



## *Annual Report 2023*



**CELEBRATING 30 YEARS PLUS!**

**THE ORGANIC PARADE!**



## Mission Statement

- Address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors
- Provide quality inspector training
- Promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process



# Staffing Plan Implemented! Growing the IOIA Team and Expanding Capacity



**Michele Schahczenski**  
February 2024



**Business Development Director**  
June 2024



**DrewAnne Wenzel**  
September 2024



**Ellie Hudson transitioned off the staff as an IOIA contractor and to full-time with ACA. Thank you, Ellie!**

# Increased Public Presence - IOIA in the public eye



- **Become an Organic Inspector Video**

- Organic inspectors serve an essential role in the oversight process. Inspectors verify compliance with the regulations by visiting organic operations on-site to uphold organic integrity and strengthen what the organic label means. Watch the [Become an Organic Inspector](#) video to hear from inspectors in the field.
- This video was developed by the organic community, led by Oregon Tilth and International Organic Inspectors Association, under the NOP Human Capital Initiative.



## IOIA is INTERNATIONAL –

- IOIA continued support of the Asia Pacific Committee in their efforts to develop, promote, and deliver online and in-person training.
- IOIA has been sponsoring the Guelph Organic Conference in Canada since 2008.
- IFOAM Organics International member since the 1990's.
- JOIA, our sister organization in Japan was founded in 1997.



이시도르지속가능연구소

ISIDOR SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE



356

in

17

4

Members

Countries

Languages of  
Trainings

# Addressing issues and concerns of organic inspectors

## Membership Benefits

- New Benefit, *The Organic Standard* at a deep discount, only \$30/yr.
- 2 Town Halls. *“A Conversation about Hydroponics”* was very well attended.
- IOIA Forum – inspector online discussion group, **Very** Active in 2023!
- Podcast *“The Farm Bill Demystified”*
- Membership Survey about future AGM dates/locations
- Accreditation Program



*“Coffee with IOIA”* for members and non-members remains popular in its 2nd year.



Thank you, Diane! For editing our newsletter (30 years!), moderating our Forum, managing our website, leading “Coffee”, assisting with scholarships and peer field evaluation, and so much more!



# Addressing issues and concerns of organic inspectors

## Membership Work

- Updated Membership Strategy with new categories of supporting members.
- Simplified the process of joining for supporting members.
- New Builders (\$1000/yr.)!
  - Organic Valley in 2022
  - Quick Organics in 2023
- Modest dues increase (first in 7 years for inspectors) was well-received
- New \$60/yr. rate for Asia-Pacific inspectors
- Technical articles and op-ed in the quarterly newsletter
- Membership Drive in process

IOIA Communicates on behalf of inspectors

With the organic global community - 42,642 emails sent via Constant Contact— increase of 10% with 60% open rate – industry average is 41%

With Certifiers – IOIA and ACA Joint Board meetings and the Certifier-Inspector Dialogue meetings.



# Addressing issues and concerns of organic inspectors – Credentialing Working Group

- Concept born at the 2023 AGM
- Welcomed input from ACA and AOI
- Silke Fuchshofen added as Facilitator
- Morphed into the **Organic Professionals Qualifications Database**

*More soon!*

Organic Professionals  
Qualifications  
Database

A Program in Development

**OPQD for  
SOE**

January 8th, 2024

# Addressing issues and concerns of organic inspectors & Training

## SPECIAL PROJECT #1 –

### ACA/IOIA Mentors for Organic Inspectors

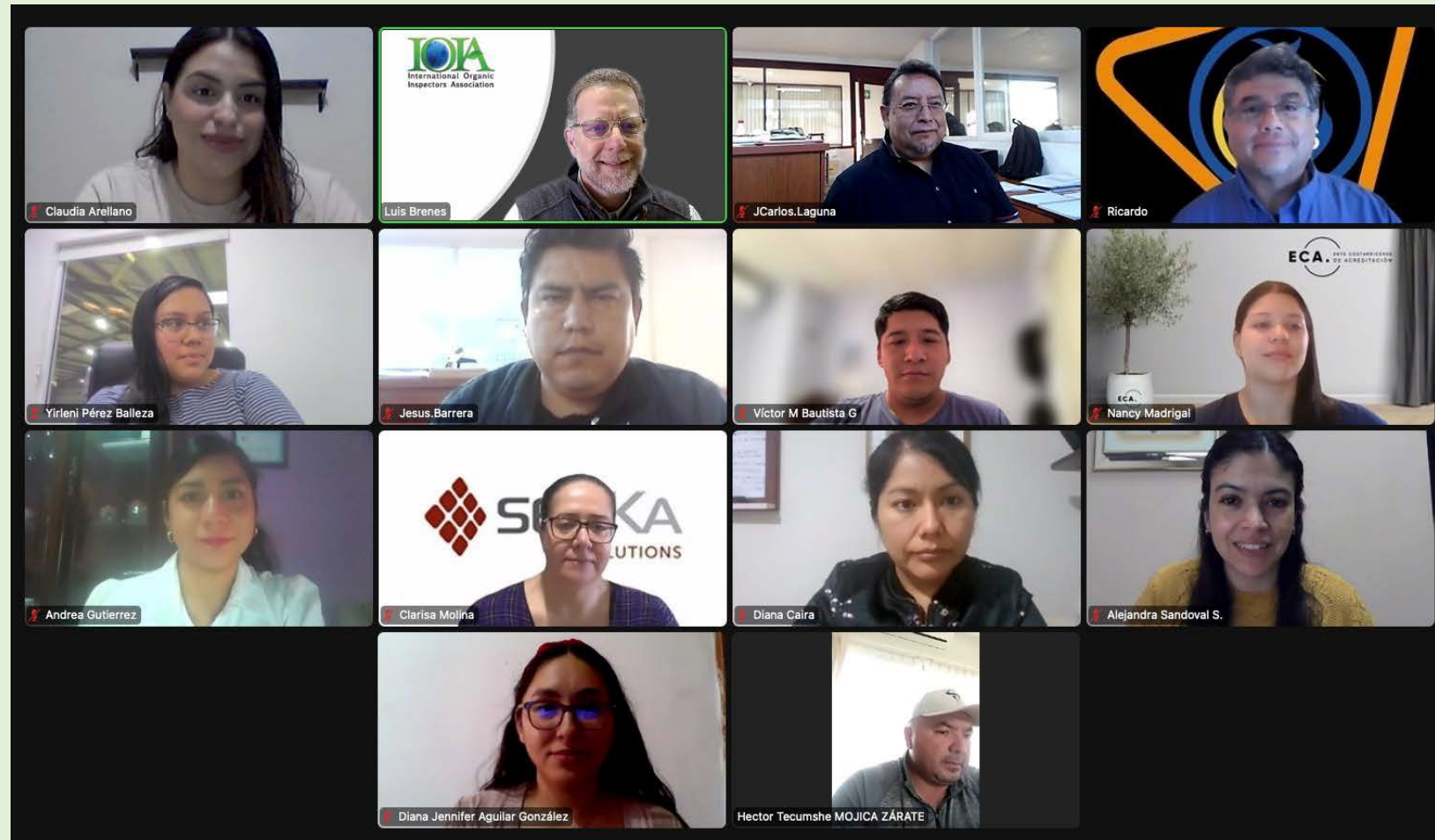
- IOIA's largest special project for 2023
- LOTS of work done
- Continuing in 2024
- Outcomes still in process
- Goal was to develop a Job-Task Analysis for Mentors and a "3-D printer for mentors"
- 8 mentors - independent contractors and employee inspectors
- 16 apprentices, 3 scopes



# Providing Quality Inspector Training Spanish Language Training – Crop & Processing

- New Spanish Processing Video training resource
- Accommodated 3 Scholarship Recipients

Our first Reynaldo De la Rosa recipient took a course!



## Providing Quality Inspector Training Expanded the IOIA/OMRI Training Partnership!

- IOA and OMRI have been collaborating on webinar training since 2013. Advanced training previously in 2007 and 2008.
- The new 100-level webinar series was launched and very successful.
  - Crop Inputs
  - Processing Inputs
- Increased participation and improved revenue.
- IOIA will double the number of webinars offered in 2024.



## Providing Quality Inspector Training – in Canada

- New Canadian livestock inspection course developed and delivered with a new inspection video
- Livestock Self-paced COR Standards Training completed and launched.
- All 3 basic trainings were offered – though Processing was postponed into 2024 due to low enrollment



# Providing Quality Inspector Training – Apprenticeship Intensive with Organic Valley/FAFO funding

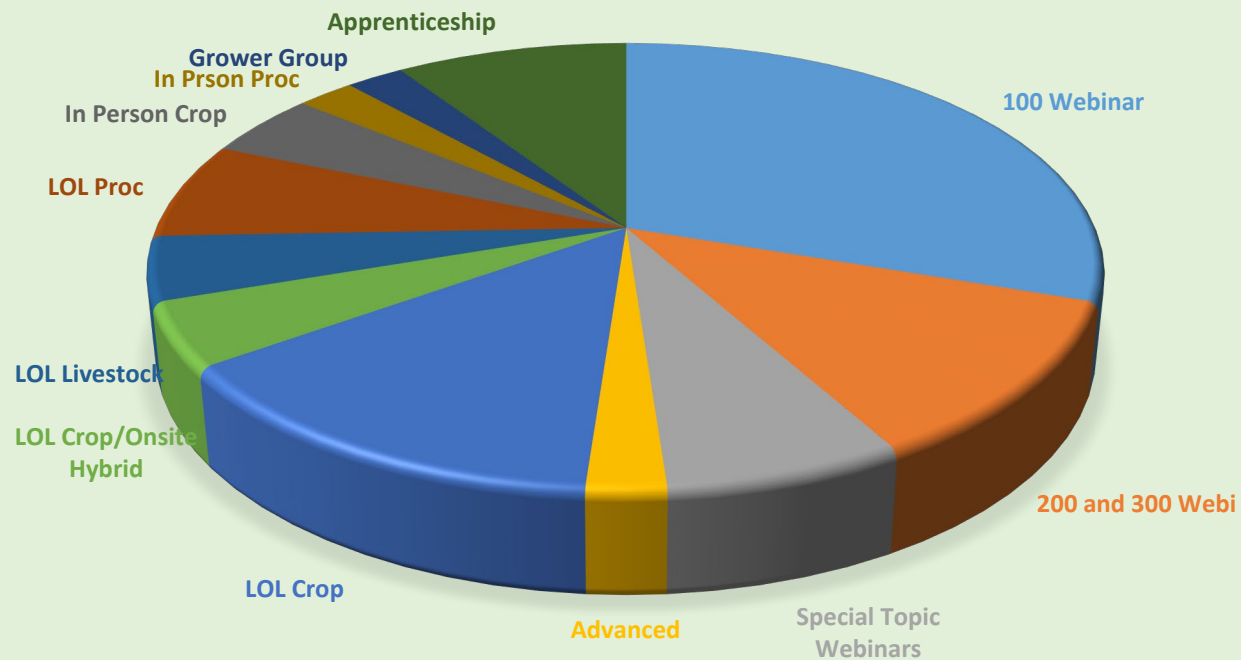


- 6 participants!
- Fully funded by a FAFO grant

43  
Courses

## Training in 2023 Number of Trainings

706 course  
participants

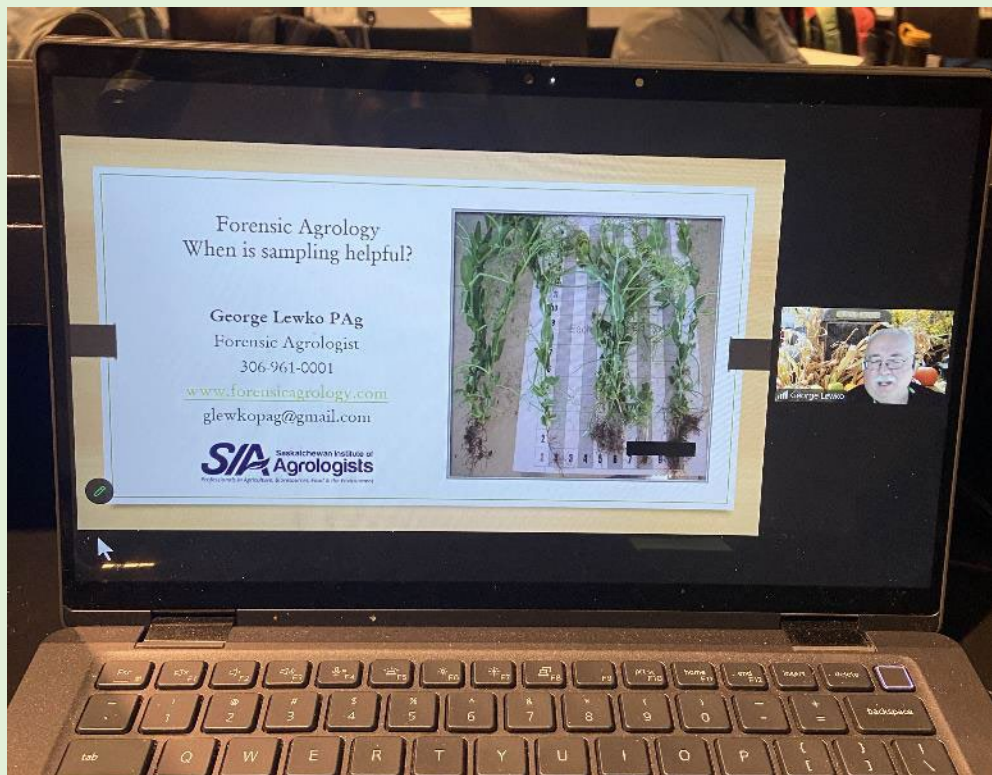


4  
languages

11  
Cosponsors



## Providing Quality Inspector Training



New Orleans, Louisiana. The first in-person  
Advanced Training in the US since 2020



The first in-person Basic Processing Training in the US since 2019.  
Cosponsored by WSDA. Paired with in-person Basic Crop Training.



## And more - Providing Quality Inspector Training –

- Implemented post-training surveys of basic training participants at 6 mo. and 12 mo. intervals
- Hybrid (remote trainer) with Hong Kong class  
Repeat performance in process for 2024



香港有機資源中心認證有限公司  
HONG KONG ORGANIC RESOURCE CENTRE CERTIFICATION LTD

## The Future-

- Training Advisory Council to be established.
- Residue Sampling webinar planned for 2024
- EU regulations webinar in the works
- Continue with low-cost membership benefit webinars
  - 2023 – Luis Brenes on 205.101 post SOE
  - 2023 – Update on Grower Group regulations (NOP/EU)

# Transition Training for Producers

## SPECIAL PROJECT #2 – IOIA is a partner with NCAT

- A 3-year project led by NCAT
- IOIA has assisted in the development and delivery of 5 transition workshops in the Northern Plains with 5 more to go this year.
- Highly collaborative, pre-TOPP project.
- Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota
- Funded by the USDA National Institute of Food & Ag





International Organic  
Inspectors Association



**International Organic  
Inspectors Association**

# **Strategic Plan**

**Accepted on  
January 20, 2022**



# Strategic Plan

## OBJECTIVE 1

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Design IOIA training products to evolve with the sector, expand capacity, and grow skills for organic inspectors and other stakeholders



# Strategic Plan – Objective 1



- **Post-basic training surveys with target goals as to satisfaction rating.**
  - **Develop and implement a mechanism for gathering training participant feedback electronically**
- **Create a plan for establishing a Training Advisory Council**
- **Successfully develop an apprenticeship program model funded by the \$250,000 cooperative agreement with USDA NOP**
- **Develop and launch press strategy to increase enrollment**
- **Host training for livestock and processing in Canada**
- **Grow number of training registrations for “beyond basic” trainings in 2022**
- **Develop virtual training calendar for monthly professional development**
- **Create Residue Sampling webinar**
- **Host a one-day advanced training in Saskatchewan**

# Strategic Plan

## OBJECTIVE 2

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Advocate for the inspector profession to the organic sector, while engaging stakeholders, to increase membership benefits and grow the community



## Strategic Plan – Objective 2



- One newly formed and active working group focused on pressing issues for the inspector profession; create and lead a human capital working group in collaboration with key industry partners
- Respond to 100% of requests for written and/or verbal public comments that meet the criteria of the IOIA comment policy
- Increase inspector member engagement by at least three interactions per member with unique IOIA content
- Develop virtual training calendar for monthly membership engagement
- Eliminate barriers to forum participation
- Partner with a NOP Human Capital project partner to host a cultivation event for prospective members
- Establish 3 new strategic partners to evolve industry conversation on credentialing.



# Strategic Plan

## OBJECTIVE 3

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Implement a clear and structured operations protocol that holds IOIA accountable for continuous improvement within the organization, and advances the IOIA mission



# Strategic Plan – Objective 3



- Create, edit and publish new Board of Directors onboarding packet.
- Evaluate 100% of IOIA staff annually.
- Increase IOIA capacity to successfully implement the strategic plan.
  - Evaluate current IOIA capacity and identify needs; Review and update staff position job descriptions
  - Hire an external consultant to
    - 1) perform a needs assessment that evaluates existing staff competencies,
    - 2) Identify skill gaps and create job descriptions or requests for proposals to fill gaps
  - Hire necessary position(s).
  - Key performance indicator --100% of 2022 strategic plan strategies are implemented, with track & report progress on strategic plan objectives quarterly.
  - Conduct bi-annual reviews of IOIA information management system. Identify a subject matter expert for IOIA's information management system who is chiefly responsible for the system and its utilization.
  - Consolidated workplan and budget approved for 2023 strategic initiatives.
    - Create a structure so that 2023 workplan decisions are made prior to 2023.
    - Collaboratively develop 2023 workplan and budget.

# How do we do it all?



# A dedicated, engaged Board of Directors



# Our hard-working staff



Margaret



DrewAnne



Drew



Cecilia



Diane



Sacha



Teri



Jennie

# IOIA Committees! Canadian

- Significant growth in interest in IOIA trainings, with all 3 scopes offered in 2023
- Guelph Organic Conference Social event in January
- BC Inspector Social at Organic BC Conference in November
- Kelly Monaghan named again to represent IOIA on the Technical Committee
- Revolving Loan Fund established using OFCC donation and used for the first time in 2023.
- Participated in Organic Week events (Drew)



# IOIA Committees! Asia Pacific



- Delivered their 2<sup>nd</sup> free promotional webinar, on residue testing in organic inspection. 130 participants!!
- Kathe P/Vitton P submitted an article to *The Organic Standard* on the same topic
- Live Online Grower Group training scheduled
- Developed training in Fiji (postponed to February 2024)
- Supported Kathe participating in South Korea training on behalf of IOIA

IOIA APC suggest  
NEXT AGM

*Come to our side of the world!*

AUSTRALIA??

*The topic could be*

**Climate Change and Organic  
Response**



# IOIA Committees! Policy Comment

- Submitted strong, comprehensive comments to US NOSB's proposals and discussion documents (Spring and Fall)
  - Discussion Document - "Oversight Improvements to Deter Fraud: Consistent Location Identification"
  - Inerts in Organic Production
- Attended the Fall NOSB meeting in Providence, Rhode Island coupled with the Northeast region TOPP meeting.
- Podcast featured the US Farm Bill with Rachel.
- Currently working on the new interpretation of Independent Contractor under US law.



**Policy Committee Coordinator  
Rachel Cherry Myers**

# IOIA Committees! 2023 Scholarship Recipients



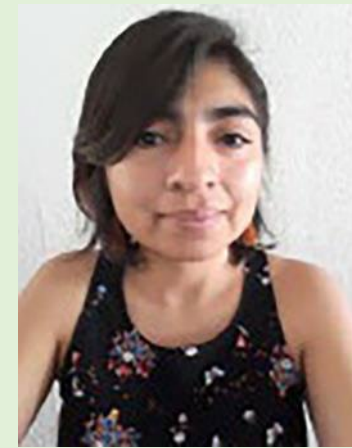
Iris Rendon,  
Canada

**Andrew Rutherford  
Scholarship**



Wilver Bentaco Velásquez,  
Nicaragua

**Organic Community  
Initiative Scholarship**



Mariana Ramirez Reyes,  
Mexico

**Reynaldo De la Rosa  
Memorial Scholarship**

# IOIA Committees! Ethics

Newly appointed members – as of Jan 18, 2024

- Deb Bunn
- Joyce Ford
- Isidor Yu
- Rochelle Eisen
- Dag Falck
- Beth Dominick
- Maheswar Ghimire
- Silke Fuchshofen
- Chuck Mitchell



Brian Baker appointed  
Ethics Chair

# IOIA Committees! Membership

- Added new committee members
- Much more active than in recent years
- Another fine slate of candidates for the Board

Committee Meetings with Drew and Margaret to explore growing the IOIA membership and expanding member benefits.



2015

# Promoting Integrity and Consistency in the Organic Certification Process

## SPECIAL PROJECT #3 – TOPP and Human Capital DEI projects

- Projects led by Organic Farmers Association & National Organic Coalition. Many meetings!
- Participated in conversations with BIPOC-led and BIPOC-serving organizations.
- IOIA has been accepted to a 9-month Racial Equity in Organic cohort, to begin in April.
- IOIA has also applied to have an intern in 2024.



**NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR A GROWING AND DIVERSE ORGANIC COMMUNITY**





# Balance Sheet

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>419,541</b>	<b>407,252</b>	<b>439,262</b>	<b>365,993</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>38,769</b>	<b>38,769</b>	<b>38,769</b>	<b>38,769</b>
<b>Other Assets (Accumulated Depreciation)</b>	<b>-20,012</b>	<b>-21,542</b>	<b>-21,542</b>	<b>-22,225</b>
<b>Total Restricted Funds (Scholarship Funds)</b>	<b>1,598</b>	<b>17,338</b>	<b>17,604</b>	<b>21,129</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>438,297</b>	<b>424,479</b>	<b>456,490</b>	<b>382,536</b>

# The Bottom Line - 2023

- Actual bottom line was about \$52,000 lower than projected, not so surprising as we were about \$80,000 better than expected last year.
- Most of that is due to not filling the planned position of Business Development Director in 2022 but filling it in 2023 instead.
- \$24,491 from the FAFO grant was received in 2022 and expenses were all incurred in 2023. We anticipated a bottom line of -\$24,491 because of this.
- IOIA's cash reserves are \$200,000. We did not dip into that reserve.
- We moved \$2074 out of our bottom line and into Restricted Funds for the income generated over the past few years by the Asia Pacific Committee.



# Budget vs Actual

	Budget 2023	Actual 2023	Budget 2024
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>761,320</b>	<b>598,237</b>	<b>686,466</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>785,111</b>	<b>675,989</b>	<b>679,466</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-24,491</b>	<b>-77,751</b>	<b>7,000</b>
	<b>FAFO grant of \$24,491 was received in 2022 with all expenses incurred in 2023.</b>		

# Thank you!

- Our Bylaws specify that the Treasurer is Chair
- All of the members of the Committee are former IOIA Treasurers
- Active Members of the committee:
  - Pam Sullivan
  - Eric Feutz
  - Brian Magaro
- Thank you to Ryan Sitler, who went off the committee in 2023.

Thank you, Terrance! Thank you, Beth! Thank  
you, Kate! Thank you, Allan!



# 2025 AGM & beyond – the future of IOIA's AGM – Membership Survey

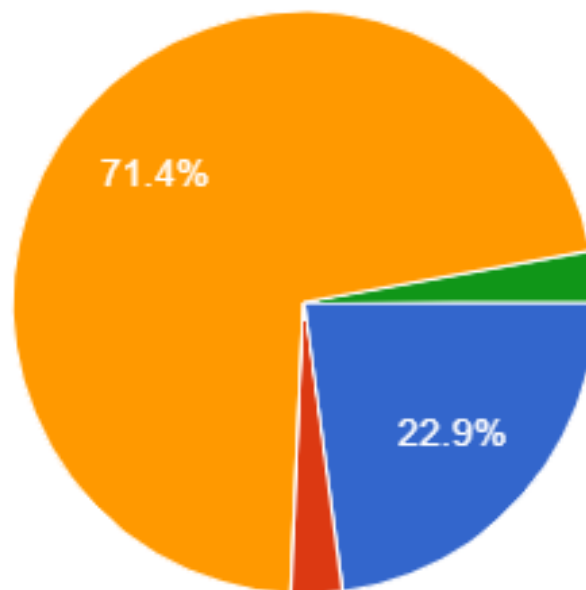
35 responses

# Format

Which of the following formats would you prefer for future IOIA Annual Meeting events?



35 responses

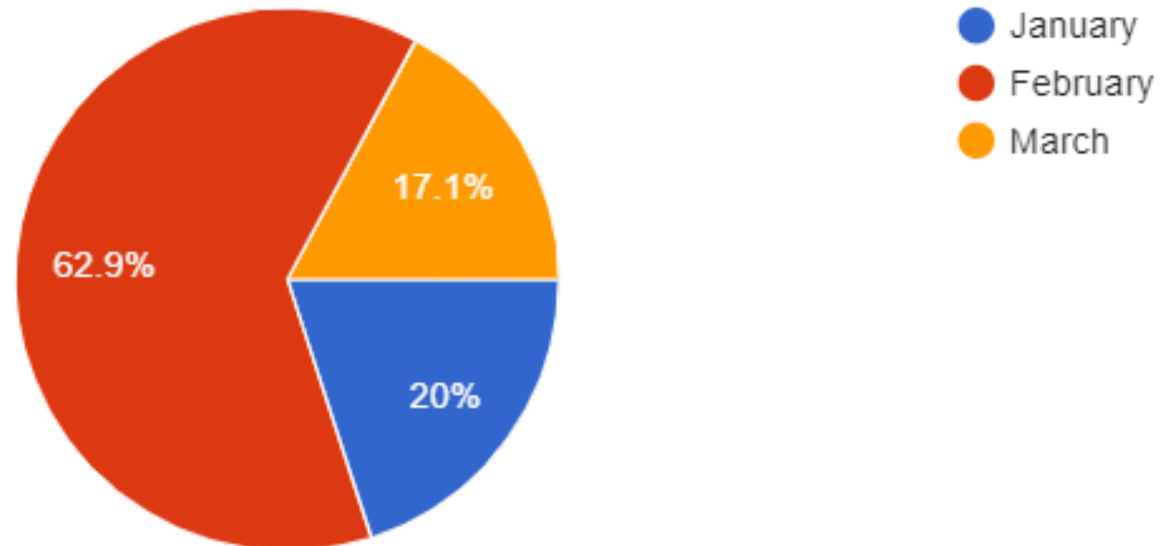


- In-person
- Online (Zoom or similar)
- Hybrid - in-person with an online attendance option
- Unless there is a raging pandemic I will not attend remote events. Not worth the time!

# Date

IOIA Annual Meetings are held in the first quarter of each year, varying from late January to mid-March. Partnering with ACA and NOP means that we have less input into date selection. Another consideration - the Nominating Committee has indicated that preparing the board ballot for a January meeting is difficult. Which would be the best date range for IOIA annual meetings?

35 responses

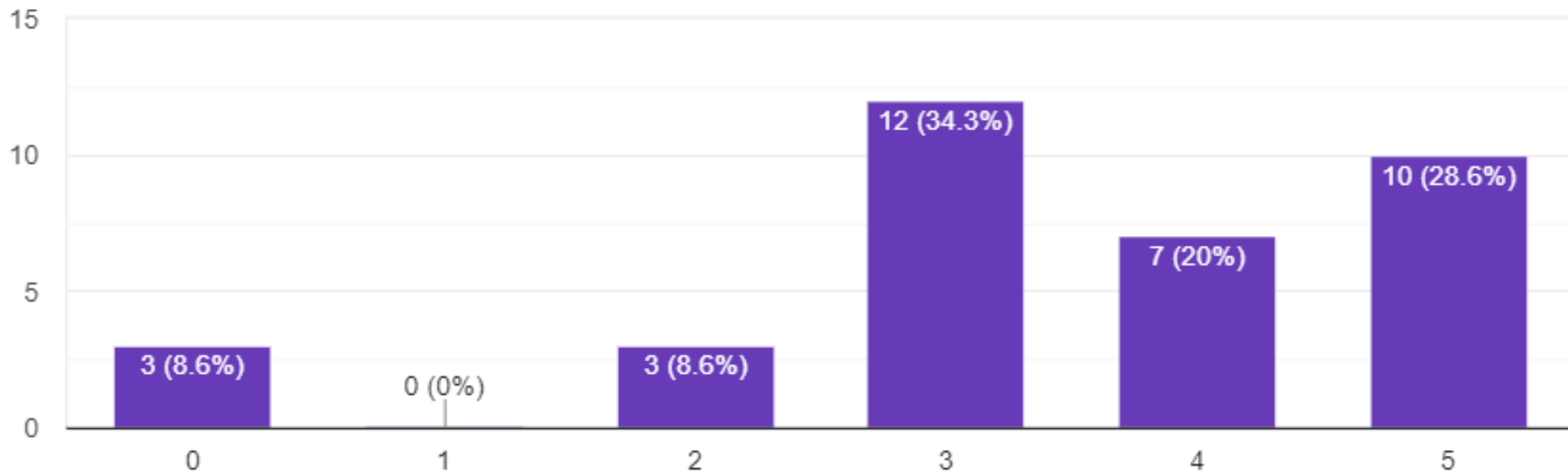


# How likely are you to attend in-person AGM in 2024?

How likely are you to attend an in-person Annual Meeting in 2024?



35 responses



# ACA & NOP

In 2024, ACA and NOP have committed to date and location of late January in San Antonio, Texas. The timing may change in future years, but it is already set for 2024. Which best represents your opinion? Choose more than one answer if you like.



Checkboxes



- I prefer the IOIA, ACA, and NOP events together, along with the IOIA Annual Meeting and A... ✕
- I prefer the IOIA Annual meeting be separate from an ACA/NOP or IOIA/ACA/NOP training... ✕
- I would likely attend the ACA and NOP events even if our annual meeting happened elsew... ✕
- I prefer that IOIA offer Advanced Training with the Annual Meeting wherever it occurs and ... ✕
- I would likely attend both the NOP/ACA event and the IOIA Annual Meeting in Texas in 202... ✕
- Other... ✕
- Add option



Required

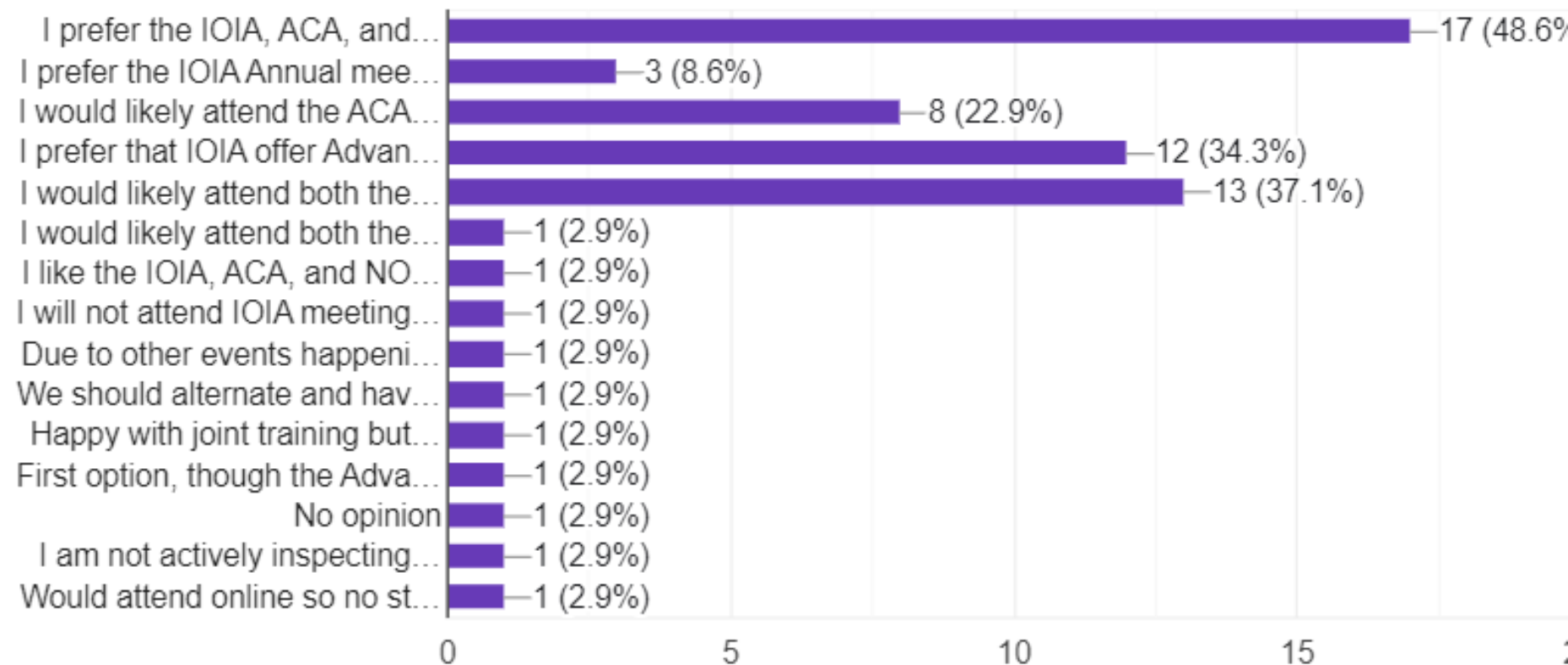




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35 responses



# Where

Below are some suggested locations from the past few annual meeting discussions. List up to 3 and indicate your top choice, adding your choice if it is not on the list.

- Japan
  - Thailand
  - Australia
  - Puerto Rico
  - BioFach (Germany in February)
  - Humboldt County, California (Northern California)
  - Chico Hot Springs, Montana
  - Guelph, Ontario, Canada
- PLEASE feel free to add your suggestions here!**

35 responses

Humboldt California, Chico Hot Springs, BioFach

TOP = Guelph, Australia, Thailand

BioFach, Japan, Thailand

Guelph, Thailand, Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico Australia, Japan, Thailand, California

Australia, Puerto Rico, Humboldt Co CA, Atlanta

I probably won't leave North America for an IOIA meeting. Chico HS or Humboldt would be my picks.

Guelph, Japan, Thailand

Thailand, Humboldt, Puerto Rico

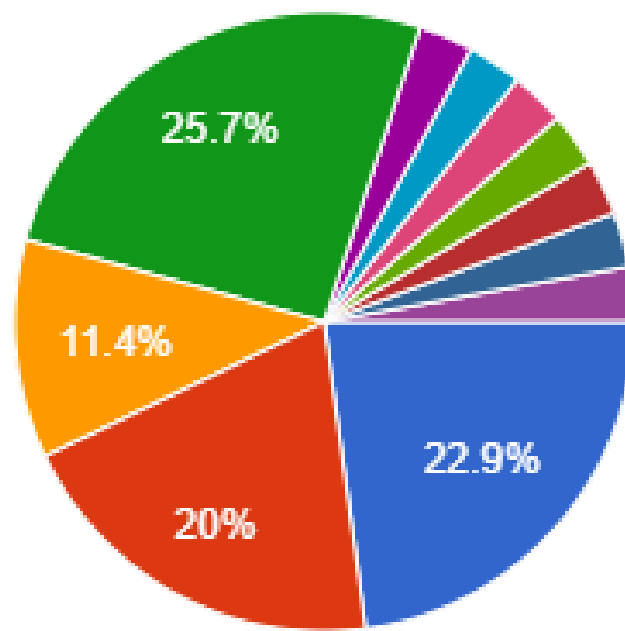
Our bylaws and nonprofit law require that we hold an annual membership meeting. Please \*  
choose from the following the answer that best fits your opinion.

- If IOIA holds a hybrid annual meeting (in-person plus online), I would likely still attend in-person.
- If IOIA holds a hybrid annual meeting (in-person plus online), I would likely attend the online meeting only.
- I think IOIA should save carbon and money by holding our annual meeting online only.
- I think IOIA should always hold an in-person annual meeting for the valuable networking and membershi...
- Other...

Our bylaws and nonprofit law require that we hold an annual membership meeting.  
Please choose from the following the answer that best fits your opinion.



35 responses



- If IOIA holds a hybrid annual meeting (...)
- If IOIA holds a hybrid annual meeting (...)
- I think IOIA should save carbon and m...
- I think IOIA should always hold an in-p...
- It depends. If IOIA meets in conjunctio...
- The location of the meeting and permi...
- If we alternate in and out of the USA,...
- Not sure whether I would attend onlin...

# How important to avoid “banned states”?

How important is it to you that IOIA avoid the "banned states" list in the US - states with discriminatory laws which have historically not supported LGBTQ+ rights, so that state-sponsored travel from some other states is not funded?



Copy

35 responses

