Engage Memorial Symposium 2025 – Attendee Survey Summary

(AI GENERATED)

Overview: The Engage Memorial Symposium 2025 received high praise for its planning, quality, and relevance. 34 survey responses were received after the event, highlighting successes in content, inclusivity, and logistics, while offering thoughtful, detailed feedback on how to enhance future events. This AI summary integrates key themes and recommendations to inform ongoing improvements.

What Went Well

✅ Overall Execution and Atmosphere

- "Great event – thank you so much for putting it together!"
- "Looking forward to the next one! Job well done!"
- Many expressed gratitude to the organizers, noting a strong sense of hospitality and care.

✅ Regional Representation and Responsiveness

- Attendees appreciated learning about work from Grenfell and Labrador.
- Funding for regional participation was noted and valued.
- Several mentioned feeling genuinely listened to by organizers.

✅ Creative and Inclusive Touches

- Warm and thoughtful food options (especially for gluten-free needs) made a big impact.
- Interactive sessions like "story time" were a hit.
- Lighthearted moments ("more cats") reflected a welcoming environment.

Opportunities for Growth

⏱️ Time and Scheduling

- Too many concurrent sessions created conflicts and reduced accessibility.
- Attendees recommended limiting overlap and extending the event to two full days.
- Session recordings were requested for post-event access.

📄 Content Balance and Inclusion

- Strong lean toward health-focused content left other disciplines underrepresented.
- Respondents asked for broader disciplinary balance and a clearer definition of public engagement across fields.
- Greater attention to diverse methodologies and publics (beyond community or network models) was encouraged.

💼 Skill-Building and Institutional Culture

- Requests for sessions on impact measurement, communication strategies, P&T navigation, ethics of care, and student engagement.
- Suggestions to include more on public engagement in science, funder perspectives, and community privacy concerns.
- Participants called for greater visibility of how Memorial supports PE work institutionally.

🏘️ Community and Public Involvement

- Feedback emphasized the need to include community partners as speakers, planners, and co-creators.
- More space for meet-and-greet or networking with community voices was requested.
- Several noted a disconnect between the concept of "public engagement" and the actual presence of the public.

♻️ Logistics and Accessibility

- While food was mostly praised, some catering staff were unprepared for allergy questions.
- A recommended accommodations list would help guests unfamiliar with St. John's.

Recommendations for Next Time

1. **Agenda Design**
    - Limit concurrent sessions to 3 or fewer.
    - Extend the event to 2 full days or add optional sessions before/after.
    - Record all sessions and make available to participants.
2. **Disciplinary and Community Representation**
    - Ensure panels and workshops include speakers from all three federal granting councils.
    - Feature faculty and staff from across campuses, not just St. John's.
    - Co-design content with community members and ensure diverse public voices are centered.
3. **Skill-Building and Professional Development**

    - Offer dedicated sessions on: impact measurement, communications, ethics of care, tenure & promotion.
    - Include cross-sector workshops with funders, students, and faculty.
4. **Logistics and Accessibility**
    - Brief catering partners on allergy protocols.
    - Provide travel/accommodation tips for regional guests.
    - Continue offering funding support for participants from Grenfell and Labrador.
5. **Institutional Integration**
    - Feature how public engagement connects to Memorial's strategy, P&T, and student learning.
    - Highlight existing OPE supports and expand awareness.

With thoughtful adjustments and continued commitment to inclusion and responsiveness, future symposia can deepen their impact and broaden their reach even further.