

# The Impact of COVID-19 on ECRs

Jenn Cooper - 9 September 2021

6th Workshop of SCAR AAA



Scientific Committee  
on Antarctic Research



# Universal Impacts

**STRESS**

# Universal Impacts

**STRESS**

**ANXIETY**

# Universal Impacts

**STRESS**

**ANXIETY**

**ILLNESS**

# Universal Impacts

**STRESS**

**LOSS**

**ANXIETY**

**ILLNESS**

# Universal Impacts

**STRESS**

**LOSS**

**FRUSTRATION**

**ANXIETY**

**ILLNESS**

# Antarctic COVID-19 Project

- SCAR-led survey by Drs. Liggett & Herbert
  - ~400 respondents: 44% ECR
  - Survey done during Sept - Nov 2020
  - Circulated to various Polar networks and in various languages



Figure 2. Survey participants' nationalities with response numbers by country



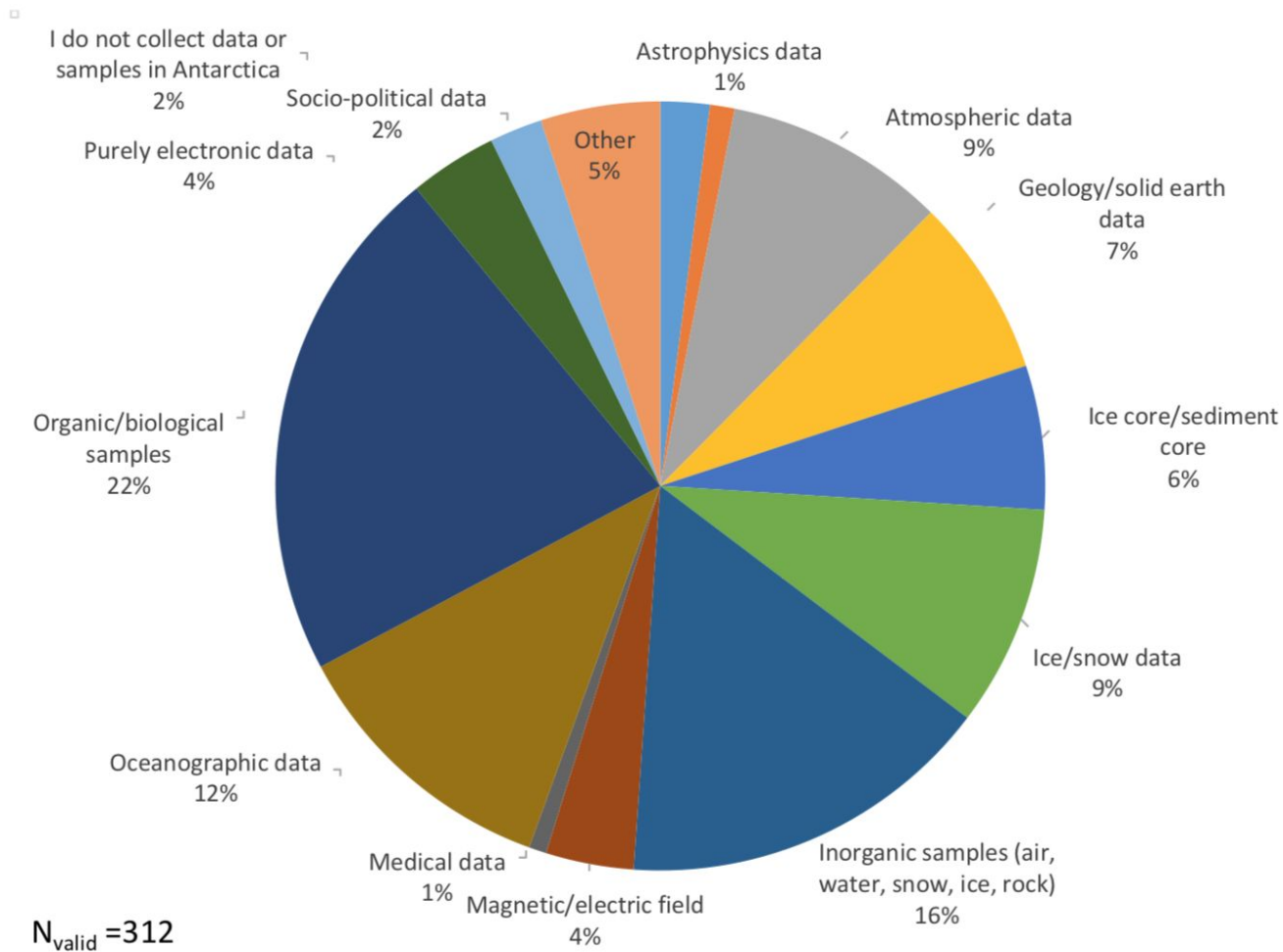
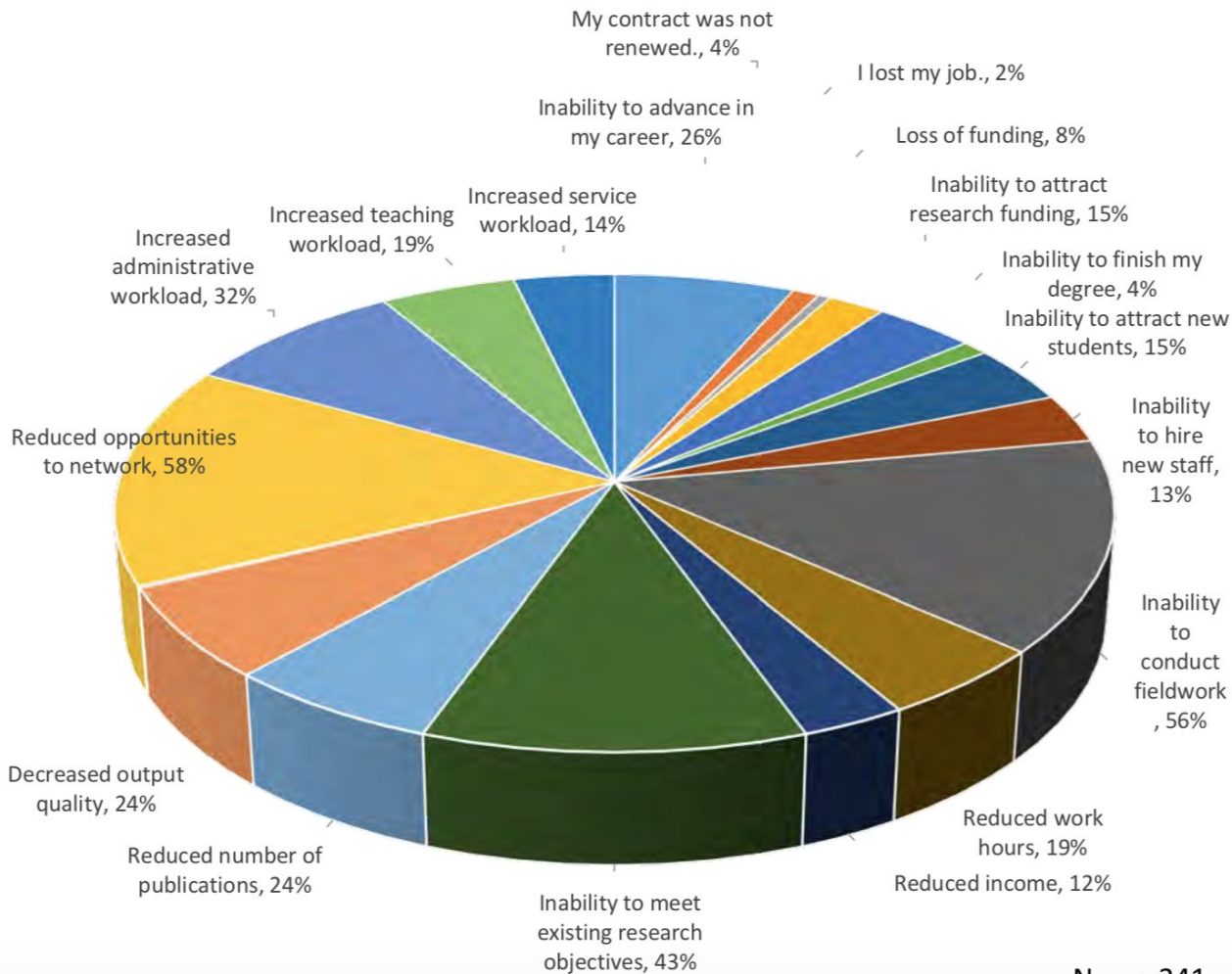


Figure 16. Types of data collected by survey respondents

# Student & ECR Impacts

- Research Struggles (84%)
  - Observatory shutdowns (ALMA) → data/paper delay
  - Reduced/non existent polar field work (99%)
  - ‘Disenchantment with working life in academia’
  - **Funding term limits**
  - **Concerns over job security**
  - **Reduced grant amounts & availability**



N<sub>valid</sub> = 341

# Student & ECR Impacts

- Education by zoom
  - Remote learning can be difficult and not possible for all
  - Lack of engagement with peers & mentors (42%)
  - Lack of motivation & knowledge retainment
  - Cancelled internships
  - Incomplete/missed coursework → delay in degree

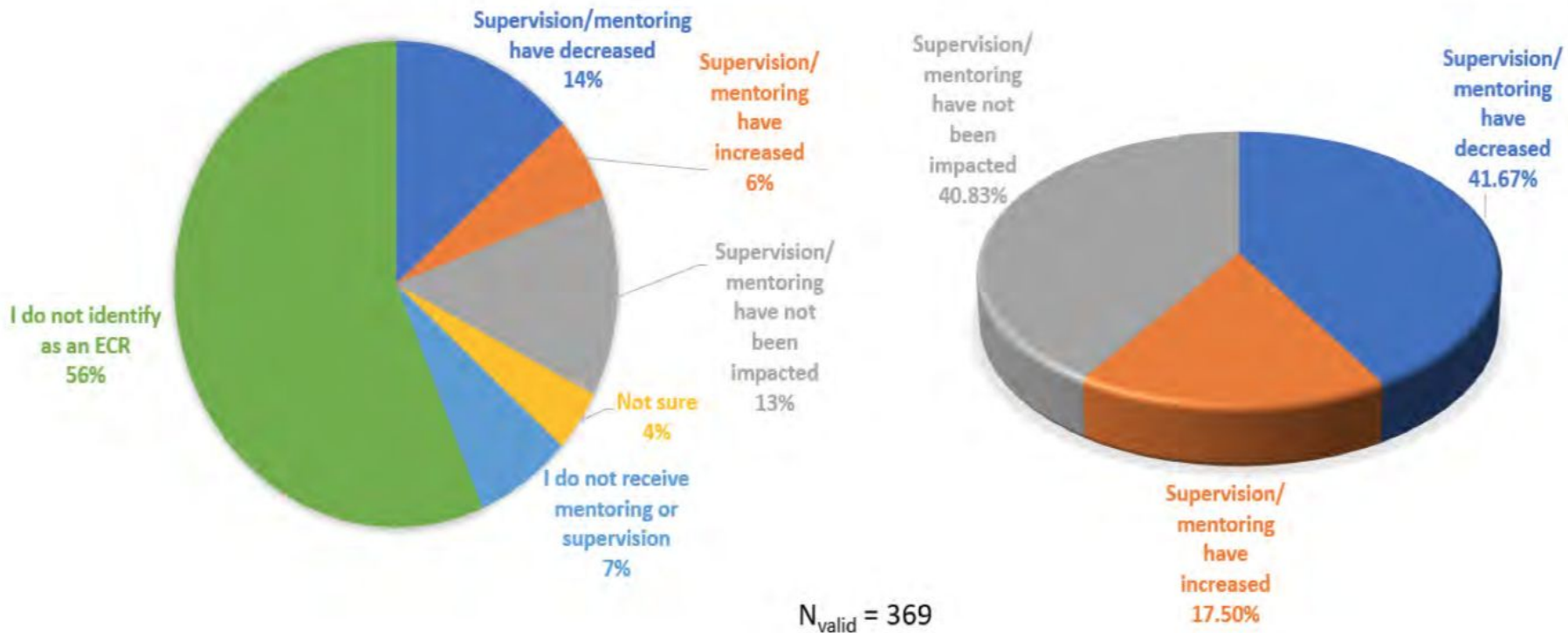


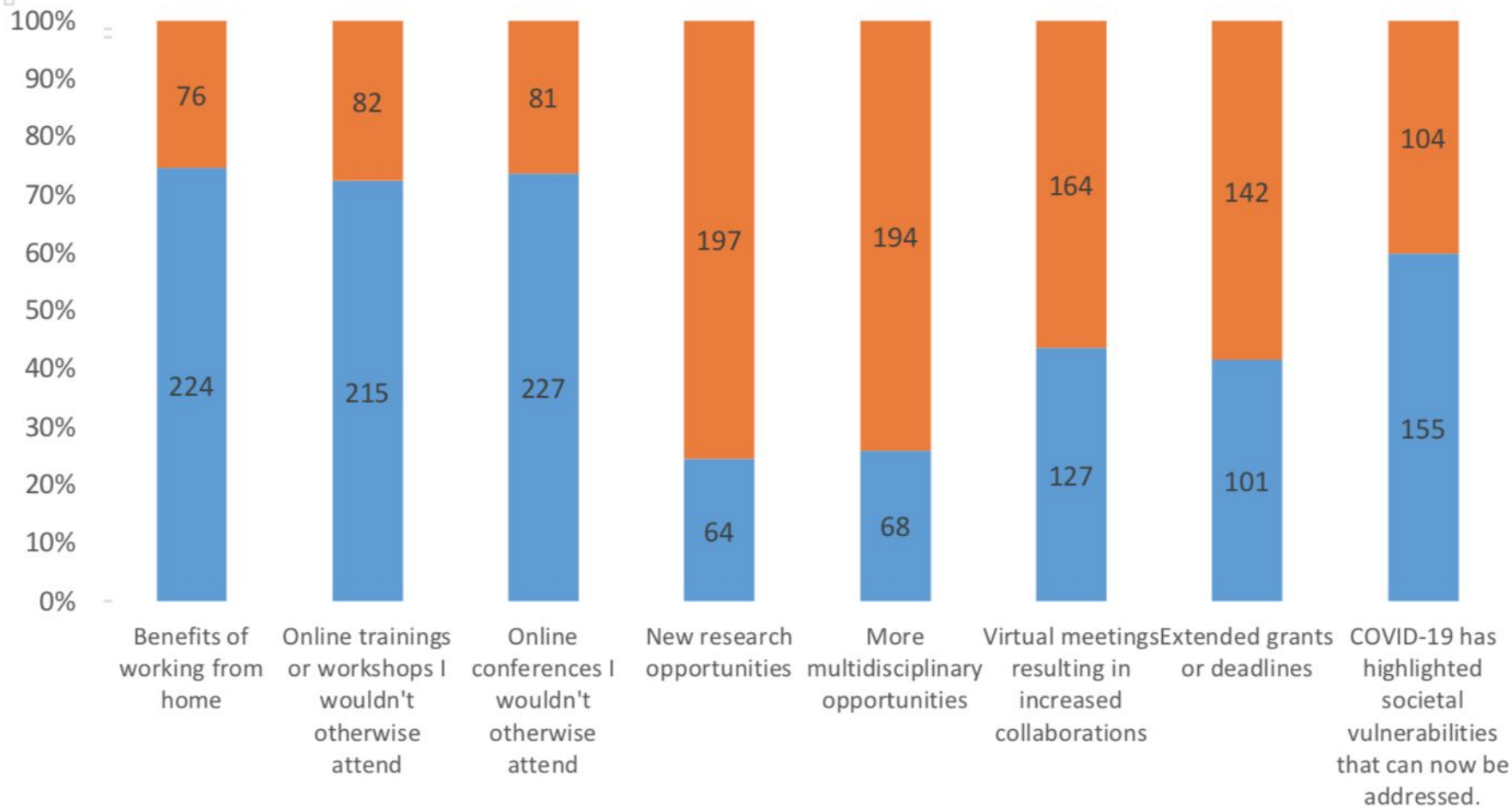
Figure 20. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mentoring or supervision

Silver Linings.....



# Looking at the Bright Side

- ~50% of respondents in the COVID-19 Project found positive aspects in pandemic

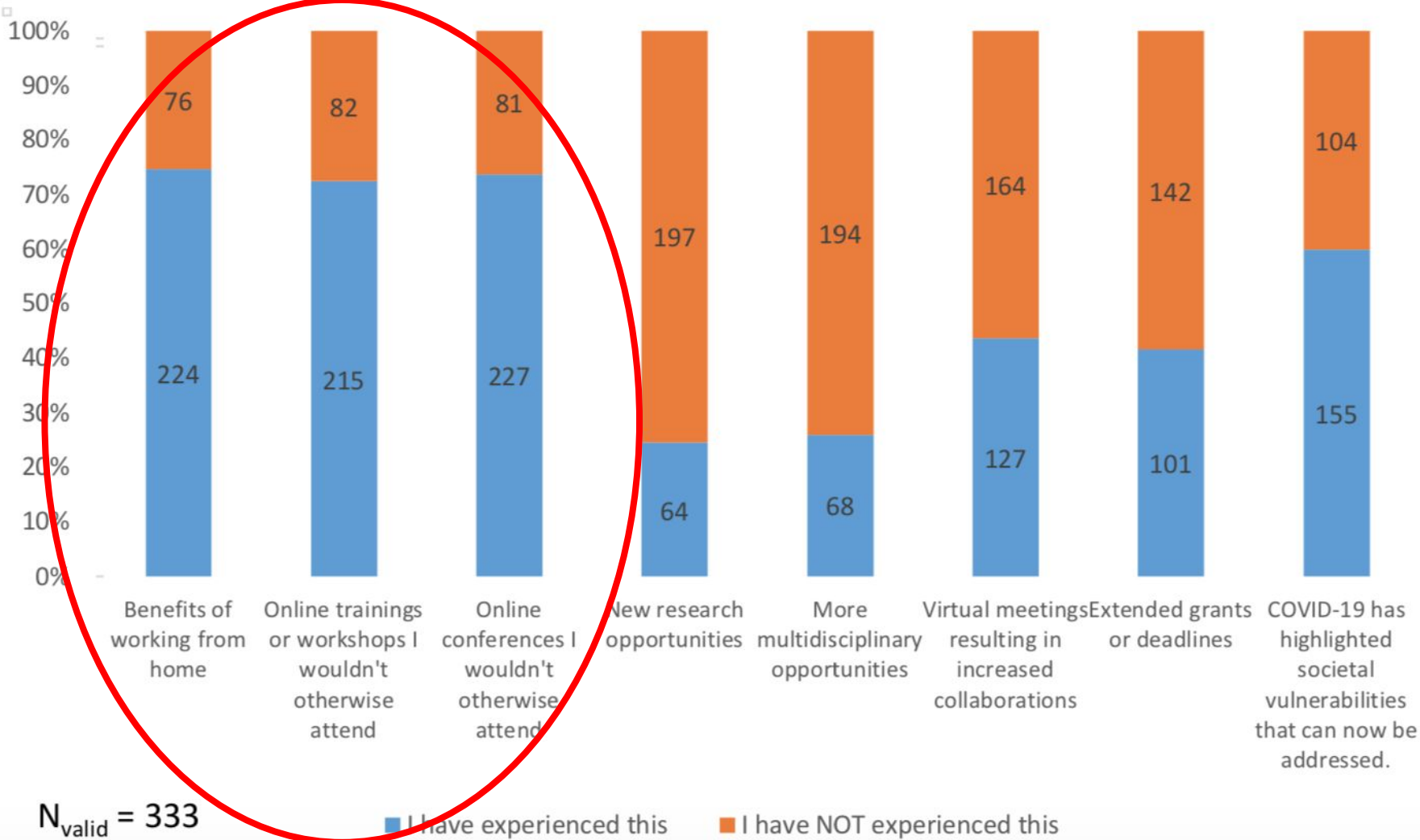


$N_{\text{valid}} = 333$

■ I have experienced this

■ I have NOT experienced this





# Looking at the Bright Side

- Possibility of remote work
  - Improved work life balance & environment
- Virtual attendance at conferences/workshops is more inclusive
  - No travel costs, visas, etc
  - → Exposure to more diverse audience & topics
  - SCAR AAA participants:
    - **2021: 80+**
    - 2019: 43

# COVID-19 Project Recommendations

- More support for working remotely → culture change
  - Equipment: laptops, internet
- Increased professional opportunities
  - Virtual attendance at meetings/training/workshops
  - Data sharing → database, collaboration, portals, etc
  - Funding: fieldwork, travel, stipends
- Establish a SCAR mentorship program
  - Link with APECS Mentorship Database
- Allow for COVID-19 impact statements during reviews

Thank you!  
Questions?