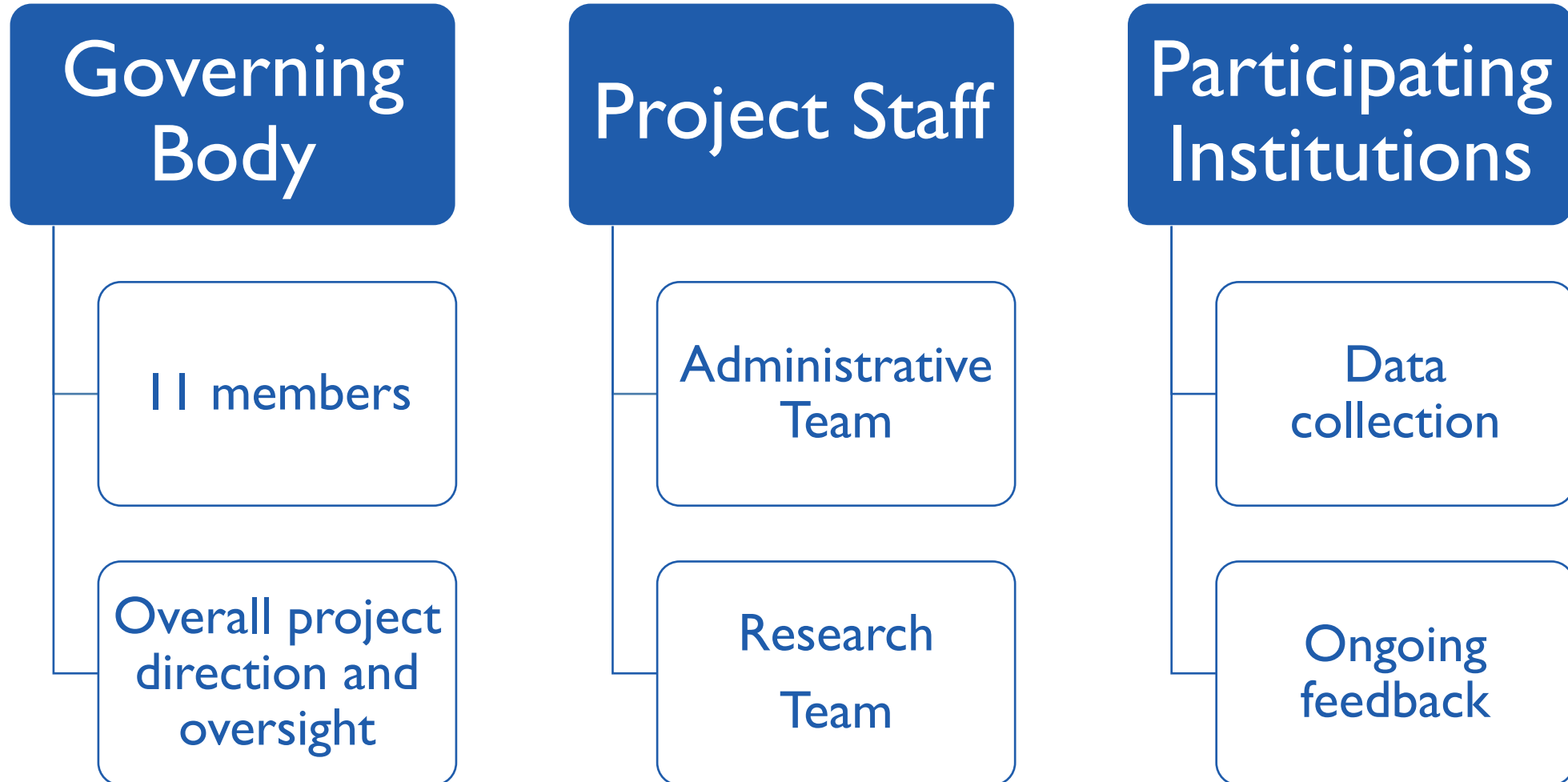
→ Year 2: Establishment & expansion ✓

→ Year 3: Launching the broader collaboration

→ [Year 4: No-cost extension!]



Current organizational structure





Science Museum of Minnesota



Museum of Science



New York Hall of Science



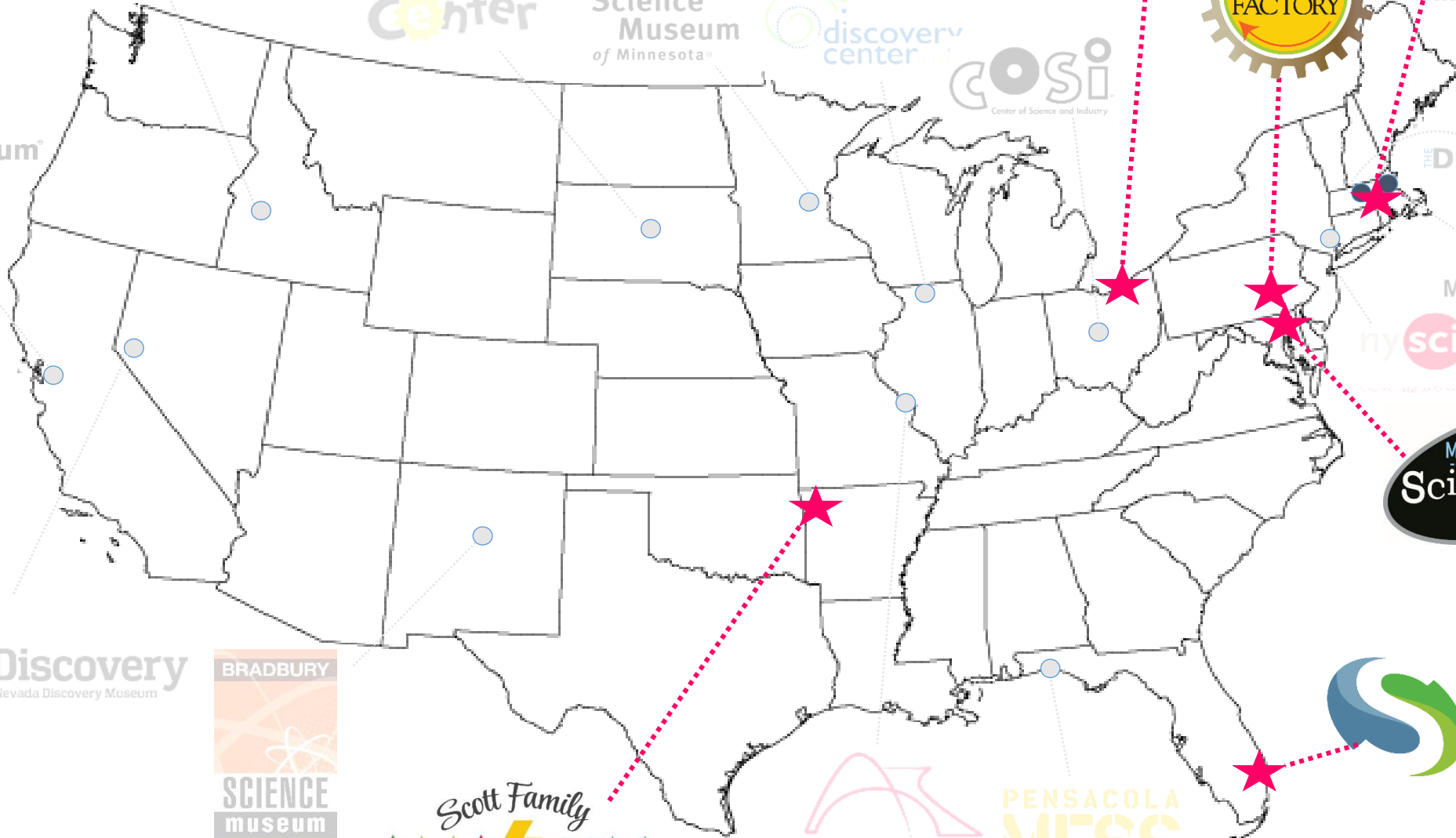


Museum of Science



New York Hall of Science







Museum of Science



SOUTH FLORIDA SCIENCE CENTER AND AQUARIUM





How we do it

- Trainings





How we do it

- Trainings
- Provide instruments and protocols



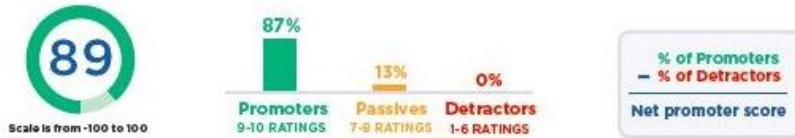


How we do it

- Trainings
- Provide instruments and protocols
- Individual & aggregate reporting

Sample Survey Report | Data collected from the Discovery Center Museum

Overall likelihood-to-recommend (net promotor score)



Who are our visitors? (individual traits)

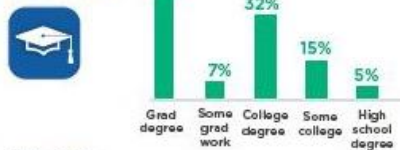
Gender



Adult age



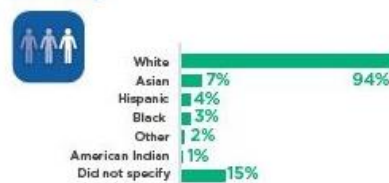
Education



Membership



Ethnicity



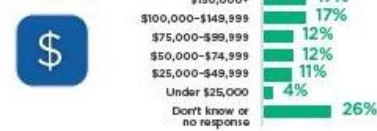
Frequency of visitation



Contact info and URL

Who are our visitors? (group traits)

Income



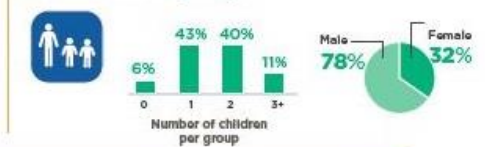
Disability



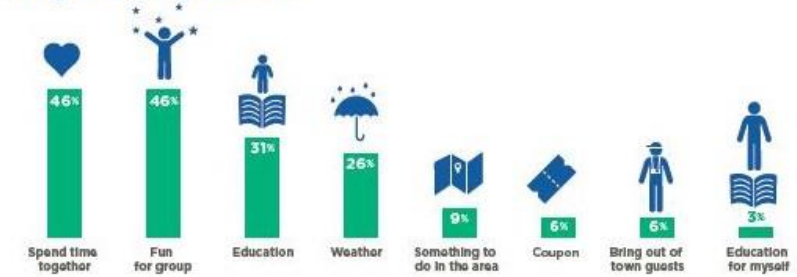
Location of Residence



Children in the group



Why did they come?



What did they do during their visit?



How did they feel about the visit? (net promotor scores)



Contact info and URL



How we do it

- Trainings
- Provide instruments and protocols
- Individual & aggregate reporting
- Provide contextually relevant data



Aggregate Data Su...

Who Visits? (Aggre...

Institutional Data S...

Who Visits? (Institu...

Comparison to Agg...



Filtering by:

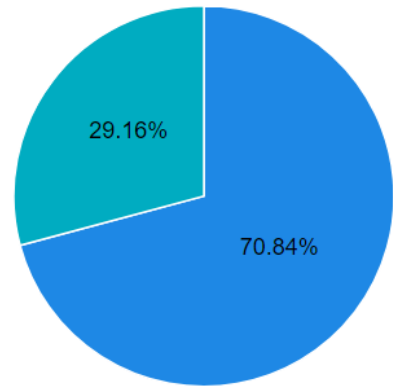
member: Are you a member?: All ▾

[Hide Filters](#)

Page Options ▾

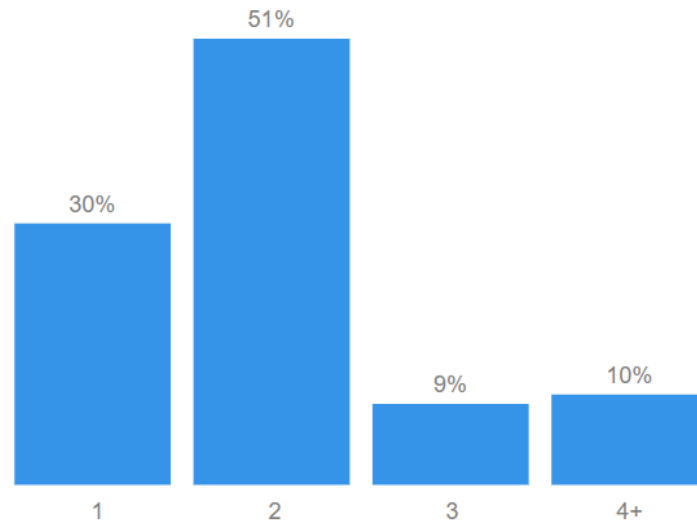
Edit Page

Membership **4781** Responses ▾

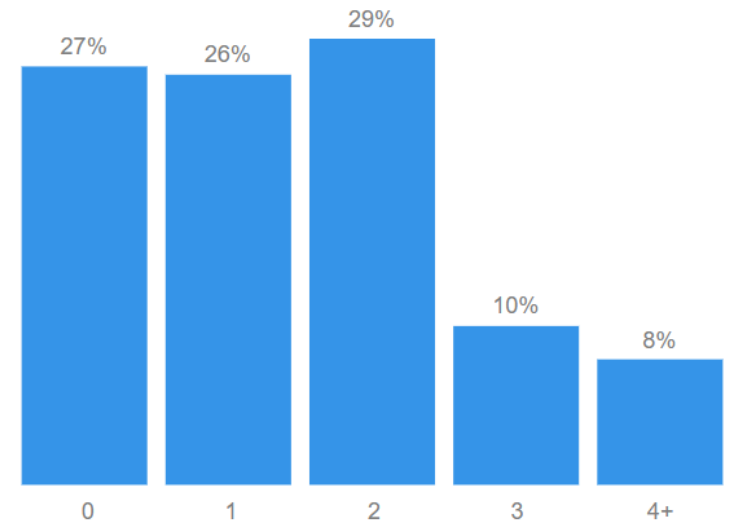


Members Non-members

Number of adults in groups **4767** Responses ▾



Number of children in groups **4721** Responses ▾



Child ages ▾

Adult ages ▾



How we do it

- Trainings
- Provide instruments and protocols
- Individual & aggregate reporting
- Provide contextually relevant data
- Contact with project staff



ASSOCIATION OF
SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY CENTERS

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NEED DATA COLLECTION GUIDANCE? CHECK OUT THE COVES ...

By: Michelle M. Kenner , 16 days ago

New documents are up in the resource library! Check out [Data Collection Key Points](#) , which is a great document to train new data collectors who were not able to attend the onsite training. The [2016 Report Placemat Walk-through](#) explains each section ...



VISITOR CONFUSION WITH EXPERIENCE RATING QUESTIONS

By: Alexander Lussenhop , 22 days ago

Hi all, I received a couple of questions from data collectors recently about visitor confusion with the museum experience ratings on the COVES survey and thought



Welcome to the COVES CoP! Here you can:

- Connect with members of the COVES team and staff at other participating institutions
- Access members-only resources, such as aggregate reports, training webinars, and capacity building documents
- Keep up-to-date with the latest COVES news and events



Science Museum of Minnesota



Museum of Science



New York Hall of Science



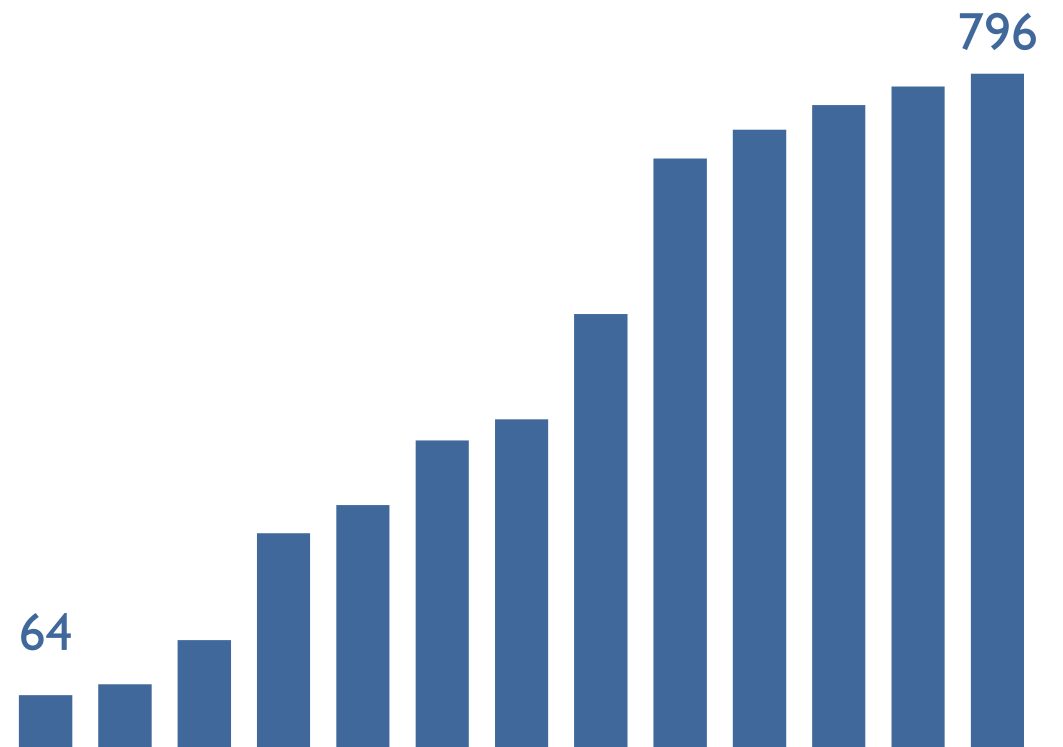


Data Summary

12 months of data



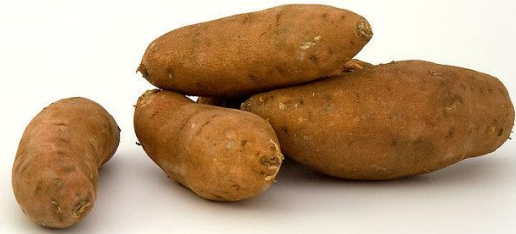
From 13 institutions,
sample sizes from



What kinds of comparisons can we make?

Examples created with COVES Year 1 aggregate data
Collected July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017







vaca și izmenele (the cow and the longjohns)
(Romanian)

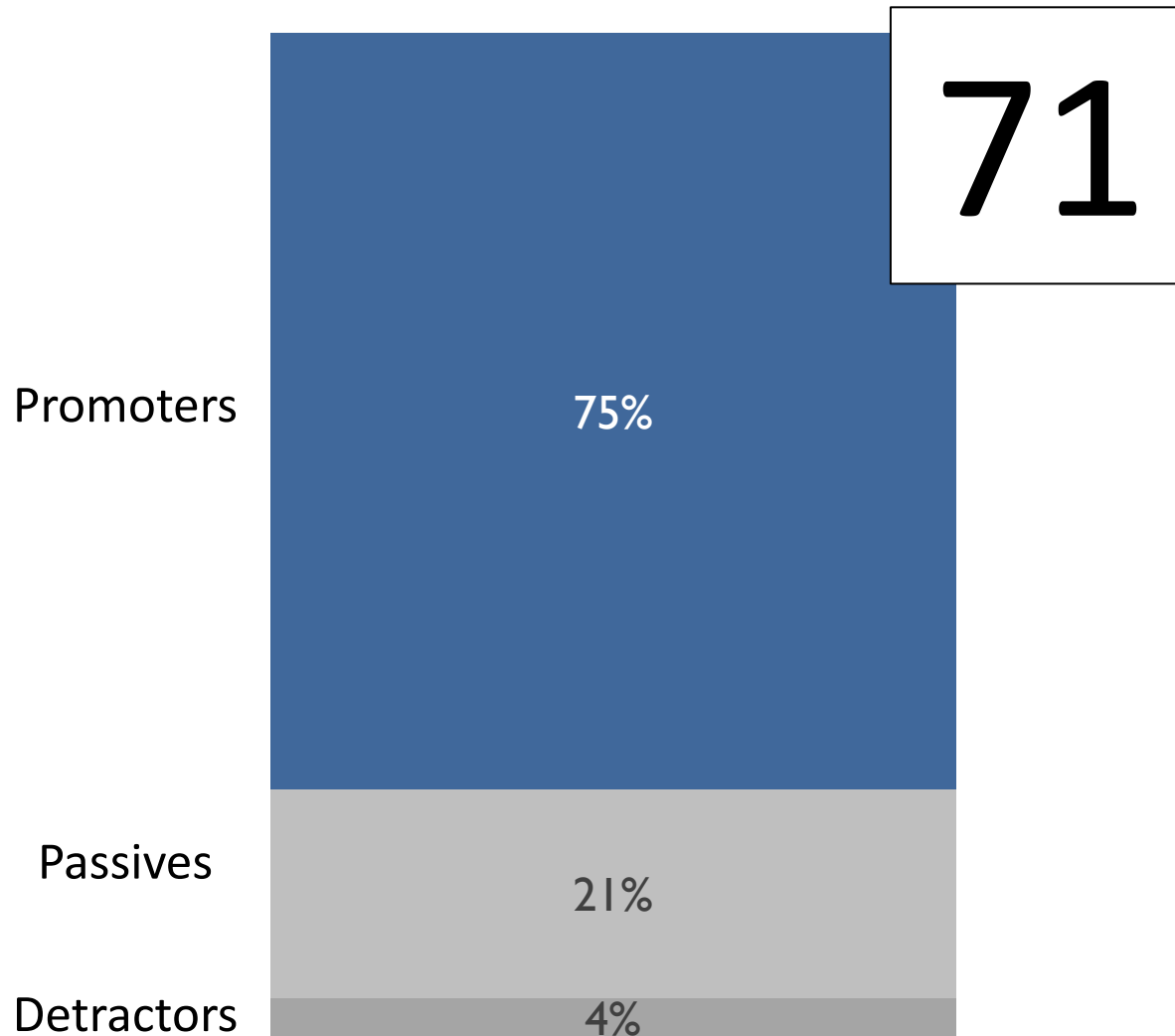


Comparing one to the aggregate





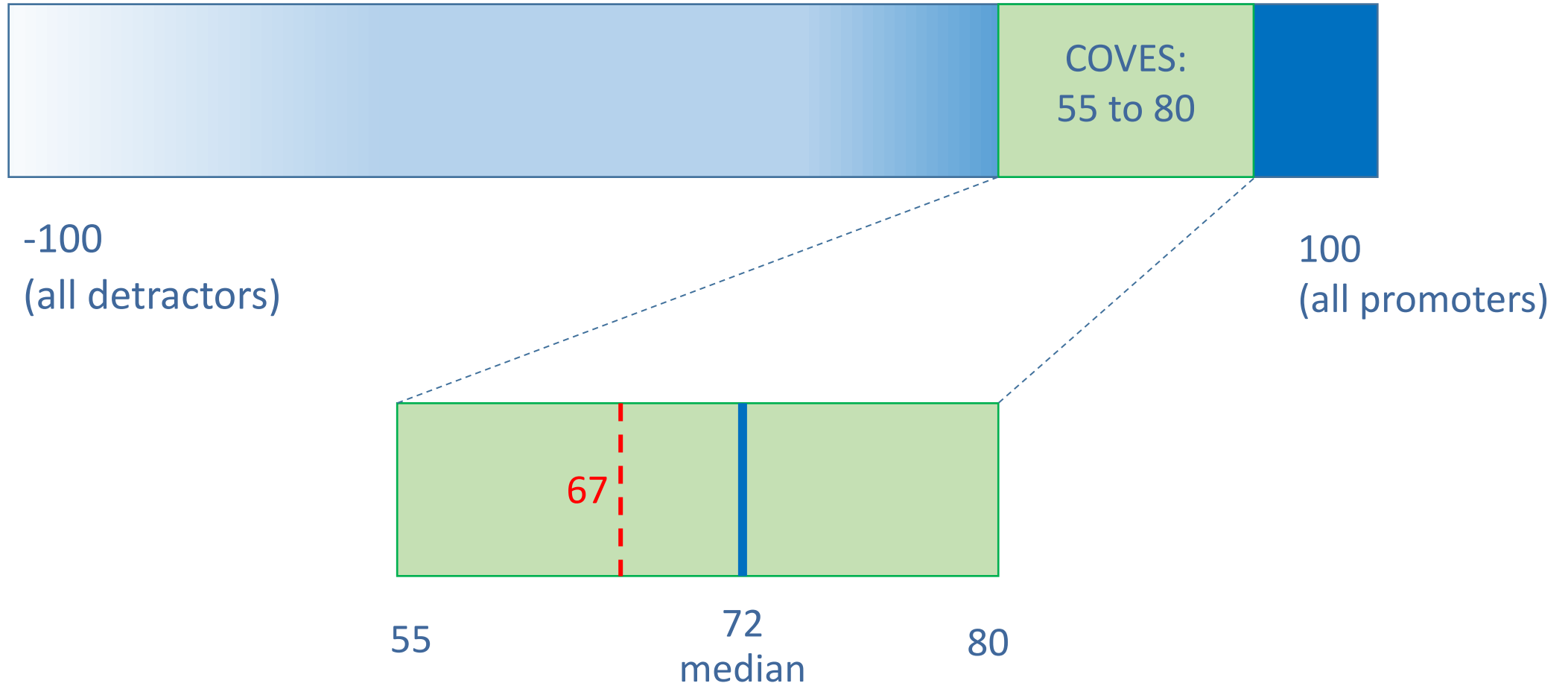
Aggregated Net Promoter Score



COVES range:
55* to 80



Comparing Net Promoter Scores





Motivations for visitation - Aggregate

37%

Spend time together

17%

Education for group / kids



To see a specific exhibit, program, show

25%

Fun / entertainment for group

Education for myself



Something to do while visiting



Fun / entertainment for myself



Because that's what good parents do



Had coupon/free pass



To bring out-of-town guests



Something to do in poor weather

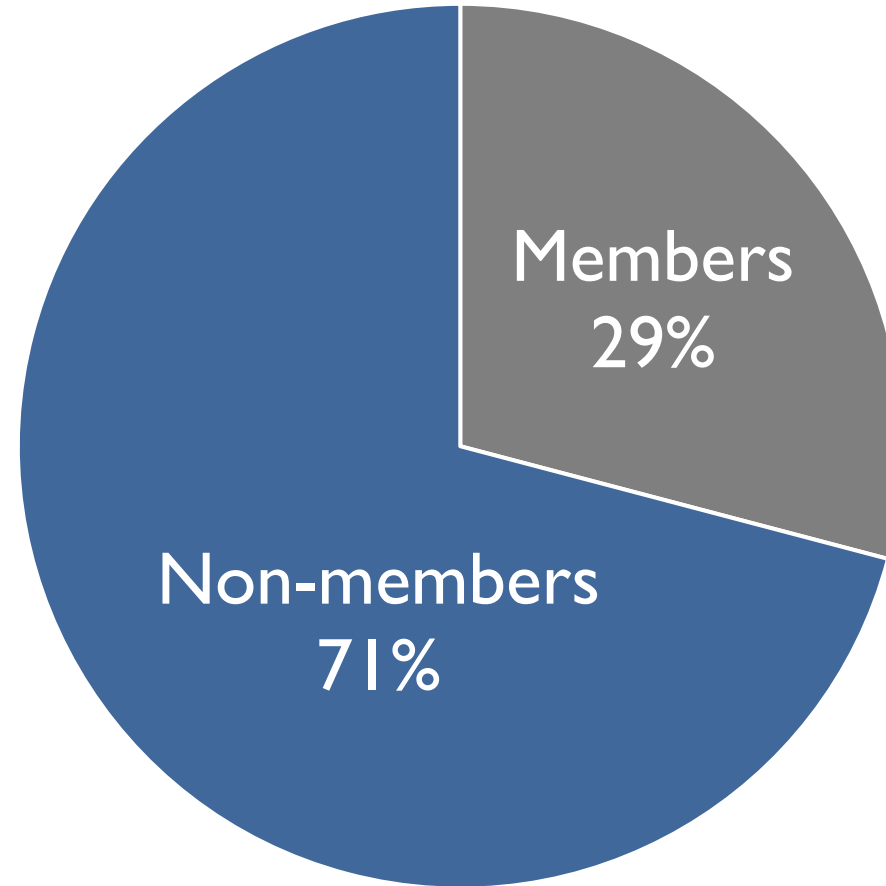


Comparing within a smaller group





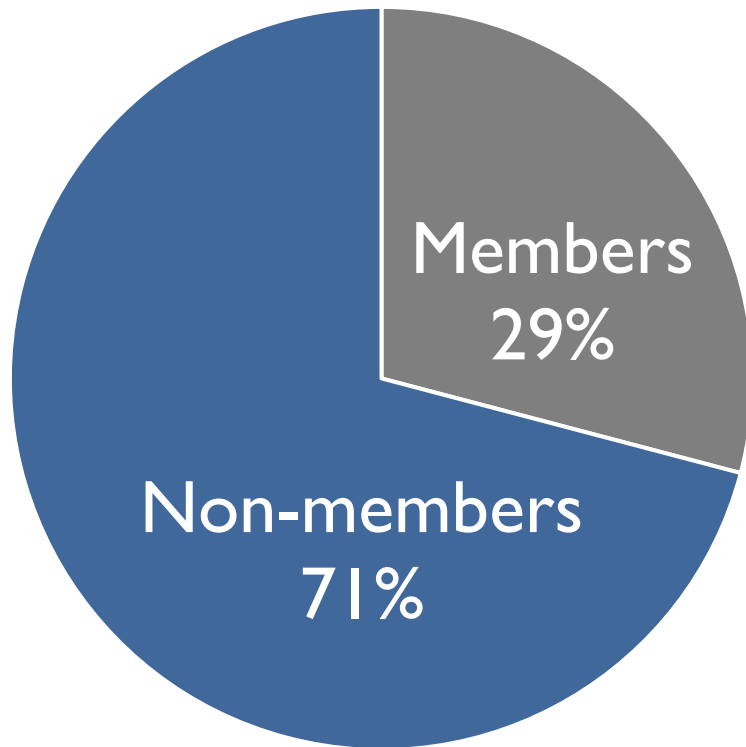
Comparing Membership - Aggregate



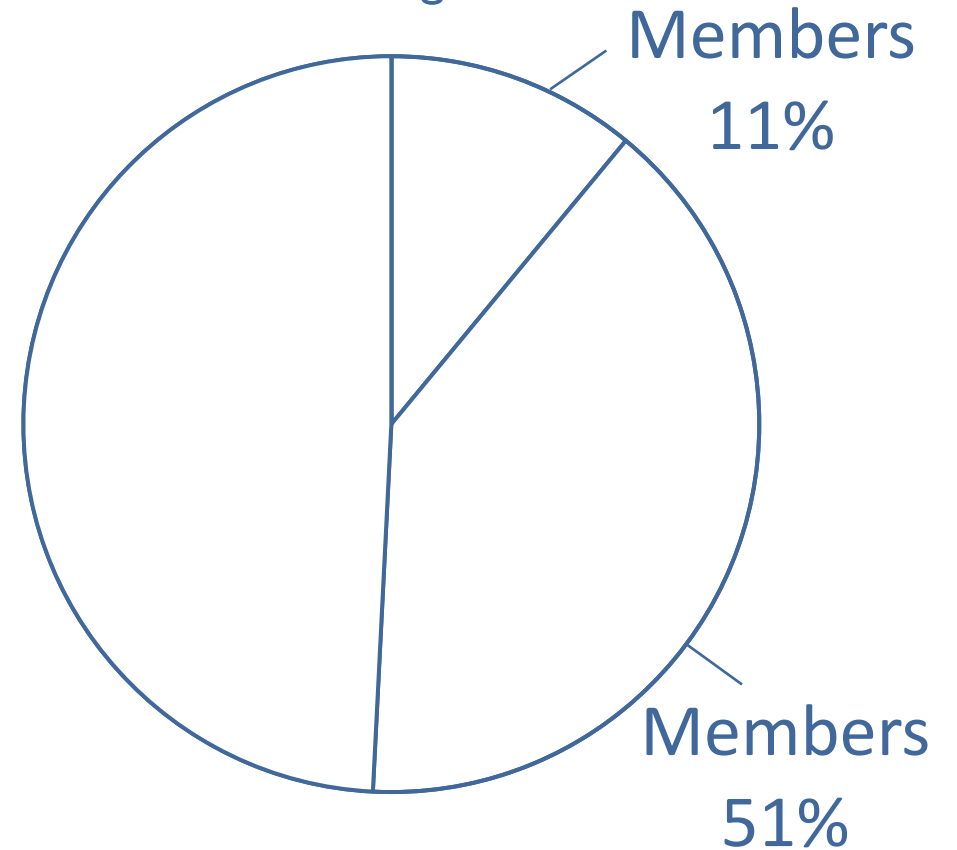


Comparing Membership – Large Institutions

Large Institutions Only

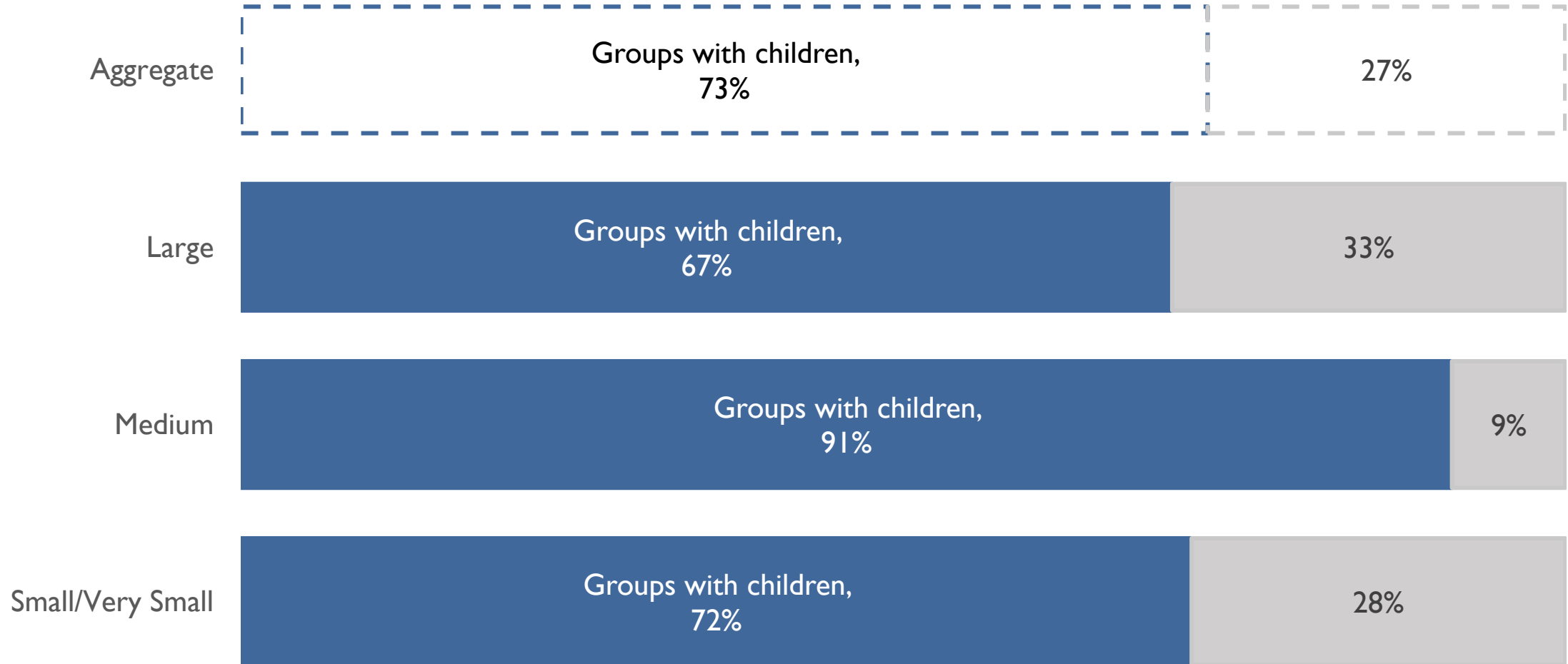


Range



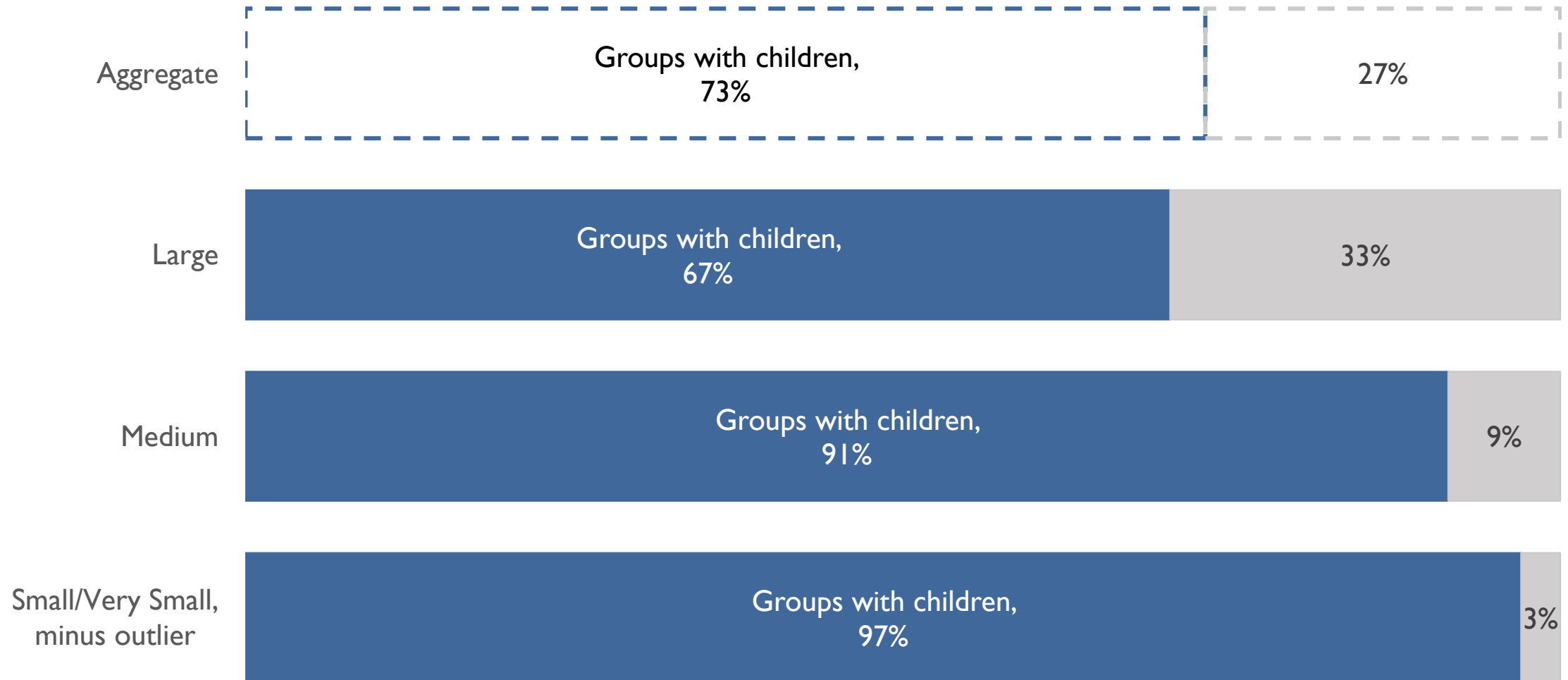


Comparing Group Composition





Comparing Group Composition



Comparing to Census data



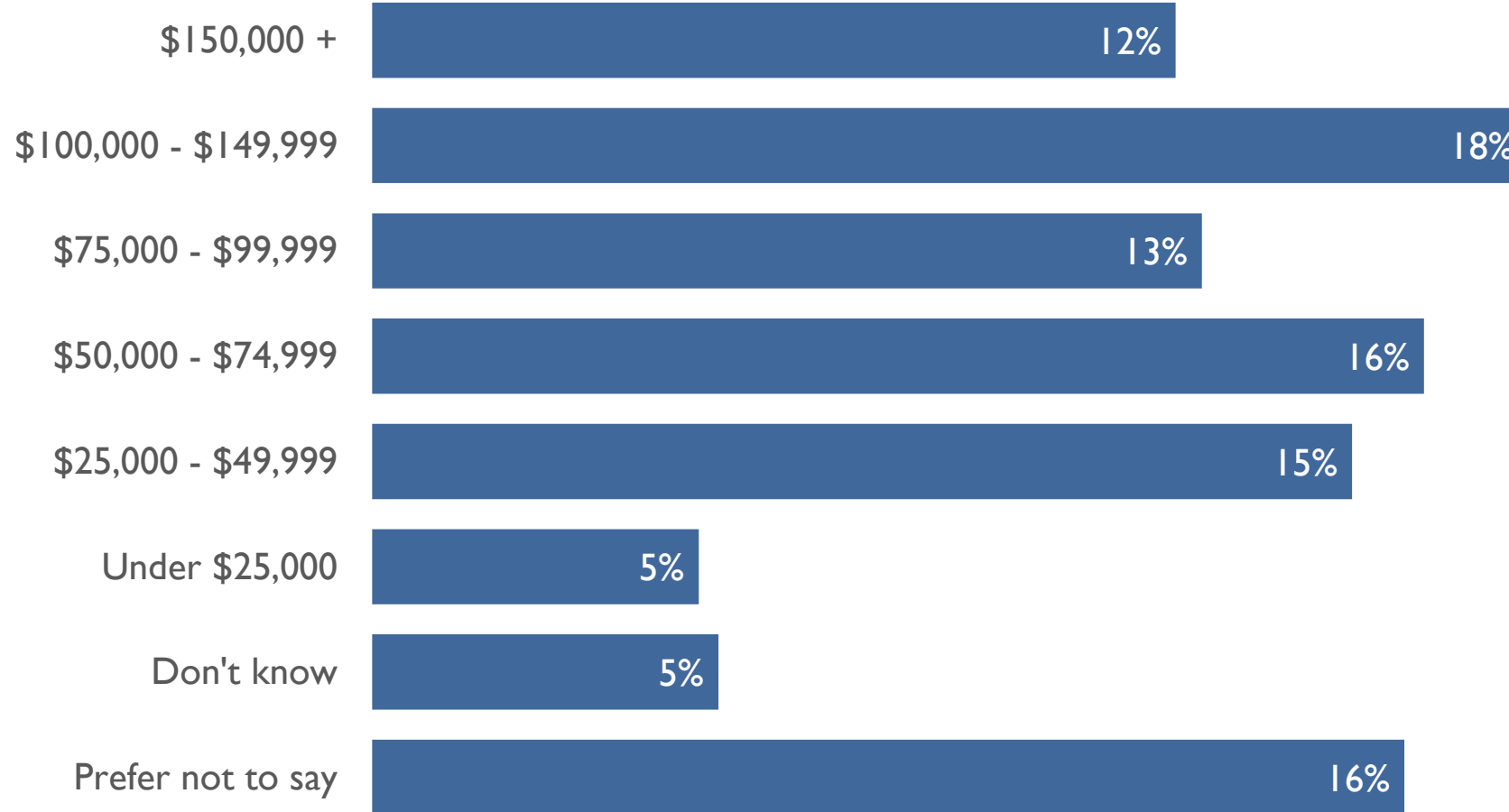
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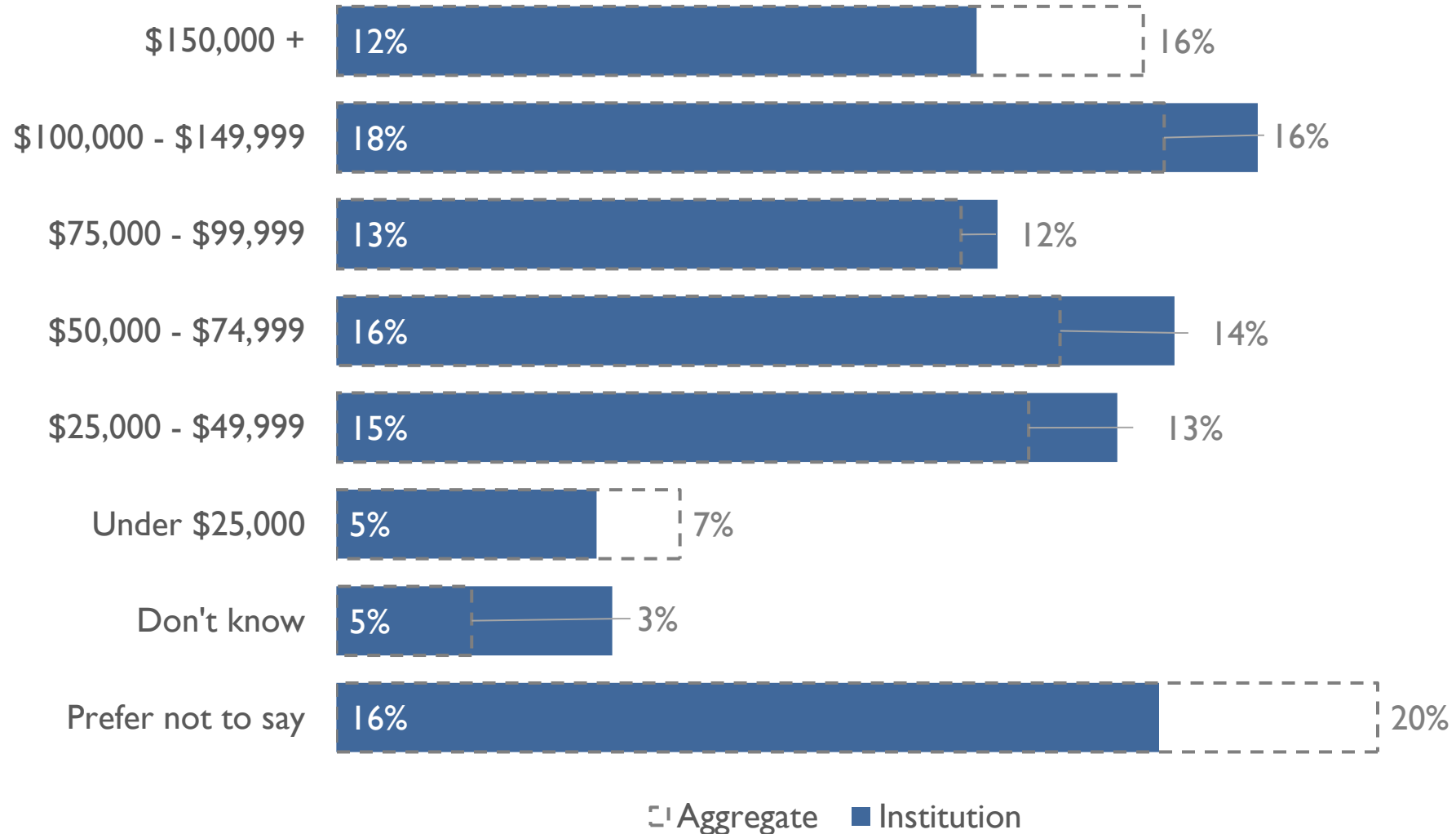
Census Data – Household Income



■ Institution

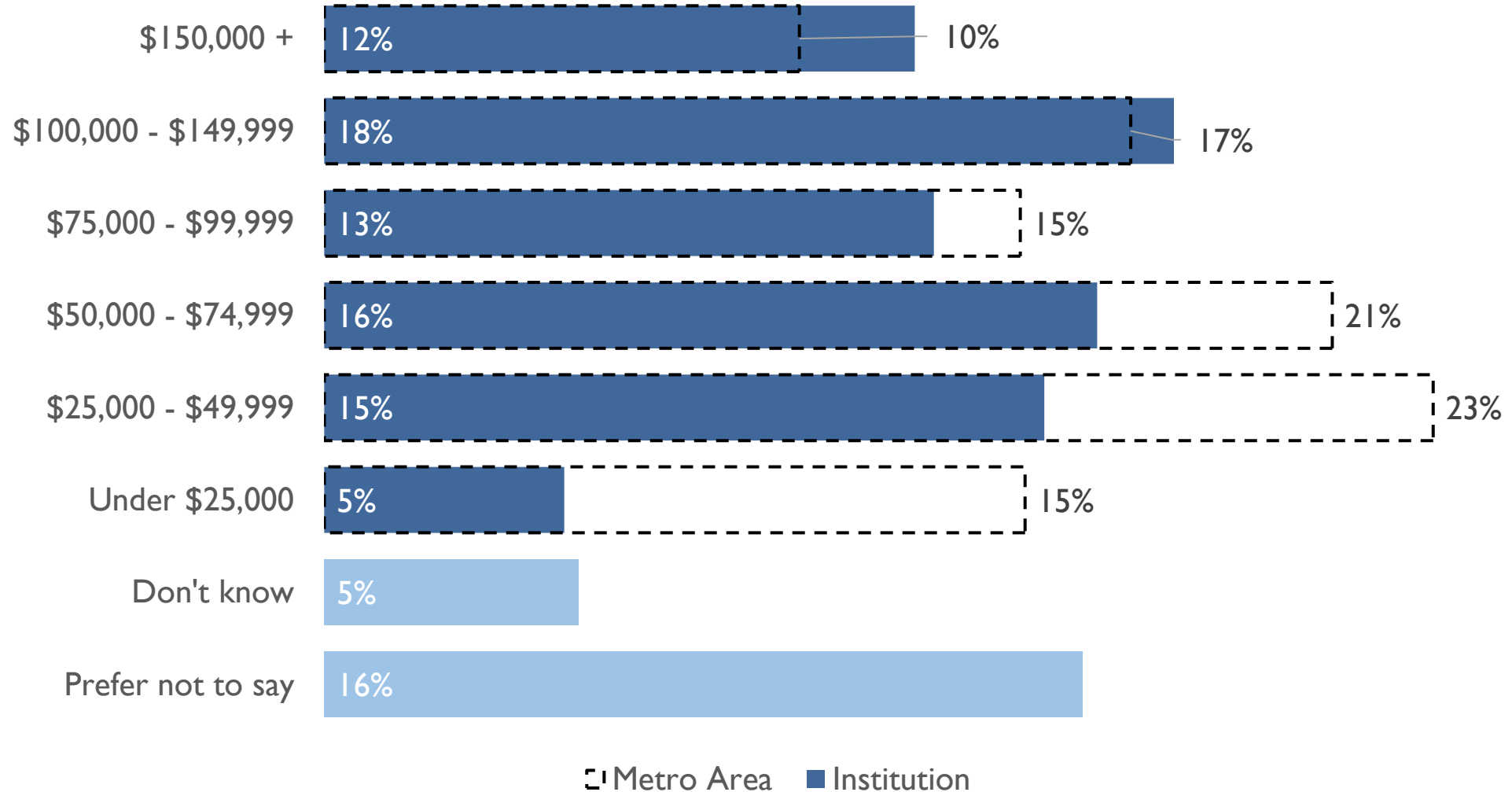


Census Data – Household Income



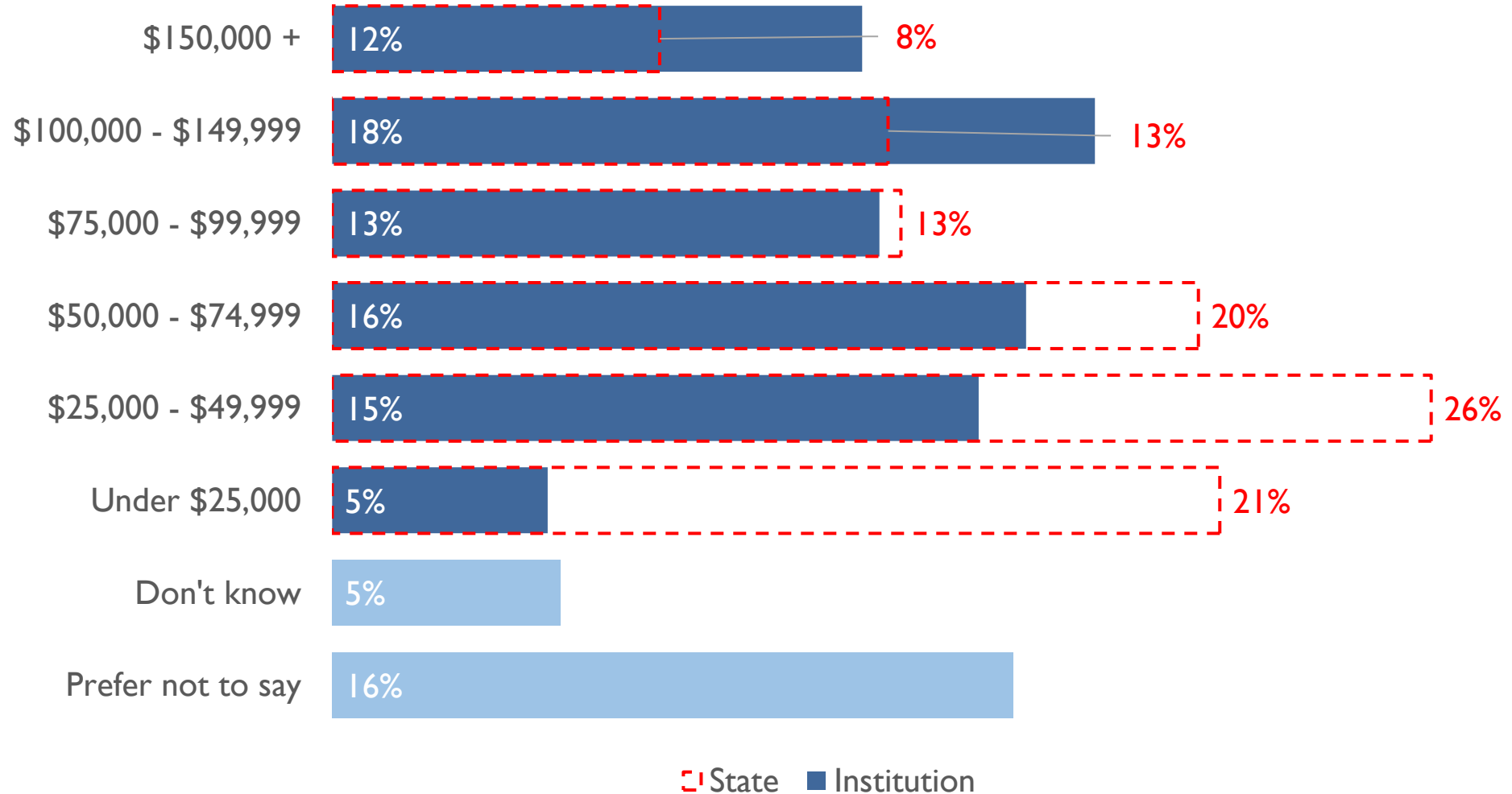


Census Data – Household Income





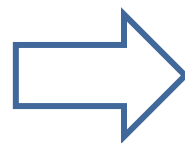
Census Data – Household Income



Comparing over time



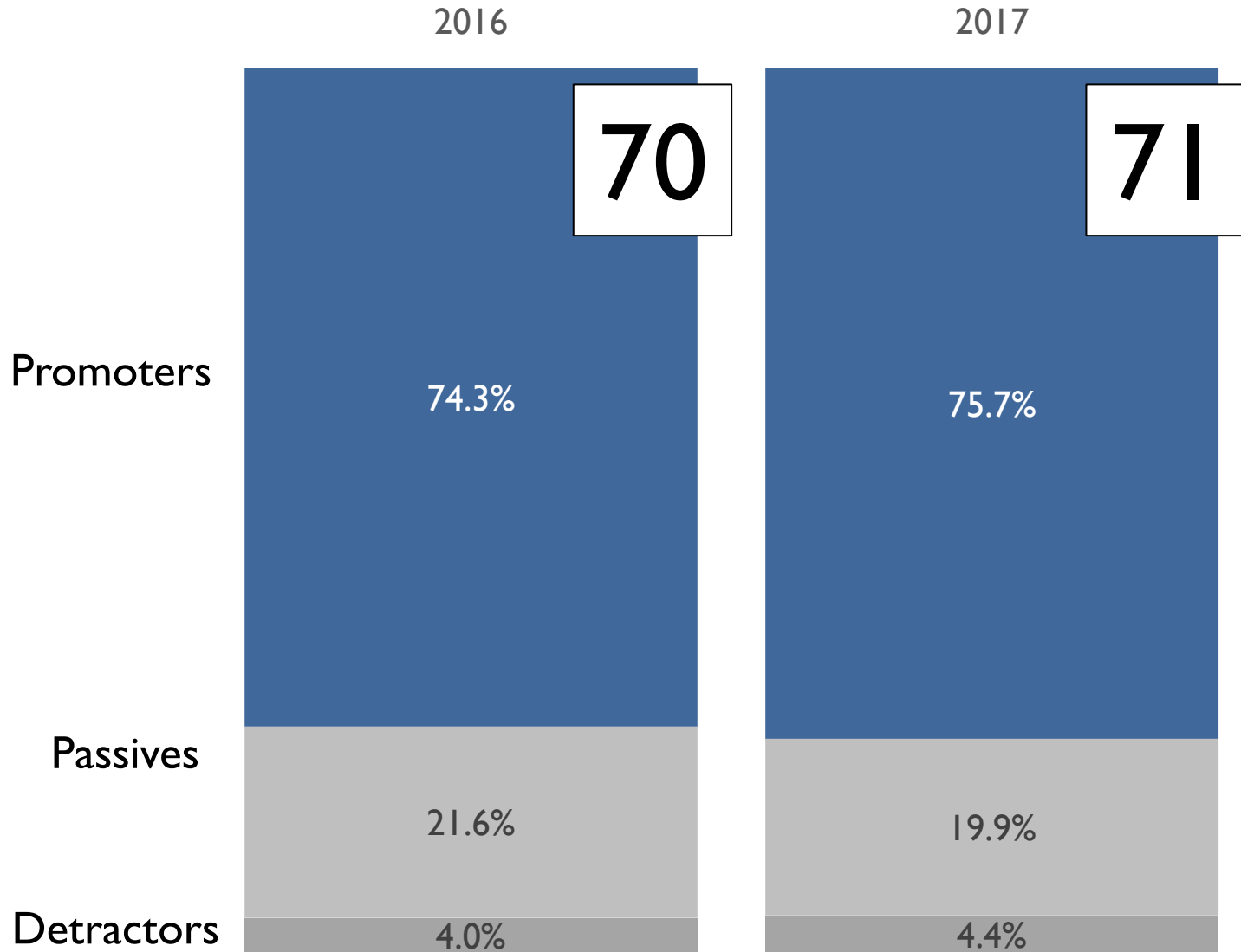
2016



2017

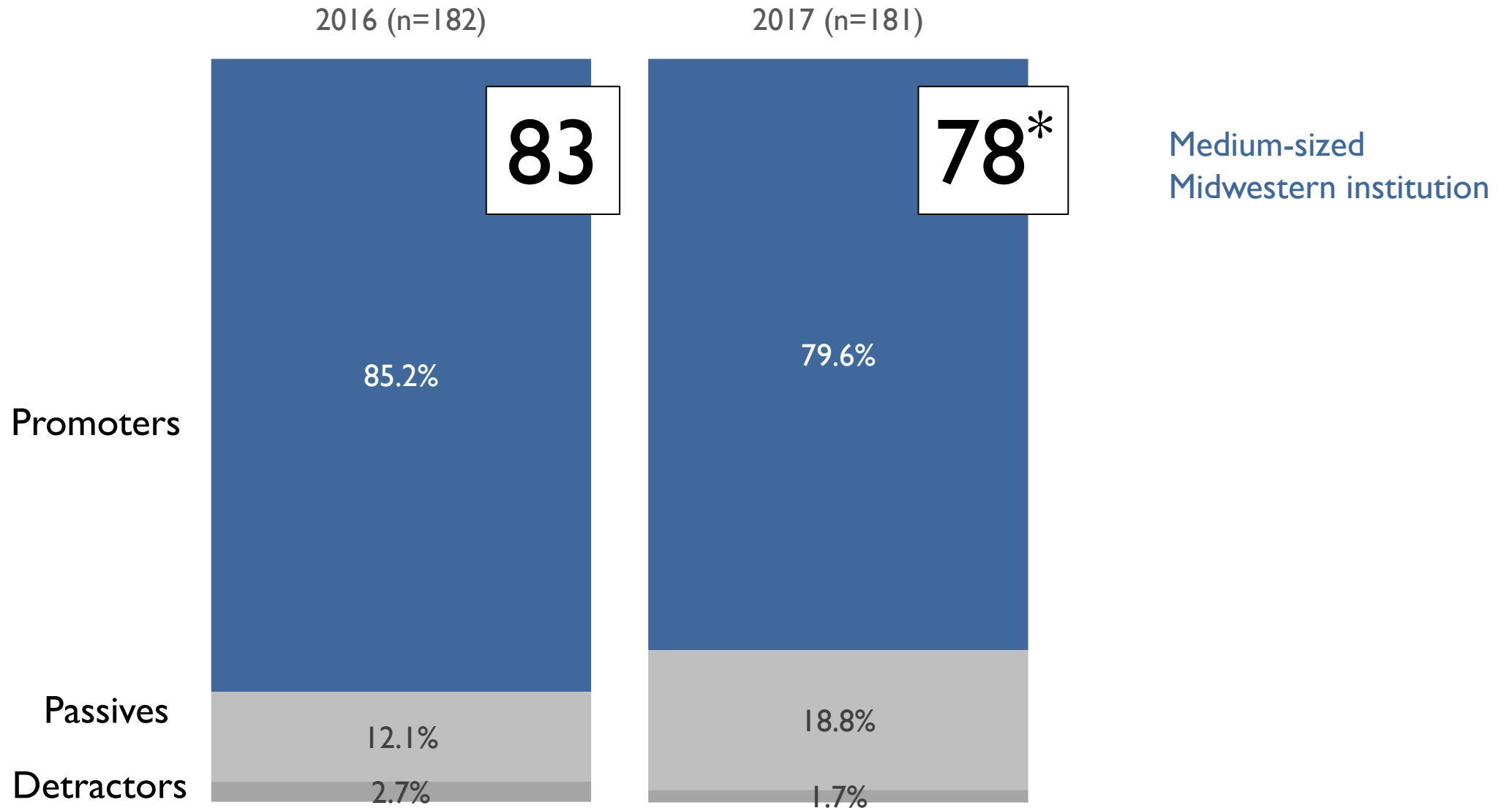


Aggregated Net Promoter Score





Institutional Net Promoter Score



Thinking about shared comparative data

Elisa Israel, Saint Louis Science Center
Joe Heimlich, Ph.D., COSI

What does it mean to go from
doing this work internally to
doing it in a network?

What are some pros and cons
of each?

What do you see as the next steps or strongest future possibilities for a multi-institutional study like this?

What can different types of visitor studies professionals (e.g. consultants, university researchers, etc.) learn or get from this work?



Questions?

1. What other metrics might we be able to use to do comparative visitor studies?
2. How can we broaden our thinking about making comparisons?
3. What projects or data points from your current work could benefit from comparisons of any kind?



Thank you!

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