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PROJECT ARCTIC CIRCLE SLED DOG SYMPOSIUM

Master's Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the organization and execution of the Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium (ACSDS), a pioneering event held in Rovaniemi, Finland, under the author's leadership. The study focuses on the project management strategies, challenges, and lessons learned throughout the planning, execution, and evaluation phases of the symposium. By applying core project management principles, such as stakeholder engagement, goal-setting, risk management, and continuous feedback, this research explores how careful planning and communication were integral to the symposium's success. Additionally, it underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptability when organizing international events, particularly in niche communities like sled dog enthusiasts.

The ACSDS was Finland's first symposium dedicated to sled dogs, requiring careful attention to detail in various organizational areas, including theme selection, speaker recruitment, schedule development, and marketing. The event's marketing campaign utilized platforms such as social media and early bird pricing to effectively reach a global audience and generate 267 ticket sales, indicating strong interest. The symposium featured a diverse range of expert speakers, including notable figures, and provided valuable networking opportunities. However, attendee feedback revealed areas for improvement, including logistical issues such as parking, venue capacity, and trade fair offerings. Suggestions for enhancing the event experience, such as expanding the variety of topics, exhibitors, and evening activities, are presented as key takeaways for future symposiums.

Through a detailed analysis of the feedback survey, this thesis identifies both the successes and shortcomings of the event, offering insights that will inform the planning and execution of future events. By integrating the lessons learned from the first ACSDS, the research highlights how the application of project management theories can drive continuous improvement and ensure that future symposiums are better aligned with attendee needs and expectations. Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of effective event management within the context of specialized, international symposiums, and provides recommendations for optimizing the participant experience and operational efficiency in future iterations of the ACSDS.

Keywords: Project Management, Key Stakeholders, Data Analytic, Qualitative Studies

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium was organized to gather the sled dog community together, to listen experienced SLED talkers and maybe learn new things. The event was held at the Korundi venue in Rovaniemi. This symposium brought together sled dog enthusiasts from around the world. In this thesis, author focus on the intricacies of project management as applied to putting up such a significant international event. The Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium aimed to create a platform for sled dog enthusiasts to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and foster a sense of community. The choice of Rovaniemi, with its Arctic charm and cultural significance, added a unique touch to the event.

This thesis analyzes the project management aspects of steering the Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium and explores the challenges faced, strategies employed, and lessons learned. The goal is to provide insights for future event organizers, particularly those involved in managing international gatherings for this type of community. The study employs a qualitative approach, drawing on personal reflections, participant feedback, and thorough organizational process analysis. Interviews with key stakeholders and a review of relevant literature contribute to a comprehensive understanding of project management dynamics in a sled dog symposium context.

Preliminary findings indicate the significance of effective communication, cultural sensitivity, and careful planning in successfully executing an international event of this magnitude. The thesis aims to identify critical success factors and potential areas for improvement in the project management framework. Understanding the nuances of project management in organizing this type of international event is crucial for fostering global communities and sustaining interest in specialized hobbies. The Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium serves as a case study that contributes valuable insights to the field of event management.

As the Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium shows, successfully organizing international events requires a delicate balance of passion, strategic planning, and adaptability. This thesis strives to illuminate the multifaceted nature of project management in this type of community gathering, offering a resource for future organizers and researchers in the field.

2 ORGANIZING AND ANALYZING SYMPOSIUMS

2.1 Benefits of organizing symposiums

Events are a great way to network, and organizing one puts you at the center. You will be in contact with all the speakers and have a chance to interact personally. This can open doors to form personal relationships that will help your career in the future. Event organizing can help you develop your soft skills. Communication, teamwork, and organization are all valuable skills that can put you ahead of the game later. You can control the agenda. This is not always possible as funding organizations may have their own demands. But generally, as an organizer, you can highlight certain papers or emerging research. You can feature someone whose ideas you think should get more attention and influence the discussion within your field. If you are active in the organization of the conference, you can also have a strong role in editing any of the final papers that come as a result of the event. This can increase your publication record. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 101-104; Voitt 2019.)

2.2 Steps to organize a successful symposium

First, you need to decide on a topic or theme. Whether you are planning a symposium or a conference, this first step is similar. Begin by choosing a central topic or theme for the event. Identify trending topics or themes in your professional or academic field. To choose between two compelling topics or to narrow down a longer list, then poll potential audience members and presenters. Ask the audience is not a requirement, but it can help you get buy-in from your audience. It can also help you eliminate topics with little interest and focus on themes with more positive responses. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 105-107; Herdhiana 2023.)

After you have decided on the topic or theme, you need to choose your speakers. There is no one way to select speakers, but these guidelines can help:

- Consider presenters who are well-known in the field and may draw a larger audience.
- Look for speakers with underrepresented viewpoints to cover a wider range of perspectives.
- Choose speakers with topics on similar themes so you can create a coherent schedule.

Planning the event schedule is the next step when organizing a symposium. The schedule for a symposium will be relatively straightforward. In most cases, you will plan a single series of presentations during a single day. Make sure to save time for panel discussions and networking. Promote the event to make your symposium known widely and get more people to buy tickets to your event. After confirming the speakers and schedule, promote the event to your community. (Vallo & Häyri-
nen, 2008. 105-107; Herdhiana, 2023.)

2.3 Key participants in symposiums

Symposiums are like big meet-ups where people come together to talk about topics they are interested in. They are from different groups, like academics, professionals, or just folks who really care about a certain topic. For example, at academic symposiums, researchers, scholars, and students in a certain field get together to share what they have been working on and swap ideas. These events often have talks, panel discussions, and chances to meet new people who share common interests. (Vallo & Häyri-
nen, 2008. 105-107; Herdhiana, 2023.)

In addition, there are professional symposiums, where people in a particular industry or job field gather. They are all about discussing what is new in the industry, sharing tips and tricks, and figuring out how to tackle challenges together. You will find all sorts of folks at these events, like experts, leaders, and even policymakers. And sometimes, symposiums attract a wider crowd, like businesses or community groups interested in what is going on. These events are great for learning, networking, and teaming up to make things better in whatever field they are focused on. (Vallo & Häyri-
nen, 2008. 111-116; Herdhiana, 2023.)

2.4 The global significance of symposiums

It is hard to say how many symposiums are held globally because they happen in different contexts and on various topics worldwide. The number of symposiums can change each year and from country to country, depending on culture, economic conditions, and how active the academic or professional community is. (López, 2023.)

Generally, symposiums are popular events in many fields like science, technology, arts, business, and more. They are important because they bring together experts, researchers, professionals, and others to share knowledge, network, and learn from each other. Even though we can not say the exact number of global symposiums, it is clear they play a huge role in sharing information and making connections worldwide. (López, 2023.)

2.5 Project management as a tool for organizing symposiums

Project management is a method used to plan, organize, and carry out projects efficiently and in an organized way. It is an important tool in many settings, like business, science, technology, and event planning. (Silfverberg, 2007. 97-98)

In event planning, project management plays a crucial role in ensuring the effective execution of tasks and the achievement of objectives. Events often involve complex processes that require meticulous planning, scheduling, and resource allocation. By employing project management principles, event organizers can establish clear goals, assign responsibilities, monitor progress, and address any unforeseen challenges or changes. (Silfverberg, 2007. 98-101)

Basic project management tools like Gantt charts, to-do lists, resource management software, and communication channels help event organizers control things and ensure all necessary tasks are done on time and within budget. Additionally, project management methods like Agile or Scrum can offer flexibility, and the ability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances or client needs in event planning and execution. Overall, project management provides a strong framework for event planning and execution, which helps ensure their success and customer satisfaction. (Silfverberg, 2007. 102-105)

2.5.1 Gantt chart

Gantt chart is a visual tool used in project management to represent the scheduling of tasks over time. It displays tasks as horizontal bars along a timeline and shows their start and end dates. This chart helps project managers and team members understand the overall timeline of a project, identify dependencies between tasks, allocate resources efficiently, and track progress. Gantt charts

are widely used in various industries for planning and managing projects of all sizes. (Shweta & Bottorff & Watts, 2024.)

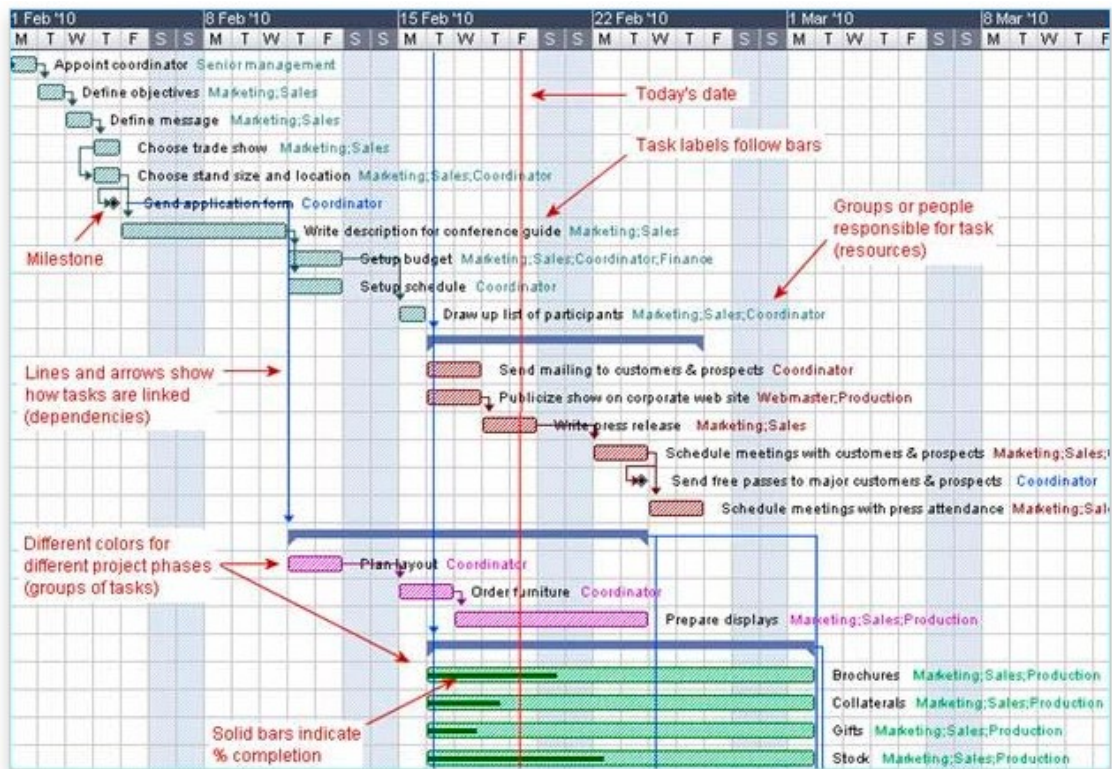


PHOTO 1. Gantt Chart (Gantt, 2023.)

2.5.2 Agile

Agile is an approach to project management that emphasizes flexibility, collaboration, and iterative development. It originated in software development but has since been adopted across various industries. Agile projects are broken down into small increments called "sprints" or "iterations," typically lasting from one to four weeks. At the end of each iteration, stakeholders review the progress and adjust based on feedback. (Appelbaum, 2024.)

Agile teams prioritize delivering working solutions quickly and responding to change rather than following a rigid plan. This methodology allows teams to adapt to evolving requirements and customer needs more effectively, resulting in faster delivery of high-quality products or services. (Appelbaum, 2024.)

2.5.3 Scrum

Scrum is a framework within Agile project management that emphasizes collaboration, iterative progress, and self-organization among cross-functional teams. It originated in software development but has found applications in various industries. In Scrum, work is organized into short iterations called "sprints," typically lasting two to four weeks. During each sprint, the team selects a set of tasks from the product backlog, works on them, and delivers a potentially shippable product increment by the end of the sprint. (Drumond, 2024.)

The Scrum framework includes specific roles, such as the Scrum Master, Product Owner, and Development Team, and ceremonies like Sprint Planning, Daily Standups, Sprint Review, and Sprint Retrospective. These elements help ensure transparency, inspection, and adaptation throughout the development process, ultimately leading to faster delivery of valuable products or services. (Drumond, 2024.)

Scrum master: This person helps the team understand and follow the Scrum process, removes obstacles, and ensures everyone works well together.

Product owner: This person represents the customer, sets priorities, and defines what needs to be done. The product owner also ensures that the team is building the right thing.

Development team: Does the actual work to create the product. They are skilled professionals who collaborate to deliver what the Product Owner wants. (Drumond, 2024.)

2.6 Data-driven project management and improvement

According to Grupp Simon in *From Participants to ROI: Measuring Success in Event Management*, four key themes exist for effectively using data in event management. These themes emphasize the importance of understanding attendees, listening to feedback, optimizing operations, and analyzing marketing effectiveness. Building on these themes, the following suggestions illustrate how data can support project management and operational improvement when organizing a symposium:

Using data to support project management and operational improvement when organizing a symposium means using the information to improve things. Here are some simple ways to do this:

Understanding attendees: Consider who is attending the symposium and what they want to gain from it. Then, plan the program to match their interests.

Listening to feedback: Listen to what people say about it after the event. This helps you determine what went well and what could be improved next time.

Making things run smoothly: Use data to plan things like where people will sit, how they will get around, and when things might get busy. This helps avoid problems during the event.

Seeing what works in marketing: Check how well different ways of telling people about the event work. This will help you spend marketing money wisely.

These are just some simple ways to use data to improve symposiums. The important thing is to use information to make smart decisions and improve the experience for everyone involved.

If you have a website, Google Analytics is a good tool to understand how people use websites. It tells you things like where visitors come from, what pages they look at, and how long they stay. For symposiums, it can show which marketing efforts work best and what parts of the event website need improvement. Overall, it is great to collect data and make events better in the future. The service is part of the Google Marketing Platform and is free to anyone with a Google account, whether they work with enterprises or small businesses. Google Analytics is used to track website performance and collect visitor insights. It can help organizations determine top sources of user traffic, gauge the success of their marketing activities and campaigns, track goal completions (such as purchases or to add products to carts), discover patterns and trends in user engagement, and obtain other visitor information such as demographics. (Digimarkkinointi, 2024.)

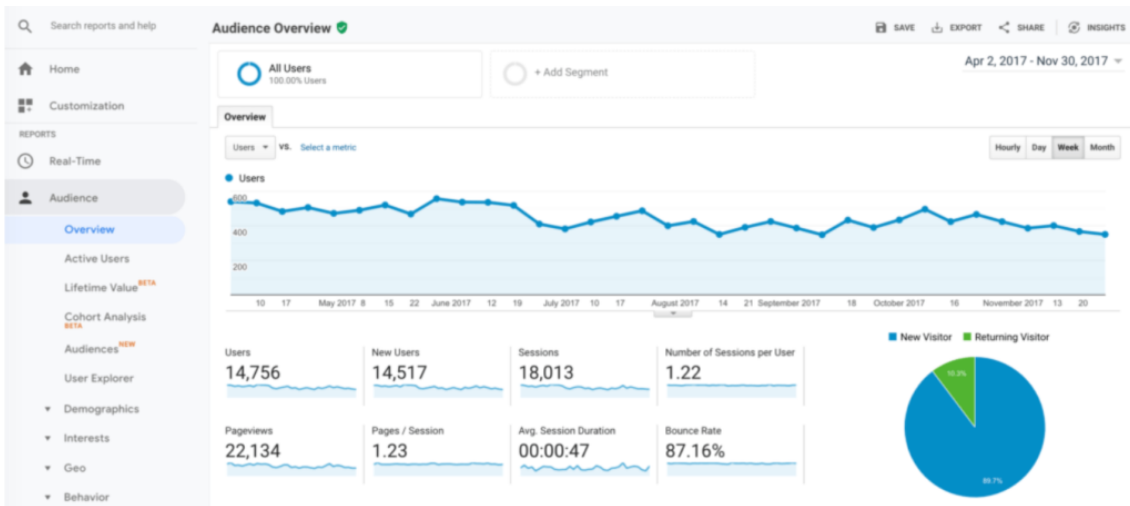


PHOTO 2. Google Analytics dashboard. (The Daily Egg, 2020.)

2.7 Marketing

Nowadays, various marketing platforms are available to promote products or services. These include social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, where businesses can engage with their audience, share content, and run targeted advertising campaigns. Platforms like Google and Bing also allow businesses to improve their visibility through search engine optimization (SEO). Other tools, such as email marketing services, influencer marketing platforms, and affiliate marketing networks, provide unique ways to connect with potential customers. (Digizer, 2024.)

In the marketing of the event discussed in this thesis, both Facebook and Instagram were utilized as key platforms to reach and engage with the target audience. While Instagram was also used for promotion, this thesis focuses on analyzing the outcomes of Facebook marketing, as it played a more significant role in the event's marketing efforts. The detailed results and insights regarding Facebook are discussed later in this thesis. (Digizer, 2024.)

2.7.1 Facebook

Facebook is a social networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with family and friends online. Originally designed for college students, Facebook was created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg while he was enrolled at Harvard University. By 2006, anyone over the age of 13 with a valid email address could join Facebook. Today, Facebook is the world's largest social network, with more than 1 billion users worldwide. (CNN Business, 2019.)

2.7.2 Instagram

Instagram is a free photo and video-sharing app available on iPhone and Android. People can upload photos or videos to our service and share them with their followers or with a select group of friends. They can also view, comment and like posts shared by their friends on Instagram. Anyone 13 and older can create an account by registering an email address and selecting a username. (Global Marketing Guide, 2024.)

3 ORGANIZING SYMPOSIUM

3.1 Defining seminar purpose and scope

According to *Vallo and Häyrinen (2008)*, successful event planning requires a structured and systematic approach. To build on their framework, the following six-point plan was developed to guide the organization of a seminar. This plan addresses the purpose, audience, topics, structure, outcomes, and budget to ensure a comprehensive and effective preparation process.

To create a successful seminar, it is essential to clearly define its purpose and scope. This process involves identifying the seminar's objectives, target audience, key topics, format, desired outcomes, and budget. These elements provide the foundation for effective planning and ensure the seminar aligns with the needs and expectations of its attendees.

The first step is to determine the seminar's objectives and goals and to clearly state what the seminar aims to achieve. For instance, is the purpose to educate the audience, inspire them, or facilitate networking opportunities? Having well-defined goals helps guide all subsequent planning decisions.

Next, the target audience should be identified. It is important to understand who the seminar is intended for, including their professional background, level of expertise, and specific interests. For example, in a seminar about sled dogs, you should consider what industries the attendees represent, their familiarity with the subject, and what aspects of sled dogs might interest them most.

Once the audience is defined, you should select the topics and themes that will resonate with them. These should be relevant, engaging, and tailored to the participants' needs. Sometimes, consulting subject matter experts or conducting surveys to identify the most compelling content may be helpful.

The scope of the seminar should also be clearly outlined. This includes deciding on the duration, structure, and activities. Will the seminar take place over a single day or multiple days? Will it feature lectures, interactive discussions, or hands-on sessions? Defining these parameters ensures the event is manageable and aligned with its goals.

Considering the desired outcomes of the seminar. What should attendees gain from their participation? These outcomes should shape the seminar's content and structure to effectively meet these objectives, whether it is new knowledge, skills, or perspectives.

Finally, a budget for the seminar must be established by identifying the resources required for key elements such as the venue, speaker fees, marketing, catering, and logistical arrangements. Prioritize expenditures based on their importance to the seminar's success and allocate funds accordingly.

By following these six foundational steps, the seminar can effectively be planned and executed to meet its objectives and deliver value to participants.

3.2 Forming a planning committee and subcommittees

Organizing a seminar for 300 participants is a complex task that requires effective teamwork and coordination. To ensure a successful event, it is essential to establish a planning committee and delegate responsibilities to smaller sub-groups, each focusing on specific aspects of the seminar.

The first step is recruitment. It is important to select individuals who are passionate about sled dogs and enthusiastic about contributing to the seminar's success. The team should consist of members with diverse skill sets, such as expertise in event planning, marketing, logistics, financial management, and knowledge about sled dogs. A balanced team with varied expertise ensures that all aspects of the seminar are handled effectively. Clearly defining roles and responsibilities for each team member is crucial. Assigning tasks that align with individual skills and interests promotes efficiency and accountability. Key roles within the planning committee might include a team leader to oversee the project, an event planner to manage logistics, a marketer to promote the seminar, an organizer to handle scheduling and registrations, a speaker coordinator to manage guest presenters, and a financial manager to oversee the budget. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2008, 212)

Regular meetings are essential for the planning team to stay organized and aligned. These meetings provide a platform to review progress, set objectives, make key decisions, and address challenges as they arise. Open communication and collaboration among team members are critical to ensure everyone remains informed and focused on achieving the seminar's objectives. Establishing a planning committee and dividing responsibilities helps distribute the workload and leverage each team member's strengths. Effective teamwork and clear communication are fundamental to successfully organizing a seminar for 300 people. (Vallo & Häyrynen, 2008. 206-208)

3.3 Setting the seminar date and venue

Once the planning team is in place, determining the seminar's date and venue is the next critical step. These decisions are fundamental as they influence the rest of the planning process and the event's overall success.

3.3.1 Selecting the date

Choosing an appropriate date involves considering several factors. It is important to account for the availability of key participants, such as speakers, special guests, and the planning team itself. External factors like weather conditions, particularly outdoor events, and potential conflicts with other significant events or holidays should be considered. It is advisable to select a convenient date for most of the target audience, ensuring minimal conflicts with other obligations.

The timing of the event is also crucial. Consider whether a weekday or weekend is more suitable for the audience and whether the seminar should be held in the morning, afternoon, or evening. Once the potential dates have been identified, it is beneficial to consult with the planning team and key stakeholders to confirm their feasibility before finalizing the decision.

3.3.2 Choosing the Venue

Selecting an appropriate venue requires careful consideration of the seminar's size, structure, and logistical requirements. The venue should accommodate the anticipated number of attendees comfortably and allow for the desired setup, whether rows of seats, classroom-style arrangements, or round tables. Accessibility is a key factor when choosing a venue. The location should be easy to reach for many attendees and offer convenient parking options. Facilities such as audiovisual presentation equipment, catering services, and other amenities should also be evaluated. The venue's atmosphere should align with the seminar's theme and objectives to create the desired impression for attendees. It is essential to contact multiple venues to compare their offerings, including pricing, capacity, flexibility in setup options, and any additional services they provide. A site visit to shortlisted venues is highly recommended to assess their suitability and identify potential challenges or advantages. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 131-135)

Finally, you should negotiate the terms of the venue contract carefully. All key details should be covered, including rental fees, deposit requirements, cancellation policies, setup and teardown times, and special accommodation or requests. This ensures clarity and minimizes the risk of misunderstandings later in the planning process. Thoughtfully selecting the date and venue lays the foundation for a successful seminar. These decisions influence the event's overall logistics and enhance its appeal to participants, increasing the likelihood of a well-attended and smoothly executed seminar. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 131-135)

3.4 Designing the program and securing speakers

With the date and venue finalized, the next step in organizing the seminar is to develop the program and select speakers with expertise in sled dogs and related topics. This phase is critical for ensuring the seminar is engaging and educational for attendees. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 194-195)

3.4.1 Program development

The first step in creating the seminar program is identifying the key themes and topics. The interests and needs of the target audience should be considered to determine what the seminar should focus on. This could include educational presentations, interactive discussions, workshops, and collaborative activities. Listing the main subjects helps structure the event and provide valuable and relevant content. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 194-195)

A preliminary agenda should then be created, outlining the proposed flow of the seminar. This includes determining the sequence of sessions, assigning time slots, and identifying potential speakers for each segment. The agenda should remain flexible to allow for adjustments based on speaker availability and audience preferences. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 194-195)

Balancing content and engagement are vital for maintaining participants' interest. The program should include informative presentations and interactive activities like Q&A sessions and networking breaks. These elements help keep attendees engaged and allow for meaningful interaction. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 194-195)

Once the initial program draft is ready, reviewing it with the planning team and other key stakeholders is essential. Their feedback can help refine the schedule to better align with the seminar's objectives and the audience's expectations. (Vallo & Häyrinen, 2008. 194-195)

3.4.2 Speaker selection and invitation

As *Vallo and Häyrinen (2008)* emphasize, finding the right speakers is crucial for the seminar's success. Identify potential candidates with expertise in sled dogs or closely related fields. Look for individuals who are knowledgeable, experienced, and capable of delivering engaging presentations that captivate the audience.

Once potential speakers are identified, email them a formal invitation. Clearly communicate the seminar's purpose and topics and why their participation would be valuable. To ensure clarity and professionalism, provide detailed information, including travel arrangements, accommodations, and honoraria.

After receiving responses, confirm each speaker's availability for the seminar date and finalize logistical details, such as travel plans and any specific requirements they may have. Maintaining open communication with the speakers is essential to addressing any questions or concerns they might have.

Aiming for diversity among the speakers to enhance the seminar's appeal. Including individuals with varying backgrounds and perspectives enriches the program, offering attendees a broader range of insights and experiences. By developing a well-structured program and securing knowledgeable and engaging speakers, the seminar is positioned to deliver a meaningful and memorable experience for all participants. These steps also set the stage for effective promotion and coordination of the event.

3.5 Marketing and promoting the seminar

Promoting and marketing a seminar is a crucial step in ensuring its success. As *Vallo and Häyriinen (2008)* explain, effective marketing helps spread the word about the event and encourages the target audience to attend. Developing a comprehensive marketing plan and implementing it consistently are key elements of this process.

The first step in promoting a seminar is to define the target audience. Understanding who will most likely be interested in the event is essential for tailoring marketing efforts. Considering the audience's age, interests, professional background, and geographic location. By identifying these characteristics, marketing strategies can be designed to resonate with the intended participants and capture their attention.

Crafting compelling messaging is another vital aspect of promotion. Highlighting the unique value of the seminar and clearly communicate why it is worth attending. This includes showcasing the benefits participants will gain, such as knowledge, skills, or networking opportunities. The messaging should be engaging, using attention-grabbing language and visually appealing elements to generate interest.

Selecting the appropriate marketing channels is critical to effectively reach the target audience. Depending on where the audience is most active, advertising efforts can be directed toward online platforms, such as social media, email, and the seminar's website, or offline methods, such as posters, flyers, and advertisements in industry publications. The content and style of the advertisements should align with the tone and format of the chosen channels.

Creating promotional materials that capture attention and convey essential information is an important component of the marketing plan. These materials should feature eye-catching graphics, concise and engaging headlines, and clear details about the seminar.

Digital marketing strategies can significantly enhance promotional efforts. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn can be used to share updates, post engaging content, and run targeted ads to specific demographics or interest groups. Email marketing campaigns are another effective tool for informing and engaging potential attendees. Regular email updates can provide details about speakers, topics, and registration while offering special promotions or reminders to encourage participation.

Collaborating with industry partners and influencers can further amplify the seminar's reach. Partnerships with relevant organizations or individuals can include sharing promotional content, hosting guest posts or interviews, and cross promoting the event on social media or other platforms.

Monitoring and measuring marketing efforts' performance is essential for optimizing the campaign. Tracking metrics such as website visits, social media engagement, and registration numbers provides valuable insights into the marketing plan's effectiveness. These insights can be used to adjust strategies and improve outcomes.

By implementing a comprehensive and well-executed marketing plan, the seminar can effectively reach its target audience, generate excitement, and ensure strong attendance. Focusing on clear communication and audience engagement helps lay the foundation for a successful and memorable event.

3.6 Manage registrations and attendee communication

According to *Vallo and Häyrynen (2008)*, managing registrations and maintaining clear communication with attendees are critical to ensuring a successful seminar. These efforts help build anticipation and address any potential issues before the seminar.

To begin, it is essential to implement a user-friendly registration system. Selecting an appropriate platform or software simplifies the registration process for attendees. The system should be capable of handling the expected volume of registrations and accommodating specific requirements such as discounts or special requests. Customizing the registration form is also important for collecting necessary information, including participants' names, contact details, affiliations, dietary preferences, and other special needs. Secure payment processing must be in place, offering various payment methods to suit attendees' preferences. Before launching registration, conducting thorough system testing helps identify and resolve any technical issues, ensuring a seamless user experience.

Promoting early bird registration can encourage timely sign-ups and generate excitement about the seminar. Offering incentives such as discounted rates or exclusive benefits for early registrants creates a sense of urgency. Highlighting the advantages of early registration, such as reserved seating or access to special sessions, further motivates potential attendees. Utilizing marketing channels effectively to publicize the early registration period ensures maximum outreach.

Clear and consistent communication with attendees is another key element of registration management. Developing a communication plan allows for timely and accurate updates throughout the process. Sending confirmation emails immediately after registration reassures attendees that their sign-up is successful and provides essential details such as the seminar date, time, and location. Periodic emails leading up to the event can share agenda updates, speaker announcements, and any changes to the schedule. Providing a dedicated point of contact for inquiries ensures that attendees receive prompt assistance with registration, accommodation, or transportation. Additionally, leveraging communication tools like social media, text messages, and event apps allows for real-time updates and reminders.

On the day of the seminar, a well-organized on-site registration and check-in process is crucial for creating a positive first impression. The process should be streamlined to minimize waiting times

and ensure efficiency. Training staff to assist attendees and manage on-site registrations effectively contributes to a smooth operation. Technology such as barcode scanners or event apps can further enhance the check-in experience.

By carefully managing the registration process and maintaining clear communication, organizers can create a seamless and enjoyable experience for attendees. These efforts foster confidence in the event's organization and help build excitement, setting the stage for a successful seminar.

3.7 Coordinate on-site logistics

According to *Vallo and Häyrinen (2008)*, coordinating on-site logistics is critical to ensuring the seminar runs smoothly and attendees have a positive experience. Careful planning and coordination at the venue help create a good impression and make the event successful.

One of the first things to focus on is getting the venue ready. Arriving early allows the team to ensure everything is set up as planned. Working with the venue staff and any service providers helps ensure that seating, signs, audiovisual equipment, and other necessary items are in place. Walking through the venue one last time helps identify and fix any last-minute issues before attendees arrive.

Registration and check-in are also key parts of the day. It is important to set up a registration area where attendees can easily collect their name badges, event materials, and other information. Staff members should be trained to help with check-ins, answer questions, and handle unexpected issues. Technology like QR codes or apps can be used for a faster check-in process to speed things up and avoid long lines.

Managing the seminar sessions requires keeping everything on schedule. This includes ensuring keynote speeches, discussions, workshops, and breaks happen on time. Speakers should be briefed on the schedule and given any technical or material support they need. Having staff or volunteers assist attendees and handle any issues in session rooms is also helpful.

Providing catering and refreshments is another way to make the event enjoyable. Work with catering teams to deliver food and drinks on time and accommodate any dietary restrictions attendees mentioned during registration. Food stations should be monitored to keep them clean and stocked throughout the event.

It is essential to support attendees and make them feel welcome. Assign staff or volunteers to assist attendees with questions or problems. Creating opportunities for networking and interactive activities to keep everyone engaged. Gathering feedback during the event can help address concerns and improve the experience for attendees.

Being prepared for emergencies is also very important. An emergency plan should be created and shared with staff and volunteers. This plan should explain what to do in medical emergencies, evacuations, or other unexpected situations. Training staff in these procedures ensures they know their roles, and having emergency contacts and resources ready helps everyone feel more secure.

After the seminar, wrapping things up properly is just as important. Clean up and remove any materials or decorations with the help of venue staff or vendors. A post-event meeting with key people involved can help review what went well and what could be improved next time. Thanking speakers, sponsors, vendors, and volunteers with notes or emails shows appreciation and helps build good relationships for future events. By organizing on-site logistics well, the seminar can run smoothly and leave a positive impression on everyone involved, making it a memorable and successful event.

3.8 Facilitate seminar sessions

As *Vallo and Häyrinen (2008)* discuss, ensuring each session runs smoothly and achieves its intended goals is essential for a successful seminar. This involves working closely with speakers, managing session logistics, and creating an environment encouraging active participation and engagement among attendees.

Effective speaker management begins well before the seminar. Speakers should be contacted in advance to confirm their participation, discuss their presentation topics, and address any specific requirements they might have. Clear communication is key, and speakers should be informed of important details such as their session's time slot, format, and technical needs. Suggesting how to engage the audience can also help them deliver a more impactful presentation. Rehearsal sessions or briefings before the event are highly recommended to review logistics, address questions, and ensure speakers feel prepared and confident.

Coordinating sessions requires careful scheduling and attention to detail. A clear schedule should outline when each session begins and ends, along with designated breaks and networking opportunities. Moderators can be assigned to introduce speakers, facilitate discussions, and manage Q&A sessions. To avoid disruptions, technical equipment, such as microphones and projectors, should be set up and tested before each session begins. Monitoring attendance and ensuring participants have enough space and comfort during sessions are also important aspects of session coordination.

Audience engagement is a critical element of a successful seminar. Attendees should be encouraged to actively participate through discussions, Q&A opportunities, and other interactive formats. Allowing time for networking during breaks and providing opportunities for attendees to connect with speakers and exhibitors can enhance their experience. Ensuring a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere helps attendees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions. Collecting feedback during the seminar can provide insights into how attendees are experiencing the event and guide adjustments to improve their satisfaction.

Preparing to handle unexpected situations is an important part of managing seminar sessions. Technical difficulties, last-minute cancellations, or other unforeseen issues can arise, so having backup plans is essential. This might include having spare equipment, alternative session formats, or standby speakers. Flexibility and quick problem-solving skills are vital, and keeping all stakeholders informed of any changes or disruptions is important.

Organizers effectively manage seminar sessions and create an environment where participants feel engaged, informed, and connected. Careful planning, strong communication, and adaptability contribute to each session's success and enhance the seminar experience.

3.9 Gather feedback and evaluate the seminar

As *Vallo and Häyriinen (2008)* emphasize, collecting feedback from participants and stakeholders after the seminar is important. This feedback helps to understand what worked well, what could be better, and how future seminars can be improved. Gathering and analyzing feedback gives valuable information about the seminar's success and helps plan better events.

The first step is to create simple ways for people to give feedback. Feedback forms or surveys can be made for different groups, such as attendees, speakers, sponsors, and exhibitors. These forms should have easy-to-understand questions, including rating scales and open-ended questions for additional comments. Sending out these surveys at the right time, such as soon after the event, increases the chances of people responding. Using online tools or apps can make collecting and organizing feedback easier. Offering the option to give feedback anonymously can encourage more honest answers.

It is also important to encourage people to participate in giving feedback. Explain why their opinions matter and how their input will help make future seminars better. Small rewards, like a chance to win a prize, can motivate people to complete the survey. The main goal is to collect honest and helpful feedback.

Once the feedback is collected, it should be used for practical improvements. Focus on the most important suggestions to implement and align with the seminar's goals. Create a clear plan for addressing these suggestions, including who will handle each task and when it will be done. Keeping track of progress ensures that changes are made.

Sharing the feedback results with key stakeholders, like the planning team, speakers, and sponsors, is an important step. This allows everyone involved to celebrate the successes and discuss ways to improve. Stakeholders can also contribute ideas and support for future changes, making the process more collaborative.

Finally, feedback should guide the planning of future seminars. Use the insights to improve the event experience, considering the participants' changing needs and new industry trends. Regularly reviewing and updating the seminar planning process based on feedback ensures that each event builds on the previous one's success. Encouraging a learning and improvement mindset within the planning team helps deliver even better seminars.

By collecting and using feedback, organizers show they are committed to improvement. This ensures each seminar improves and brings more value to attendees and stakeholders.

3.10 Reflect and plan for future seminars

As *Vallo and Häyriinen (2008)* highlight, reviewing the results and planning for future events is important after the seminar ends and feedback is collected. This helps improve the seminar each time and ensures better outcomes in the future.

The first step is to go through the feedback from participants, speakers, sponsors, and other stakeholders. Look at what worked well and what needs to be improved. Use both numbers, like survey results and attendance statistics, and written comments or opinions to fully understand how the seminar went. Consider common points in the feedback, like comments about session topics, speaker performance, venue, or overall satisfaction.

Next, the seminar results will be compared to the original goals set during the planning stage. Ask questions like: Did the seminar achieve its goals? Did enough people attend? Were participants happy with their experience? Comparing the actual outcomes to your expectations helps identify what went well and what needs improvement. Recognizing successes and thanking the team, speakers, and sponsors for their efforts also helps build a positive atmosphere for future planning.

Taking time to reflect on the seminar as a whole. Identifying what went smoothly and what should be repeated in the future. Think about areas where changes could improve the event's results. Write down the lessons learned and share these with the team and stakeholders. This helps everyone learn from the experience and work together to improve.

Based on the feedback and review, develop clear suggestions for improving the next seminar. Focus on improving session topics, making activities more engaging, fixing logistical issues, and building stronger partnerships with sponsors or speakers. Plan for these changes, assign tasks to the right people and set deadlines to ensure the improvements are completed.

When planning future seminars, use the lessons and recommendations from past events. Let the feedback guide decisions about topics, logistics, and goals. Keep updating your methods to match new industry trends and technologies. Setting clear goals for future seminars helps ensure they provide more value and engage participants even better.

By reviewing feedback and planning improvements, each seminar becomes more successful than the last. This process helps organizers deliver better events that are valuable for participants and stakeholders.

4 FROM IDEA TO EXECUTION

The planning of the event began in 2020 upon realizing that no such event existed in Finland, unlike the Kiruna Sleddog Symposium in Sweden, which served as a reference point. Organizing a similar event in Finland was initially deemed unfeasible due to limited resources, knowledge, and skills. Posio was considered as a potential location, but its venues were too small. Other options, such as Kuusamo, Ruka, and Syöte, were briefly evaluated but not further pursued.

In 2022, participation in the seminar held in Kiruna renewed interest in organizing the event. This led to a re-evaluation of potential venues, with Ruka, Posio, and Syöte being excluded due to the scale of the envisioned event. Kuusamo was revisited as a possibility, specifically Kuusamotalo, but its accessibility was deemed insufficient for the purpose.

The search subsequently shifted to the west coast, where Oulu was immediately ruled out as an unsuitable location for a sled dog-related event. In Kemi, one potential venue was identified and inquiries were made, but it was found to be undergoing renovations due to indoor air quality issues. Additional suitable venues in Kemi were sought but none were identified.

Towards the end of 2022, a visit to the Korundi House of Culture in Rovaniemi, undertaken in connection with professional responsibilities, led to the identification of an ideal venue. Korundi was recognized as a fitting location for hosting Finland's first seminar dedicated to sled dogs, aligning with the requirements and vision for the event.

4.1 Korundi House of Culture

Korundi House of Culture is a space for people and the arts in Rovaniemi. It is home to Rovaniemi Art Museum and the Lapland Chamber Orchestra, showing the world from a northern perspective. Korundi brings together artists and viewers, everyday life and celebration, history and the present. (Korundi.fi 2023.)

On January 31, 2023, an inquiry was sent to the sales manager of Korundi regarding the availability of the auditorium and potential spaces for exhibitors or vendors for the event. A response was received the following day, confirming that the facilities were still available. Subsequently, colleagues who had expressed willingness to assist in organizing the event were contacted.

A live meeting with the sales manager was scheduled to take place during a site visit on March 29, during which a guided tour of the facilities would be provided, and preliminary plans for the event would be discussed. It was agreed that the venue would be provisionally booked under specific conditions, with a final reservation to be confirmed by the end of June.

4.2 Name of the event

The process of brainstorming names for the event began to identify a title that encapsulated the essence of Rovaniemi, often associated with the "Arctic Circle," and the sled dog community. It was considered important that the chosen name authentically represented the event's spirit while remaining inclusive and appealing to a broader audience. To achieve this, the use of the term "seminar" was intentionally avoided. After careful consideration, the name "Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium" (ACSDS) was selected.

4.3 Website

The creation of the event website was undertaken independently, leveraging prior experience in developing websites for various events. This background provided valuable insights into effective design principles and common pitfalls, enabling the realization of a clear vision for the website without the need for external assistance.

One of the main challenges encountered was selecting an appropriate domain name. The goal was to choose a domain that was both memorable and easy to spell. The initial consideration was www.arcticcirclesleddogsymposium.fi, but this option was ultimately deemed too long and potentially cumbersome for users to remember or type accurately.

An alternative using the event's abbreviation, such as www.acsds.fi, was also evaluated. While this option offered a shorter URL, it was found to lack clarity, as it did not convey the nature of the event or its relevance to potential visitors.

After careful deliberation, the domain www.sleddogsymposium.fi was selected. This choice was concise, clearly communicated the event's primary focus, and emphasized its location in Finland through the .fi suffix. The simplicity of this domain was expected to improve user recall and ease of access, which are critical factors for driving website traffic and effectively promoting the event.



PHOTO 3. The header of the website. (Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium, 2024.)

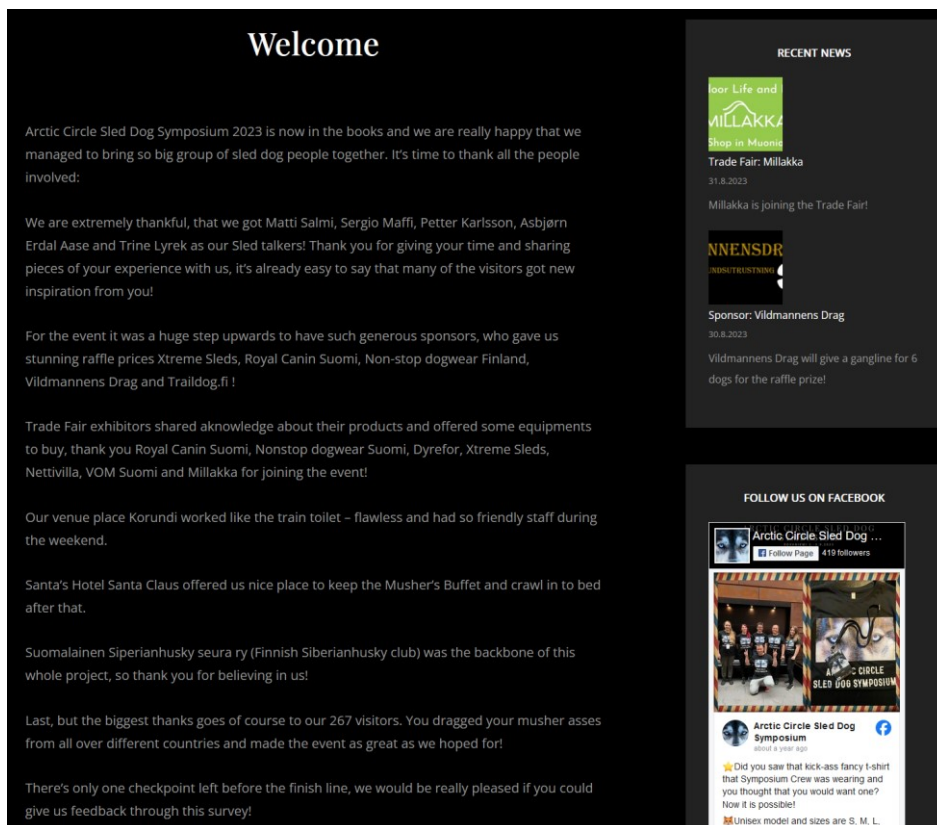


PHOTO 4. Homepage of the website. (Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium, 2024.)

The website was developed using WordPress, a platform selected for its user-friendly interface and flexibility. WordPress is particularly advantageous for individuals without extensive technical expertise, as it enables the creation of professional and visually appealing websites without requiring in-depth knowledge of coding.

To monitor website traffic and visitor behavior, a plug-in was installed to integrate Google Analytics. This tool provides valuable insights into visitor engagement, including metrics such as the most frequently visited pages, the duration of visits, and the geographic locations of users. These analytics offer a comprehensive understanding of user preferences and the website's overall effectiveness in meeting its objectives.

The website was officially published on April 13, 2023.

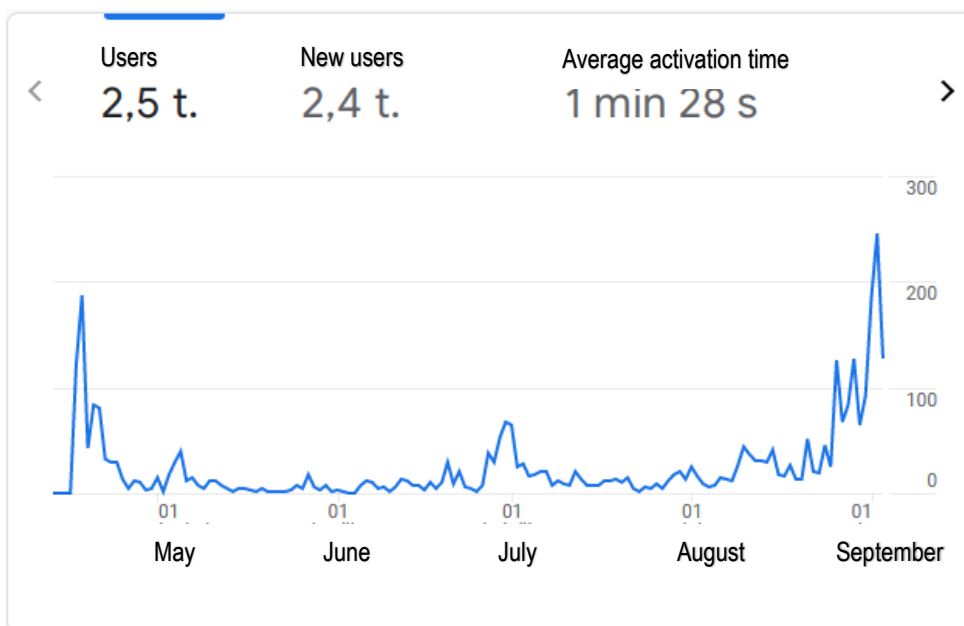


FIGURE 1. Visitors from the launch till the last day of the seminar.

Figure 1 shows that there are two higher peaks after the website was launched and we started marketing it: On April 18th, the website had 187 visitors, and during the actual event on September 2nd, the website had 246 visitors.

	2 486 100 % from total	2 411 100 % from total	2 967 100 % from total	57,82 % Average (0 %)
1 Finland	1 535	1 516	2 126	59,44 %
2 Norway	286	284	274	55,47 %
3 Sweden	203	187	221	61,39 %
4 United States	127	75	45	34,62 %
5 Germany	70	62	71	48,63 %
6 France	57	54	47	51,65 %
7 Austria	41	39	41	56,16 %
8 Italy	31	31	23	40,35 %
9 Ireland	26	10	2	7,69 %
10 Netherlands	21	19	26	59,09 %

FIGURE 2. Visitors per country.

From the launch of the website until the conclusion of the symposium, the site attracted visitors from around the world. The highest number of visitors came from Finland, totaling 1,535 individuals, followed by Norway with 286 visitors and Sweden with 203, as illustrated in Figure 2.

In addition to Scandinavian visitors, the website also received traffic from outside the region. A total of 127 visitors accessed the site from the United States, while Germany contributed 70 visitors, and France 57. Other countries, including Austria, Italy, Ireland, and the Netherlands, also had notable levels of engagement with the website.

	12 879 100 % from total
1 Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium – Rovaniemi 2.-3.9.2023	3 585
2 Schedule – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	2 727
3 Tickets – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	1 377
4 SLED talkers – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	1 249
5 Trade Fair – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	861
6 Musher’s Buffet – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	768
7 Venue – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	669
8 Accommodation – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	618
9 Sponsors & Partners – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	469
10 Christer Afséer Is Unable To Join – Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium	162

FIGURE 3. Visitors per page

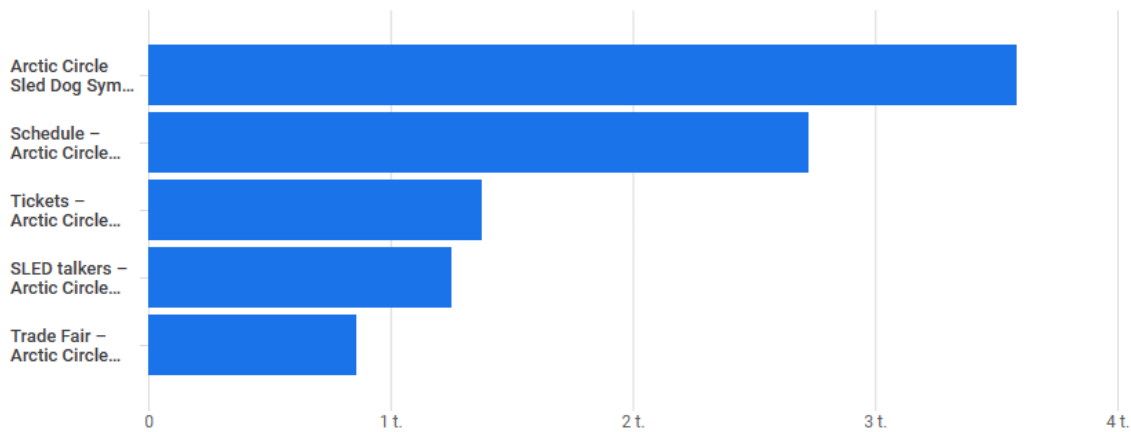


FIGURE 4. Chart for five of the most visited pages.

As shown in Figure 3, the website received a total of 12,879 page views. Figure 4 highlights that the homepage garnered the highest number of views, with 3,585 visits. The schedule page followed as the second most viewed, with 2,727 visits.

The ticket page ranked third, with 1,377 views, closely followed by the "SLED Talkers" page, which received 1,249 views. Pages such as Trade Fair, Musher's Buffet, Venue, Accommodation, and Sponsors & Partners each attracted between 400 and 1,000 views. In terms of news content, the most viewed article was regarding Christer Afs er's cancellation, which received 162 views.

4.4 Social media

Two social media pages were created for the event, designed to be evergreen rather than limited to specific years. A Facebook page, titled "Like Me," and an Instagram account were established.

On Facebook, the page garnered 297 likes and 416 followers, while the Instagram account attracted 261 followers.

Two paid advertising campaigns were conducted on Facebook. The first campaign, promoting Musher's Buffet tickets, ran from August 9 to August 11, with a budget of €14.00. This campaign reached 1,569 individuals within the targeted demographic, as shown in Figure 5. According to Facebook analytics, 77.5 % of the audience were women, while 22.5 % were men. The target group consisted of individuals aged 18 to 65+, residing in Finland.

Finland.

TARGET GROUP

This add reached 1 569 people from your target group

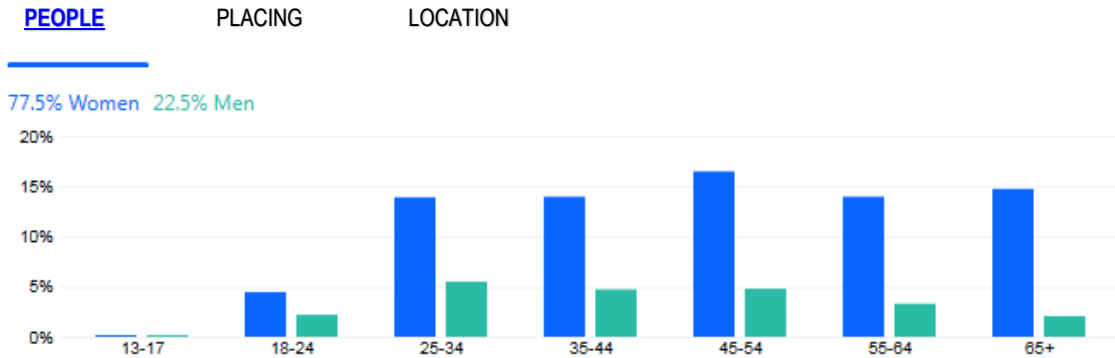


FIGURE 5. The chart from the Facebook division is based on age and sex.

The second advertising campaign focused on the After Movie (Facebook, 2023), which was created from clips recorded by several individuals. This campaign ran from September 10 to September 17, with a budget of 20.00 €. It reached 2,641 individuals within the targeted demographic, as illustrated in Figure 6. According to Facebook analytics, 65.5% of the audience were women and 34.5 % were men. The target group consisted of individuals aged 18 to 65+, residing in Finland.

TARGET GROUP

This add reached 2 641 people from your target group

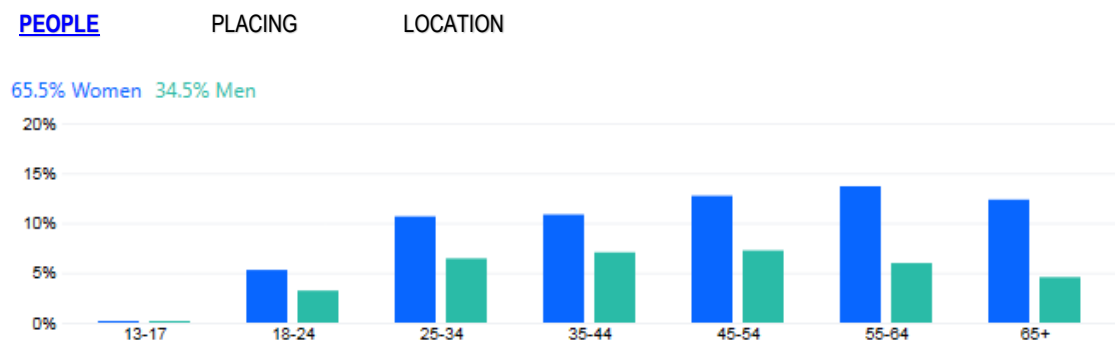


FIGURE 6. The chart from the Facebook division is based on age and sex.

4.5 SLED Talkers

For instance, in the Kiruna symposium, speakers are labelled as speakers, which can be a bit plain. I wanted to come up with a unique term for this. I was thinking about the IT industry's term "TED Talks," and the idea of "SLED Talkers" was developing. I hope that this term goes viral because it is pretty cool.

Our first speaker was Matti Salmi, from Finland, who confirmed his participation before our website was launched. Salmi lives in Nellim with his family and runs dog sledding safaris. Who is also a long-distance racer. He races with Siberian Huskies, and in 2023, he won the world championship in the 600km RNB1 class at the Finnmarkslopet race. *"The World Champion title in the FL-600 RNB Class (pure-breed dogs) went to Finland. Matti Salmi ran one of the 14 participating RNB teams to a sovereign victory in the RNB class."* (Finnmarkslopet.no, 2023.)

Thomas Wærner, from Norway, who won the most famous sled dog race, the Iditarod, in 2020, confirmed his coming on April 16th. Unfortunately, he had to cancel due to personal reasons, as did Christer Afséer, who confirmed his coming on April 17th, competes in long-distance dog sledding with Alaskan Malamutes.

Next, we had a confirmation from a mother-daughter duo, Trine & Hanna Lyrek, on April 27th. Unfortunately, Hanna could not make it due to illness. They have lived in Alaska and have also competed there. Nowadays, they live in Alta, Norway, and compete with Alaskan Huskies. *"She lived for seven years and competed in the Iditarod, the world's longest sled dog race."* (Lyrek, 2024.)

After Thomas Wærner said he could not come, we called to Petter Karlsson, who has won the Finnmarkslopet's 1200km class several times. He confirmed his coming on June 28th.

For the veterinary field, we got Sergio Maffi from Italy. He has worked as a race vet in various sled dog races worldwide. He confirmed his coming on June 29th. *"Over the years, Dr Maffi has directed his professional interests towards the medicine of sporting and working dogs, taking a particular interest in dogs involved in dog sledding and cani-cross."* (Maffi, 2024.)

A few weeks before the event, after Christer's cancellation, we got a real legend in the sled dog world, Asbjørn Erdal-Aase. He has competed with Alaskan Huskies in the open sprint class and has won numerous competitions.



PHOTO 5. Open sprint team racing in Finland. (Asbjørn Erdal-Aase, Private collection, 2023.)

4.6 Sponsors & Partners

Getting sponsors and partners was a bit out of my comfort zone. I am not used to asking for things for free, so I had to change my mindset a bit to talk to potential sponsors and partners. We managed to get Royal Canin, the Finnish Siberian Husky Club, Xtreme Sleds, Santa's Hotel Santa Claus, Non-stop Dogwear Finland, Traildog.fi, and Vildmannens Drag on board as sponsors or partners.

4.7 Musher's buffet

The idea of organizing a dinner for the participants was considered in order to provide evening activities. Santa's Hotel Santa Claus was selected as the venue, as it offered the most affordable option for hosting the dinner. Additionally, the fact that most symposium participants were staying at the hotel made it a convenient choice. A total of 103 tickets were sold for the dinner, which was considered a strong turnout, particularly given that this was the first time such an event was being organized. The dinner included a video presentation about an old sled dog race held in the Rovaniemi-Kuusamo-Kemijärvi-Posio area, known as Scandream, followed by a DJ performance.

In retrospect, the decor, lighting, and table arrangements could have been more carefully considered. The room seemed too large for the number of participants. A special name for the event was also needed, and it was decided to call it "Musher's Buffet." Since the majority of dinner attendees were mushers, and the meal was served buffet-style, this name was deemed appropriate.

5 TICKET SALE

We started selling tickets for the event at the end of April 2023. Every week, we kept track of how many tickets we sold. At first, we had a special Early Bird price of 69.50 €. This discounted price was available until the end of June. After that, the price went up to 89.50 €.

In total, we sold 267 tickets for the event. We were thrilled to see so many people interested in joining us. The Early Bird offer seemed to be popular, and many people took advantage of the discounted price. As the event got closer and the ticket price increased, we still managed to sell quite a few tickets, as Figure 7 shows. It was interesting to see how ticket sales changed over time. At the start, there was a rush to get the Early Bird tickets. Then, as the price went up, sales slowed down a bit. Still, the overall number of tickets sold was quite good, and it showed a lot of interest in our event.

We will keep this data in mind for future events to see how we can improve our ticket sales strategies and offer the best deals to our attendees.

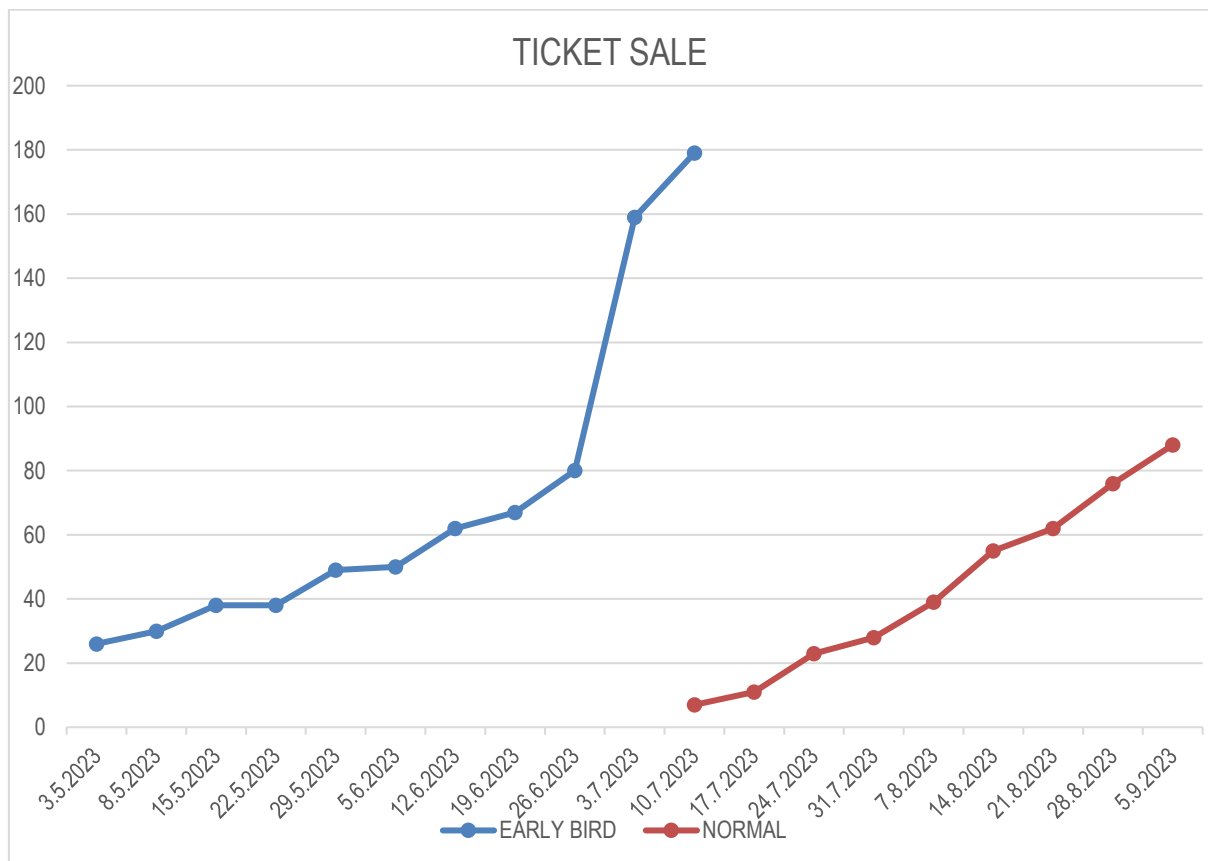


FIGURE 7. The picture shows the development of the tickets on a weekly basis.

6 SURVEY FOR THE VISITORS

A survey was conducted to gather feedback from over 250 event attendees, but only 37 responded. It might help to better explain the importance of feedback or offer small incentives to improve future response rates. Language preferences also emerged as an issue, with some respondents answering in Finnish despite the survey being in English. Offering multilingual surveys could increase participation.

Key feedback themes included ticket pricing, communication, and timing. Comments on ticket prices can guide future pricing strategies, while feedback on communication emphasizes the importance of clear and timely information. Attendees also highlighted the timing of the event, suggesting adjustments to avoid conflicts with busy seasons.

Participants shared thoughts on speakers and topics, stressing the need for engaging and relevant content. Venue feedback addressed accessibility and suitability while catering feedback focused on food quality and dietary options. Exhibitors and vendors were another area of interest, with suggestions for improving their number and quality.

Evening activities, like the musher's buffet, received mixed reviews, offering opportunities for improvement or expansion. Additional comments in the survey provided valuable insights for refining smaller details and generating new ideas.

By reviewing this feedback, organizers can identify areas for improvement, build on successes, and better align future events with attendee needs. Listening to participants and making thoughtful changes will help ensure that future events are more enjoyable and valuable.

6.1 Analyzing responses

Question 1 *Did you get enough info before the symposium weekend?*

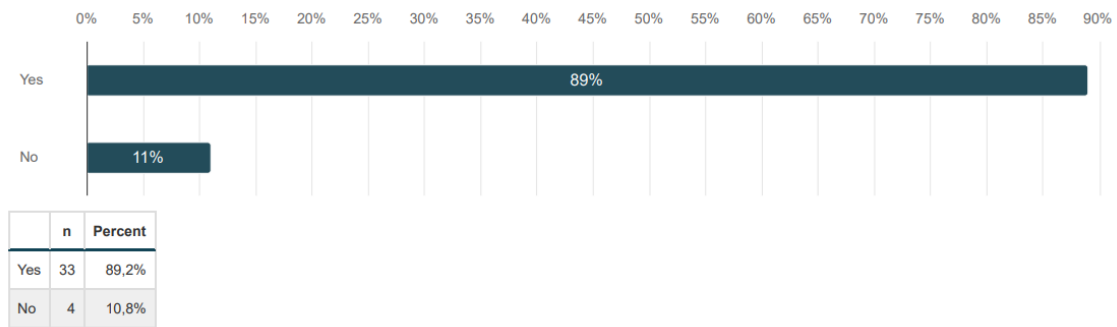


FIGURE 8. Survey Responses to Question 1

The figure shows the answers to the question, "Did you get enough info before the symposium weekend?" Out of the respondents, 33 answered "yes," which is 89.2 % of the responses, and 4 answered "no," which is 10.8 % of the responses.

Question 2. *Did you like the venue?*

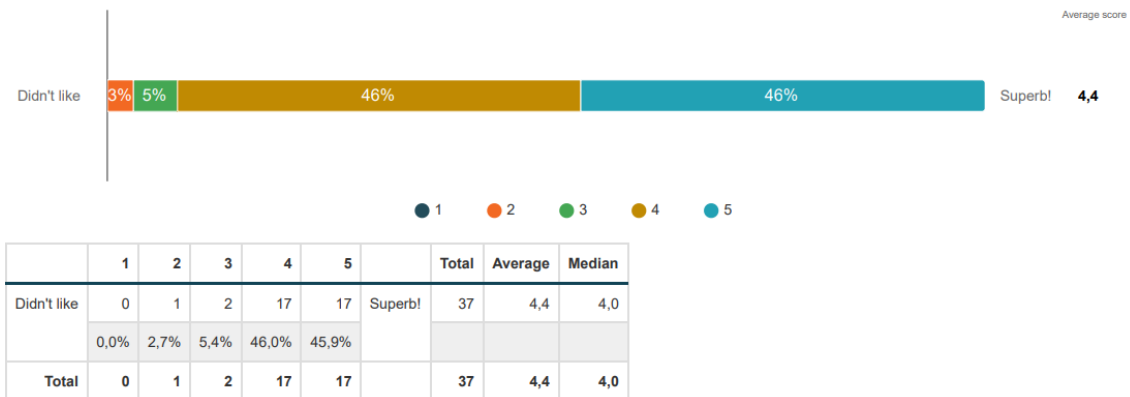


FIGURE 9. Survey Responses to Question 2

The figure shows the answers to the question, "Did you like the venue?" Among the respondents, 17 individuals, representing 45.9 % of the respondents, gave a perfect score of 5 points. Another 17 respondents, accounting for 46 %, were awarded 4 points. 2 respondents (5.4 %) gave 3 points, and 1 respondent (2.7 %) gave 2 points. The average score is 4.4, with a median of 4.0.

Question 3. How did you come to the venue?

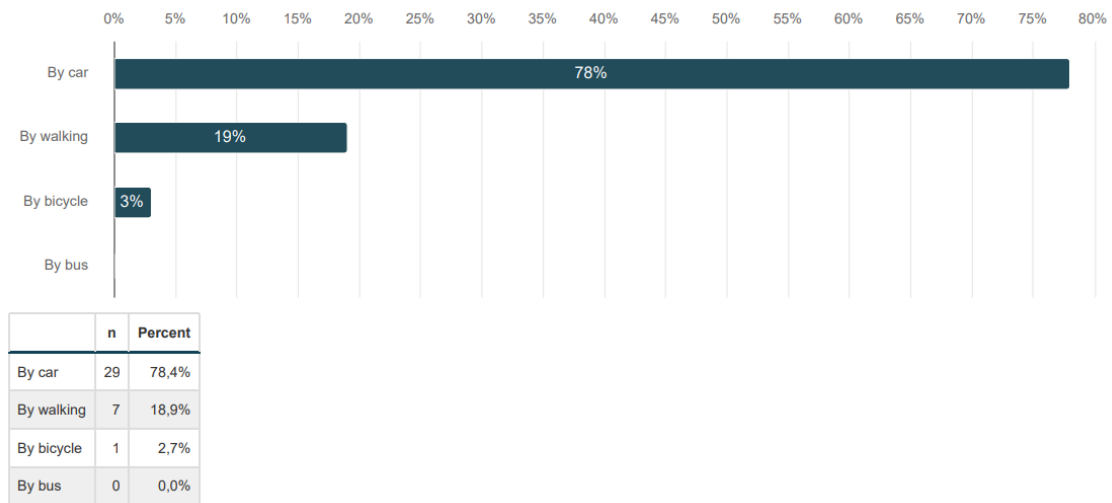


FIGURE 10. Survey Responses to Question 3

The figure shows the answers to the question, "How did you come to the venue?" 29 of the respondents came by car, which is 78.4 %, 7 by walking, which is 18.9 %, and 1 by bicycle, which is 2.7 %.

Out of the 37 respondents who came by, about 29 decided to come with their own cars. This makes sense, as people just feel comfortable driving their own vehicles and would not be tangled up with others' time schedules.

Additionally, 7 visitors chose to walk to the venue, indicating a preference for environmentally friendly and healthy modes of transportation. Walking may have been a feasible option for those living in close proximity to the venue or for those who enjoy walking as a leisure activity.

Interestingly, only one visitor arrived by bike, suggesting that cycling may not be a commonly preferred mode of transportation among the attendees. Possible reasons for this could include distance, weather conditions, or limited bike infrastructure in the area.

Notably, no visitors arrived by bus. This absence of bus travellers may reflect either a lack of convenient bus routes to the venue or a preference among attendees for alternative modes of transportation perceived as more convenient or flexible.

Overall, the distribution of transportation modes among the visitors highlights the diverse preferences and factors influencing travel decisions. Understanding these preferences can inform future event planning efforts, such as optimizing parking facilities, promoting sustainable transportation options, and considering transportation accessibility when selecting event venues.

Question 4. *If by car, did you find the parking lot easily?*

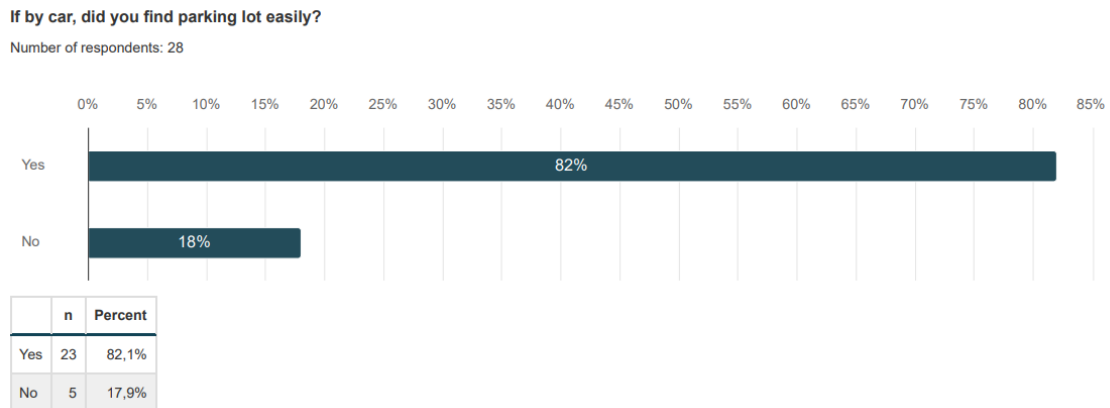


FIGURE 11. Survey Responses to Question 4

The figure shows the answers to the question, “If by car, did you find a parking lot easily?” Out of the 28 respondents who answered the question, one person did not respond even though they arrived by car.

Among the respondents who answered, 23 individuals, or 82.1 % of the total, reported that they easily found a parking lot. On the other hand, 5 respondents, or 17.9 % of the total, mentioned that they did not find a parking lot easily.

Question 5. What you think about the location of the venue?

What you think about the location of the venue?

Number of respondents: 37

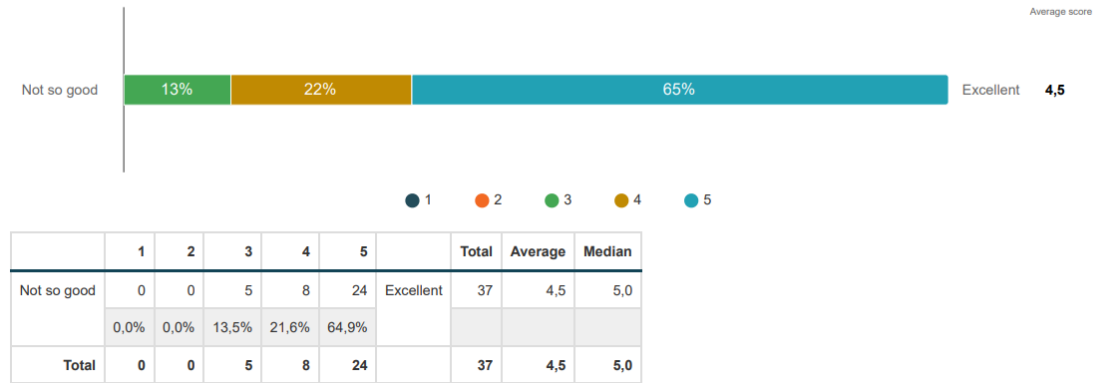


FIGURE 12. Survey Responses to Question 5

The figure shows the answers to the question, “What you think about the location of the venue?” Of all respondents, 24 individuals, which is 64.9 %, said the event's location was excellent, giving it the highest score of 5. 8 respondents, 21.6 %, thought the location was really good, giving it a score of 4. Additionally, 5 respondents, which is 13.5 %, said the location was okay, giving it a score of 3. When we look at all the scores together, the average rating was 4.5, which means most people rated the location very positively. The median rating, which is the middle value when all ratings are put in order, was 5, indicating that many people rated the location as excellent.

Question 6. Did you eat lunch that was served by Korundi Kitchen and Café?

Did you eat lunch that was served by Korundi Kitchen and Café?

Number of respondents: 37

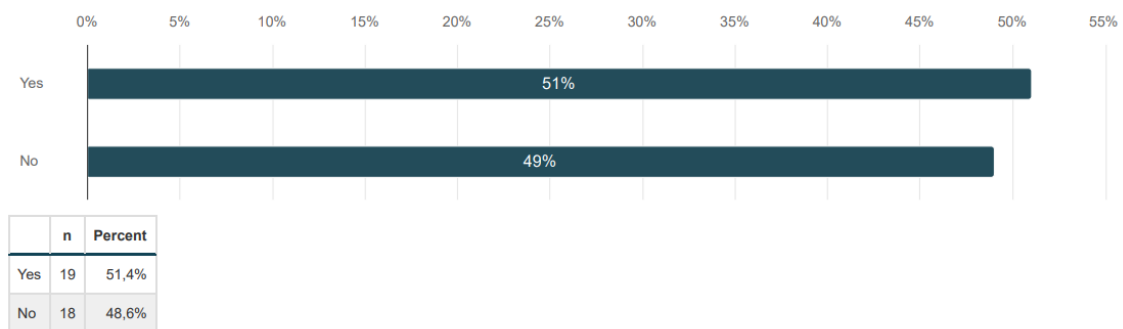


FIGURE 13. Survey Responses to Question 6

The figure shows the answers to the question, “Did you eat lunch that was served by Korundi Kitchen and Café?” 19 respondents, which is 51.4 %, had lunch served by Korundi Kitchen and Café, and 18 respondents, which is 48.6 %, did not have lunch.

Question 7 + Free Word. If yes, how would you rate it?

If yes, how would you rate it?

Number of respondents: 19

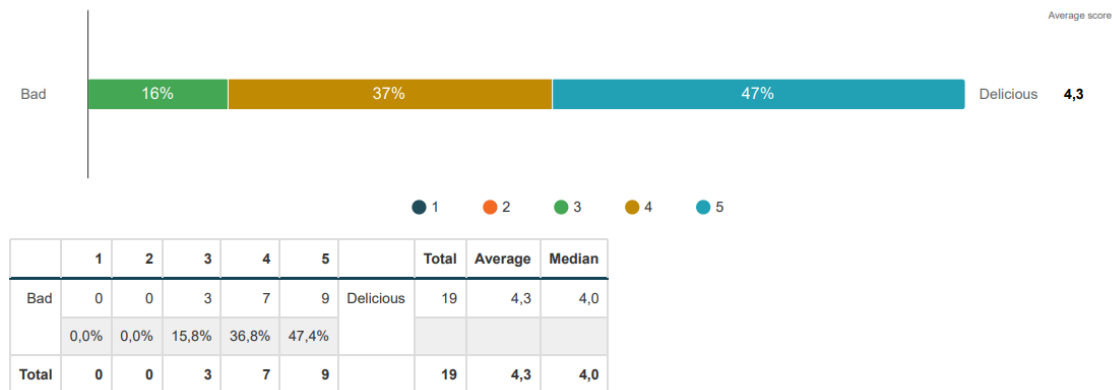


FIGURE 14. Survey Responses to Question 7.

Free word about the lunch:

Number of respondents: 6

Responses
It was ok. Probably superhealthy, but not superyummy. The meat was really good. Missed real butter and some regular accessories like like mashed potatoes.
The main food was really good, salad buffet bit disappointing
I didn't take it because it seemed too pricey for me. I was able to find something cheaper in the city center.
Excellent tastes, veggies, sauses, salads. Great cooking.
The pork on the first day was absolutely amazing! The second day I decided to eat somewhere in rovaniemi but I'm sure the lunch was good on the second day too!
I ate only on Sunday.

FIGURE 15. Survey Responses to Question's 7 Free Word.

Figure 14 shows the answers to the question, “If yes, how would you rate it?” Among the respondents, 9 individuals, representing 47.4 % of the total, rated the lunch as excellent, giving it a top score of 5. Another 7 respondents, constituting 36.8% of the sample, awarded a rating of 4, indicating a high level of satisfaction. However, 3 participants, comprising 15.8% of the respondents, gave a score of 3, suggesting a moderate level of satisfaction. The average rating across all responses stands at 4.3, indicating generally positive feedback, with the median score being 4, reflecting a balanced distribution of ratings.

Overall, feedback on the food provided at the event varied. While some participants found the main dishes to be satisfactory, praising the quality of the meat, others expressed mixed opinions regarding the taste and variety of the offerings. Some attendees appreciated the healthy options and praised the selection of vegetables, sauces, and salads. However, others were disappointed by certain aspects, such as the absence of real butter and traditional accompaniments like mashed potatoes. Additionally, concerns were raised about the pricing of the meals, prompting some individuals to seek alternative dining options in the city center. Despite these mixed reviews, the pork dish served on the first day received particular acclaim from one participant. Overall, there were differing preferences and experiences regarding the food provided during the event, with some participants choosing not to partake in the meals at all.

Question 8. Did you like the SLED talkers?

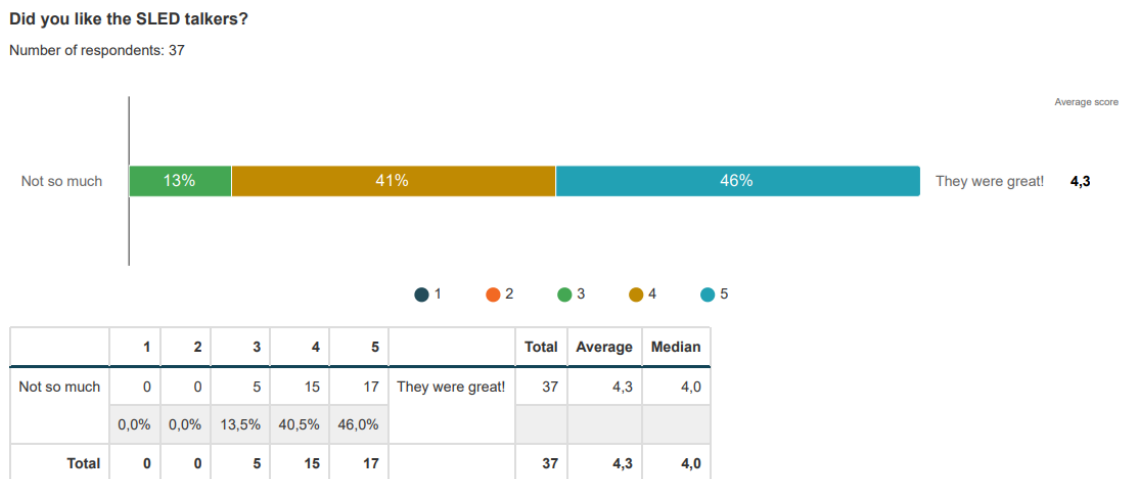


FIGURE 16. Survey Responses to Question 8

The figure shows the answers to the question, “Did you like the SLED talkers?” Out of the respondents, 17, or 46.0 %, rated the SLED talkers as excellent, giving them a score of 5. Meanwhile, 15 respondents, or 40.5 %, rated them as good, giving them a score of 4. Only 5 respondents, or 13.5%, gave a score of 3. On average, the responses indicate a rating of 4.3, with a median score of 4.

Question 9. Was there enough exhibitors at the Trade Fair?

Was there enough exhibitors at the Trade Fair?

Number of respondents: 37

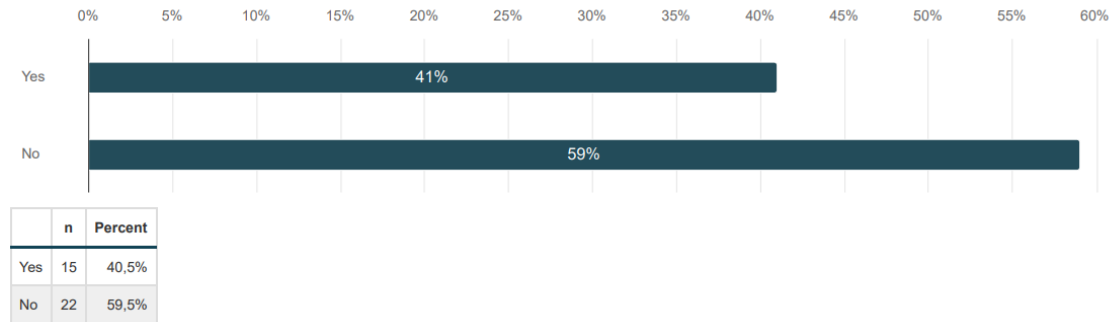


FIGURE 17. Survey Responses to Question 9

The figure shows the answers to the question, “Was there enough exhibitors at the Trade Fair?” 15 respondents, or 40.5 %, were satisfied with the number of exhibitors. Meanwhile, 22 respondents, or 59.5 %, were not satisfied with the number of exhibitors.

Question 10. Did you attend the Musher’s Buffet?

Did you attend the Musher’s Buffet?

Number of respondents: 37

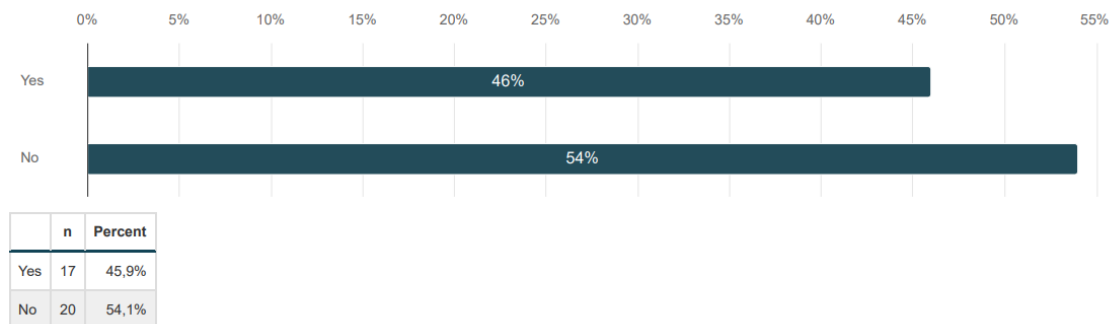


FIGURE 18. Survey Responses to Question 10

The figure shows the answers to the question, “Did you attend the Musher’s Buffet?” Almost half of the respondents, 17 people, or 45.9 %, attended the Musher's Buffet. The majority, 20 people, or 54.1 %, did not.

Question 11. *If yes, how did you like the food and the entertainment?*

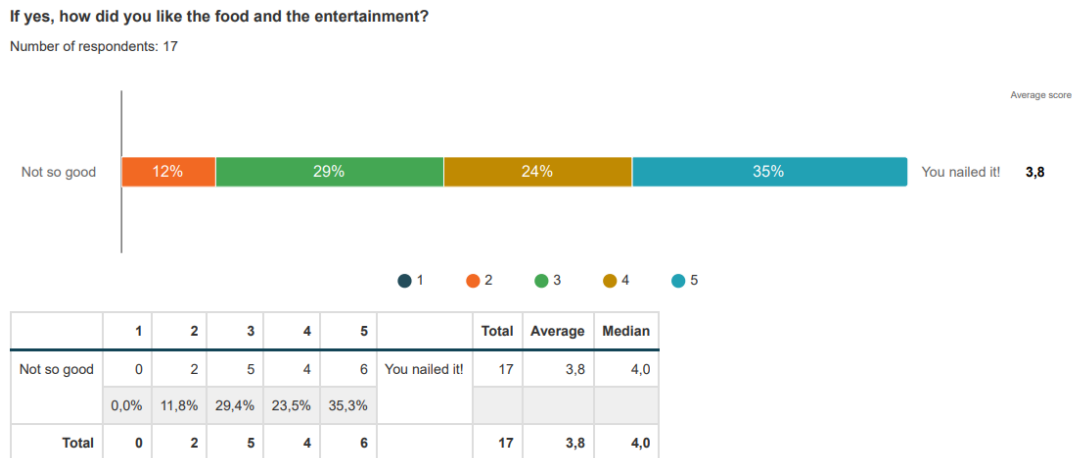


FIGURE 19. *Survey Responses to Question 11*

Figure shows the answers to the question, “If yes, how did you like the food and the entertainment?” Out of the 17 responses, 6 people, which is 35.3 %, gave a top score of 5. 4 people, which is 23.5 %, rated it a 4. 5 people, which is 29.4 %, gave a score of 3. Only 2 people, which is 11.8 %, rated it a 2, and no one gave a score of 1 when the best score was 5 and the worst was 1. The average rating was 3.8, and the median was 4.

Question 12. *Was the date of the symposium okay?*

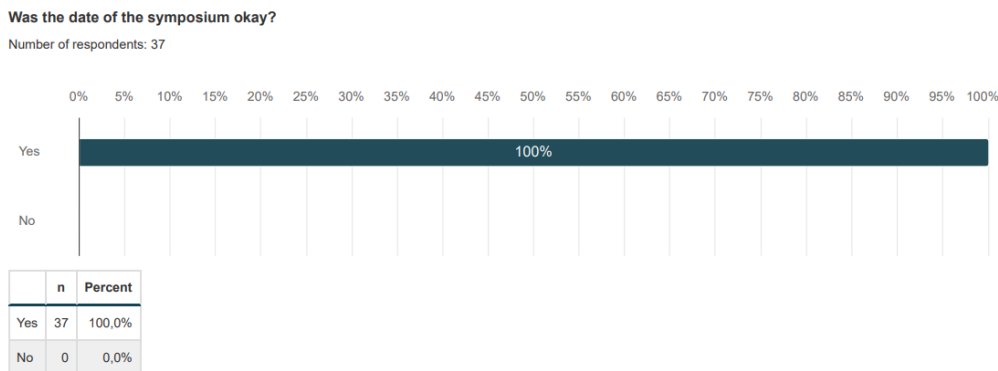


FIGURE 20. *Survey Responses to Question 12*

The figure shows the answers to the question, “Was the date of the symposium okay?” All respondents, which is 100 %, answered "yes".

Question 13. Where are you from?

This question had written answers, so based on those answer figure below was made.

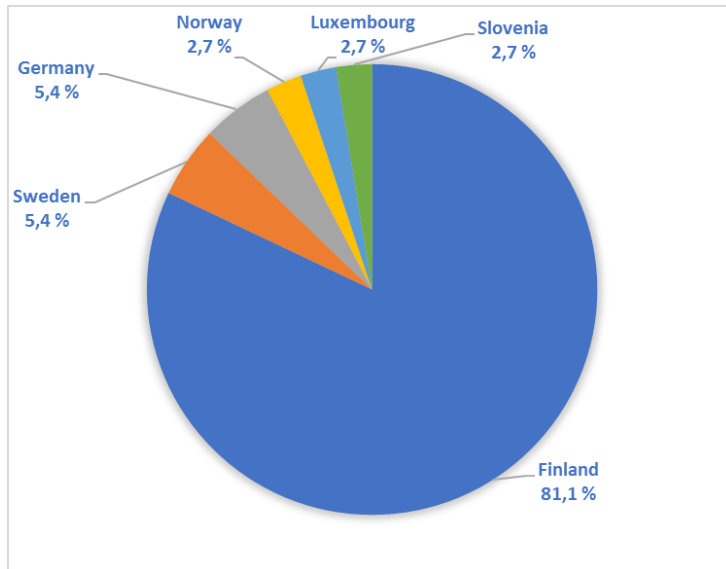


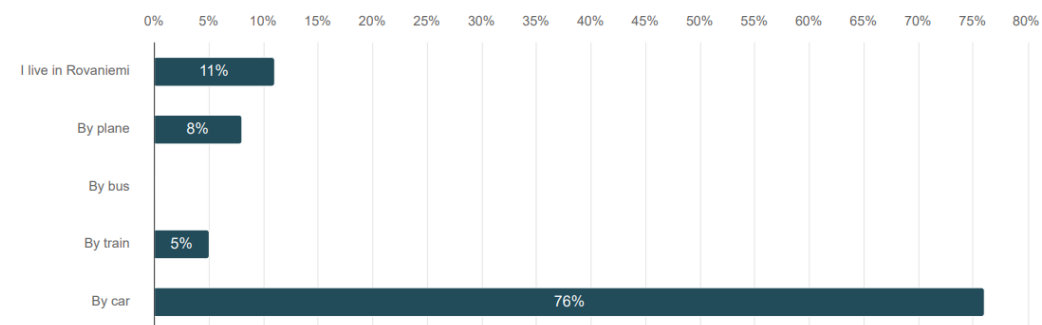
FIGURE 21. Chart of attendees' location.

The figure shows that most of the respondents were from Finland, with Sweden and Germany each having 2 respondents. Norway, Luxembourg, and Slovenia each had 1 respondent.

Question 14. How did you get to Rovaniemi?

How did you get to Rovaniemi?

Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
I live in Rovaniemi	4	10,8%
By plane	3	8,1%
By bus	0	0,0%
By train	2	5,4%
By car	28	75,7%

FIGURE 22. Survey Responses to Question 14

The figure shows the answers to the question, “How did you get to Rovaniemi?” Out of those who responded, the most, 28 people, which is 75.7%, arrived by car. Four respondents, which is 10.8%, live in Rovaniemi. Three people, which is 8.1%, traveled by plane to get there. Two individuals, which is 5.4%, used the train. No one did not use the bus.

Question 15 (only free word so no caption of it). *If there will be Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium in 2025, what subjects would you like to hear from the SLED talkers?*

Only 29 responses out of 37 respondents to this question, and here is the analysis of it:

Many people are keen on understanding the pros and cons of training sled dogs. They are asking for detailed information about the training routines, how to get started from scratch, and how to prevent injuries. Some are also interested in learning about canine movement and the basics of dog care.

Everyone is focused on health. They want to know about the best feeding practices, supplements, and overall well-being of dogs. There is also a strong interest in understanding how a dog's structure affects its working ability. Vets and experts talking about these topics would be great.

Breeding and genetics are topics that have come up a lot. People are curious about how to breed good sled dogs and what makes a strong working dog. They would also like to know about different breeds and their characteristics.

Practical advice is always popular. People want to hear about the day-to-day aspects of mushing, like how to organize a kennel, what gear to use, and how to train a team for different types of races.

There is also a call for more diverse speakers. Some want to hear from mushers who focus on recreational sledding rather than competitive racing. Others want to hear from women mushers or those who train different breeds of sled dogs.

Overall, people are looking for a mix of practical tips and great stories. They would love to hear about experiences from seasoned mushers, from training routines to memorable races. They are also interested in the mental health of the musher and how they handle the challenges that come with the sport.

Question 16. *Would you attend in 2025?*

Would you attend in 2025?

Number of respondents: 37

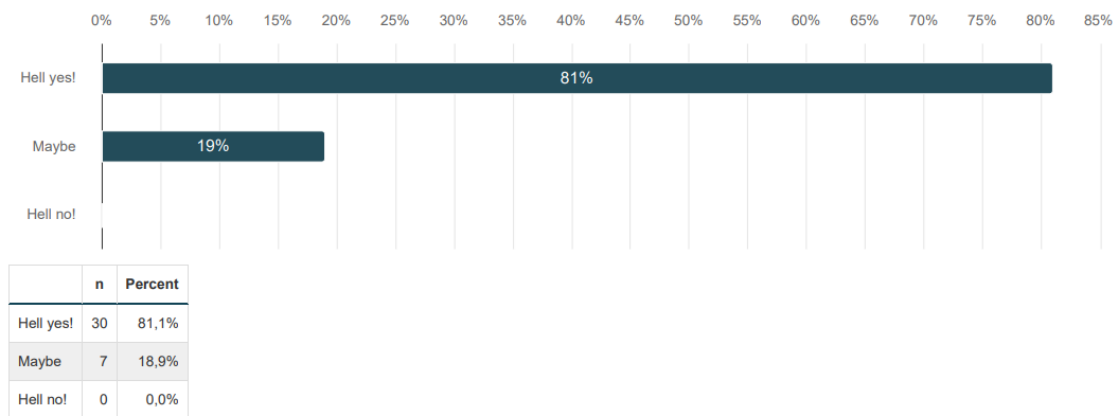


FIGURE 23. Survey Responses to Question 16

The figure shows the answers to the question, "Would you attend in 2025?" In the responses, "Hell yes!" means the respondent is definitely coming back, "Maybe" shows some uncertainty, and "Hell no!" means they definitely will not come back. Out of the answers, 30 people, which is 81.1%, said "Hell yes!" 7 people, which is 18.9 %, said "Maybe," and thankfully, no one said "Hell no!"

Question 17 (only free word so no caption of it). *What did you like the overall atmosphere?*

Every respondent (which is 37), answered this question, and here is the analysis of it:

The overall atmosphere of the event was really positive and welcoming, with many attendees describing it as great, wonderful, and nice. People seemed to appreciate the friendly and open environment where they could easily connect with others who share their passion for mushing and sled dogs.

There was a sense of togetherness and fellowship among the attendees, with many mentioning how they enjoyed meeting new people and catching up with old friends from different places. This sense of community was a highlight for many, making the event feel like a gathering of like-minded individuals.

While most of the feedback was positive, a few attendees did mention that the venue felt a bit small. Despite this, it did not seem to reduce the overall positive experience for most people.

Several attendees also expressed their gratitude to the organizers, recognizing the effort and hard work that went into making the event a success. They felt that the organizers did an amazing job and were appreciative of the friendly and cozy atmosphere created.

Question 18 (only free word so no caption of it). *Where did we succeed and where not?*

Only 18 responses out of 37 respondents to this question, and here is the analysis of it:

We received a lot of positive feedback on many aspects of the event. Participants were particularly pleased with the organization and the overall atmosphere. They felt that everything ran smoothly and that the event was well-managed. Many were impressed by the location, saying it was good and convenient. The speakers also received high praise, with special mentions for Trine Lyrek, who was a standout hit.

The lunch provided was a hit among the attendees, with many expressing their appreciation for the quality and variety of the food. The effort to stick to the schedule was also noticed and appreciated by most, with comments like "I was pleasantly surprised that the schedule was kept."

However, there were areas where we could improve. Parking was a recurring issue, with many feeling that there was not enough space. This affected participants' experience, as some had difficulties finding parking or felt it was inconvenient.

Some attendees also suggested that the program on Sunday could start a bit later. This would give them more time to prepare or rest before the day's events.

Another area of improvement mentioned was communication about the event's schedule and topics. Some attendees wanted more information in advance about what the speakers would discuss. This would help them plan their time better and choose which sessions to attend.

The trade fair also received mixed reviews. While some found it beneficial, others felt it wasn't up to the mark. Some questioned its necessity if it could not be done properly.

Lastly, the musher dinner was another area where improvements could be made. Some attendees felt that the ambiance could be better, suggesting changes like better lighting and a more engaging setup to make it more enjoyable.

Overall, while the event was largely successful and well-received, there are areas we can focus on to make the next one even better.

7 REFLECTION AND SUMMARY

Before diving into the analysis of the symposium, it is essential to understand the project management framework applied to this event. According to project management principles, successful projects are divided into phases such as planning, execution, and evaluation. By applying these principles, the Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium was organized with clear objectives and actionable strategies, ensuring its alignment with stakeholder expectations. Looking at how the sled dog symposium was organized and the feedback from the survey, we can see what worked well and what needs to be improved for future events. Using project management ideas, we can better understand these points and make plans to improve next time.

7.1 Planning the event

The planning phase focused on defining the project scope and engaging key stakeholders. The scope included delivering educational content about sled dogs, facilitating networking opportunities, and creating an enjoyable experience for attendees. Key stakeholders, including attendees, speakers, sponsors, and exhibitors, were identified early to align the event's objectives with their expectations. The team also did well in recruiting the right people to help organize the event. Choosing the venue, planning the schedule, and inviting speakers were all handled effectively, making the event run smoothly. However, some attendees mentioned issues like limited parking and crowded spaces, which shows that planning for venue capacity and logistics could be improved in the future.

7.2 Marketing and attracting attendees

Marketing efforts were visible, especially through social media, Facebook ads, and Early Bird ticket offers. These methods helped attract attendees and created excitement about the event. However, the feedback suggests that more could be done to reach a wider audience. For example, using email campaigns, partnerships with local businesses, or different social media platforms might help connect with more people.

7.3 Managing registration and communication

The registration process was easy to use, and clear communication before the event made things smoother for attendees. These are important parts of good project management. However, some challenges were noted, such as language barriers in the survey responses. Offering registration and surveys in more than one language, like Finnish and English, could help include everyone and get more responses.

7.4 Running the event

During the execution phase, resource allocation and risk management played critical roles. For example, resources such as venue capacity, speaker availability, and marketing budgets were effectively managed to ensure smooth operations. However, some risks, such as parking issues and overcrowding, materialized and highlighted areas for improvement in future resource planning.

The feedback about the venue was mixed. While many people liked the location and cleanliness, others felt the space was too small and parking was difficult. These issues highlight the need for better logistics planning to ensure the venue fits the size of the event.

Attendees praised some speakers and presentations, but they suggested more variety in speakers and topics. Offering a broader range of content could help keep the event interesting for everyone. These improvements align with good project practices, which focus on delivering what the audience needs.

7.5 Improvements for the trade fair and evening activities

The trade fair was appreciated, but attendees wanted more exhibitors and products related to sled dogs. Adding more vendors and creating stronger networking opportunities would make the event more valuable. Some feedback about the Musher's Buffet suggested that the atmosphere could be improved to make it a more enjoyable experience.

7.6 Using feedback for future events

The feedback analysis is an essential part of the project management cycle, commonly referred to as "lessons learned." By reviewing attendee feedback, the organizing team can identify areas of success and improvement. This iterative process ensures continuous development and enables the incorporation of attendee preferences into future events. For example, addressing logistical challenges, expanding the range of speakers, and enhancing marketing efforts are key takeaways for the next symposium.

By integrating project management theories, such as goal-setting, risk management, and stakeholder engagement, the Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium achieved significant success while identifying clear areas for improvement. Applying these principles not only enhances the event's value for attendees but also ensures that the organizing team operates efficiently and effectively in future projects.

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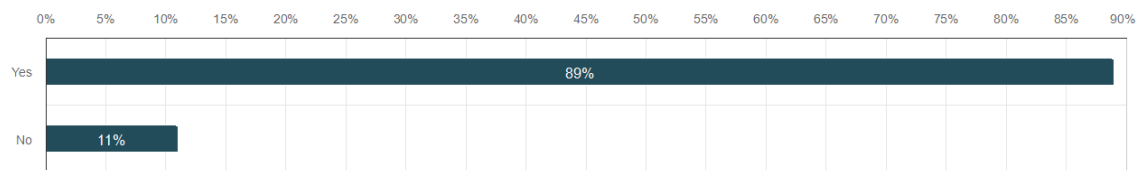
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Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium 2023

Total number of respondents: 37

Did you get enough info before the symposium weekend?

Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
Yes	33	89,2%
No	4	10,8%

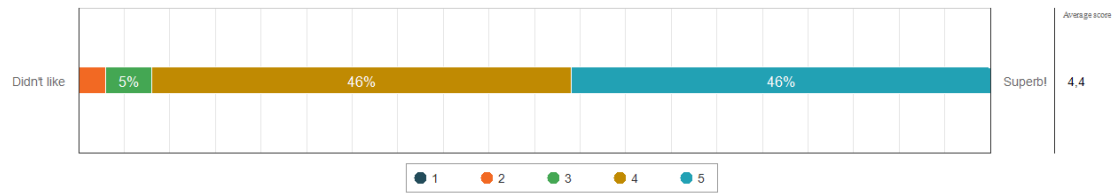
Free word about the info:

Number of respondents: 7

Responses
First it was disappointing that announced speakers were canceled. Then it was no info about the topics the speakers would talk about. Also time schedule at all would have been great if it was published earlier.
You should Be more active in social media
Would have hoped little bit more info about everything beforehand. Also think that maybe advertising could be better too
It was easy to find the timetables and all from the web pages, and i also got email like tje one saying welcome to the musher dinner so I knew everything was ok.
Olisi mukava tietää aina aiheet etukäteen mistä puhuja aikoo puhua, mutta muutoin info oli oikein hyvä!
Wery Good, I'm happy i went
Vielä kattavammat esittelyt sled talkereista olisi kiva lisä 😊

Did you like the venue?

Number of respondents: 37



	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average	Median
Didn't like	0	1	2	17	17	Superb!	37	4,4	4,0
	0,0%	2,7%	5,4%	46,0%	45,9%				
Total	0	1	2	17	17		37	4,4	4,0

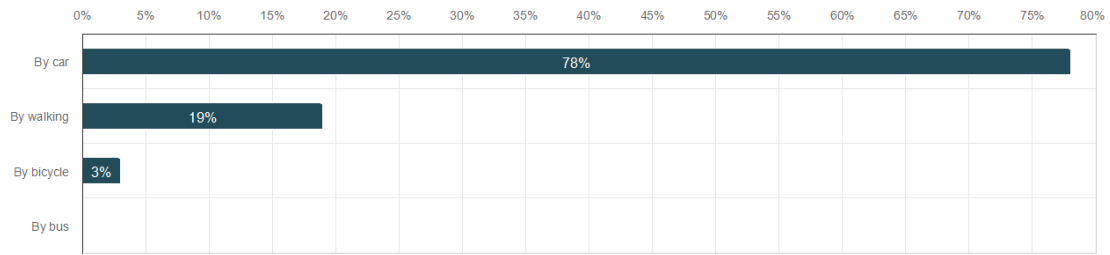
What did you like/didn't like particularly?

Number of respondents: 16

Responses
Would need more room for trade fair
Cinema was great. Hall was a bit crowded with all people. Place for trade fair was a bit small (maybe enough if you count that it was not that many companies)
Cafe was expensive
Would be nice to get some coffee later in Sunday and maybe not so expensive..... 😊 Otherwise the place was great. Clean and comfy, enough space
Little more sitting areas would've been more ideal and a bigger space for the people selling dog items
Very good schedule, not too tight, enough time in between the lectures.
Sunnuntain viimeisellä tauolla ei kahvila ollut enää auki siitä miinus muuten korundi on huippu paikka
Food, art exhibition, beauty of the building, easy to come, good flow
the trade fair room was a bit small. The layout inside the venue made it be a little bit crowded at times.
Hivenen ahtaat käytävätilat, liian vähän parkkitilaa. Muuten oikein hyvät!
I liked most Sergio Maffi
The area for the trade fair could have been a bit bigger I guess. It felt a bit cramped at times. But all in all very nice!!
The atmosphere, speakers and sponsors were absolutely amazing! Everything felt to work smoothly. Would've loved more sellers! But for the space we had, the amount was good. I hope the sellers had good weekend and got plenty of customers :-)
Listening to the pro, meeting new people 😊 but I got no Pannacotta dessert
Too crowded
Siisti, hyvä akustiikka, erinomainen kahvila, sopivan kokoinen, erinomainen sijainti

How did you come to the venue?

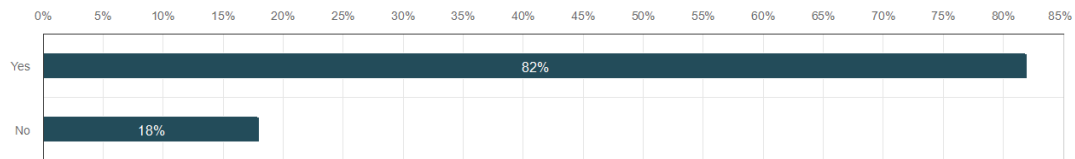
Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
By car	29	78,4%
By walking	7	18,9%
By bicycle	1	2,7%
By bus	0	0,0%

If by car, did you find parking lot easily?

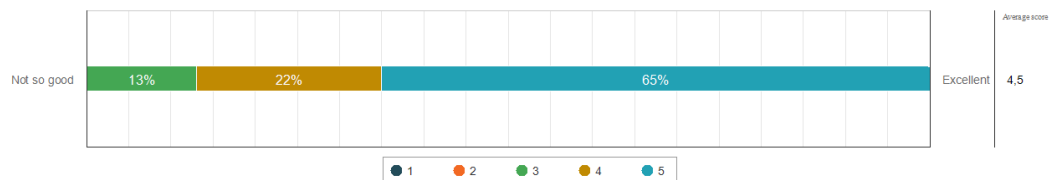
Number of respondents: 28



	n	Percent
Yes	23	82,1%
No	5	17,9%

What you think about the location of the venue?

Number of respondents: 37



	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average	Median
Not so good	0	0	5	8	24	Excellent	37	4,5	5,0
	0,0%	0,0%	13,5%	21,6%	64,9%				
Total	0	0	5	8	24		37	4,5	5,0

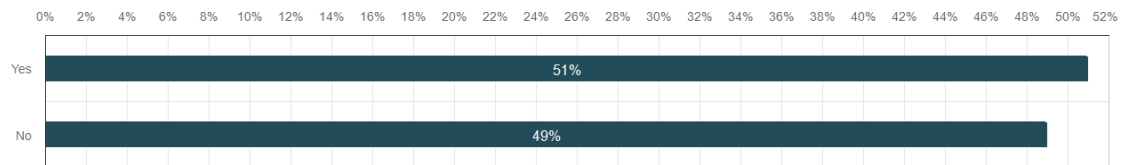
Free word about the location:

Number of respondents: 6

Responses
Nice location. More parking spaces or better info about parking possibilities / costs would be nice.
Just perfect
Near to centrum, easy to walk from hotel
Lähinnä parkkitila hankala
Great location, right in the heart of the city. Also nice was that it's close to the city center, I went there for lunch both days instead of staying at Korundi for lunch
Aina on hyvä syy lähteä Lappiin!

Did you eat lunch that was served by Korundi Kitchen and Café?

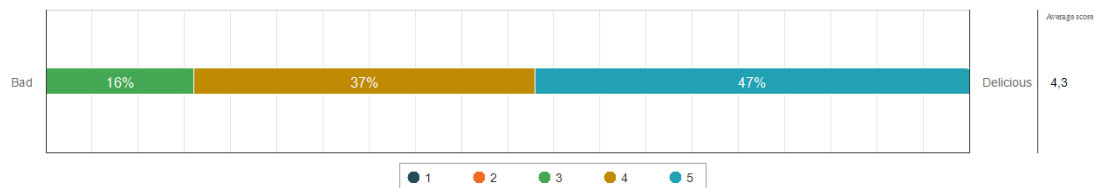
Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
Yes	19	51,4%
No	18	48,6%

If yes, how would you rate it?

Number of respondents: 19



	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Average	Median
Bad	0	0	3	7	9	19	4,3	4,0
	0,0%	0,0%	15,8%	36,8%	47,4%			
Total	0	0	3	7	9	19	4,3	4,0

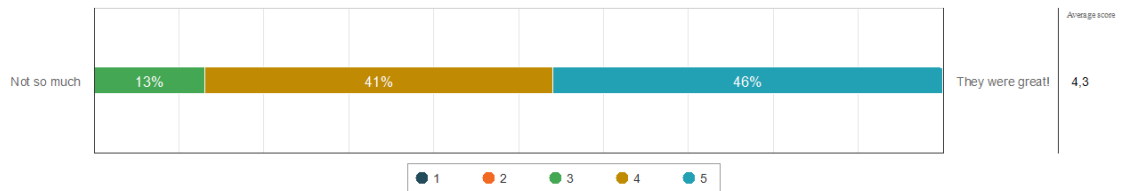
Free word about the lunch:

Number of respondents: 6

Responses
I ate only on Sunday.
The pork on the first day was absolutely amazing! The second day I decided to eat somewhere in rovaniemi but I'm sure the lunch was good on the second day too!
Excellent tastes, vegies, sauses, salads. Great cooking.
I didn't take it because it seemed too pricey for me. I was able to find something cheaper in the city center.
The main food was really good, salad buffet bit disappointing
It was ok. Probably superhealthy, but not superyummy. The meat was really good. Missed real butter and some regular accessories like like mashed potatoes.

Did you like the SLED talkers?

Number of respondents: 37



	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average	Median
Not so much	0	0	5	15	17	They were great!	37	4,3	4,0
	0,0%	0,0%	13,5%	40,5%	46,0%				
Total	0	0	5	15	17		37	4,3	4,0

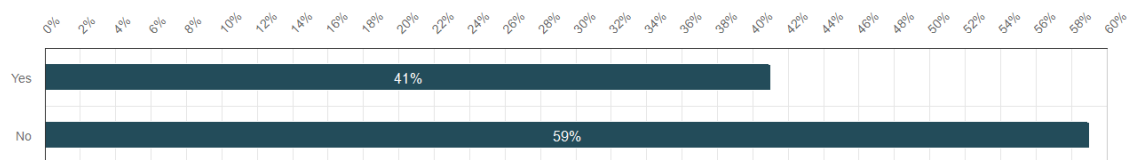
Free word about the SLED talkers:

Number of respondents: 16

Responses
They all did it by heart and it was nice they spoke in front of a big public. Appreciate that. But I wished for a bit more structure or guided topics during the lessons. So it keeps interesting for mushers and they learn something new. Matti, Trine and Sergio have been very inspiring
Good mix of talkers but of course not good to advertise the symposium with big names that are not coming
In the future I would like there to be talkers that are not so active at competing races but still actively train their dogs and have big dog packs. Would be nice to hear thoughts about the normal life with dogs and also more detailed things about sleddog training routines etc.
Trine should be talking both days, loved her! Matti was also good, great talking substances. Hoping more speakers next time!
We had some really good speakers and a couple of bad ones. We're still dog people at heart so speaking in front of a big crowd is of course not everyone's thing
Nice variation! Some new ideas and some history about sleddogs, great performance
Best was Trine Lyrek - inspirational, touching, funny ❤️ Petter Karlsson was a bit boring, didn't really open up his ideas or principals.
Different kind of speakers, nice! Some were very inspirational. Would love to hear Lyrek more :D
Täällä tapahtui sama kuin kirunassa. Toivoisin että kun kutsutte puhujia antaisitte heille aiheen mistä puhua ei vain pyyntöä puhua. Kun puhujilla ei ole kokemusta jää hyvin helposti puhe erittäin pintapuoleiseksi. Esim. Matin eka oli todella hyvä Trine myös.. ell hommat aina hyviä.
Trine was super inspiring, empowering and fun, like a bubbling greeting of energy. Matti's first talk was sooo important topic and touching, great down-to earth way to talk about it. It was interesting to hear about Petters winning machine and about Sergios knowledge and FL-study. It was an honour to get Asbjorn to the stage, and Toni handled interviewing him with heart and style!
They were great! Would really like to hear more from different Siberian Husky mushers!
Really great!! However, sometimes Asbjorn was a bit difficult to understand.
Amazing, inspiring, educational and fascinating. I enjoyed each presentation and especially Trine was such an inspiration, too vai her daughter couldn't join the event!
Enjoyed really much!!
It felt like the norwegian man was a bit anti-siberian. There ARE good purebred siberians out there, many actually. To say that all the good siberians are mixed breed is an insult to everybody that has worked and are working to preserve the breed.
Trine ❤️ Lisää Trineä parin vuoden päästä kiitos!

Was there enough exhibitors at the Trade Fair?

Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
Yes	15	40,5%
No	22	59,5%

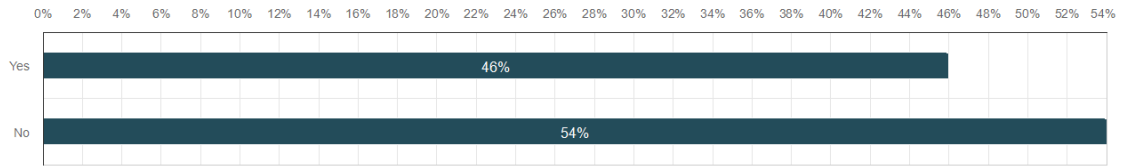
Free word about the Trade Fair:

Number of respondents: 13

Responses
I wished for more sled dog equipment. more variety in what was sold (more harnesses, poo pickers, equipment from different companies, more sleds and also off-snow vehicles would be nice)
For the dog food: a wider Information broad or actual more food supplier would be nice
I was expecting big sales like in Kiruna. Needed harnesses, lines etc. Only few harnesses where normal shop prices.
Could have been more exhibitors with more stuff. Worst was Royal Canin. We asked to buy a pack of Energy Booster (that they had there) and it was said they don't sell it at the symposium, it's just possible to order. So, we asked for the price and answer was that he doesn't know. Neither competent nor customer friendly.
Nonstop uses to have way more things with them at the symposium in Kiruna
I would like there to be more exhibitors in the future and this year the space for exhibitors were way too small.
This was actually huge disappointment. I was ready to spend some money but there was not a single thing where to spend it. Please next time get some real sellers not some people who just want to show the stuff and then ask you order it from online.
Would have liked to buy more stuff at the fair but it wasnt really possible.
Would liked to do more shopping. There wasn't enough exhibitors unfortunately
Some visitors said they wish there was more articles to buy.
Lisää myyjiä olisi hyvä saada. Ja nimenomaan valjakkovaruste
I liked the amount of exhibitors. But I thought it would've been better for them to have more gear for purchase on-site. For example I had a few non-stop dog wear items in mind that I would've bought there on the spot, but they didn't have them for purchase there.
Yes, for the space there was, but with bigger venue definitely would've loved more
Too small place, and def need more sellers in trade fair, also maybe some exculsive offers from sellers..
But this was the first one, next time it will be probably be better. But it was good that it was at the same time as the Rovaniemen markkina, found a really good karvalakki there.

Did you attend the Musher's Buffet?

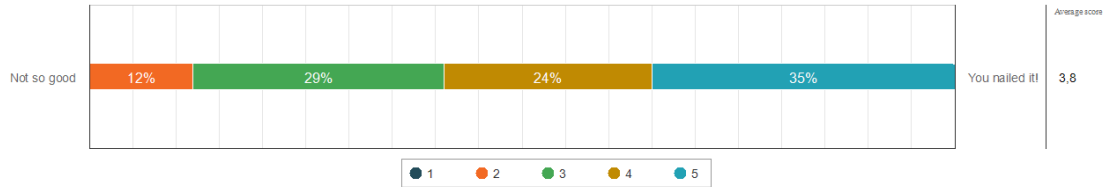
Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
Yes	17	45,9%
No	20	54,1%

If yes, how did you like the food and the entertainment?

Number of respondents: 17



	1	2	3	4	5		Total	Average	Median
Not so good	0	2	5	4	6	You nailed it!	17	3,8	4,0
	0,0%	11,8%	29,4%	23,5%	35,3%				
Total	0	2	5	4	6		17	3,8	4,0

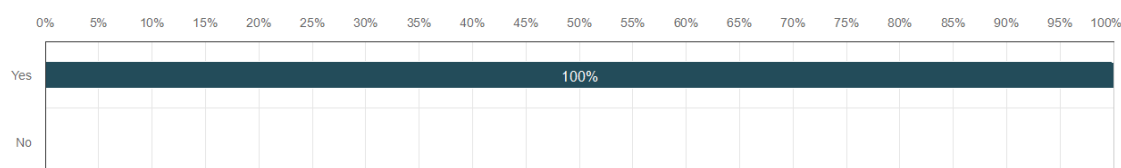
Free word about the food and entertainment:

Number of respondents: 9

Responses
Maybe a bit more of a conversation starter or entertainment would be nice (sled dog related), and also the ending was very cutted.
Food was a bit limited for this high price. Liked the lunch food from the venue much more.
Too expensive
We came there for after party but they already closed the bar and venue 22:30. Maybe next time they can keep it open longer
Some program would be nice for the evening too
The meat was not nice. If there was better quality meat served, the dinner was actually good. The texture of the meat was off. Overall atmosphere under the people was good but the room was not cozy at all. Nobody wants to dance if the big office lights are on. If the room was make more cozy with dim lights, it would have been better
I personally like more modern style food than the one that was served. When people are seated in long tables, it almost would need some sort of placement and/or program to make sure no one is left alone. Anyway, the idea of mushers getting together in the evening is great. Maybe some more informal place for that, like drinks in a pub?
No pannacotta , the dish was empty when it was my turn
The DJ could have started playing a little bit later. When people have had time to eat and drink, and be social.
Jotain aktiviteettia tai muuta vastaavaa olisi kaivannut illallisella. Ruoka oli hyvää, kiva kun oli hyvin tilaa ja baari auki.

Was the date of the symposium okay?

Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
Yes	37	100,0%
No	0	0,0%

Free word about the date:

Number of respondents: 7

Responses
Date was good, because doesn't interfere with more intense training season
I think the symposiumi could also be earlier in the summer.
Perfect date!!
Ajankohta minusta hyvä. Eikä sen niin väliä kunhan ennen marraskuuta.
Great date
I think it was a great choice to ring in the new season!!
Todella hyvä kickoff uuteen treenikauteen

Where are you from?

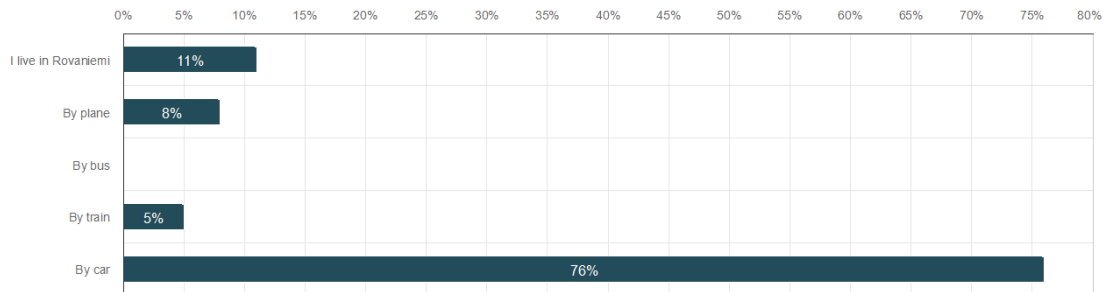
Number of respondents: 37

Country:
Slovenia
Finland
Finland Kemi
Finland
Sweden
Finland
Finland
Finland
Finland
Germany
Sweden
Finland
Finland
Finland
Finland
Luxembourg
Finland
Finland
Finland
Suomi
Finland

Finland
Finland
Finland
Suomi
Finland
Finland
German nationality
Suomi
Finland
Finland
Norway
Suomi
Suomi
Finland
Finland
Finland

How did you get to Rovaniemi?

Number of respondents: 37



	n	Percent
I live in Rovaniemi	4	10,8%
By plane	3	8,1%
By bus	0	0,0%
By train	2	5,4%
By car	28	75,7%

If there will be Arctic Circle Sled Dog Symposium in 2025, what subjects would you like to hear from the SLED talkers?

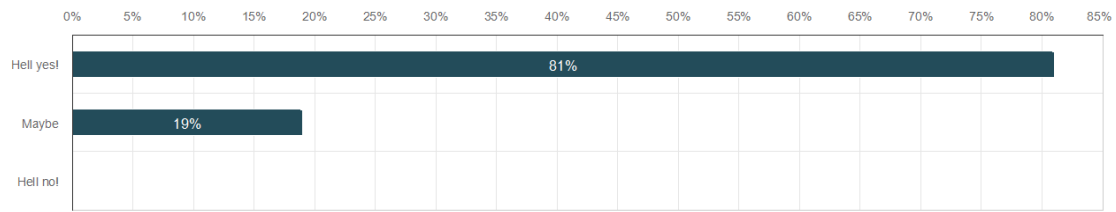
Number of respondents: 29

Responses
I would like to hear more about long distance mushing (Iditarod, Yukon quest...), their experiences.....their training and competing....
*Training for Long distance mushing * mindset of working dogs/communication/dog psychology * Dog Welfare (not only in the medical view, but also how the dogs benefit from good care-taking, f.e. Better and more comfortable housing for better resting time, etc.)
More vets, more about training and welfare.
Deeper insights in vet questions Training for long distance races, different training plans, pros and cons Maybe 3-5 successful mushers on the podium with an open discussion about a topic, e.g. training, feeding, harnesses, etc Financing of having sled dogs, training and racing them
More talkers that have pure bred sleddogs and different breeds. For example talkers that mainly train their dogs without competitive racing and do camping trips with the dogs. More info about detailed training routines and thoughts about living with big dog pack and how the different dogs and their characters have a impact on getting along in the pack.
More how they actually train the dogs during the whole year and would be nice to here more about the thing Matti was speaking so the mushers health and mental health
Not one in particular, but diversity is good
I would like to hear more about use of materials(sleds, ropes etc), more about genetics or maybe more about a hobby level of mushing, not all of us are interested in doing races of course
More veterinary stuff!
Some More about training a good sleddog team, and more about feeding
Something about the mushers own capability, both mental and physical. How to become better musher... A bit more "deep" about driving with the dogs.
Kennel life Overnight tours Tourist tours Breeding Long distance races
Dog welfare
Training, breeding, racing. Would be nice to hear some lecture about check point routines
Esimerkiksi tuon Trinen juttujen perään olisi kiva kuulla kovan tason kuskeilta kuinka ovat päätyneet siihen missä ovat. Kehityskaarta kilpailusta kilpailuun. Matin treeni kuviot oli myös mielenkiintoinen.
- Dog health, minimizing stress of sleddogs - Tips how to organize kennel and teach the dogs so that everyday life is easy - Training for MD and how to feed and recover before, during and after Races - Female mushers' stories - Mushers feelings and how to handle them (maybe Katariina Alongi could talk about it, it's so same with horse riders) - Stories of mushers who didn't win

- Mental training for dogs - Trekking experiences/ expeditions /routes with sleddogs in Lapland, Sweden or Norway
Breeding
Valjakon treenaamisesta eri matkoille, valjakon kokoamisesta
Koiran treenaaminen nollasta, vammojen hoito ja ehkäisy, kehonhuolto
As someone who is quite new to the sport, I would've liked a sort of introductory session. Explaining some basics of the sport. However, I also understand that most other people were experienced mushers and perhaps for them this kind of session would have been boring. But maybe an idea would be to organize a "basic introduction to mushing" session as a pre-event on Friday afternoon/evening.
Year with sled dog. Differences between breeds. From pup to senior. Health and measuring health in sled dogs. Racing and hobby equipment. Even more interesting life stories!
From different aspects
Taking care of the dogs in holiday season(meaning summer), how old dogs are taken care of
Talk about how you measure angles on good sled dogs. There are people like Karsten Grönås and Els van Lierop that can talk about that. And probably others as well.
Kuinka koiran rakenne vaikuttaa sen työskentelykykyyn Vinkkejä treeniin, myös MD matkalle Lisäravinnetietoa Hyvän rekikoiran jalostus Yksi ohjelman osa voisi olla missä olisi useampi sled talker keskustelemassa paneelikeskustelu - tyyppisesti aiheista tai vastaamassa kysymyksiin yhteisesti.
Training dogs, canine movemet, feeding
More about training and more about ld race things.
- feeding before and during the LD race - training km and time
Tourism dogs, their training wellbeing, not just racing

Would you attend in 2025?

Number of respondents: 37




	n	Percent
Hell yes!	30	81,1%
Maybe	7	18,9%
Hell no!	0	0,0%

What did you like the overall atmosphere?

Number of respondents: 37

Responses
Very friendly and cozy....
Very much appreciated. You did an amazing job !
Great
Was good
atmosphere was ok
Feeling of togetherness: passion of the mushing love for sled dogs.
Everybody was very positive. And talkin with strangers was very easy.
It was ok
Loved it! Thank you fir everything, hope we will see again 2025
Very nice
Really good! I met a lot of nice people!
Nice
Nice to meet freinds from all around The place
Friendly and open atmosphere. Connected.
Very nice 🍷🍷
Very nice people, good talks!
Overall athmosphere was perfect
Everything was great
Nice!


Relaxed, easy, safe, warm
It was great.
Great
great!
Hyvä
Great!
It was very good
Yes!!
Friendly, passionate & curious people.
Nice
Really nice, only the venue was too small.
Very nice. Met a lot of nice people.
Todella hyvä, ihmiset iloisia ja hyvällä tuulella, kysymyksiä tuli aika paljon mikä oli kiva.
Good
Wonderful
Super
Yes

Where did we succeed and where not?

Number of respondents: 18

Responses
The venue, the lunch, the Organisation beforehand was much better than in Kiribati f.e.
The variety of musher equipment and also the variety of the content of the speakers haven't been like I wished for. Also the musher buffet could need a little bit of sparkle. Maybe some dog related content, a little conversation starter, kind of a kick-off. It was nice that we could sleep, where the buffet was. But maybe a bit longer next time (if possible)
Trade fair was really bad. Didn't need any of that there. If not proper, why do the work.
Everything else perfect
Succeed: number of participants for the first time, location Not succeed: planning and information about schedule/topics; trade fair
The lunch and care you guys provided was absolutely amazing! Much better than provided in Kiruna... The big misser for me was the musher dinner. Big office lights, no dim or cozy lights and a small dark corner for the dj
Maybe the program on Sunday could start a little later.
You created a top class venue and everybody is looking forward to the 2025, I am sure!
Good location, good food, very good speakers. More exhibitors would be nice, many things had to be ordered online.
Inviting Trine Lyrek was a big success. Please more Norwegian mushers as speakers
Olin todella positiivisesti yllätynyt kun aikataulut piti. 🙏
+ time, schedule, place, venue, talkers, lunch, atmosphere, organizing, info, flow, accommodation, people, - it would be nice to know in advance what topics the talkers (who speak twice) are going to talk about. If only they themselves would know it. Maybe also one activity per day, like a team task, would help to share the vicissitudes of the public and keep us awake.
Everything went fine. It would be nice to get the slideshows after the symposium. Special thanks to Toni The Time Master.
ended a bit late on Sunday for those who had a long way home.
Honestly only big problem was too small amount of parking space. Otherwise well done!
100% succeeded!
You succeed. Period.
Actually quite good
Kaikki meni nappiin, ei ole mitään mihin verrata, mutta tosi hyvin kaikki sujui. Seuraavaa seminaaria odotellessa.
Kiitos todella paljon järjestäjille!
Everything goes good. Nothing problems.