

# APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY AUSTRALIA

... sharing and learning together

## SURVEY RESULTS (March 2011)

### Total Responses

Invitations to respond to the survey were emailed in December, followed by another email reminder in January.

Number of invitations: 110

Number of responses: 45

Percentage response: 41%

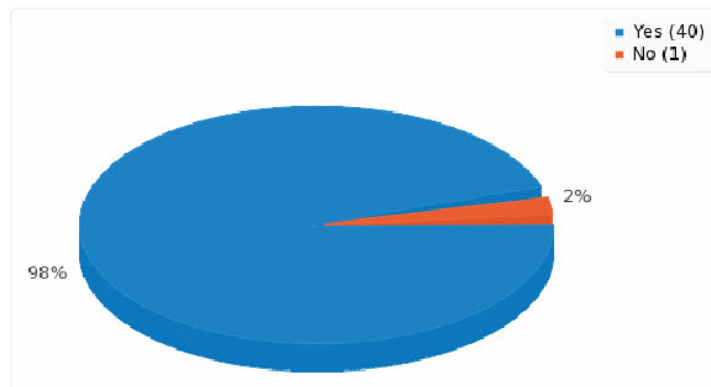
Of the 45 people who responded, 41 completed the survey so their responses could be collated into result data and included in this document.

Results therefore represent 41 out of 110 possible responses or an overall 37% response rate.

### 1. Do you agree with this name for our Australian AI community?

*Appreciative Inquiry Australia*  
... sharing and learning together

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	40	97.56%
No (N)	1	2.44%
TOTALS	41	100%



### Additional Comments:

- I particularly like the notion of sharing and learning together
- Also encourage for short (ie Twitter) .. AIA ... (if possible )
- I like it. It's simple and inclusive.
- Good option I think. My only hesitation is that it sounds a little more like a business than a network. Alternatives could be AI Network Aust or AI Community Aust.
- It's clear what this community is about, from the name

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- The suggested name identifies the group and its purpose with great clarity - i.e. it conveys the purpose and intention of membership to the reader.
- The Australian Appreciative Inquiry Network is the name we use and have used for some time for our website and community - it consists of people who have visited our website at [www.appreciativeinquiry.net.au](http://www.appreciativeinquiry.net.au)...and signed up to be a member and/or participated in one of our AI workshops including most recently the David Cooperrider (Nov 2009) and Jackie Stavros (July 2010) ones. On the basis that name (Australian Appreciative Inquiry Network) has been used since 2006 I think it would create confusion to have another Australian AI. However I am willing to participate in any and every community that fosters and/or promotes Appreciative Inquiry.

## 2. Do you agree with the Statement of Purpose for the Thinking Partners group?

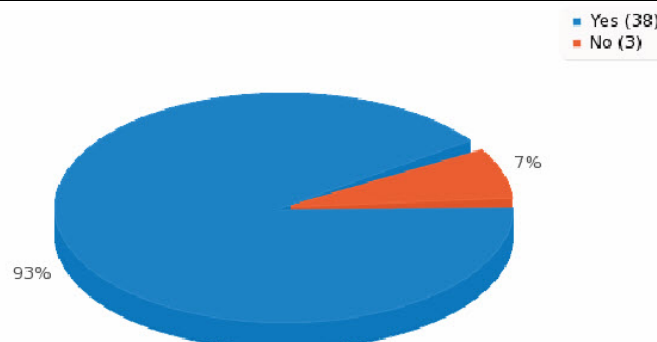
### Statement of Purpose:

*One of the foundational purposes of Appreciative Inquiry is to help people co-create an even better future for their organisations, their communities and the world. Those involved with Appreciative Inquiry have a wide range of different dreams about specifically what they would like to achieve within their own situations and contexts.*

*Within this framework, as a group of 'Thinking Partners' for Appreciative Inquiry in Australia, we commit to:*

- *Acting always in service to others in the Australian AI community - a role of stewardship, not ownership - to support their work in the world and help them shape what they would like to achieve.*
- *Remaining true to the essential spirit and principles of Appreciative Inquiry*
- *Exploring possibilities for connection, communication and collaboration for all in the Australian AI community, as they work with others to co-create a better life, a better world and a sustainable future*
- *"Holding a space" that is transparent, generative and truly collaborative, where people can come together to articulate and share their dreams as well as plan to realise them together*
- *Ensuring that whatever we do as an AI community connects with (where possible) and complements the work of other strength-focused groups or movements.*

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	38	92.68%
No (N)	3	7.32%
TOTALS	41	100%



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## Additional Comments

### From those who answered “YES”

- This statement makes me feel very proud and excited about being a part of this vision and I look forward to growing in my place within it.
- I think some specific identification with Chaordic principles would assist in creating and maintaining the AI Spirit. David Cooperrider told me that at one stage he spent so much time working with Dee Hock (who invented the word CHAORDIC and wrote the book *The Birth of the Chaordic Age* - see *One from Many* as the follow-on book) that he got to know him better than his wife! I mention this in the light hearted manner it was told to me - but to illustrate the importance that Cooperrider placed on the Dee Hock influence and relationship.
- ENCOURAGE AIA members to 'support' (volunteer) other members through an AI 'offer' (free of charge) - for 1 (or 3 or 5) .. AI 'sessions' .. with a 'report' (maybe a small charge?)
- Particularly well expressed – congratulations
- In essence sounds great! Just a couple of comments/suggestions: Dot point 1 and 4 appear to express similar ideas. Not sure that stewardship is a well understood/ used word. Are you trying to capture a spirit of collaboration rather than competition? Dot point 2 I would prefer to stress 'actions' rather than 'remaining true' eg 'Acting in ways that are consistent (or congruent) with the essential...' Dot point 3 should it read 'we' rather than 'they'? and i would suggest 'together' rather than 'with others' And some other thoughts: What about NZ? Promote reflectiveness and learning about the effective use of AI within Aust contexts Support/nurture the use/application of AI within Aust orgs and communities

### From those who answered “NO”

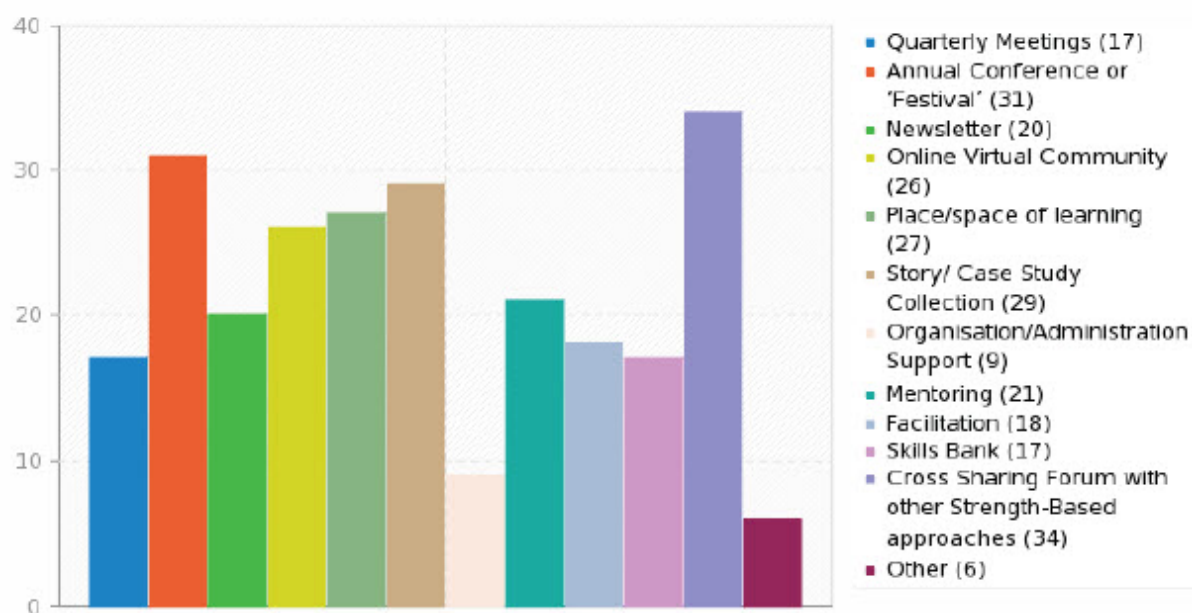
- This statement sounds to me like one that is meaningful to those already in the community and who have worked with AI. It depends on your purpose. If you want the statement to explain to those outside the community and possibly attract others to the community, then I my feeling is that the statement is too much like "AI speak" and not "rest of the world" speak. "Holding a space" and sharing dreams may seem a bit weird to many people, even though I like it, personally!
- Thinking Partners implies thinking, the framework implies action. This needs to be aligned
- I fully support the intentions expressed, however feel that more "I/we" language would be appropriate rather than 'them/their'- this would make a greater personal connection, a sense of 'doing with' rather than 'doing to'. The suggested changes are minimal...see below...
  - Acting for the well-being of the Australian AI community - a role of stewardship, not ownership - to support our work in the world and help people shape what they would like to achieve.
  - Remaining true to the essential spirit and principles of Appreciative Inquiry
  - Exploring possibilities for connection, communication and collaboration for all in the Australian AI community, as we work together to co-create a better life, a better world and a sustainable future
  - "Holding a space" that is transparent, generative and truly collaborative, where people can come together to articulate and share their dreams as well as plan to realise them together
  - Ensuring that whatever we do as an AI community connects with (where possible) and complements the work of other strength-focused groups or movements.

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## 3. Please select all activities you'd like to see happen for the Appreciative Inquiry Community in Australia

Answer	Count	Percentage
Quarterly Meetings	17	41.46%
Annual Conference or 'Festival'	31	75.61%
Newsletter	20	48.78%
Online Virtual Community	26	63.41%
Place/space of learning	27	65.85%
Story/ Case Study Collection	29	70.73%
Organisation/Administration Support	9	21.95%
Mentoring	21	51.22%
Facilitation	18	43.90%
Skills Bank	17	41.46%
Cross Sharing Forum with other Strength-Based approaches	34	82.93%
Other	6	14.63%



### “Other” Suggestions:

- Creating Points of Difference
- Local communities of practice
- Possibly offering facilitation of AI to overseas communities/groups/governments. Explore the possibilities of offering our services through large NGOs working in community development/ sustainable business development. This could also provide opportunity to mentor/ train up Australian practitioners AND those in the overseas communities that we work with.
- Offer of a session (*See third dot point, additional comments, Q2 above*)
- Facebook page or use of externally hosted SharePoint site where collaborative asynchronous discussions can occur
- Perhaps creating a LinkedIn Group

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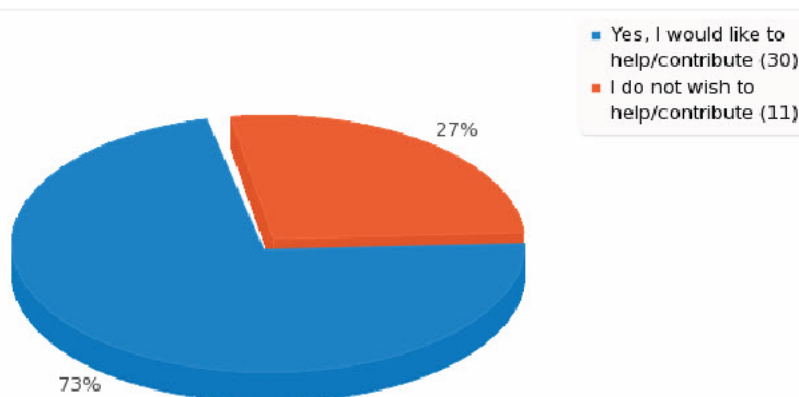
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## Additional Comments

- The list of activities is commendable but a little predictable. It seems like a duplicate of what's already out there and I don't think that it's going to turn heads or stimulate the interest that I think is required; if we're going to meet the goals that I thought we set ourselves. If we wish to create a forum that is going to make a real difference, perhaps we should consider some more 'edgy' activities and have an area that will encourage some wilder thinking and the exchange of ways that may appear bizarre, particularly to the more traditional approaches. Happy to enter into discussion on this approach if anyone else feels so inclined. In addition, I'd like to see more on Future Communication trends and opportunities...Web 2.0, Web 3.0, How can we engage Social Media as an essential part of AI etc. Perhaps these will emerge in the respective activities but the titles seem flat and uninspiring to me.
- I'm not sure what "Organisation/Administration Support" is referring to. Is that support for third-party organizations, or what?
- As mentioned before I have already got people who have signed up for (presumably) some or all of the above possibilities. Given that I have sold my other business and can now focus on the AI side of things I will be enquiring of the existing members (of the Australian AI Network) in similar vein and will be in a better position to determine which if any of the above activities we will be pursuing as well. I would imagine there would be no problems in sharing these resources but it will take some care not to get into a tangle and confusion.
- The story/case study collection could be tied to the learning space and could feature 'out of the ordinary' uses of AI or aspects of AI or AI-informed practices (which is how I use it).
- I think all of them are wonderful possibilities - for the future if the movement finds legs and active supporters. I have ticked the ones I think will allow us to build a foundation. For now, I would also be pointing people to the commons and AI practitioner of they want case studies as I am not sure we have the volume yet here in Australia.
- Cross sharing forum with other strength-based approaches is a really interesting pro-active proposition.
- Part of me want to tick all the boxes, however pragmatism cut in and I minimised the ticks!!!!

## 4. Can you help?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes, I would like to help/contribute	30	73.17%
I do not wish to help/contribute	11	26.83%
TOTAL:	41	100%



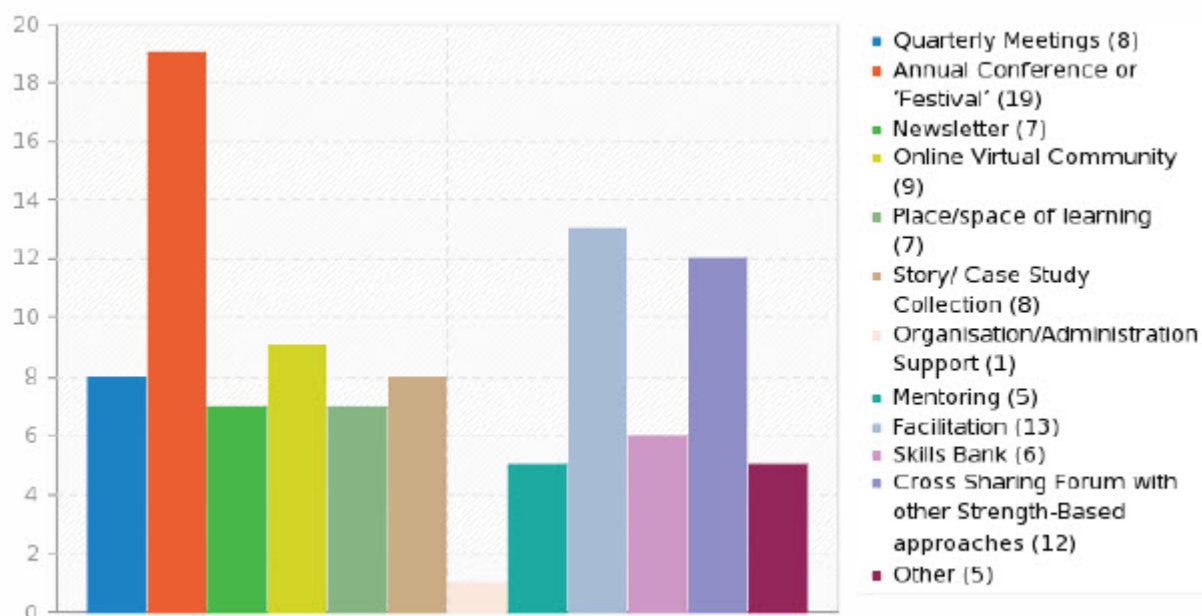
*NOTE: The 11 people who did not wish to help/contribute at this time all said they would like to be kept informed of developments.*

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## 5. Please indicate the areas in which would be able to contribute some energy and time

Answer	Count	Percentage
Quarterly Meetings	8	19.51%
Annual Conference or 'Festival'	19	46.34%
Newsletter	7	17.07%
Online Virtual Community	9	21.95%
Place/space of learning	7	17.07%
Story/ Case Study Collection	8	19.51%
Organisation/Administration Support	1	2.44%
Mentoring	5	12.20%
Facilitation	13	31.71%
Skills Bank	6	14.63%
Cross Sharing Forum with other Strength-Based approaches	12	29.27%
Other	5	12.20%



The 30 people who indicated their willingness to provide help and support were all willing to share their contact details with others who expressed interest in contributing to the same area(s).

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## **6. Please write a few lines about what you are most passionate about in regard to Appreciative Inquiry**

- The collectiveness of the movement.
- Using AI in coaching & team building/group coaching in the workplace as a complimentary part of strengths based approaches. I also have a particular passion for working with women.
- Its potential for facilitating change in organisations.
- From my limited experience with Appreciative Inquiry, I'm confident that it can play a significant role in various aspects of life that will contribute to our development of a better world. The fundamentals of AI must be respected as it appears to be a very powerful system. That said, I am very interested in considering creative opportunities to apply AI in ways that will contribute to the achievement of breakthroughs and marked improvements in our lives, whilst showing greater respect for the earth and those with whom we share the planet.
- The possibilities of mirroring back to people their own strengths and encouraging them to strengthen themselves and the community around them through building on these strengths.
- I was very interested to learn another way of conducting facilitation which helped move groups forward. I see myself as a student of AI but already used aspects of this before it had this name!
- I'm not an expert in AI, however I have seen where focusing on people's strengths can be incredibly empowering. I am passionate about realizing people's true potential to do good for themselves and for others.
- The strength based approach which focuses on the positives and not just problem solving.
- We are social beings and as social beings we create and obtain our knowledge of our existence and of the world through our relationships. It is through our relationship with ourselves and with each other that determines the world we live in, whether this is through personal relationships or other relationships such as our relationships with our colleagues. This extends to how we relate to each other as organisations, within our own country and to those overseas. People and their relationships are paramount to happy, meaningful and productive workplaces. Appreciative Inquiry provides an opportunity to unlock the voices and potentials of individuals and organisation. To me, AI is a way of 'being'. I believe everyone wants to be passionate about what they do. They want a sense of meaning and belonging in what they do and they want to be treated with dignity and respect. I feel Appreciative Inquiry is a tool to enable individuals, groups, organisations and governments to explore themselves and act on their own possibilities.
- I really like the high engagement and energy that AI can achieve at the beginning of a change program. I would really like AI practitioners to be more willing to acknowledge the benefits of other (so-called "deficit oriented) approaches for some purposes.
- In collaboration with 6 others I am writing a book and my chapter for this book will be dealing precisely with this subject...and I expect the draft to be concluded by end Jan. It is a huge subject for me and AI both creates and sustains passion or energy to move us in the direction of improvement along the lines of innovation and the creation of sustainable value.
- Recognising current knowledge skills and experiences and 'mapping' them to VET / Nationally recognised Qualifications.

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- Openness and commitment to genuinely build better futures for people.
- I use the 4Ds of AI to inform evaluations of community based development projects - mostly in Melanesia. I find that under these headings I can facilitate a dialogue by indicative questions which re-focus community members' minds on the project and this then (perhaps) enhances sustainability of the project outcomes as perceived/experienced by those people. It is the strength based aspects of AI that appeal to me and it is the SBA that I am passionate about. I use this approach in evaluation, combined with other inclusive participatory tools which are user friendly. It is the participation and ownership of the knowledge generated by the community that I am most passionate about. All the tools must provide an transparent and ethical approach to inquiry.
- Using an AI approach to community engagement, and in building capacity in organisations to engage well and meaningfully.
- Simple and positive way of connecting with like minded people on issues that matter.
- My personal passion is for AI as an OD approach - for bringing about whole-system change. More broadly though I acknowledge its vast applications and so want to support that here in Australia we have the most generative understanding of AI. So that it can be applied in ways that truly bring forth its potential and the potential of those who work with it.
- Raising the profile of possibilities within organisations and individuals and helping them to not continue to be stuck in the "only if" mindset. Ensuring that the "Appreciative" aspect of AI includes the "not so nice stuff" and empowering people to appreciate ALL aspects of an issue.
- Energising and inspiring people to reflect and take action through appreciation of themselves and others.
- It is a strength rather than deficit based approach to org/community change. It has a proven, simple yet elegant methodology.
- For far too long, the corporate emphasis has been on managing the risk of something going wrong rather than encouraging and recognising the things that go right, on disciplining those who are not compliant or make mistakes as opposed to inspiring innovation and collaboration and celebrating successes. Positive feedback creates positive energy and contributes to peoples' health and wellbeing.
- The simplicity of the concept and the fact that people are connected with the positive strengths and can tap into that in times of challenge. It takes them into a different space where they can use these insights to build and create (or recreate) something powerful. It's energising and motivating.
- Like positive psychology, the idea of working with and building on our strengths and things that work well makes good sense to me. I am tired of being told to fill the gaps, both for myself and in terms of developing people. I want to learn more about it as it is not "in my bones" yet.
- Appreciative Inquiry is very aligned with my personal and professional core values and beliefs. I see it as a practical and easily applied framework for almost any context to bring value, create positive outcomes, energise people and clarify thinking.
- I am passionate about using AI in all aspects of my work - individual and team coaching, facilitating workshops and organisational development.



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- Using AI as a context specific participatory process to engage people in shaping their and their organisation's future finding ways to distribute ownership and leadership of organisation directions giving voice to the silent majority democratising strategy.
- Strongly committed to Asset Based Community Development, and AI is the key tool I utilized. It has revolutionized my work in the fields of community and economic development.
- I am most passionate about the capacity of AI to foster generative conversations and connections that help to energise individuals, organisations and communities for positive action. For me, encountering Appreciative Inquiry was like 'coming home' - a natural 'next step' from many years of other work focusing on possibilities and strengths rather than problems and deficits.
- The notion of building on people's strengths. Celebrating successes I guess is an extension of this which I think in organisations people often forget.
- I am an Open Space facilitator and use the AI process in all the pre-work with the client/sponsor. I also use it, again coupled with OST in a leadership model.
- Understanding how it is used and applied - APPLIED AI - this is an approach used in the Improv field where practitioners learn more about application. Understanding more about the successes and case studies and sharing with others.
- Its collaborative approach.
- It closes perceived gaps and creates a level playing field through sharing it's a 'fair' way of communicating.
- Learning more about a generative approach and refining what I now realize I have already been doing - only just beginning with AI.
- We very much appreciated the experience we had in 2008 with AI and we are interested to keep in contact.

## ***7. Is there anything else you would like to tell us***

- Tony Richardson who was my Australian introduction to Future Search Conferences that has similar objects to AI.
- Thank you for the initiative of establishing AIA. Special thanks to Sue James for her tireless organisation and communication. Let me know if there's anything that I can do to assist.
- I would like to thank Sue, Chris and the many others who contributed to getting this off the ground. We are all very busy, and it's great to see people such as yourselves giving time and effort to creating something however big or small that will aid humanity.
- I'm a generalist, not a specialist. I don't set out with the intention of using AI (or anything else) -- I design each intervention (or whatever) to suit the situation and purpose.
- Presently a Consulting Partner with Corporation for Positive Change and intend to bring Diana Whitney or Amanda Trosten-Bloom to Australia some time later this year or early next year. Either would make terrific keynote speakers at a conference and the 4 and a half day foundations course could be offered as well at that time. What do you think? Max.
- As an Assessor for the Investors in People standard, one of my primary tasks is to identify the things that are going well in an organisation (that it should do more of) based on what its people tell me. Of course we also identify opportunities for improvement and this forms the

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basis for future opportunities for demonstration of good practice and celebration of achievements. As a methodology, Investors in People fits hand in glove with Appreciative Inquiry.

- I am keen to learn more and connect with like minded members of the AI community.
- Great work for getting this going!
- Willing to assist as much as I am able - limitation is due to due to a heavy work travel program.
- While I have indicated that I am unable to help at this point, it is in fact only this point and would be happy to reconsider at some time in the future.
- Thanks for the opportunity to comment/participate.
- I would like to be involved in this group and to contribute in the future. I have just assumed responsibilities on a national committee for another association and so cannot make a commitment to this one for the moment. Kind regards, Jennifer McCoy.
- Keep up the good work. Appreciate the work that has gone into putting this together.
- I would like to be on the mailing list for events, and opportunities to participate along the lines of your introductory forum, rather than be informed of 'development' per se.