

# Health Sciences Initiative Town Hall

February 19, 2019



# Health Sciences Initiative

- Process and some initial feedback
- Results of faculty survey
- Idea generation exercise

# Health Sciences Initiative

Purpose: Expand and raise the profile of health research and academic programs at UVic

- Joint initiative by VPAC and OVPR with executive support
- Alignment with Strategic Framework, Strategic Research Plan and Rankings & Reputation Initiative
- Launched with two events for Deans and Associate Deans / Research Centre Directors
- Work being advanced by an advisory group with broad health-related experience
- Aim is to produce a concept paper by April 2019



# Advisory Group Members

- Lisa Kalynchuk, OVPR
- Tony Eder, VPAC
- Bruce Wright, DMS
- Chris Goto-Jones, HUMS
- Scott Hofer, IALH/SOSC
- Carolyn Cameron, SCI
- Alex Brolo, CAMTEC/SCI
- Karen Urbanowski, CISUR/HSD
- Nick Dechev, ENG
- Frances Lau, HSD
- Ryan Rhodes, EDUC
- Charlotte Loppie, HSD
- Mike Masson, SOSC
- Robin Syme, CanAssist
- Jennifer Vornbrock, VPER

Andrea Knittig, OVPR  
Kaitlyn Roland, OVPR  
Ased Said, VPAC



# Health Sciences Initiative

Advisory group informed by –

- UVic health inventory (programs, funding)
- External environmental scans
- Faculty survey
- In person consultations with key stakeholders: Dept heads, School Directors, Program heads, Island Health, Ministry of Health, BC Support Unit, MSFHR
- Site visits (USask, UBC, SFU)
- Links with government priorities
- UVic townhalls (Feb 19, April 2)
- Dean's council, COCD, RAC
- Common sense and collective knowledge about UVic and our place in the provincial and national landscape



# Health Sciences Initiative

Recommendations organized within 4 pillars:

- Research Priorities
- Academic Programs
- Structures
- Space / Infrastructure

And three timelines:

- Short term (1-2 yrs)
- Medium term (3-5 years)
- Long term (6-10 years)



# Health Sciences Initiative: What we have heard

## Research

- Develop a peer review process for CIHR grants
- Streamline ethics
- Funding for trainees, collaboration
- Break down silos / build more clusters
- Priority research areas: aging, mental health and addictions, Indigenous health

## Programs

- Enthusiasm for a new interdisciplinary BSc program in Health Sciences (Studies)
- Can differentiate UVic based on some programs (SDH, HINS)
- Further opportunity to partner with UBC

## Structures

- Research centres promote collaboration and interdisciplinarity

## Space/Infrastructure

- Need more research and meeting spaces
- Capital plan

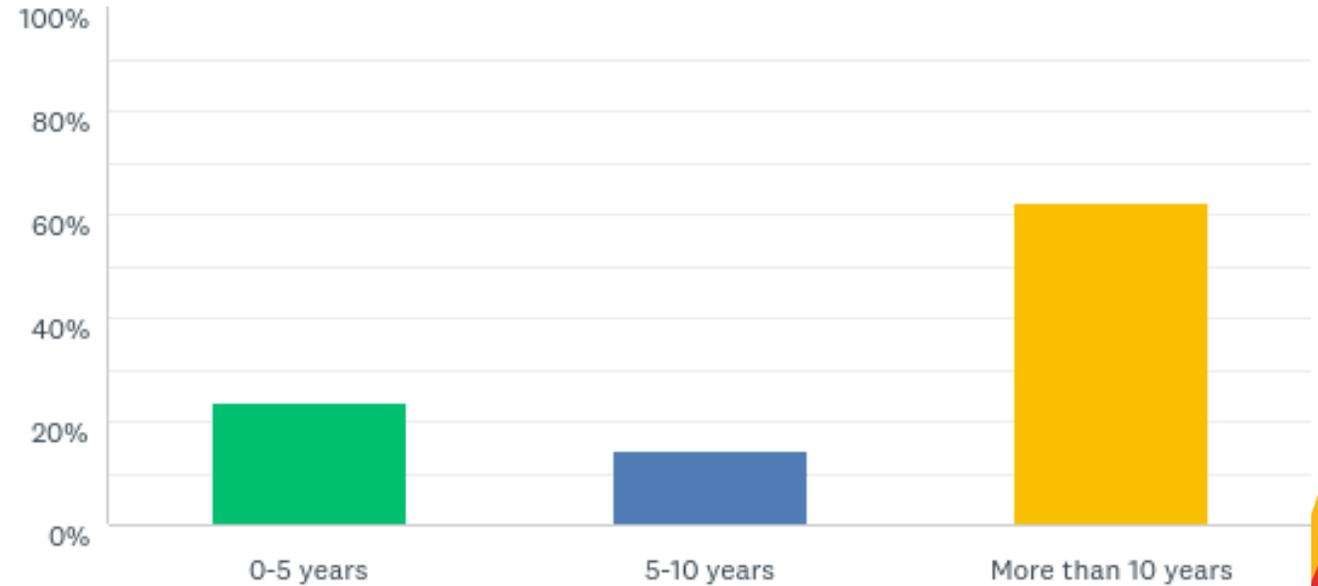
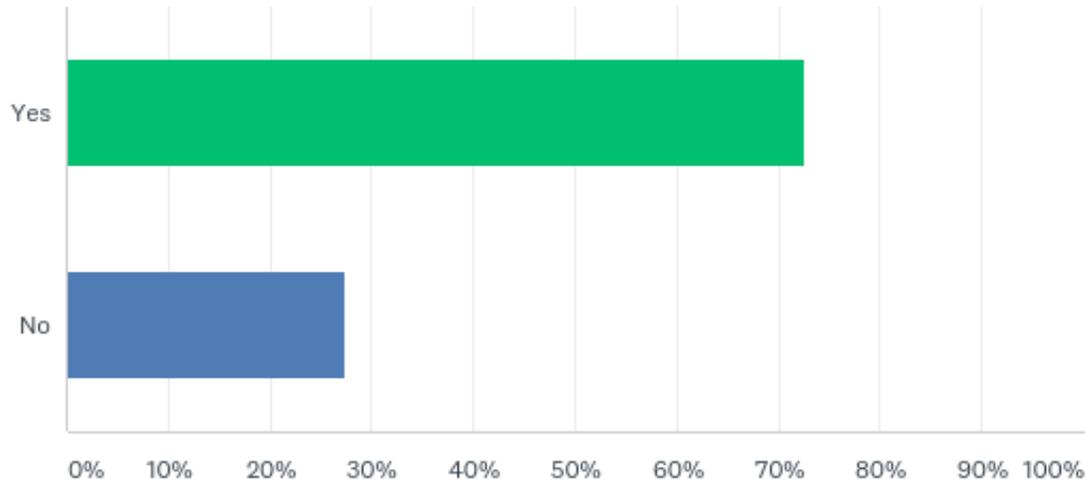


# Faculty Survey Results



# Sample Size

- 168 responses



- 73% involved in health-related research or teach in health-related academic program(s)

- 62% been a faculty member > 10 years



# Defining “health” at UVic

- Answered: 138      Categories: 31

CODES	#	CODES	#
Physical, Biological, Body	66	Political	5
Mental, Psychological, Emotional	59	Social justice and equity	5
Wellbeing, Wellness	57	Underlying processes and factors	5
Social	44	Behaviour, choices, tools, techniques, practices	4
Broadly	22	History, historical factors and context	4
Community health, population, society	17	Subjective indicators (feelings)	4
Healthcare, clinical practice, diagnosis, treatment	17	Indigenous health and wellbeing	3
Spiritual	17	Physiological	3
Resilience, capacity to adapt	15	Health promotion	2
Cultural	13	Health systems, digital, operation, management	2
Optimize life, rather than absence of disease	12	Nonhumans	2
Ecological environmental	10	Not science	2
Inclusive	10	Occupation	2
Interconnected factors, multidisciplinary	9	Science	2
Individually defined	7	Communication, linguistic	1
		Economic	1



# Defining “health” at UVic

## Considerations:

- The definition of health to be inclusive, broad, multidisciplinary, interacting
- The individual, the community/collective, the global environment/planet
- The body, function, behavior
- Health care systems and services
- The individual, their behavior and available choices are embedded within social, political, cultural, historical context



# Defining “health” at UVic

- **Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986)**
  - healthy public policy, supporting environments, community action, personal skills, prevention of illness and health promotion
- **CIHR’s mandate (CIHR Act 2000)**
  - excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system.”
- **Geneva Declaration on the Health and Survival of Indigenous Peoples (2002)**
  - Physical, mental, social, cultural and spiritual health and survival
  - Sciences, systems of knowledge, sacred and ceremonial sites, people and practices of health and medicine
  - Quality and culturally appropriate health care
  - Integrity of territories, protection of the environment and food sources



# Defining “health” at UVic

## WHO definition of Health:

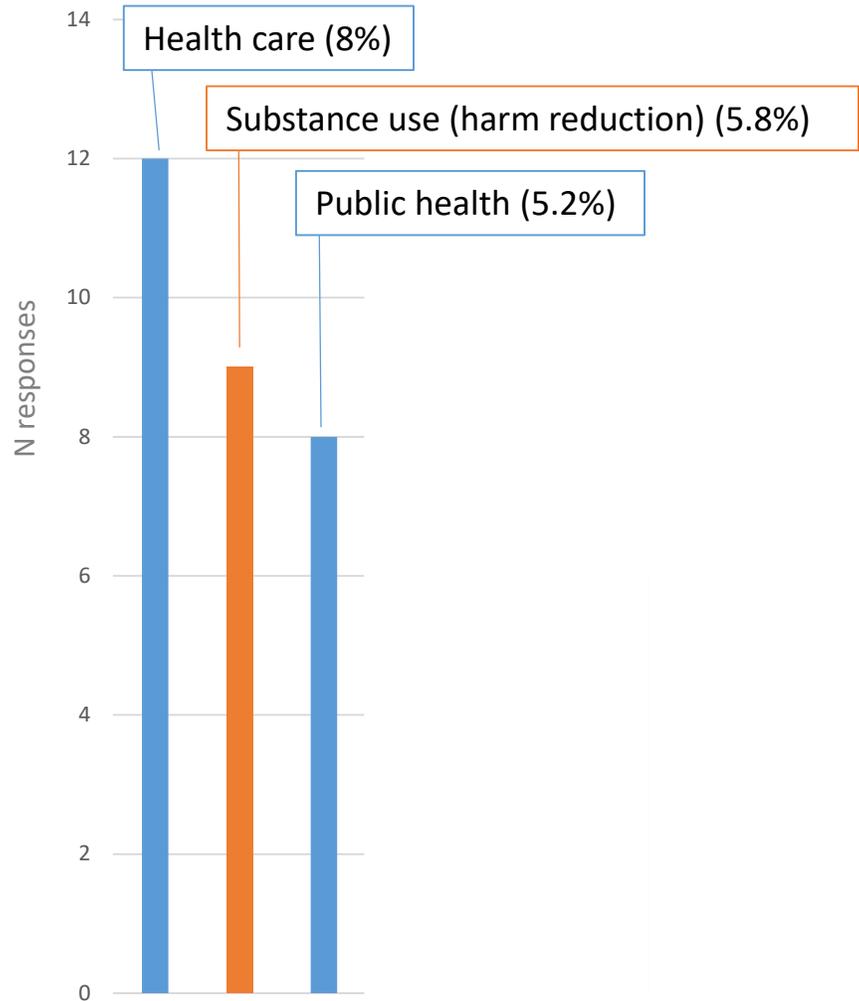
The World Health Organization’s definition of health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”



# Identified Areas of Research

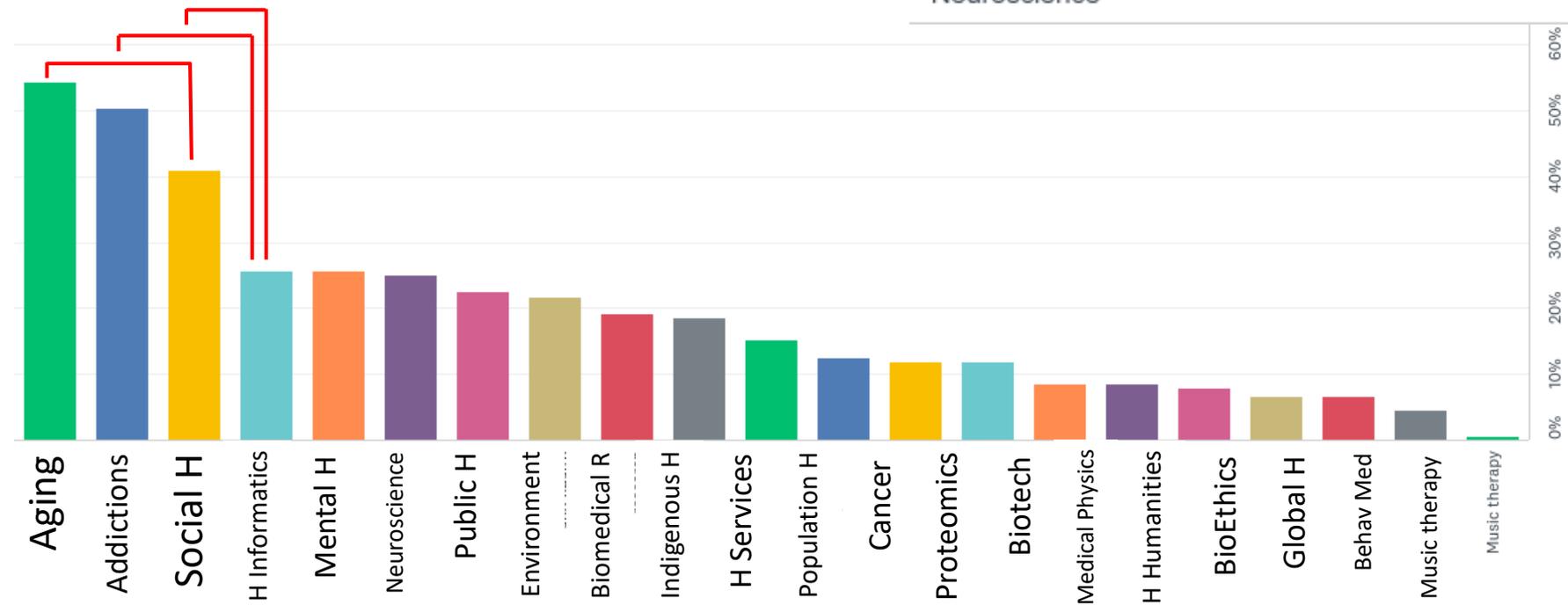
- 102 identified areas of research

Areas of Research (N=126, 56% total tagged responses)



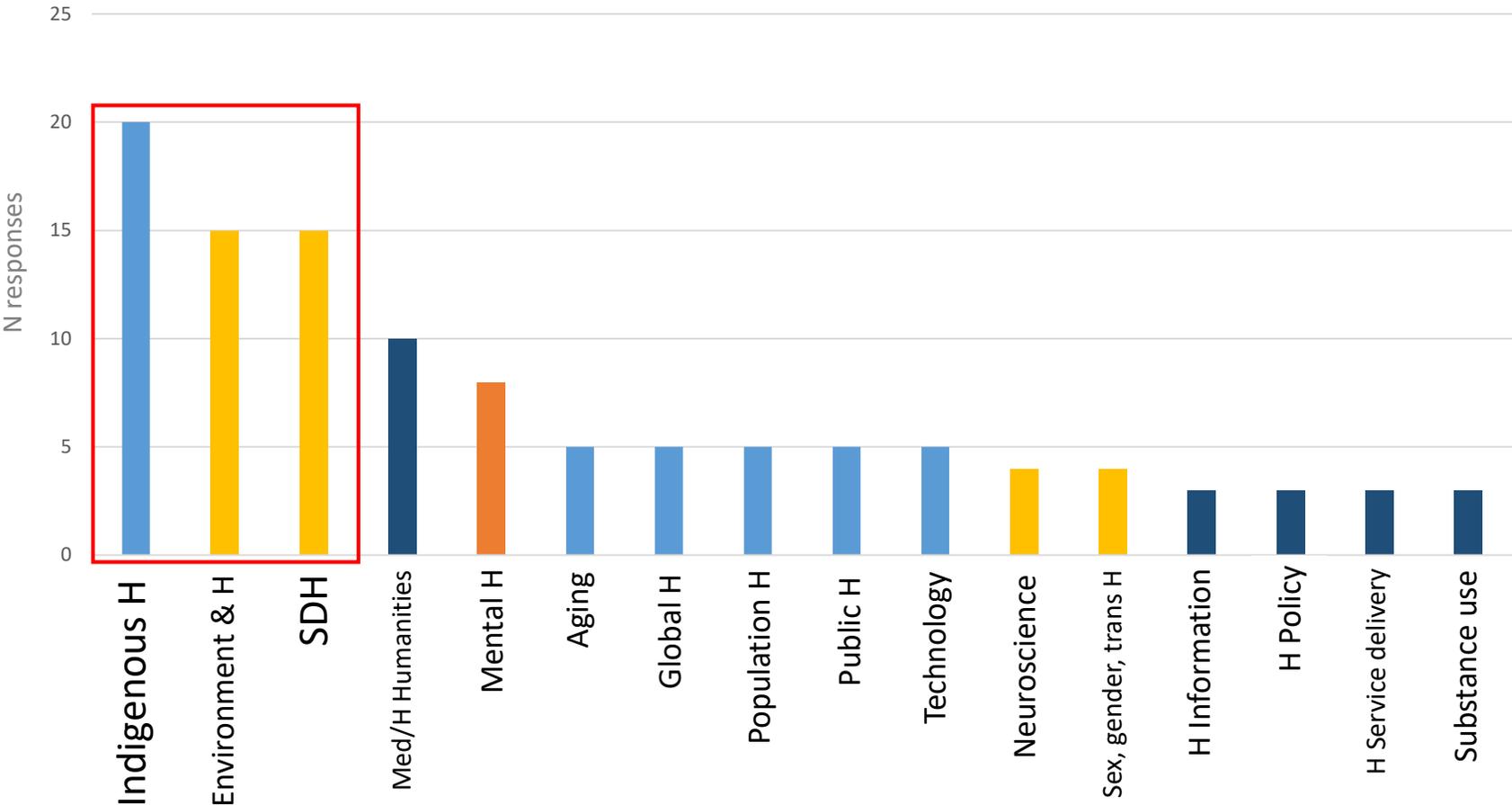
# Top Existing Research Strengths

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Aging	54.30%	82
Addictions	50.33%	76
Social aspects of health	41.06%	62
Health informatics	25.83%	39
Mental health	25.83%	39
Neuroscience	25.17%	38



# Areas to Build Additional Research Strengths

Areas with 3+ responses (N = 113, 66% of total tagged responses)



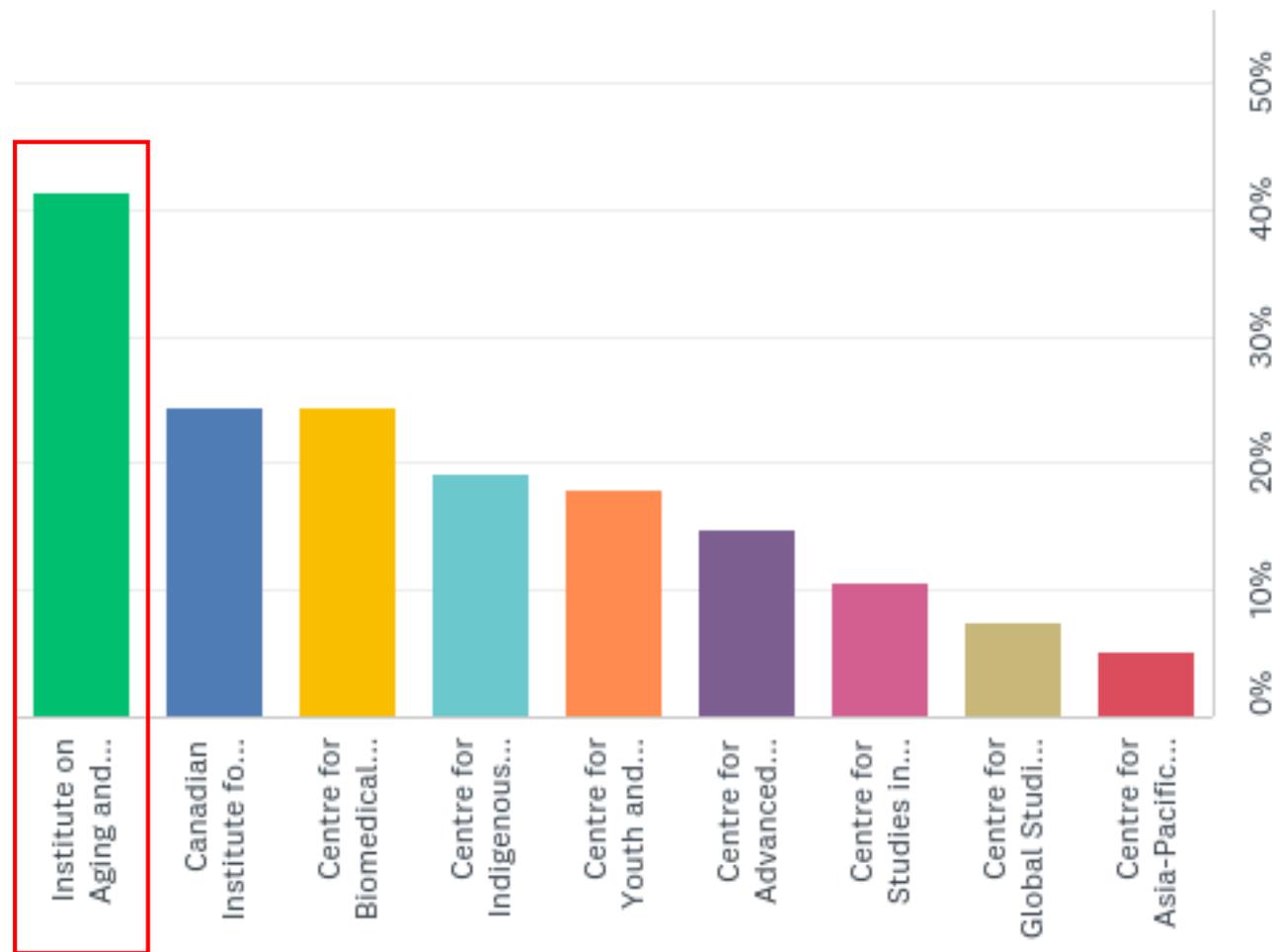
“Enhanced capacity-building in **Indigenous health and wellness research**; particularly looking the following resourcing and policy/practice approaches to support capacity-building: 1) course releases for early career Indigenous health researchers; 2) an Indigenous REB tor remove barriers to research for Indigenous health researchers at UVic; 3) ongoing institutional support of the IMN-PN beyond its funding sunset and likewise, ongoing support of CIRCLE; 4) allow internal applications for CRC postings and/or guarantee hires for chosen CRC candidates to enhance recruitment and sustainability of faculty; 5) hire Indigenous staff specializing in Indigenous research into Research Services and faculty-based research centres or supports; 6) support the development of an Indigenous Health Centre of Excellence - which may be achieved through support of a Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research.”

# Areas to Build Additional Research Strengths

- “I think we have some amazing researchers across all of the areas but am only 'very aware' of health in the areas that I operate in. I can't really vote about proteomics and its importance. We should **maximize resources where we already have a track record** and set out in a few areas that are leading edge to **build a team** and we have some researchers that are being successful.”
- “Biomedical research and biotechnology as these areas have great potential for **impact, translation, and commercialization** all of which will significantly raise UVic's profile.”
- “We need to take a **bigger lens on health** than just disease and the individual. We need to include the relationship of the individual to the community as well.”

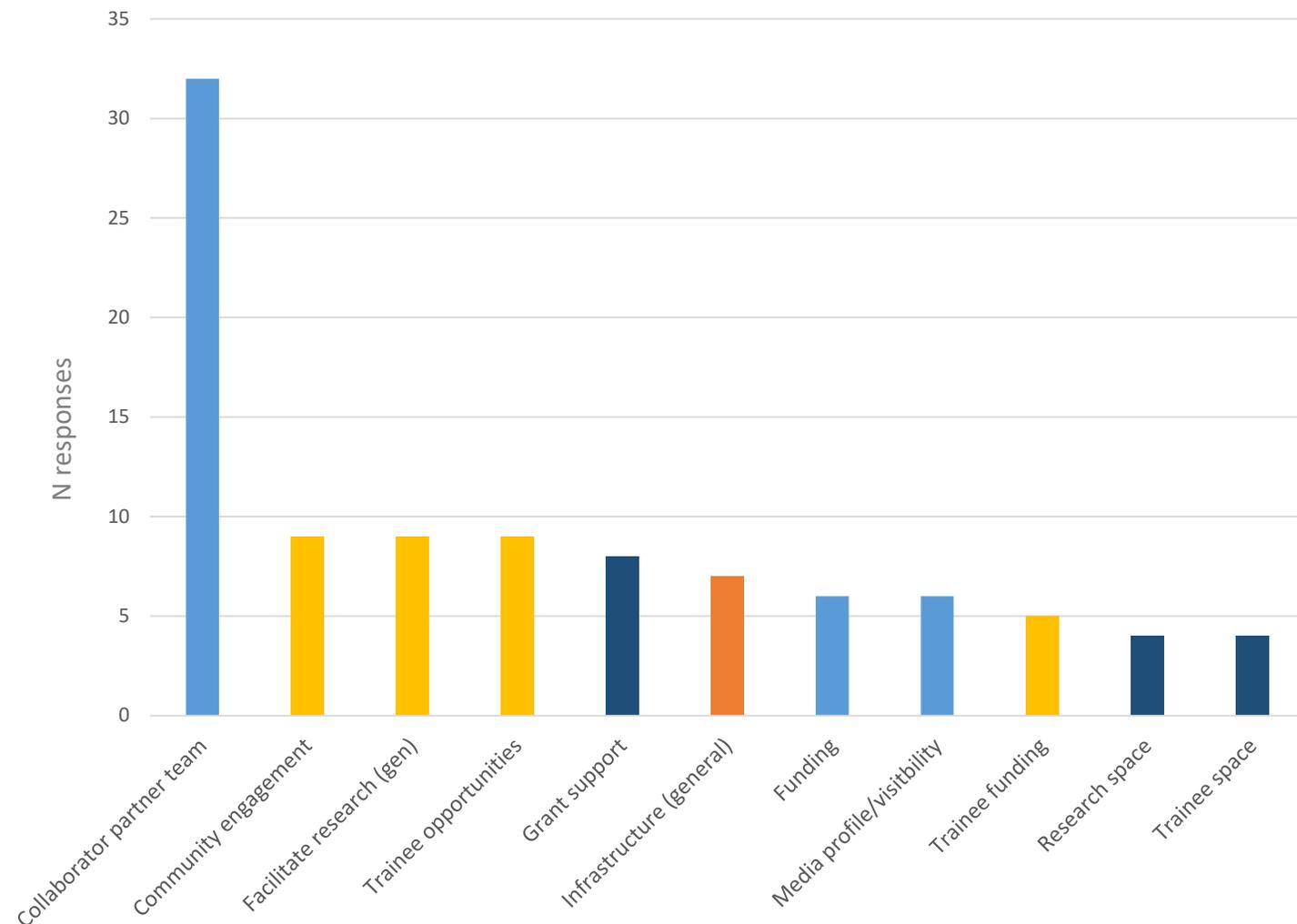


# Which of the following research centres have you worked with on health-related activities?



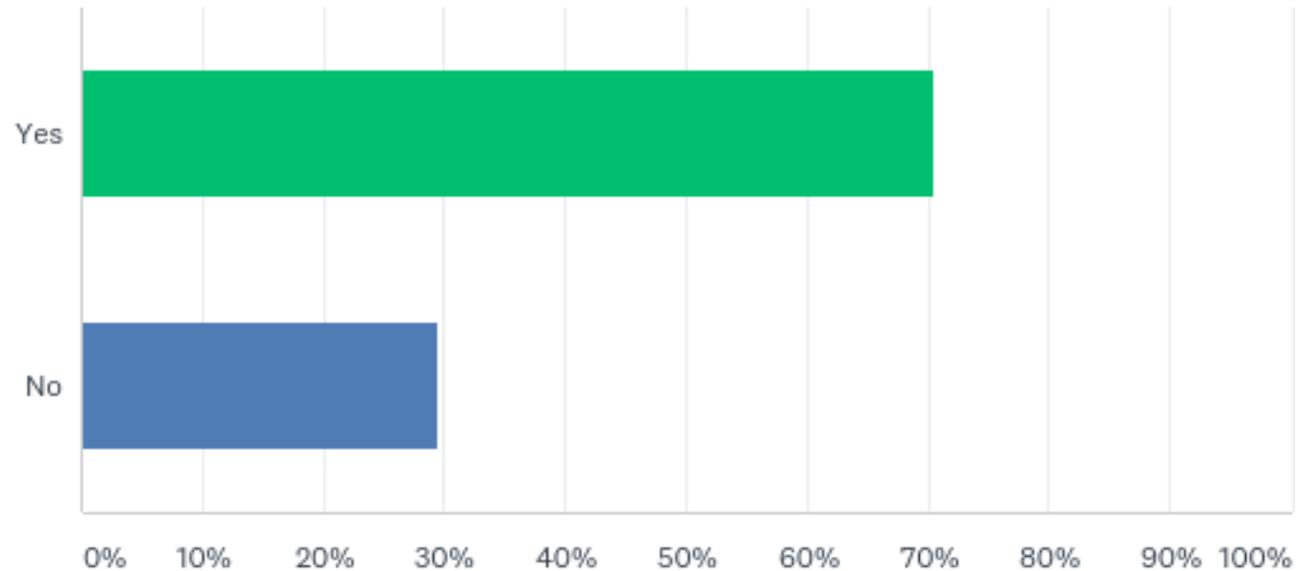
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health (IALH)	41.49% 39
Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR)	24.47% 23
Centre for Biomedical Research (CFBR)	24.47% 23
Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE)	19.15% 18
Centre for Youth and Society (CFYS)	18.09% 17
Centre for Advanced Materials and Related Technology	14.89% 14
Centre for Studies in Religion and Society (CSRS)	10.64% 10
Centre for Global Studies (CFGS)	7.45% 7
Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI)	5.32% 5
Total Respondents: 94	

# How have these centres been helpful or impactful for advancing health sciences at UVic?



- **Collaboration, partnership and team-building**  
“They allow for collaboration of multi-disciplinary researchers... place for these collaborations to form and be maintained.. Bring[ing] scholars from diverse backgrounds together to explore common questions. “
- **Community engagement**  
“Helpful in linking health researchers with community needs... work closely with communities and organizations (e.g., Island Health) on health-related, community-led projects.”
- **Facilitate research (general)**  
“They have been useful for individual faculty members needing support to get their research programs up and going ... very good at facilitation of research.”
- **Trainee opportunities**  
“Provide graduate student opportunities... critical to obtaining funding and to supporting students.”

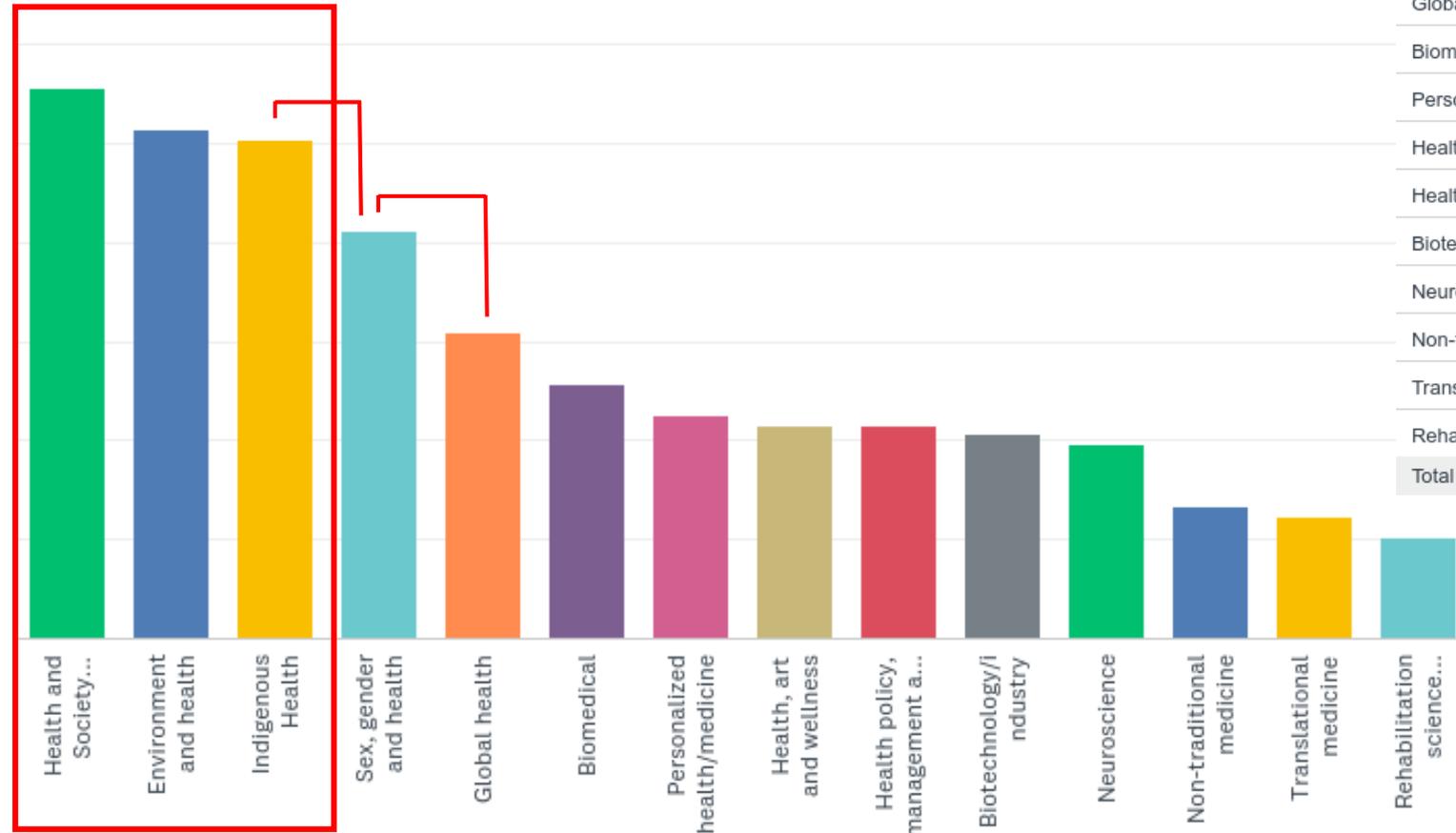
# Do you think a new undergraduate interdisciplinary program in health sciences and/or studies would be a good addition to the current programming at UVic?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.45%	93
No	29.55%	39
TOTAL		132



# Undergraduate interdisciplinary program in health sciences and/or studies: streams



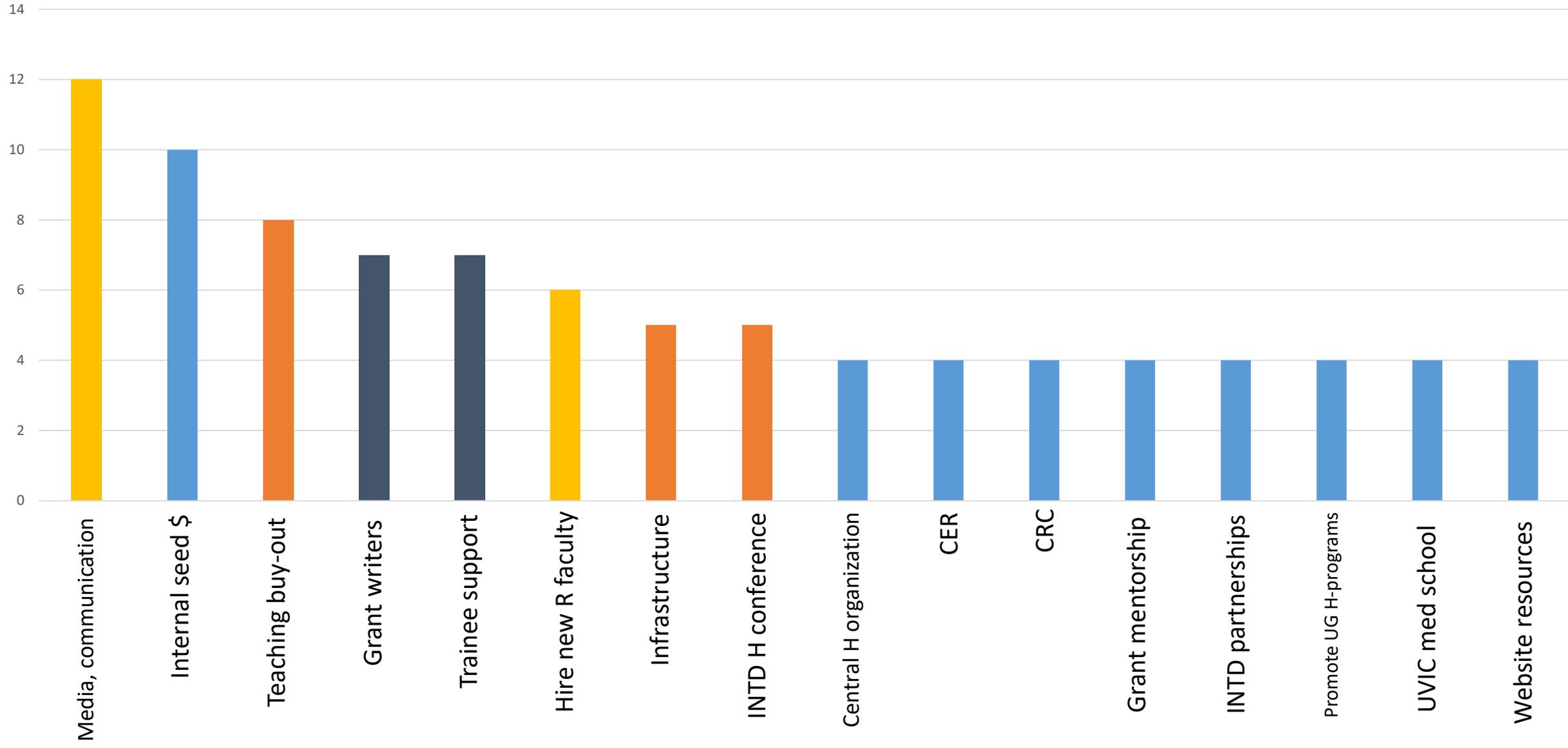
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Health and Society (includes community, public and population health)	55.67%	54
Environment and health	51.55%	50
Indigenous Health	50.52%	49
Sex, gender and health	41.24%	40
Global health	30.93%	30
Biomedical	25.77%	25
Personalized health/medicine	22.68%	22
Health, art and wellness	21.65%	21
Health policy, management and leadership	21.65%	21
Biotechnology/industry	20.62%	20
Neuroscience	19.59%	19
Non-traditional medicine	13.40%	13
Translational medicine	12.37%	12
Rehabilitation science (physiotherapy)	10.31%	10
Total Respondents: 97		



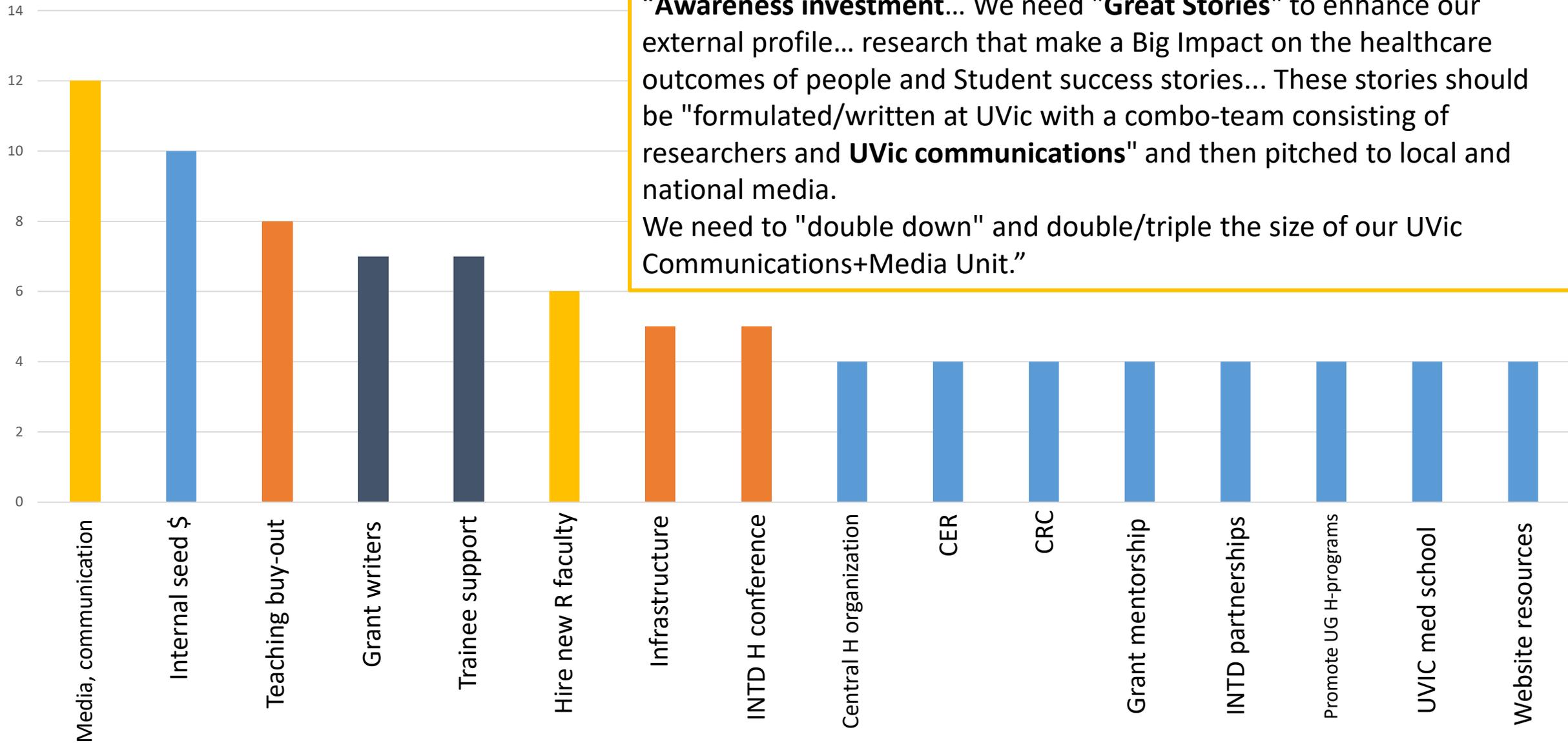
# Undergraduate interdisciplinary program in health sciences and/or studies: streams

- “A new undergraduate program could be **valuable, but differentiation** would be key. It may be more useful to ensure key graduate programs have sufficient researcher capacity to sustain their standing and offer highly differentiated graduate programming for professionals and doctoral students.”
- “**I said no above because** it seems like the cart before the horse- if and when a university-wide health initiative goes forward, the priorities of that initiative would drive the undergraduate program. I would want to understand what an undergraduate interdisciplinary program could deliver that is not possible by **taking courses in different units**, and I would want to understand what the **expected career trajectories** are for students who pursue this option.”

# Teaching and Research Investments



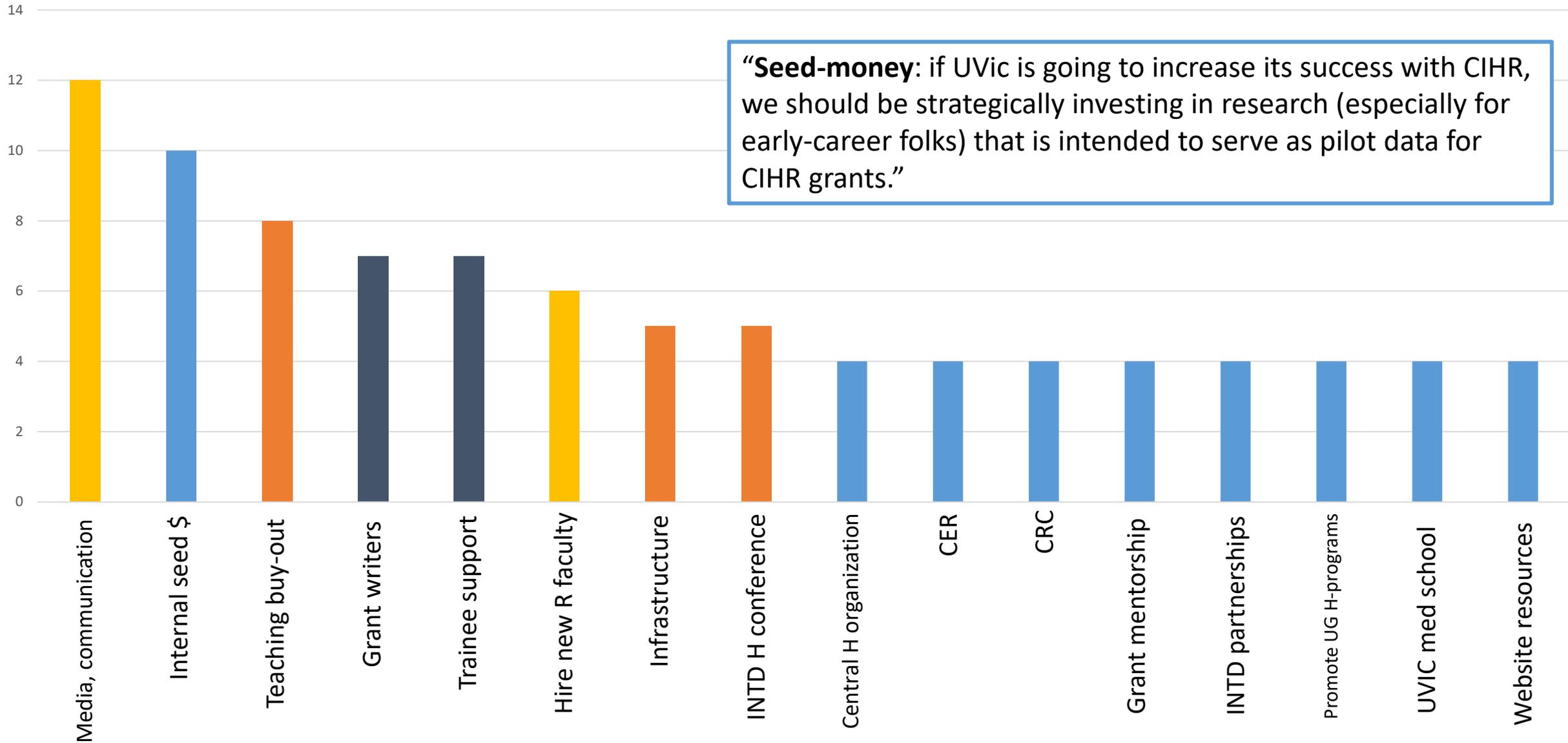
# Teaching and Research Investments



**“Awareness investment... We need **“Great Stories”** to enhance our external profile... research that make a Big Impact on the healthcare outcomes of people and Student success stories... These stories should be “formulated/written at UVic with a combo-team consisting of researchers and **UVic communications”** and then pitched to local and national media.**

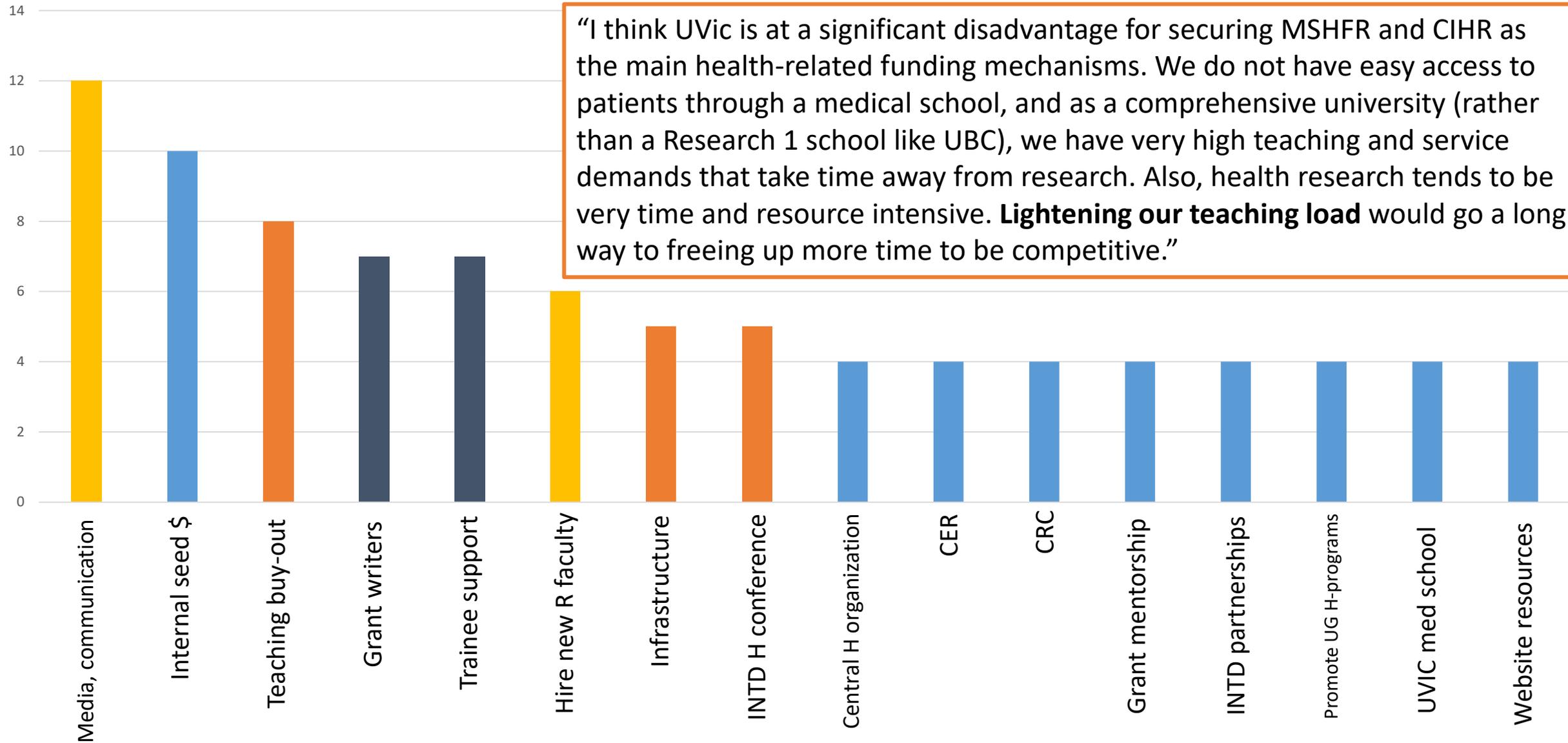
**We need to “double down” and double/triple the size of our UVic Communications+Media Unit.”**

# Teaching and Research Investments



“**Seed-money:** if UVic is going to increase its success with CIHR, we should be strategically investing in research (especially for early-career folks) that is intended to serve as pilot data for CIHR grants.”

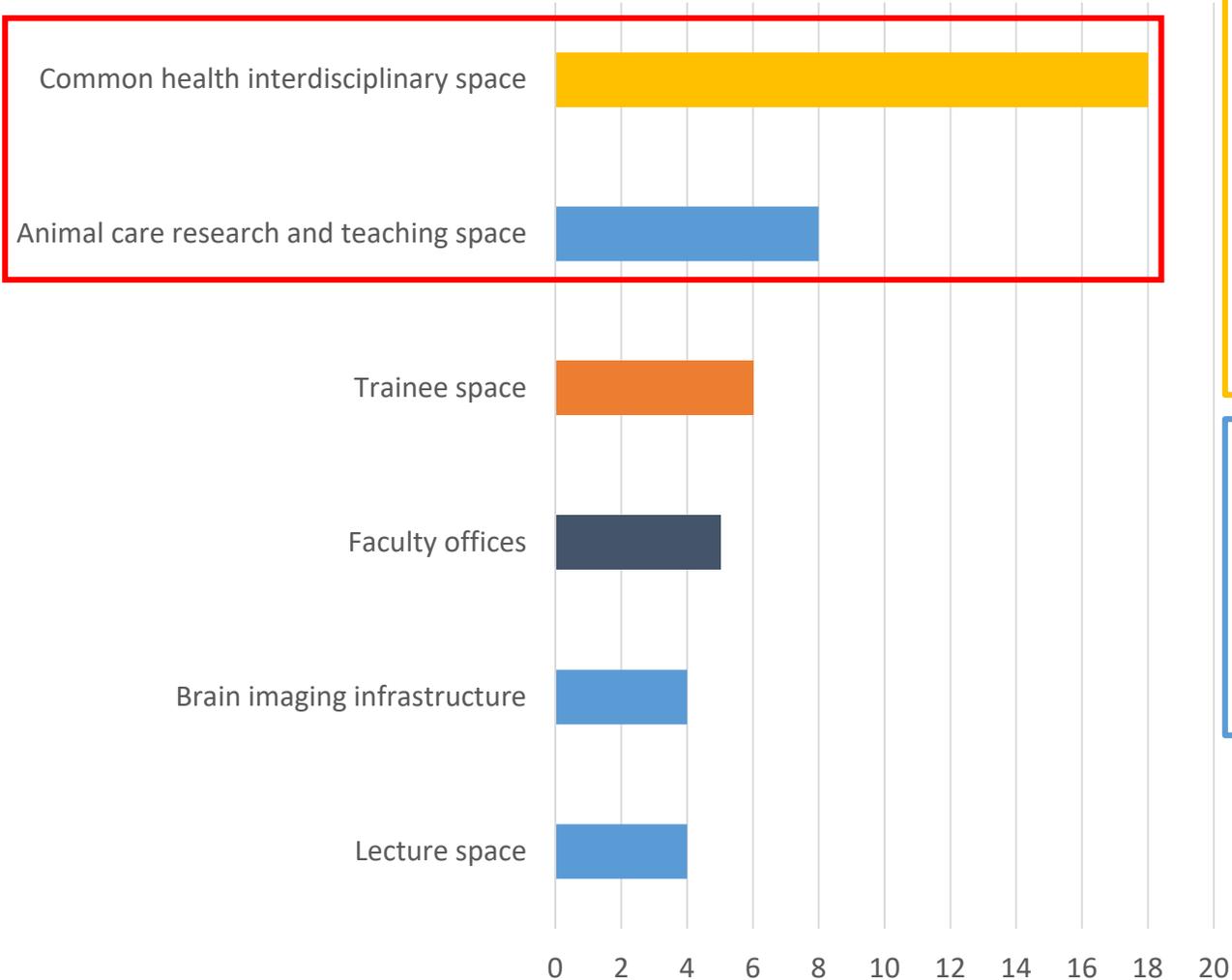
# Teaching and Research Investments



“I think UVic is at a significant disadvantage for securing MSHFR and CIHR as the main health-related funding mechanisms. We do not have easy access to patients through a medical school, and as a comprehensive university (rather than a Research 1 school like UBC), we have very high teaching and service demands that take time away from research. Also, health research tends to be very time and resource intensive. **Lightening our teaching load** would go a long way to freeing up more time to be competitive.”

# Specialized Space and Infrastructure

- 22% (N=19) said NO or Not Sure

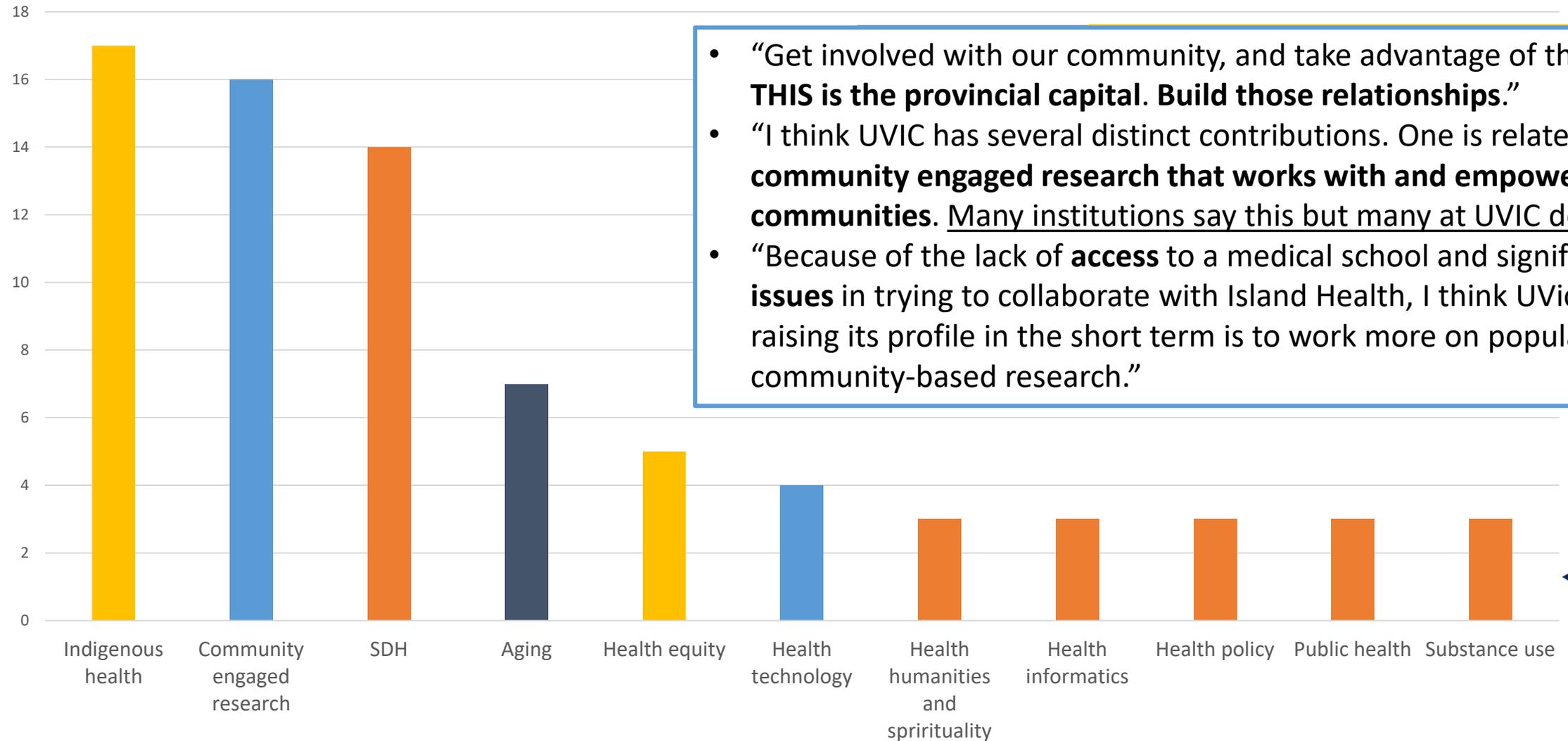


- “collaborative spaces to **leverage our strengths** - that we can't do right now as we are fairly heavily silo'ed. Getting a building where folks from the medical, natural social sciences, and humanities **share space**”
- “**health research innovation hub** bring together faculty, grad students and postdocs working in related areas... faculty and trainee offices, video-conferencing facility, modifiable meetings rooms, free parking for public, high quality secure research data centre.”

- “Mouse facility is getting crowded” “None of the buildings are designed specifically for animal research and therefore are always at risk of being deficient from a regulatory standpoint” “**Need a new building and animal care center attached.** The building should house the researchers and act as a nexus for the researchers and students to develop as a cohesive unit”



# Topics to Distinguish UVic from Others



- “Get involved with our community, and take advantage of the fact that **THIS is the provincial capital. Build those relationships.**”
- “I think UVIC has several distinct contributions. One is related to strong **community engaged research that works with and empowers communities.** Many institutions say this but many at UVIC do this.”
- “Because of the lack of **access** to a medical school and significant **structural issues** in trying to collaborate with Island Health, I think UVic's best shot at raising its profile in the short term is to work more on population health or community-based research.”



# Additional Comments

## Inclusive

- “It is my sincere hope that **health is truly being taken to capture as broad a meaning as possible** in this survey. I think that UVic has the potential to develop a massive and campus-wide health concentration, which given recent turns at SSHRC (which now includes health-focused research), would be both timely and leading edge.”
- “We need more cross disciplinary and inter-departmental sharing and collaboration, and the infrastructure to support this...**various faculty would be engaged and could contribute** if information is made available and the framework for participation is inclusive and effective.”

## Building on current strengths

- “UVic has a lot of **great health research already in existence** (and unique educational programs in health related areas). From my perspective what is urgently needed is better support of the existing programs so that a solid base is developed from which future extensions and new programs could grow from.”



# Additional Comments

## External engagement

- “I don't want us to become another health sciences university. I do want us to **serve the public** in a meaningful way through basic research, advancement of knowledge, bringing our expertise into our community, and informing government policy. “
- “Utilize a few tools - wrap the provincial government and public health folks (Island Health) into research centers, start a pipeline of public health and clinical researchers into research centers (CIHR has some tools) - place students in their institutions using some of new CIHR Post-docs (health service initiative) etc. We need more institutionalized processes with policy-makers, practitioners and researchers all dealing with each other. We need to leverage funding for a center or at least be able to leverage government funding in an MOU of jointly agreed research priorities.”



“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts” ... final thoughts

Health Research at UVIC				
Areas focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous Health</li> <li>Environment and Health</li> <li>Aging, Mental Health, Addictions</li> <li>Impact, translation, commercialization</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team-based</li> <li>Interdisciplinary</li> <li>Broadly defined</li> <li>Community engagement</li> </ul>	Approach
Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant, research support</li> <li>Exposure, outreach, media</li> <li>Collaboration, partnership, team-building</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate programs, courses</li> <li>Integrate into research centres</li> <li>Integrate clinical professors from community</li> </ul>	IMP
Investments	<b>Grant support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal seed \$</li> <li>Grant writers</li> <li>Teaching buy-out</li> </ul>	<b>Media, Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great stories</li> <li>Buy UVIC</li> <li>Edge branding</li> </ul>	<b>Trainees</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding</li> <li>Mentorship</li> <li>Space</li> </ul>	<b>Space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common INT health</li> <li>Animal care R &amp; T</li> </ul>

“This is a very exciting initiative and I thank you for asking for feedback”.



# Idea Generation Exercise - Stations

**1. Research Priorities:** Goal - To raise the profile of health research and identify research priority areas and opportunities to cluster activities

Leads: Karen Urbanowski, Scott Hofer

**2. Institutional Supports:** Goal - To enhance health research revenues and supports to increase the visibility of health research at UVic

Leads: Ryan Rhodes, Frances Lau

**3. Academic Programs:** Goal - To raise the profile and support existing health programs and identify opportunities for new academic programs

Leads: Bruce Wright, Chris Goto-Jones

**4. Capital and Infrastructure:** Goal - To ensure that we have the necessary spaces and infrastructure to support expanded health research and programming

Leads: Alex Brolo, Nick Dechev

**5. Partnership and Community Outreach:** Goal - To develop partnerships with key stakeholders to ensure UVic maintains a leadership position in key areas of strength

Leads: Jennifer Vornbrock, Robin Syme