



Funder plus

What we've found so far

January 2026

John Ellerman
Foundation



The Wolfson*
Foundation

Pilgrim
Trust



the
Tudor trust



Benchmarking and tracking applicant perceptions

We track grantee and applicant experiences with 16 grant-makers and have over a decade of data.





nfp Research.

FUNDER PLUS & ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

What do applicants really think?

August 2024

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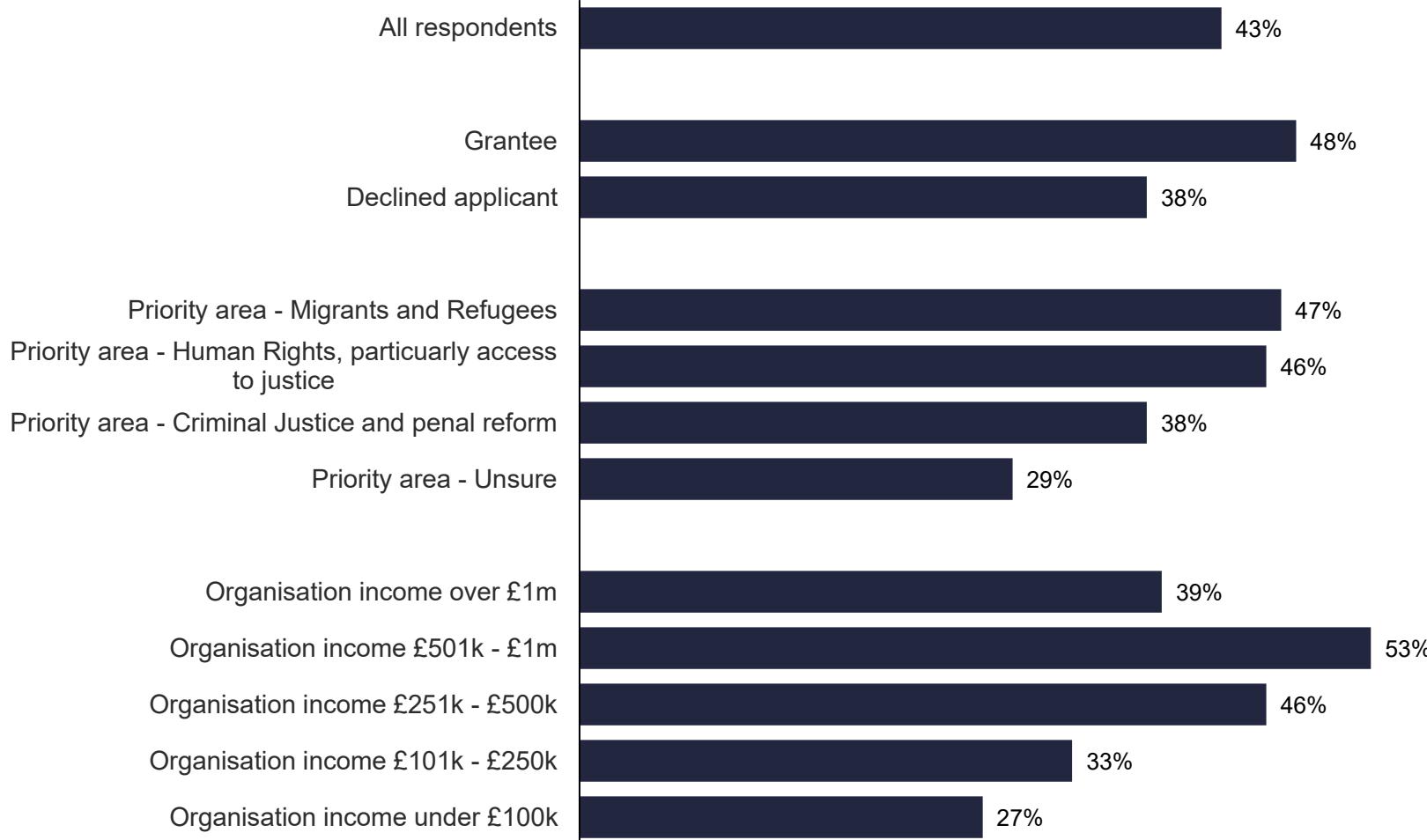
Survey respondents

	Grantees	Declined applicants
AB CHARITABLE TRUST	83	89
The Henry Smith Charity	295	465
John Ellerman Foundation	87	146

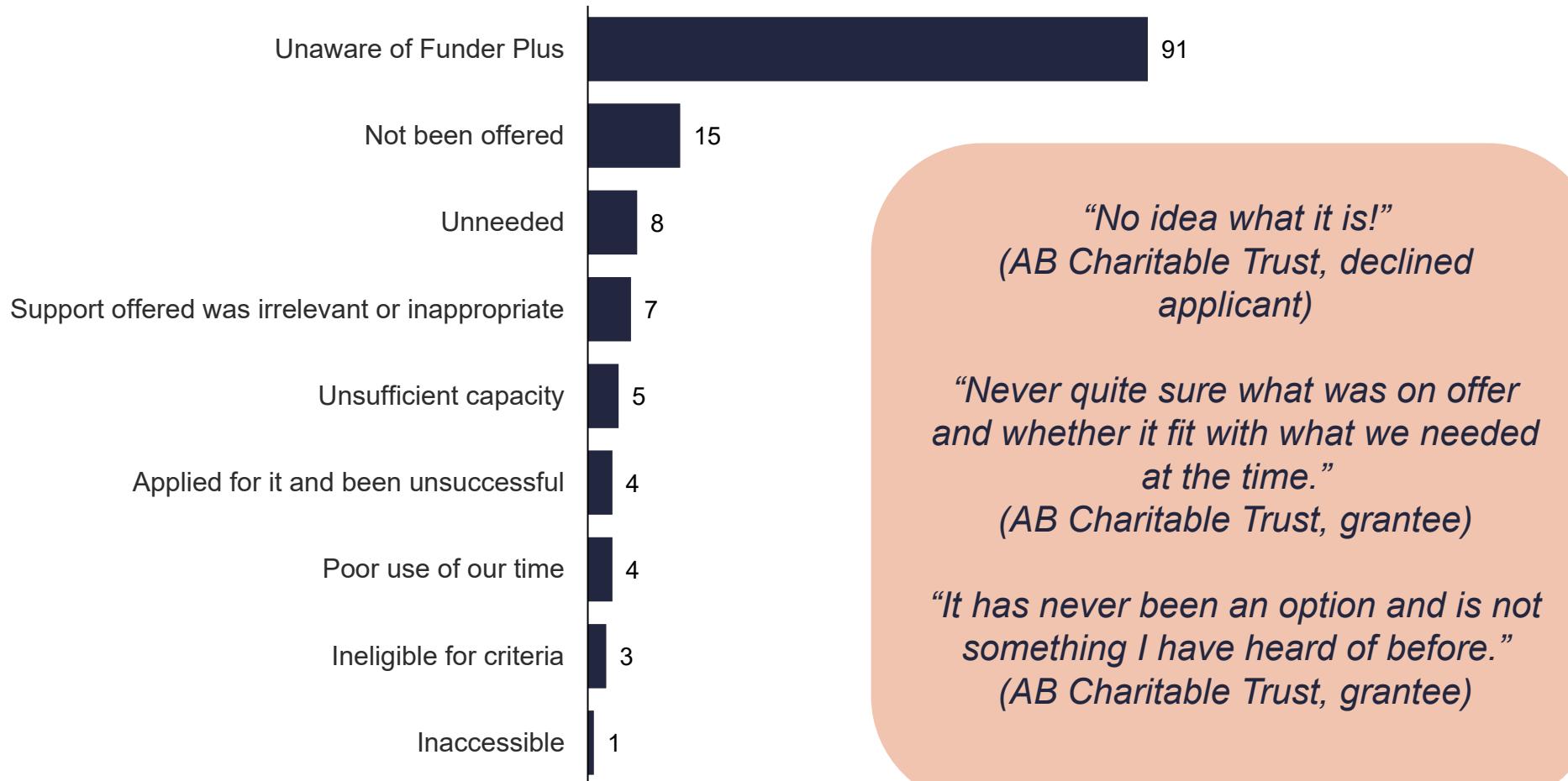
Percentage of respondents who have ever accessed a Funder Plus offer from another funder, by different sub samples

"Has your organisation ever accessed a Funder Plus offer from another funder?"

*Funder Plus is an approach taken by grant-givers to go 'beyond the money' – offering additional support to build capacity, leadership, and resilience within organisations.

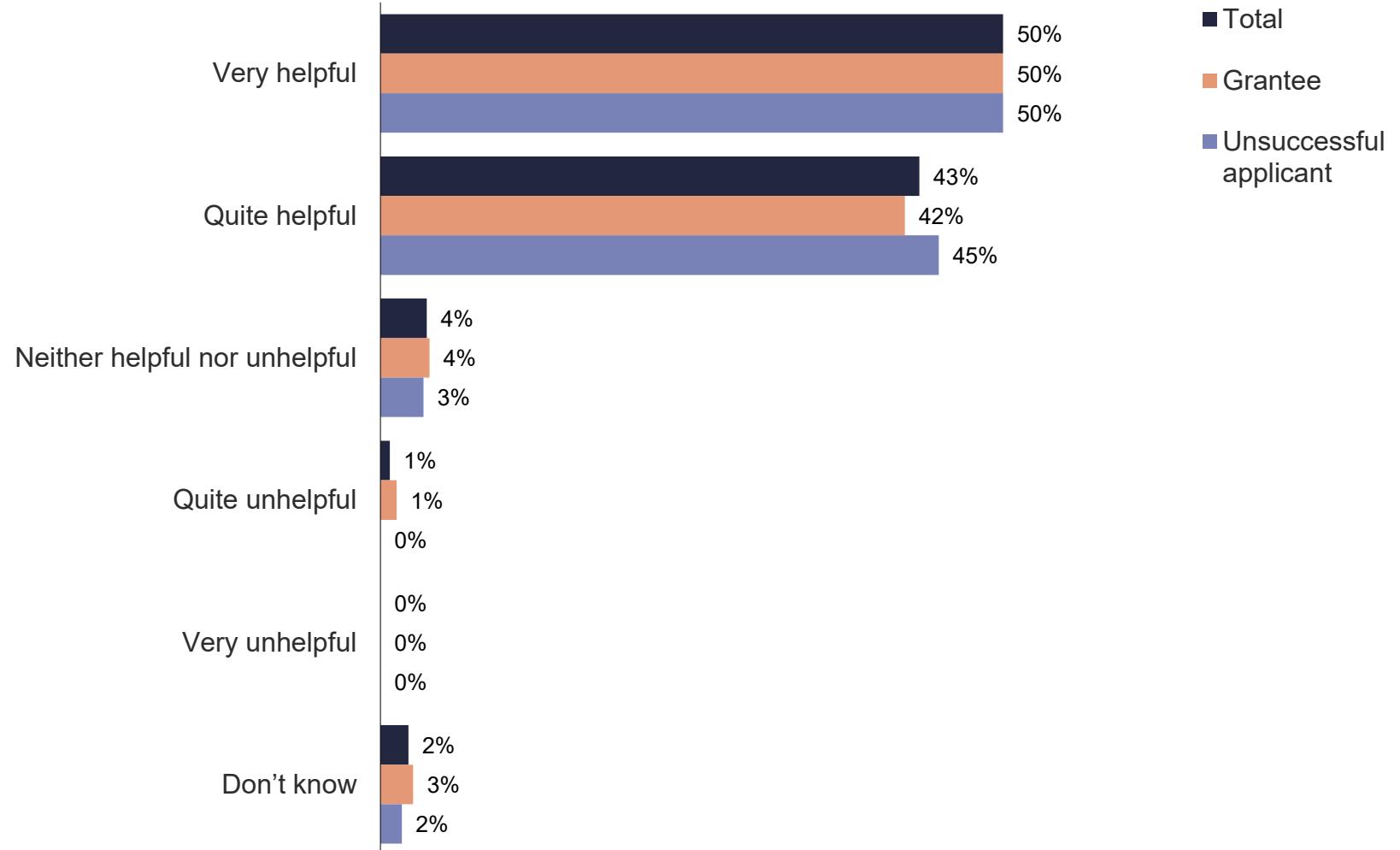


Many people have not heard of the term ‘funder plus’ – and the smaller the charity, the less likely they are to have heard of it



Majority found this Funder Plus offer ‘very’ or ‘quite’ helpful

“How helpful was this Funder Plus offer?”



“

“The support given alongside the funding is almost as helpful if not more helpful than the money itself.”

(AB Charitable Trust, declined applicant)

“We have found that we build stronger and closer connections with our funders who offer support beyond the direct financial support.”

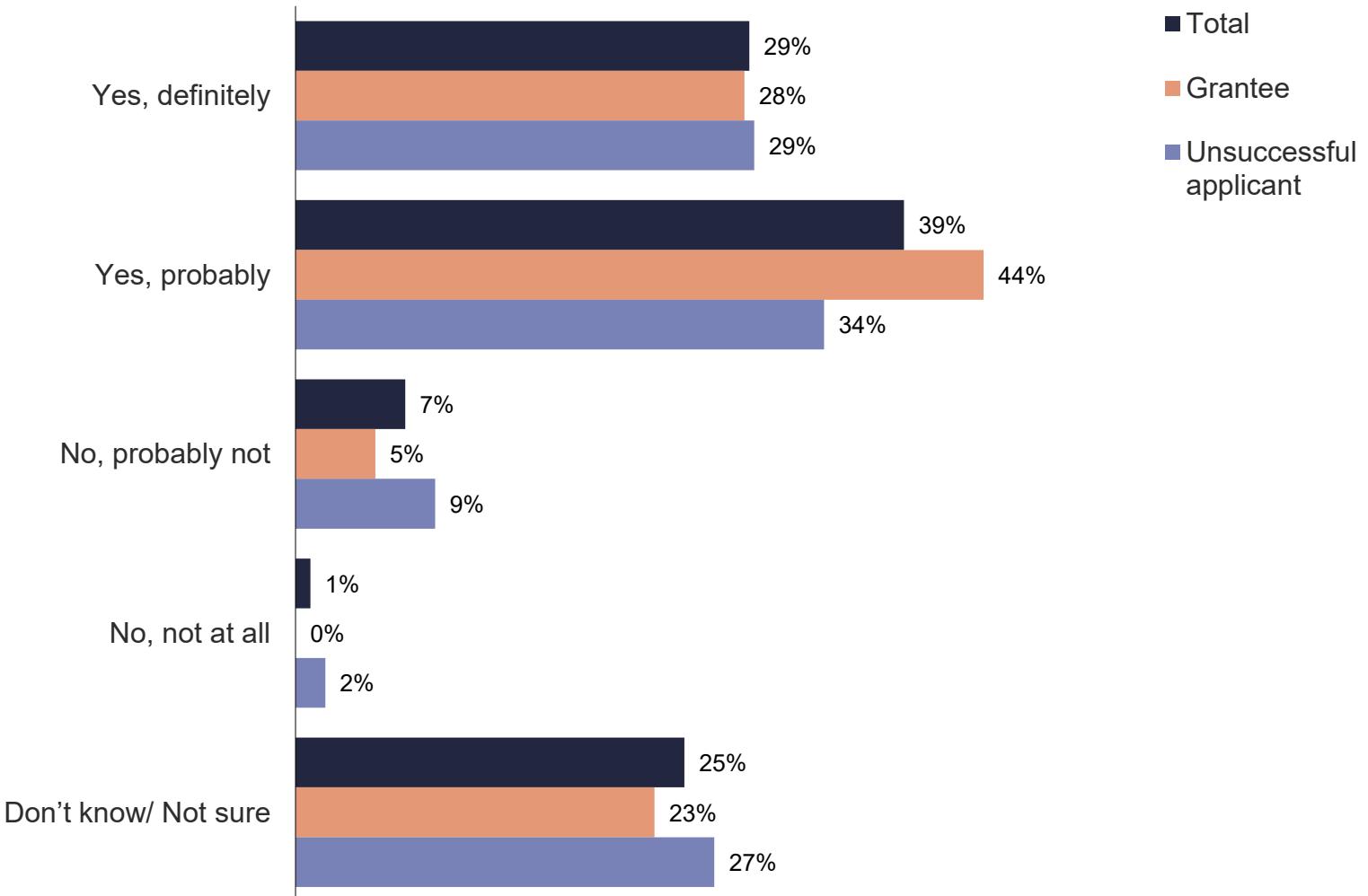
(AB Charitable Trust, declined applicant)

“It would perhaps help you to understand organisations better and subsequently make decisions on your fundraising programmes and goals in a more informed, and possibly more "bottom-up" way.”

(AB Charitable Trust, grantee)

68% would find it helpful if A B Charitable Trust were to develop this kind of support

"Do you think it would be helpful if The A B Charitable Trust were to develop this kind of support?"



A photograph of a protest scene. In the foreground, a person's arm and shoulder are visible on the left. In the center, a group of people of diverse ages and ethnicities are holding handmade protest signs. One man holds a large sign that reads 'EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL'. A woman holds a pink sign that says 'Justice for ALL'. Another woman holds a green sign that says 'FREEDOM IS A RIGHT'. A man holds a brown sign that says 'I WANT TO BE HEARD'. A woman holds a white sign that says 'FIGHT PEACEFULLY'. The background shows a chain-link fence with barbed wire and a corrugated metal building.

It has to be bespoke

Potential issues with offering Funder Plus

Base: all AB Charitable Trust respondents; number of mentions; the same respondent may make multiple mentions)



Issues with funder plus

- Consider grantees' needs
- Consider the grantee's capacity
- Must be truly optional
- Importance of funding
- Coordinated with other funders
- Quality of support

“

“We often feel these initiatives work well but only if you have the time and dedication to commit to them. The past few years we have been hugely stretched and unable to pick these opportunities up.”

(AB Charitable Trust, grantee)

“Funder Plus offers are typically an offer of expertise or training. For a hard-pressed charity short of both financial and time resources, an offer of an expert to tell you what to do (better) without the financial or time resource to do it may just be helping the funder feel good about itself. (I have been a funder too).”

(AB Charitable Trust, declined applicant)

Useful types of support

- Capacity building
- Peer networking / learning

“

“The support Funder Plus initiatives provide organisations valuable information and support to develop skills which otherwise there are limited budgets for. Such initiatives not only provide the financial costs towards development and capacity building but also the support and buy in from Board and organisation level.”

(AB Charitable Trust, grantee)

“As a charity that's grown from small to medium-sized relatively quickly, there are definitely skills we need to build on our team, but we don't always have extra funding to devote toward operational capacity-building. This type of support would be very useful.”

(AB Charitable Trust, grantee)

“

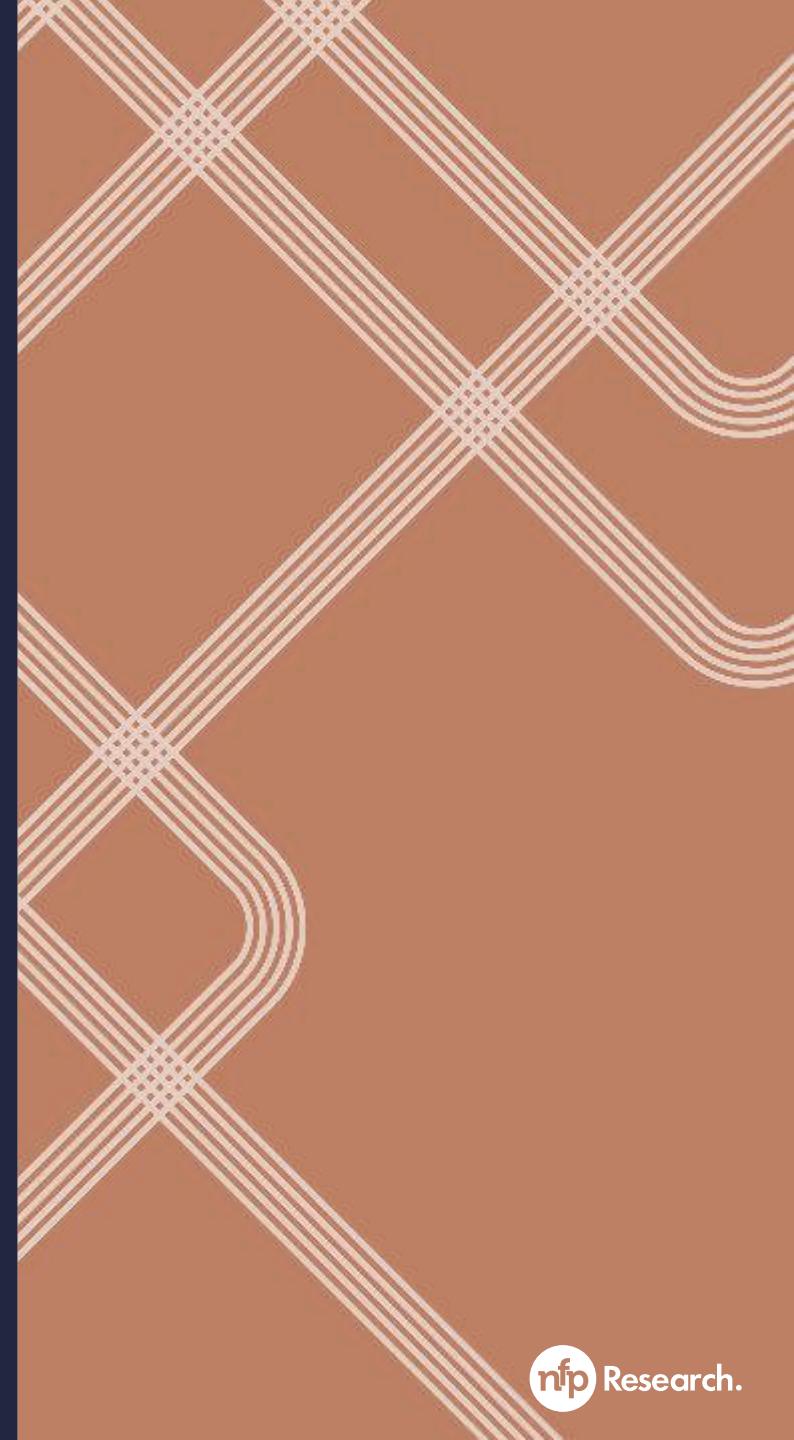
“I think that the other thing that's been really helpful is when a funder has got together a group of charities that they're funding - having that list of action learning sets and sort of reflective time where we learn together. Because most charities work pretty much in silos and facilitating that sort of level of shared learning, I think is really, really helpful. I've often been to those things, and I've gone at the beginning of the day thinking this is going to be such a waste of a day because it's not going to help at all. And at the end of the day, I thought, oh my goodness me, we've got to do more of this because it's that kind of collective wisdom that can help.”

Grantee

What do people want to see from a Funder Plus offering?

Potential areas where applicants would appreciate some additional support:

- IT support
- Networking
- Media and communications i.e., social media strategies
- HR support i.e., recruitment policies
- Advocacy and policy work
- Marketing and sales
- Industry/sector insights
- Strategy and business planning
- Volunteer engagement and management
- Staff training and development
- Trustee support
- Leadership support and management

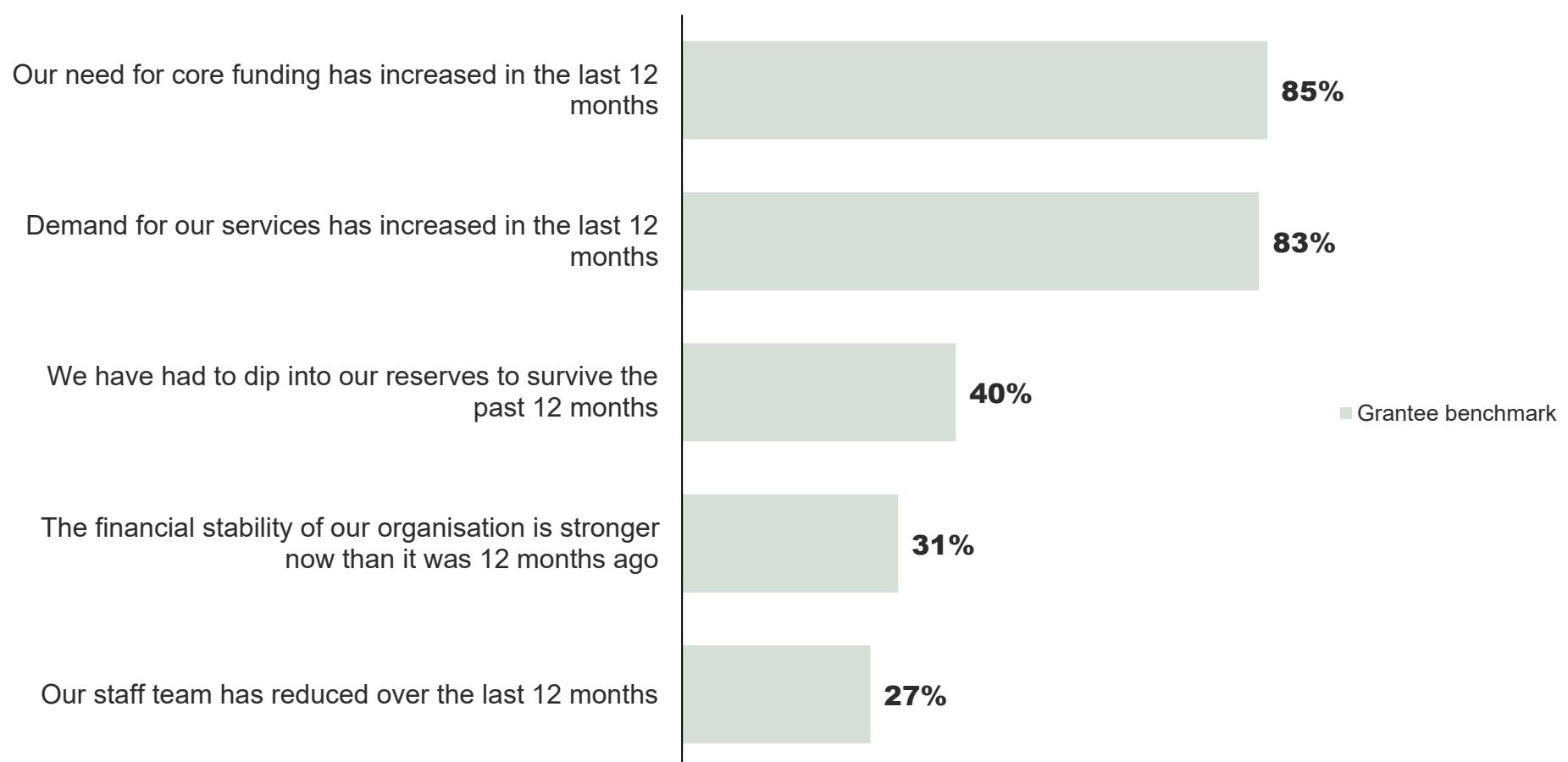


The broader context for grantees and unsuccessful applicants

Organisations are experiencing increases in demand for their services and have a greater need for funding

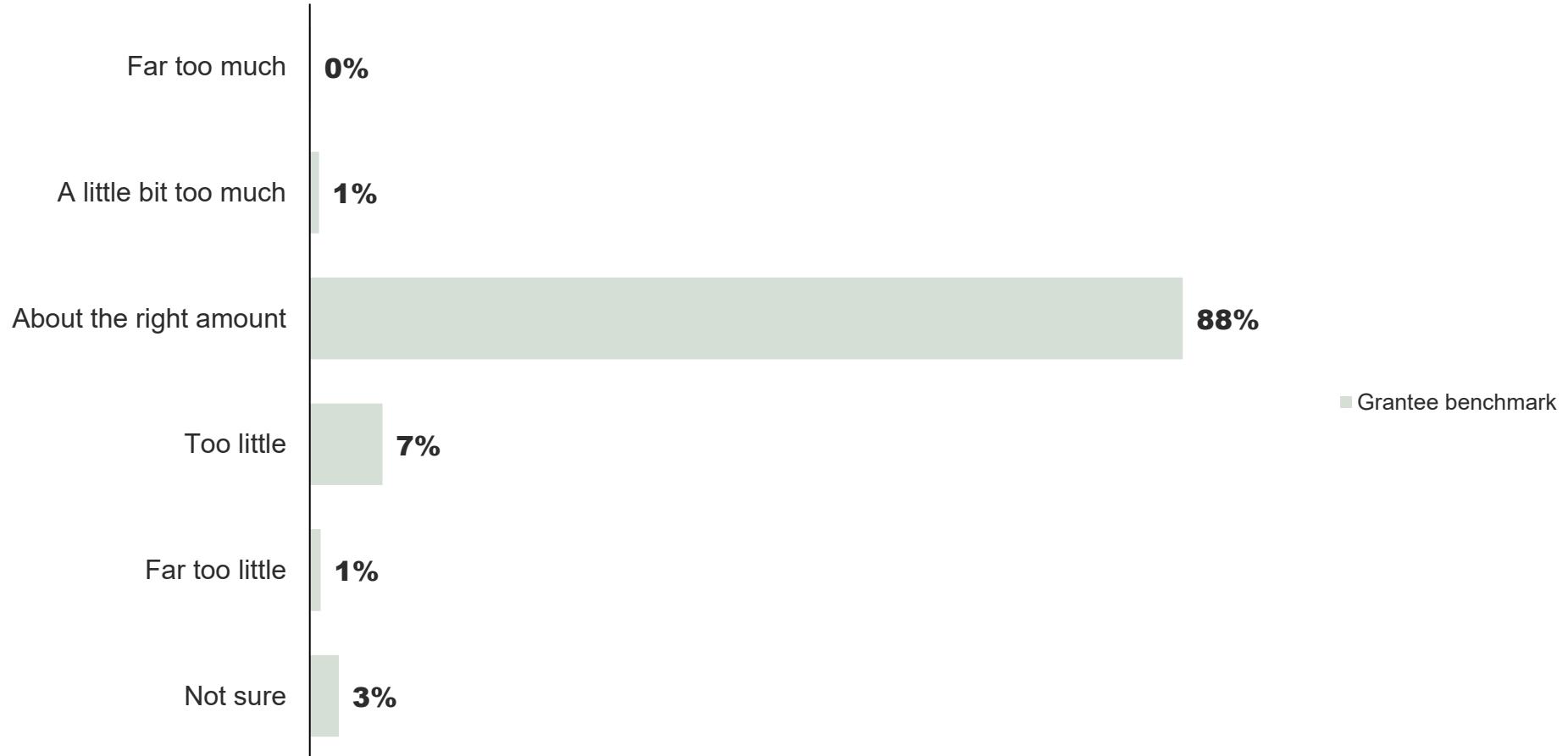
"Funder wants to understand more about the context within which you are operating – what are your priorities and challenges. The next questions ask about your organisation's experiences during the past 12 months. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?"

Strongly agree + agree



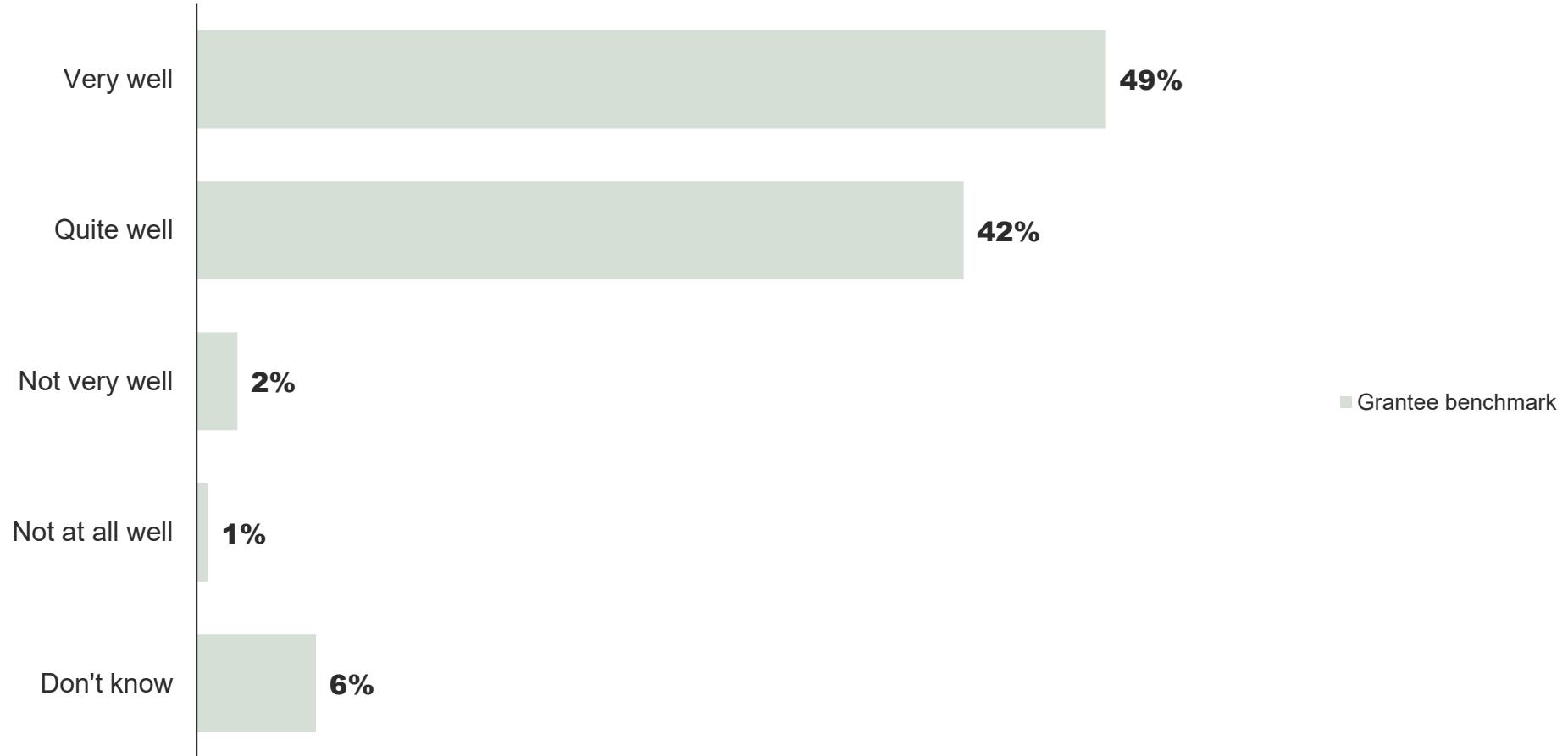
Most grant holders feel they have the right amount of contact with their funders

"As a grantee, how much contact do you have with this funder?"



91% of grantees in nfpFunders benchmark feel well understood by their funder

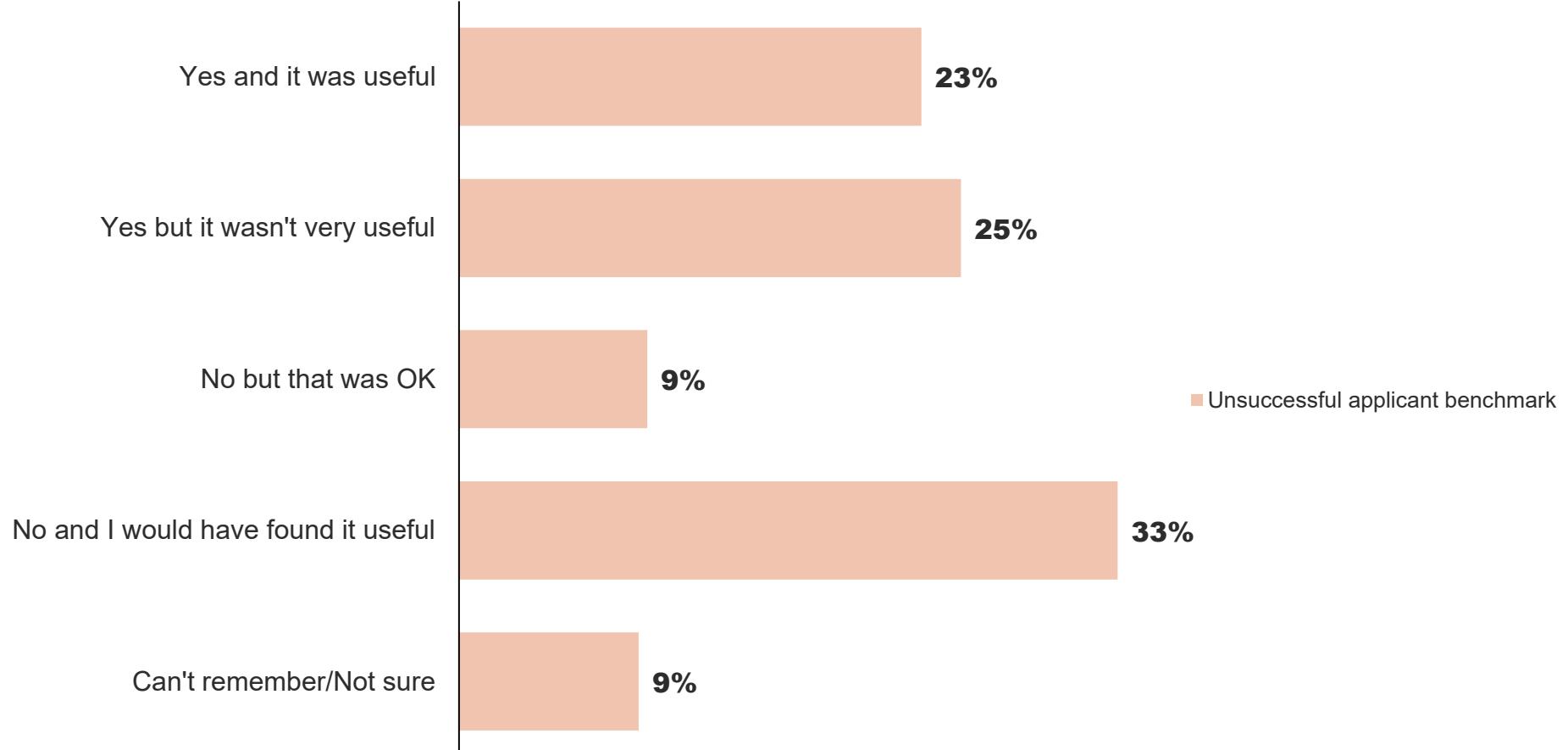
"How well do you feel xxx
understands your
organisation and its aims?"



Source: Applicants Survey 2025 | Base: 0 to 2442 respondents
Filters: Organisation Filter, Year - 2025

42% of unsuccessful applicants have not received any feedback about their application

"Did you receive any feedback on why your proposal was unsuccessful?"



QUESTIONS?



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