ACIL ALLEN CONSULTING

REPORT TO
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
26 MAY 2015

INTERIM REPORT

STAGE 2
EVALUATION OF THE NEW COLOMBO PLAN PILOT PROGRAMS

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KEY POINTS

Purpose

This report provides the interim results for ACIL Allen's independent evaluation of the New Colombo Plan's (NCP) Mobility and Scholarship Pilot Programs – Stage 2. It delivers findings from a survey of approximately 280 Mobility students and 13 Scholarship students that have undertaken their NCP experience and returned to Australia.

The results presented in this report focus specifically on the experiences of NCP grant holders while at one of the host locations.

The full results for Stage 2 are planned for delivery to the Department of Education and Training (Education) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in September 2015.

Headline results

Overall results

Overall, respondents to the survey reported a high level of satisfaction with the Mobility and Scholarship Pilot Programs. For example, more than 98 per cent of all survey respondents identified that they would recommend the programs to other students. A similarly high proportion of respondents identified that they had a rewarding program experience and are more knowledgeable about the Indo-Pacific region as a result of the pilot programs.

Mobility Pilot Program

For the Mobility Pilot Program, survey results indicated that:

— 67 per cent of respondents received some language or cultural training; more than 50 per cent of respondents found the training either 'very helpful' or 'helpful'.

— University faculties provided the primary source of information about NCP (i.e. this is where students first learned about NCP).

— More than 80 per cent of respondents either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the Mobility Pilot Program was well managed.

— 88 per cent of respondents thought the funding and support they received from the Mobility Pilot Program was reasonable/adequate.

— A high proportion (85 per cent) of respondents reported that attendance of cultural events were 'very valuable' or 'valuable' aspects of their Mobility experience.

— Attendance at business events and trade fairs was identified as the least 'valuable' experience.

— Cultural awareness relating to respondents' *study* (which includes internships/mentorships) and *social experiences* were identified as the primary benefit of the Mobility Pilot Program. Other important

benefits included: improved language skills (social and study); development of new friendships; and improved study/research skills.

— Respondents identified language as the most significant challenge facing Mobility students. Approximately 33 per cent of respondents (most of whom visited Japan) identified this challenge as 'very large' or 'large'.

Scholarship Pilot Program

For the Scholarship Pilot Program, survey results indicated that:

— 54 per cent of respondents received some form of language and/or cultural training which was mostly delivered by Australian universities. All of these respondents found the language training either 'very helpful' or 'somewhat helpful', while 60 per cent found their cultural training either 'very helpful' or 'somewhat helpful'.

— University international offices were the most important source of information about the Scholarship Pilot Program for 38 per cent of respondents. Students do not appear to be gaining this information from government websites or Universities Australia.

— All respondents from the Scholarship Pilot Program were satisfied with the Case Manager and the Case Manager's ability to resolve critical incidents when they arose.

— All respondents from the Scholarship Pilot Program identified that the funding they received was reasonable/adequate.

— Respondents experienced strong personal development as a result of their participation in the Pilot Program. All respondents reported that they were more:
  – Enthusiastic about travelling in and engaging with the region as a result of the Scholarship experience.
  – Willing to tackle challenging situations as a result of the Scholarship experience.
  – Willing to seek out new experiences and try new things as a result of the Scholarship experience.

— The most significant challenges facing program participants were arranging an Internship/Mentorship (with 54 per cent finding that this challenge was either 'very large' or 'large') and understanding the processes of the host university or organisation (with 45 per cent finding that this challenge was either 'very large' or 'large').

Implications and future considerations

Overall the survey results indicated a positive response to the pilot by Mobility and Scholarship students. These results will be further tested and augmented with data gathered from upcoming host location surveys and Case Manager interviews.

In the interim, any decisions regarding future rounds should consider whether:

— The challenges facing students who are seeking to undertake Internships or Mentorships are being addressed through NCP practices and processes. Respondent feedback suggests that some students require additional support from their universities and case managers to help them identify and then confirm Internship and Mentorship opportunities. There seems to be a clear case for providing the Case Manager with additional support or incentives to better assist students with this aspect of the NCP.

— There is benefit in helping Australian universities better prepare/inform their students about host university processes. A significant proportion of respondents (45 per cent of Mobility students) specifically identified that the challenges presented by host location university processes were not overcome during their in-country experience.

— The language and cultural training support provided to students adequately supports their needs while in-country. For example, 34 per cent of respondents from the Mobility Pilot Program reported that they 'did not' overcome or only 'partially overcame' the challenges presented by speaking a foreign language. Further analysis to understand which institutions are delivering high quality language and cultural training (and what the training entails) may be needed. Any lessons identified from this analysis could then be shared with the sector as best practice.

— The current NCP website is an ineffective information/communication channel for prospective students. Survey results suggest that less than 5 per cent of all respondents learnt about NCP through Government websites as opposed to other communication channels – such as those provided by universities at the faculty level. The NCP website could be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of its language and terms and to ensure search tag optimisation is achieved.

C O N T E N T S

FIGURES

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1

PROGRESS TO DATE

1.1 Introduction

In 2014 ACIL Allen Consulting (ACIL Allen) was engaged by the former Department of Education (now the Department of Education and Training (Education)) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to undertake an independent evaluation of the New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship and Mobility pilot programs. The evaluation is to occur over three stages that follow the implementation of NCP and the experiences of key stakeholders (notably students, universities, and host locations) who participate in the pilot programs. These stages are:

— Stage 1 – Analysis of the nomination / application (Scholarship) and application (Mobility) processes used by Government and universities for 2014. This stage was completed in October 2014.

— Stage 2 – Analysis of the student experience. This stage commenced in November 2014 and will be completed in September 2015.

— Stage 3 – Analysis of pilot program outcomes / achievements. This stage is planned to commence in 2016.

This document provides an update on the activities and outputs of Stage 2 since its commencement in November 2014. It includes the interim results from the Mobility and Scholarship surveys of students administered by ACIL Allen during this period.

It is important to note that the findings provided in this report are partial at this stage. Only 60 per cent of students from the Mobility and Scholarship pilot programs have completed their projects so the sample of students is limited.

More detailed analysis will be provided in the Draft Report to Education scheduled for September 2015. The report will draw on evidence collected through the activities outlined in section 1.3 below.

1.2 Activities completed

The following evaluation activities have been undertaken by ACIL Allen since November 2014:

— Stage 1 reporting of results to the former Department of Education and DFAT.

— Stage 2 planning and refinement of evaluation questions, evaluation tools and timelines.

— Regular updates provided to Education's Project Management team via email, teleconference and progress reports. A significant project progress report delivered to DFAT and Education in late-February 2015.

— Adoption of a new survey tool (Web Survey Creator) to address concerns raised by Education about respondent privacy. Several survey instruments were trialled by ACIL Allen before selection and implementation of the current survey tool.

— Development and finalisation of the Mobility survey following feedback from Education and DFAT.

— Distribution of the Mobility survey to the 1st cohort of students in late-2014, including several reminders and follow up emails to encourage participation. Examination of these results for the progress meeting in late-February 2015.

— Distribution of the Mobility survey to the 2nd cohort of students in April 2015. The results from the second cohort of students examined and presented in this report.

— Development and finalisation of the Scholarship survey developed following feedback from Education and DFAT. The survey was distributed to students on an individual basis – i.e. following each student's return – and the results were examined for the progress meeting in late-February 2015 and this report.

— Development of a draft host location survey developed by ACIL Allen. Education and DFAT have provided feedback on this draft.

1.3　Planned activities

The following activities are planned for June, July, August and September 2015:

— Finalisation of the host location survey and its distribution to project level contacts at host institutions. Consultations with a selection of host location contacts, which are planned for June 2015, will be used to shape the final survey questions.

— Ongoing administration of Scholarship Pilot Program survey.

— Administration of Mobility Pilot Program survey (3rd cohort) during July-August 2015.

— Consultation with the Case Manager during June 2015.

— Consultation with a small selection of university NCP contact officers. The selection of universities will occur in consultation with Education and DFAT and seek to explore key issues associated with NCP's delivery.

— Consultation with a sample of students who have completed their NCP in-country experience. Three on-campus workshops have been planned for this stage of the evaluation.

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MOBILITY: INTERIM SURVEY RESULTS

2

2.1 Survey administration

2.1.1   1st cohort

The survey was distributed to the 1st cohort of approximately 300 participants in November 2014.

Participants were provided with a two week response window. This was extended by a week to capture additional responses. Four reminders were sent by ACIL Allen during the survey window and Education provided follow up/reminder emails to university NCP contact officers.

The final response rate was 34 per cent, with 22 universities represented in the responses. Respondents were fairly evenly spread across the universities.

All host locations were represented in the responses with 12 from Hong Kong SAR, 25 from Indonesia, 47 from Japan, and 24 from Singapore.

2.1.2   2nd cohort

The survey was distributed to the 2nd cohort of approximately 420 participants in March 2015.

Participants were provided a two week response window. This was extended by 1.5 weeks to help capture additional responses. Five reminders were sent by ACIL Allen during the survey window and Education provided follow up/reminder emails to university NCP contact officers to further stimulate responses.

The final response rate was 41 per cent, with 31 universities represented in the responses.

All host locations were represented in the responses with 6 from Hong Kong SAR, 106 from Indonesia, 33 from Japan and 28 from Singapore.
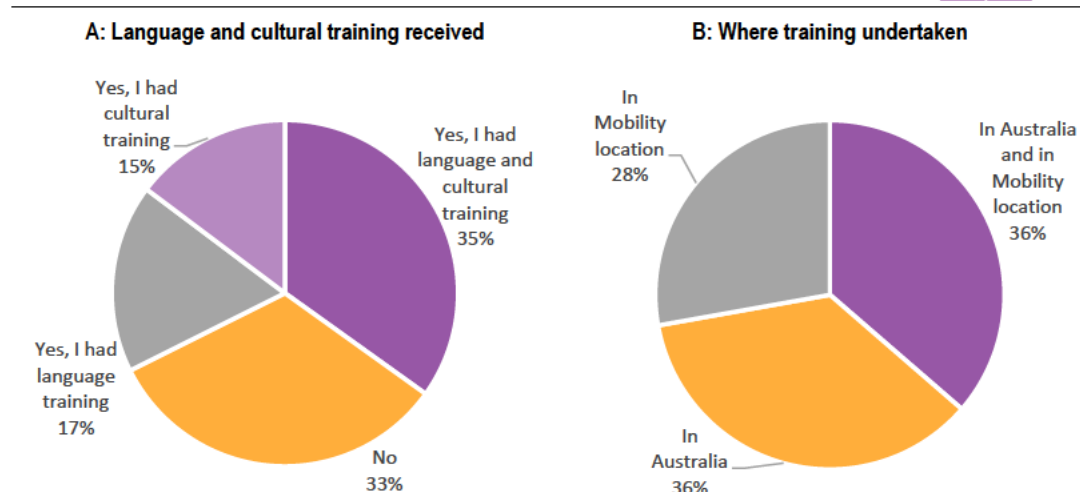
2.2 Headline results

The combined results for cohorts 1 and 2 are provided in the sections below.

2.2.1 Language and cultural training

Survey respondents were asked to identify whether they received any cultural and or language training for their Mobility projects. They were also asked to identify where (i.e. in which location) the training had taken place.

The results which relate to language and cultural training are depicted in Figure 2.1 and the key points from these results are discussed below.

FIGURE 2.1 – **LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL TRAINING RECEIVED AND WHERE UNDERTAKEN**

A: Language and cultural training received

- Yes, I had cultural training 15%
- Yes, I had language and cultural training 35%
- Yes, I had language training 17%
- No 33%

B: Where training undertaken

- In Mobility location 28%
- In Australia and in Mobility location 36%
- In Australia 36%

Note: 1. nA = 278; nB = 187. 2. *Question A: 14. Did you undertake any language and/or cultural training to assist your Mobility Project? Question B: 15. Where was this training undertaken?*
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.1 (A):

— 67 per cent of respondents received some form of language and or cultural training.

— 17 per cent of respondents received language training only.

— 15 per cent of respondents received cultural training only.

Key points for Figure 2.1 (B):

— 36 per cent of respondents received this training in Australia; six of the universities involved (i.e. Curtin University, Deakin University, Queensland University of Technology, University of New South Wales, University of Wollongong and Victoria University) were noteworthy because they provided all of the students who responded to these surveys with language and/or cultural training.

— 28 per cent received the training in the host location; 56 per cent found the cultural training 'very helpful'; and 53 per cent found the language training 'somewhat helpful' (not pictured).

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2.2.2   Publicity of the Mobility Pilot Program

Survey respondents were asked to consider aspects relating to the publicity of NCP's Mobility Pilot Program. In particular, respondents were asked to identify how they first came to learn about the Mobility Pilot Program.

Figure 2.2 identifies that universities are the primary source of information about NCP. This finding is consistent with findings from Stage 1 of the Evaluation, which suggested that universities were the primary sources of information about the NCP.

FIGURE 2.2 – **SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM**
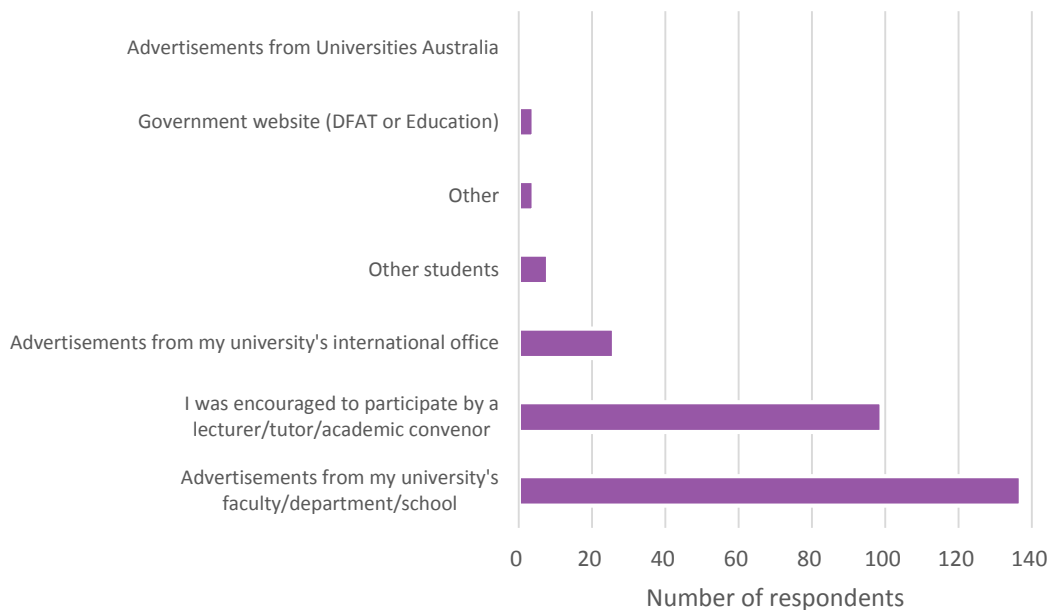
Note: 1. n = 278. 2. *Question: 23. How did you first learn about the New Colombo Plan Mobility Program?*
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.2:

— Advertisements from university faculties, departments and schools were identified as the primary source of information about the Mobility Program.

— Lecturers, tutors and academic convenors were also a significant source of information for prospective Mobility Pilot Program participants.

— Advertisements from Universities Australia were not identified as a source where students learnt about the Mobility Pilot Program.

— Results suggest that 'other students' and the Government website were not significant sources of information about the Mobility Pilot Program.

2.2.3   Program administration

Survey respondents were asked to provide feedback on the administrative arrangements used by their home universities for the Mobility Pilot Program. The results suggest there is an overall level of satisfaction amongst students with the administrative arrangements underpinning NCP (see Figure 2.3).

FIGURE 2.3 – **ADMINISTRATION OF THE MOBILITY PROJECT BY HOME UNIVERSITY**
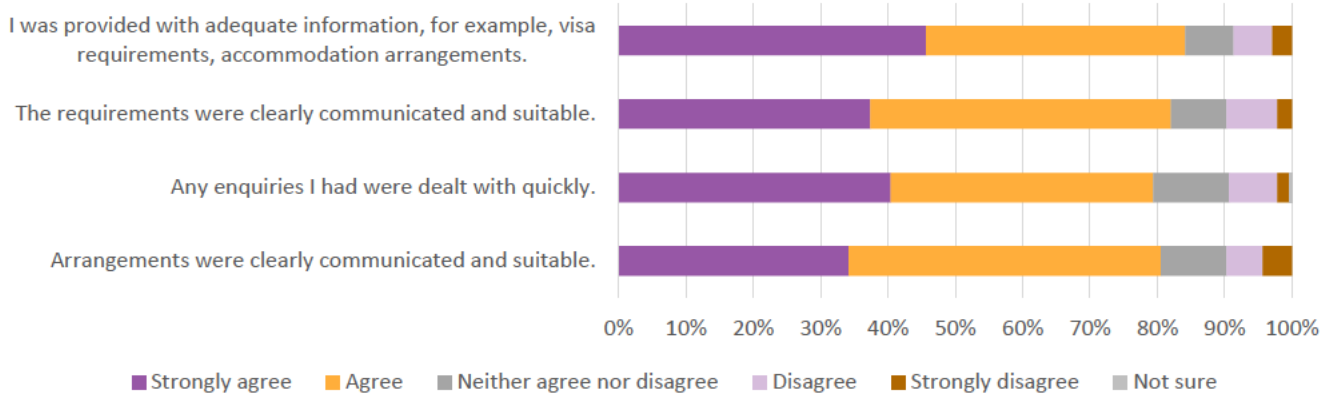
Note: 1. n = 277-278. 2. Question: 24. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the administration of your Mobility Project by your home university?
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY
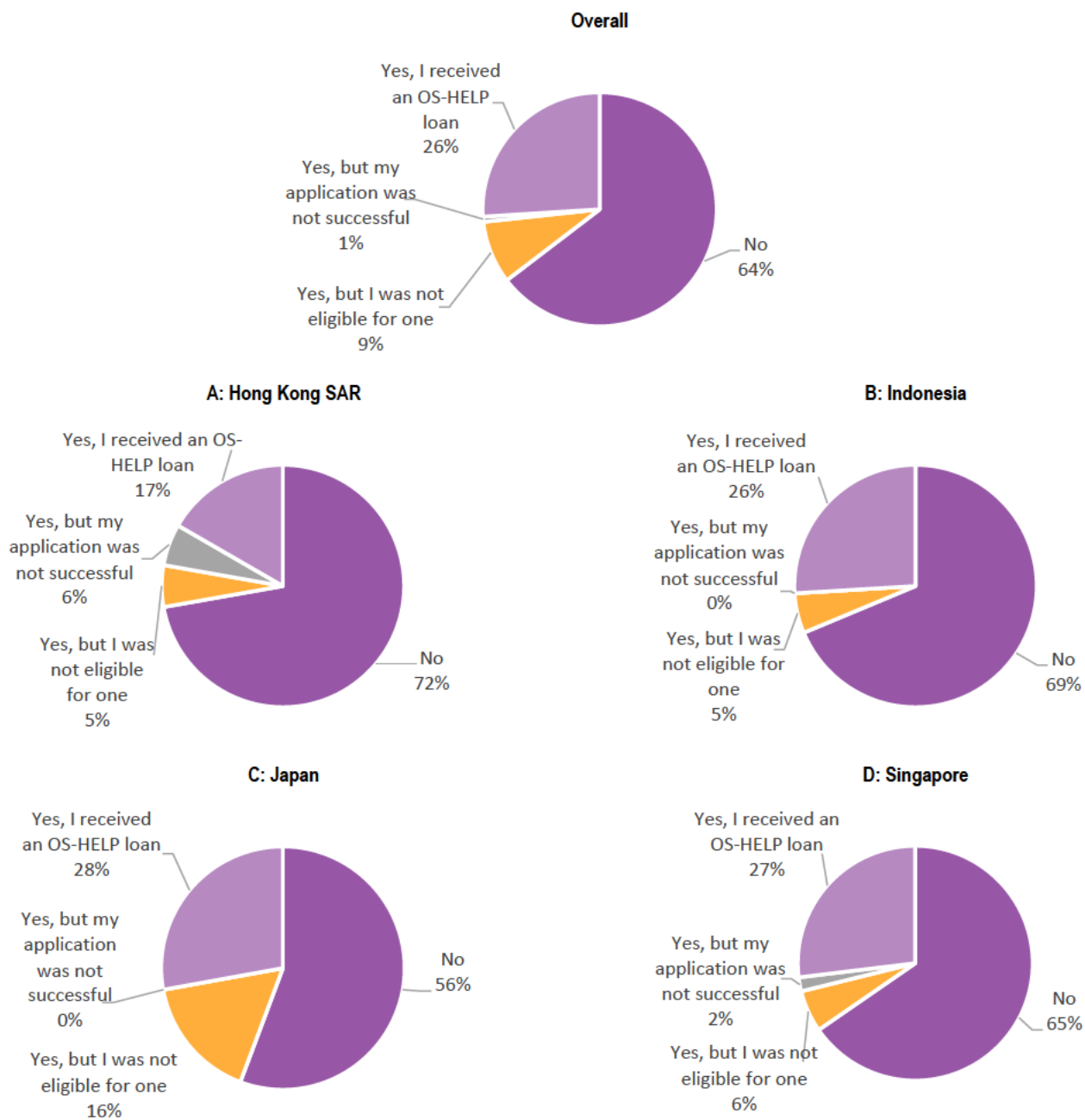
Key points for Figure 2.3:

—   Respondents provided positive feedback about the administration of their Mobility experience by home universities. More than 80 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Mobility Pilot Program's administration was well managed.

—   Results suggest that program requirements and information were communicated adequately. The results also show that issues/enquiries raised by students were, for the most part, dealt with quickly by their home institutions.

2.2.4   Funding

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the adequacy of funding provided by a Mobility Pilot Program project grant. Respondents were also asked to identify whether they had applied for and received an OS-HELP loan to support their NCP project experience.

The results from this feedback are provided in Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5 below.

FIGURE 2.4 – **FUNDING: OS-HELP**

Overall

Yes, I received an OS-HELP loan 26%

Yes, but my application was not successful 1%

Yes, but I was not eligible for one 9%

No 64%

A: Hong Kong SAR

Yes, I received an OS-HELP loan 17%

Yes, but my application was not successful 6%

Yes, but I was not eligible for one 5%

No 72%

B: Indonesia

Yes, I received an OS-HELP loan 26%

Yes, but my application was not successful 0%

Yes, but I was not eligible for one 5%

No 69%

C: Japan

Yes, I received an OS-HELP loan 28%

Yes, but my application was not successful 0%

Yes, but I was not eligible for one 16%

No 56%

D: Singapore

Yes, I received an OS-HELP loan 27%

Yes, but my application was not successful 2%
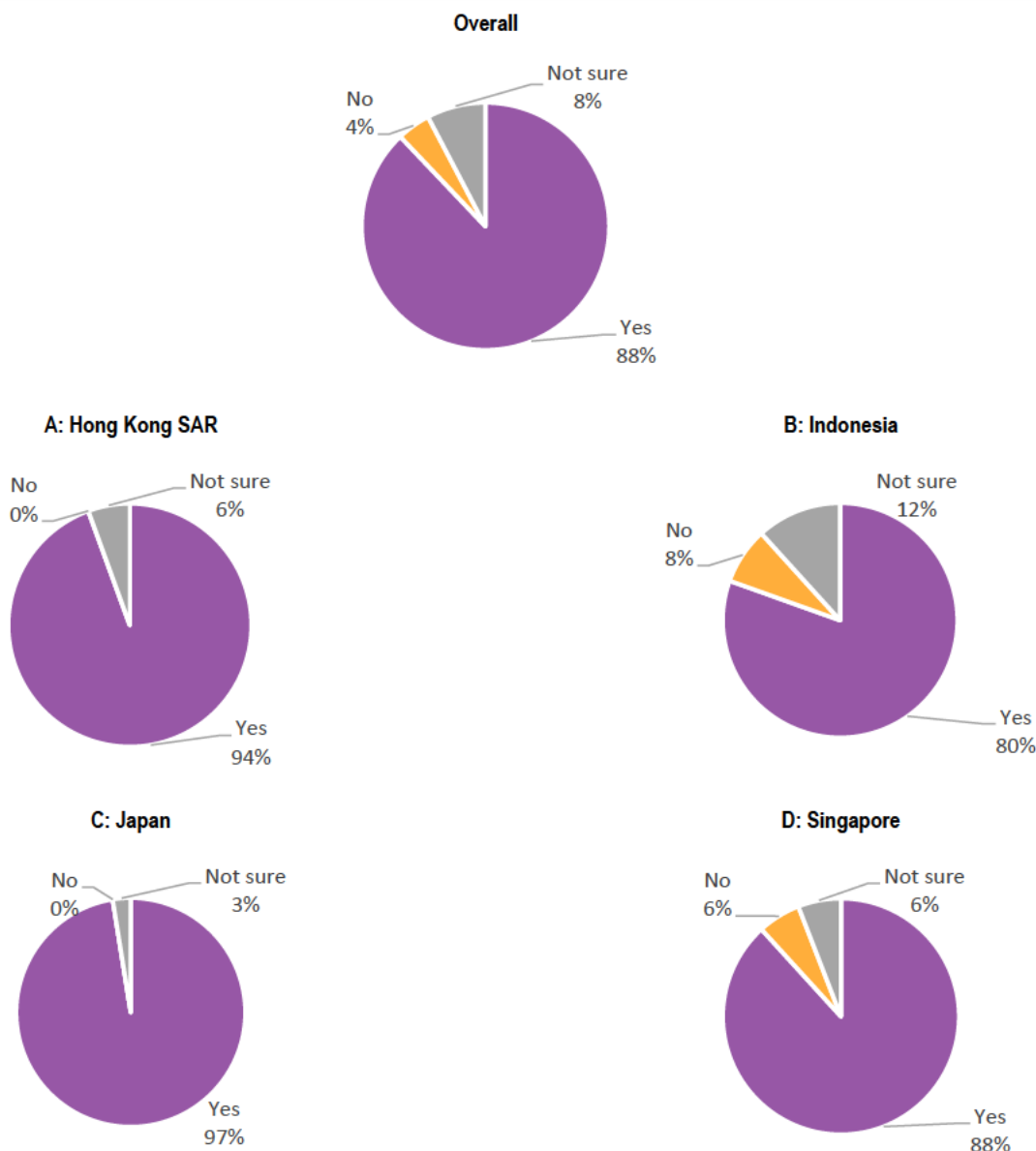
Yes, but I was not eligible for one 6%

No 65%

Note: 1. n = 277; nA = 18; nB = 131; nC = 79; nD = 52. 2. *Question: 25. Did you apply (or consider applying) for an OS-HELP loan to help you undertake your Mobility Project?*
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.4:

— 26 per cent of respondents received an OS-HELP loan to undertake their Mobility Pilot Program. This comprised:

  – 17 per cent of respondents who visited Hong Kong SAR.
  – 26 per cent of respondents who visited Indonesia.
  – 28 per cent of respondents who visited Japan.
  – 27 per cent of respondents who visited Singapore.

— A significant proportion (64 per cent) of respondents did not apply for an OS-HELP loan at all.

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FIGURE 2.5 – **FUNDING: ADEQUACY OF MOBILITY GRANT**

Overall

No
4%

Not sure
8%

Yes
88%

A: Hong Kong SAR

No
0%

Not sure
6%

Yes
94%

B: Indonesia

Not sure
12%

No
8%

Yes
80%

C: Japan

No
0%

Not sure
3%

Yes
97%

D: Singapore

No
6%

Not sure
6%

Yes
88%

Note: 1. n = 273; nA = 18; nB = 128; nC = 79; nD = 51. 2. *Question: 26. The Mobility grant and OS-HELP are meant to subsidise (not necessarily cover in full) your participation in the Mobility Project. In light of this, was the Mobility funding you received reasonable?*

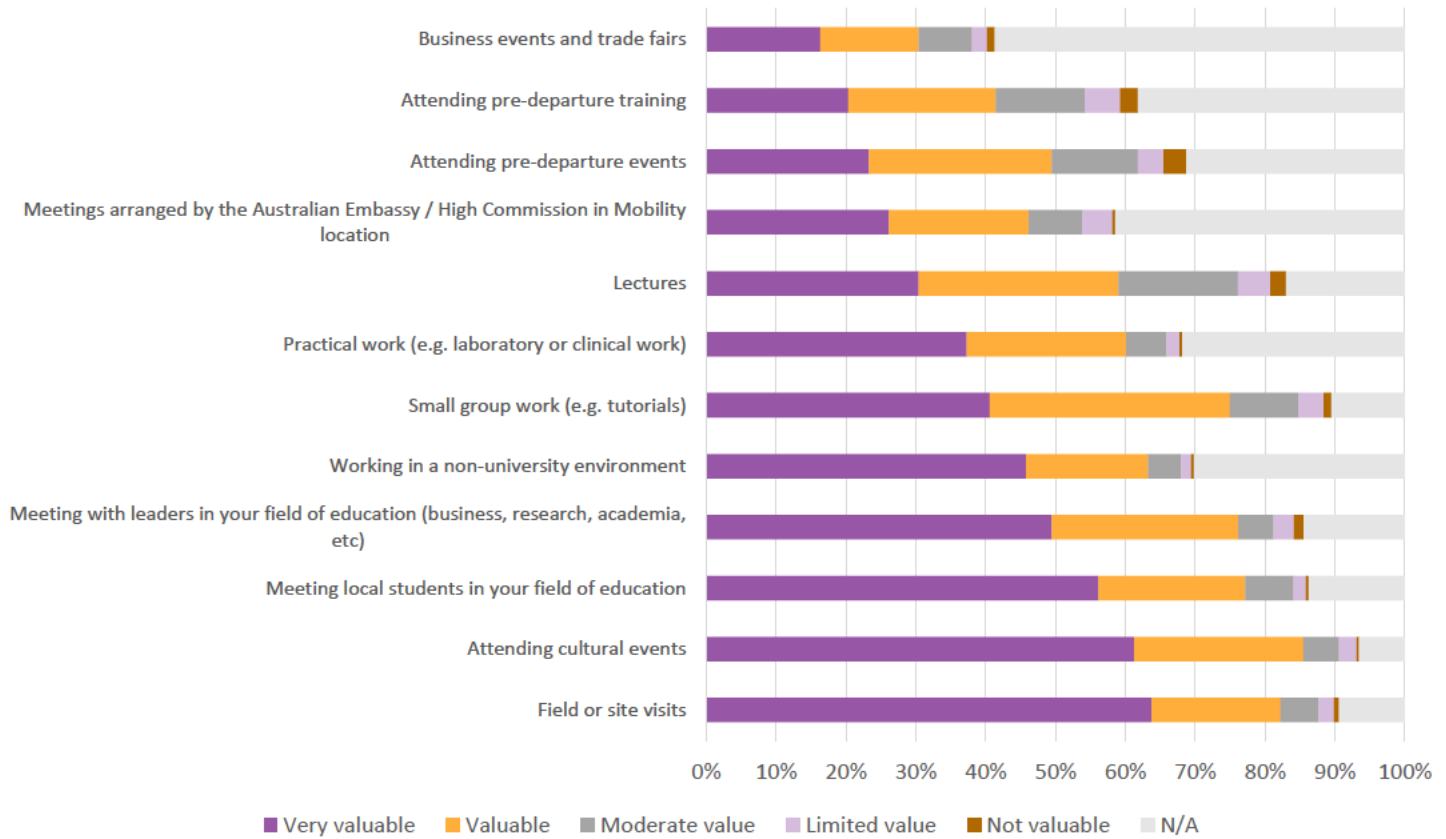*SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 2.5:

— 88 per cent of respondents thought the funding and support they received from the Mobility Pilot Program was reasonable/adequate. This comprises:

  – 94 per cent of respondents who visited Hong Kong SAR.
  – 80 per cent of respondents who visited Indonesia.
  – 97 per cent of respondents who visited Japan.
  – 88 per cent of respondents who visited Singapore.

— Respondents provided positive feedback about the adequacy of Mobility Pilot Program funding. The feedback is in contrast to feedback provided by some university NCP contact officers during Stage 1 of the evaluation. A selection of NCP contact officers identified that Japan's higher living costs were a potential a barrier to student participation in the Mobility Pilot Program, however survey results suggest that this is not the case.

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2.2.5   Experiences

The survey asked respondents to place a qualitative value on the different types of activities or experiences they had prior to and during the Mobility Pilot Program project. The results from respondents are provided in Figure 2.6 and broken down by host location in Figure 2.7 and Figure 2.8. The key points from these results are also provided below.

FIGURE 2.6 – **VALUE OF DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES**

Note: 1. n = 275-276. 2. Question: 27. Your Mobility Project should have provided you with different academic, professional and social experiences. Please indicate how valuable you found each of the following experiences.
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.6:

— A high proportion (85 per cent) of respondents reported that attendance at cultural events was a 'very valuable' or 'valuable' aspect of their Mobility experience. 'Site/field visits' and 'meeting with leaders in your field of education' were identified by respondents as being the next most 'valuable' aspect.

— Approximately 41 per cent of respondents attended business events and trade fairs during their Mobility experience. Attendance at these events was identified as the least valuable experience.

  – However, approximately 75 per cent of respondents who attended business events and trade fairs found them to be 'valuable' or 'very valuable' experiences.

— Approximately 62 per cent of respondents attended pre-departure training for their Mobility program. Results suggest that approximately two thirds of these recipients found pre-departure training 'very valuable' or 'valuable'.
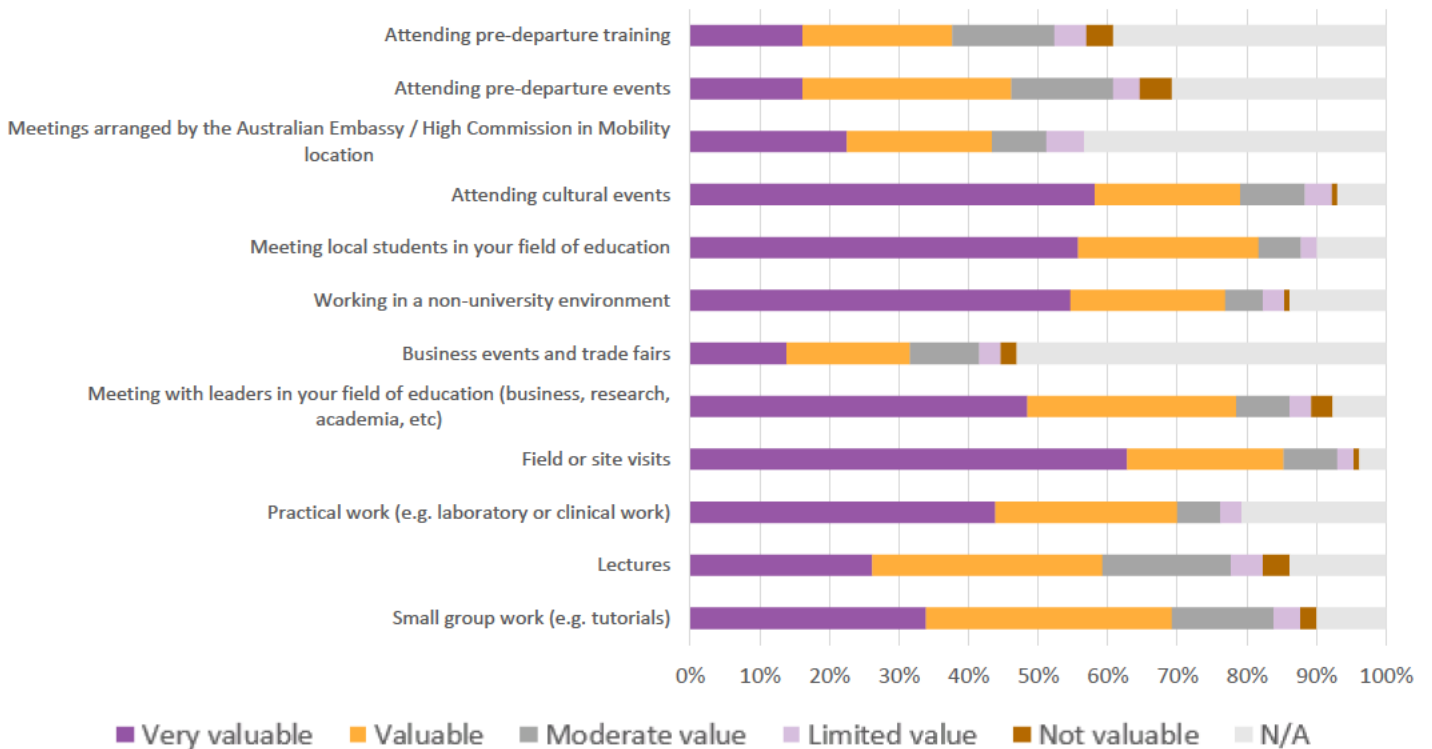
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FIGURE 2.7 – **VALUE OF DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES BY HOST LOCATION (HONG KONG SAR AND INDONESIA)**

A: Hong Kong SAR

B: Indonesia
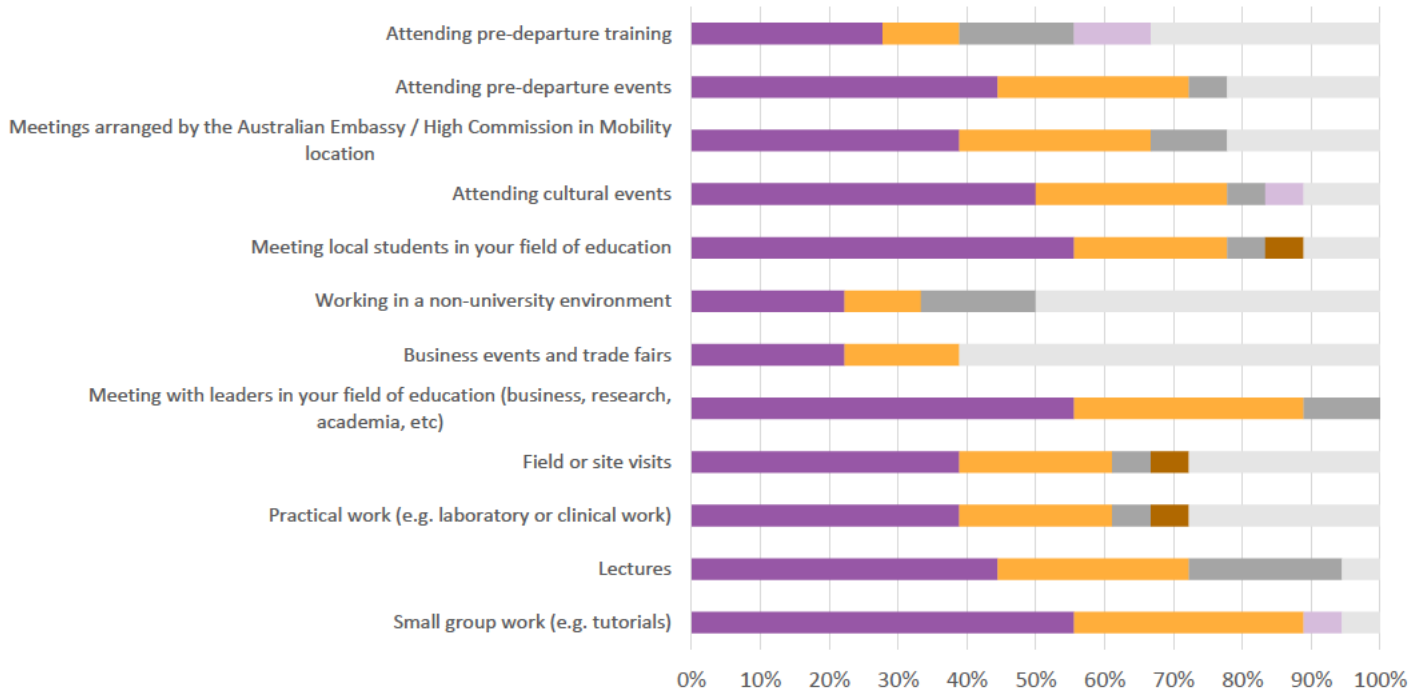
■ Very valuable ■ Valuable ■ Moderate value ■ Limited value ■ Not valuable ■ N/A
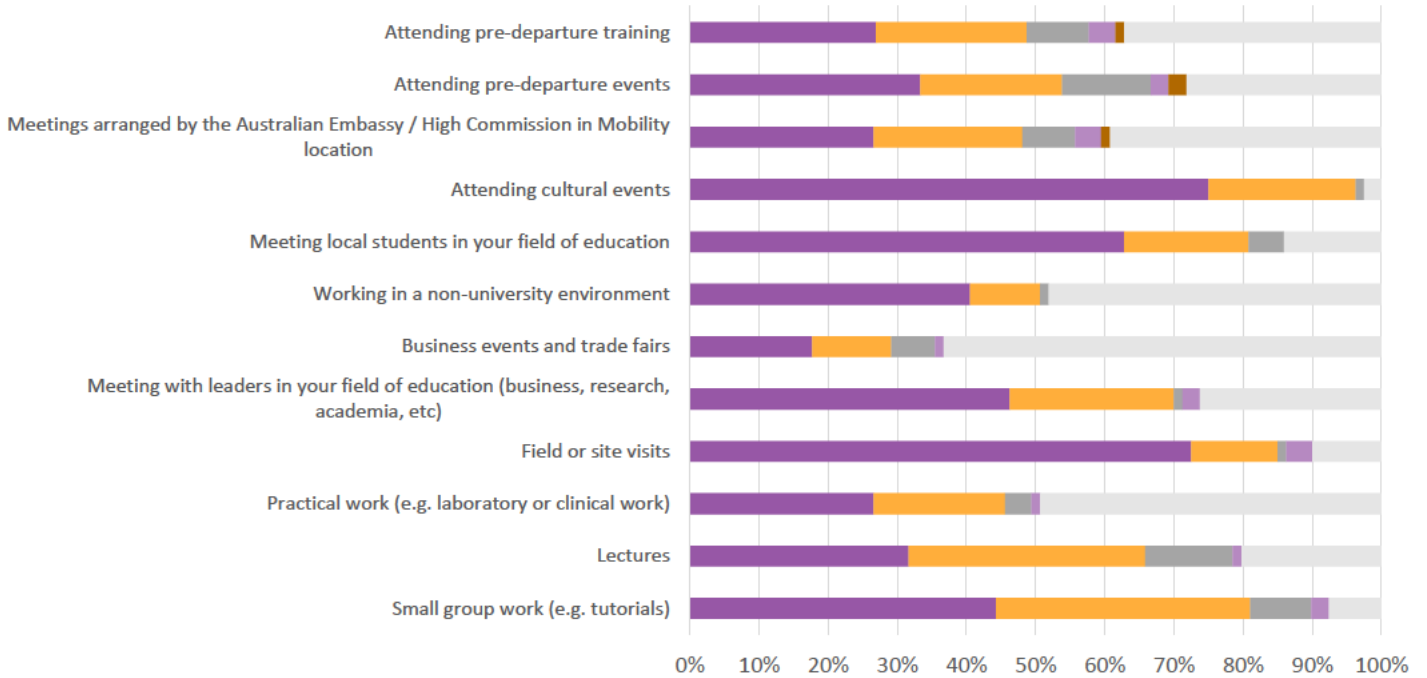
Note: 1. nA = 18; nB = 129-131. 2. *Question: 27. Your Mobility Project should have provided you with different academic, professional and social experiences. Please indicate how valuable you found each of the following experiences.*
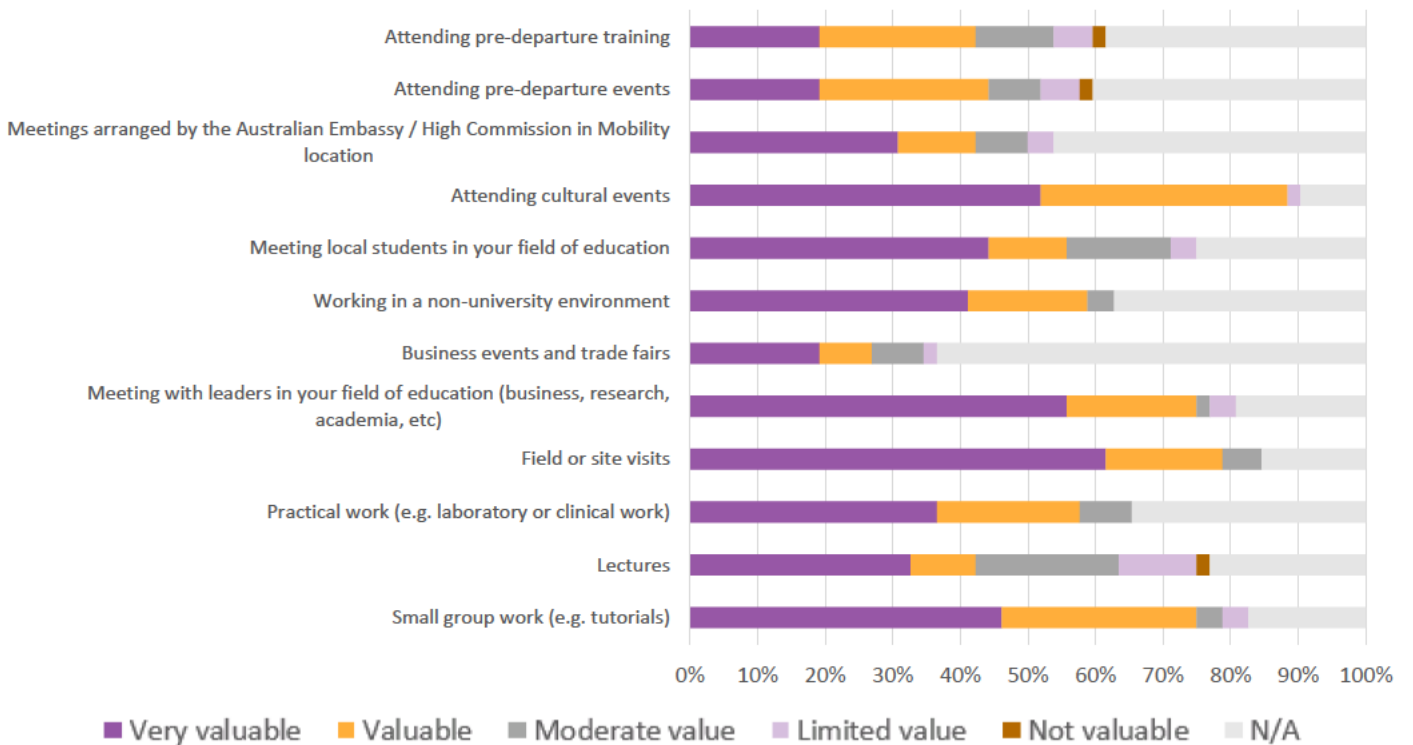*SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

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FIGURE 2.8 – **VALUE OF DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES BY HOST LOCATION (JAPAN AND SINGAPORE)**

C: Japan

D: Singapore

Legend: ■ Very valuable ■ Valuable ■ Moderate value ■ Limited value ■ Not valuable ■ N/A

Note: 1. nC = 78-80; nD = 51-52. 2. *Question: 27. Your Mobility Project should have provided you with different academic, professional and social experiences. Please indicate how valuable you found each of the following experiences.*
SOURCE: *MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

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Key points for Figure 2.7 and Figure 2.8:

— There is some variation in the value students attached to these experiences. For the respondents who visited:

  – Hong Kong SAR: meetings with academic leaders and business, and small group work were identified as the most valuable experiences.
  – Indonesia: field and site visits, meetings with local students and attendance at cultural events were identified as the most valuable experiences.
  – Japan: attendance at cultural events and site visits were identified as the most valuable experiences.
  – Singapore: attendance at cultural events, followed by site/field visits, meeting local students and meeting leaders in their field of education were identified as the most valuable experiences.

— Business events and trade fairs were identified as the least valuable experiences across all of the host locations.
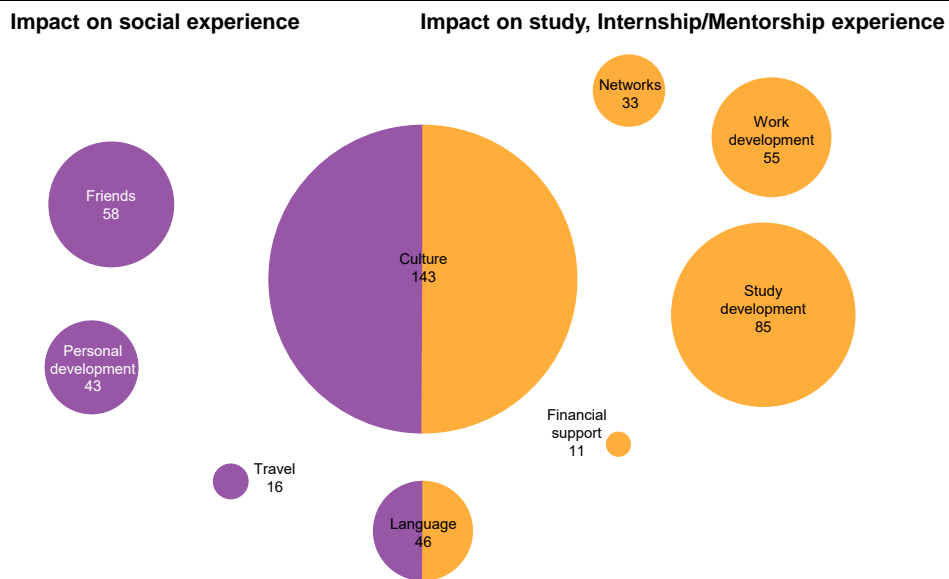
2.2.6   Benefits

Students were asked to identify the benefits they gained from participation in the Mobility Pilot Program. Students were provided with an opportunity to identify up to three key benefits of NCP using free form text boxes. The benefits identified by respondents fall into two dominant categories:

— Benefits to study – which has some linkages to a respondent's professional experiences.
— Benefits related to social experiences.

These benefits have been depicted in Figure 2.9 and broken down by host location in Figure 2.10.

FIGURE 2.9 – **FREQUENCY OF BENEFITS: IMPACT ON STUDY AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCE**
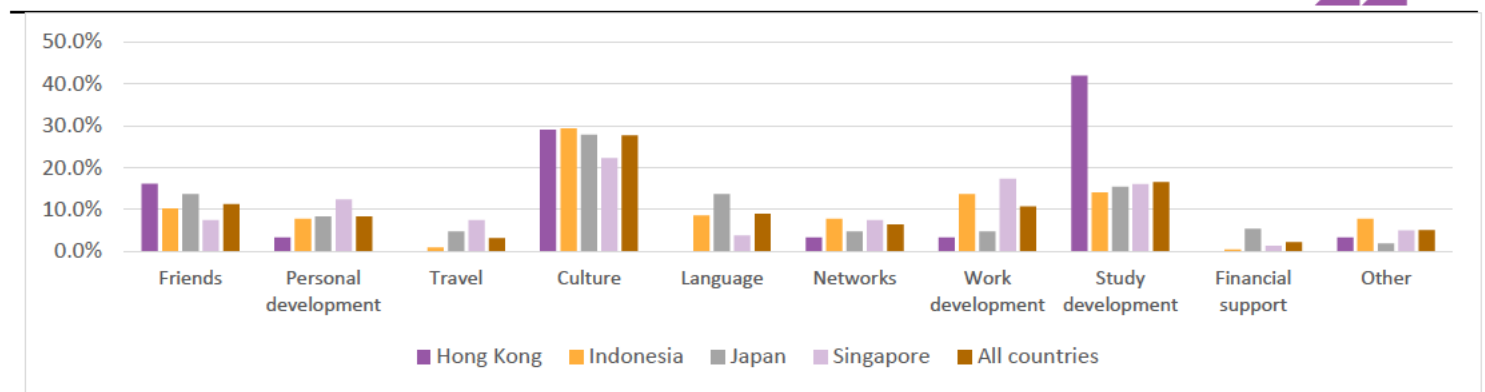

Note: 1. n = 516. 2. *Question: 30. You may have experienced some key benefits during your Mobility Project. Please briefly identify up to three benefits from your experience.* 3. Benefits noted by survey respondents are categorised into key benefit groups, e.g. benefits related to culture, making friends, study development, etc. The frequency of the benefits is reported alongside each benefit group. The key benefit groups have been allocated by ACIL Allen as to whether they would predominantly affect the social experience of the Mobility student (purple) or the study, Internship/Mentorship experience of the Mobility student (orange).
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.9:

— Survey results show that cultural awareness relating to respondents' *study* (which includes internships/mentorships) and *social experiences* were identified as the primary benefit of NCP.
— Other important benefits include: improved language skills (social and study); development of new friendships; enhanced work development and improved study development.

FIGURE 2.10 – **BENEFITS BY HOST LOCATION**

Note: 1. n = 516; Hong Kong n = 31; Indonesia n = 235; Japan n = 169; Singapore n = 81. 2. *Question: 30. You may have experienced some key benefits during your Mobility Project. Please briefly identify up to three benefits from your experience.*

SOURCE: *MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 2.10:

— Respondents who visited Hong Kong felt that the study or education component of their program was the most significant benefit of their Mobility experience. Respondents who visited Indonesia, Japan and Singapore identified cultural development and learning as the most significant benefit generated from their Mobility experience.

— Respondents identified that travel, financial support, improved language skills and professional network development were lower order benefits arising from their experiences.

2.2.7   Challenges

Survey respondents were asked to consider the challenges they may have faced during their Mobility Pilot Program experience. The results presented in Figure 2.11 (on the next page) suggests that knowledge of the local language was the most significant challenge facing Mobility students. Respondents were also asked to identify the extent to which these challenges were overcome while in the host location. Figure 2.12 shows (by host location) that the large majority of respondents overcame the challenges they were confronted with.

The key points for Figure 2.11 (below) are:

— Approximately 33 per cent of respondents identified language as a 'very large' or 'large' challenge. Respondents who visited Japan identified language as a more significant barrier than other host locations.

— 18 per cent of respondents identified that host university processes were a challenging aspect of their Mobility experience.

— Accommodation was not considered to be a significant challenge for Mobility students.

The key points for Figure 2.12 are:

— A high proportion of respondents (above 80 per cent) reported overcoming the challenge presented by host university processes.

— Approximately 37 per cent of respondents identified that they only 'partially' overcame the language challenge or 'did not' overcome the language challenge presented at all.

— Most respondents overcame the accommodation challenges they experienced. However overcoming accommodation challenges in Hong Kong SAR and Japan was reported as more difficult than in other host locations.
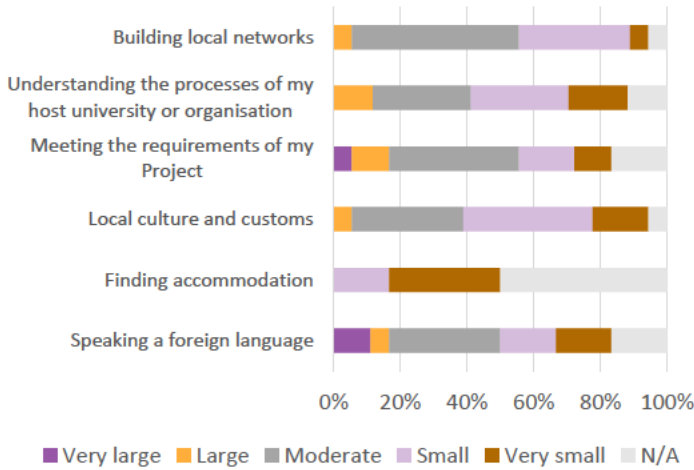
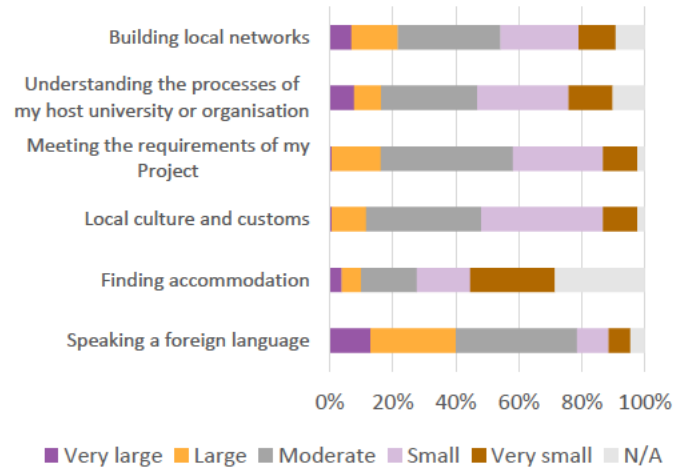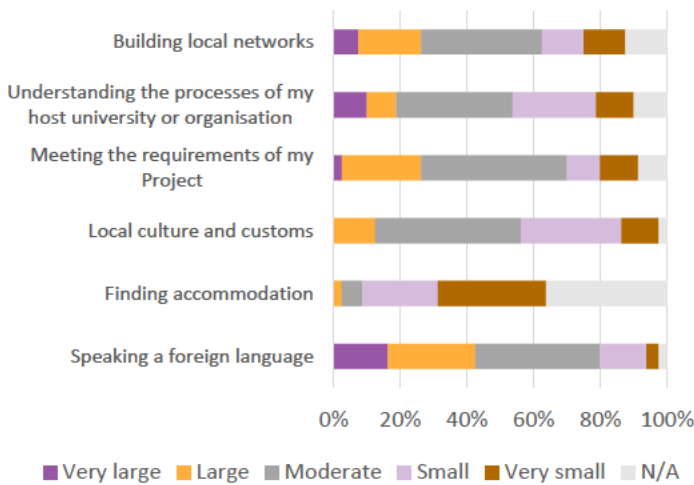## FIGURE 2.11 – EXTENT OF CHALLENGES BY HOST LOCATION
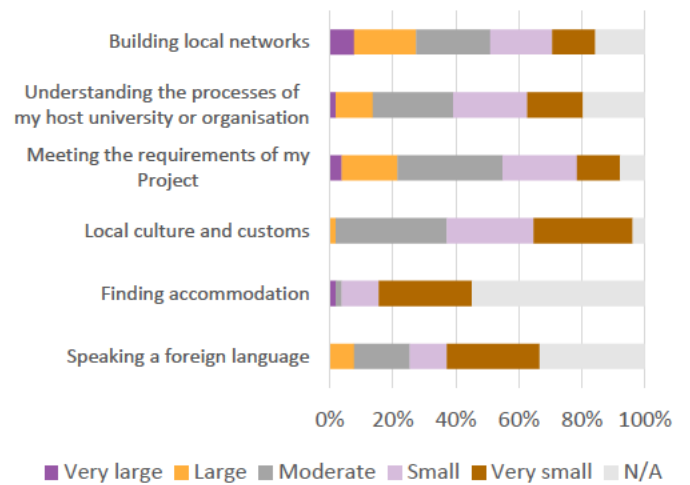

Overall
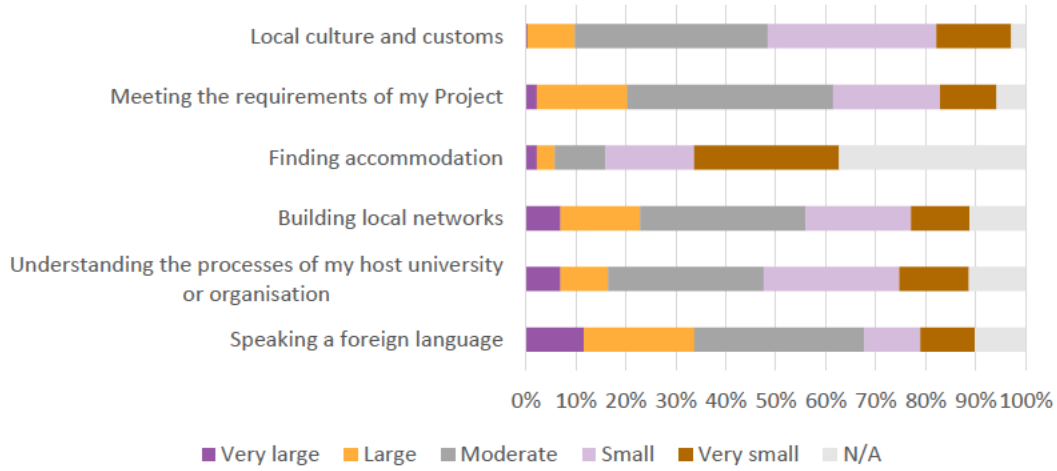
A: Hong Kong SAR

B: Indonesia

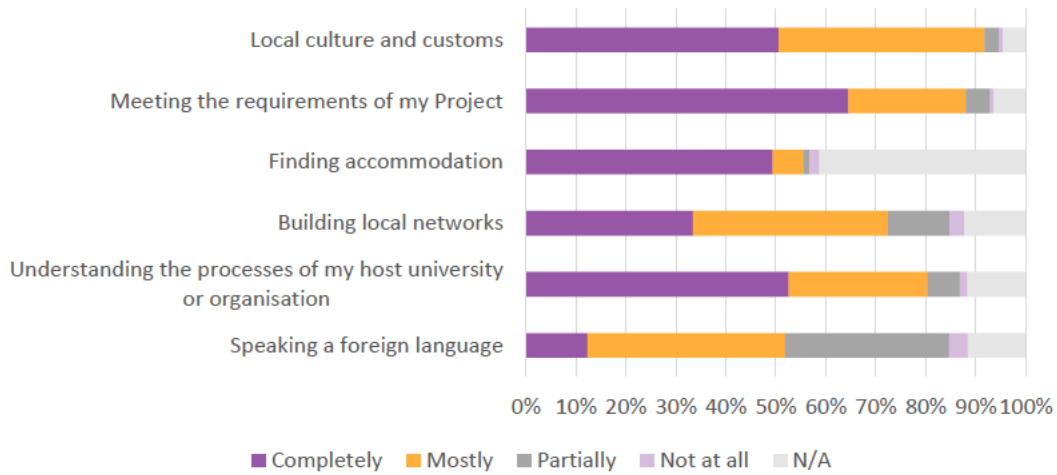**C: Japan**

D: Singapore

Note: 1. n = 273-276; nA = 17-18; nB = 128-130; nC = 80; nD = 51. 2. *Question: 29. You may have experienced some challenges during your Mobility Project. Please identify the extent to which each of the following was a challenge.*

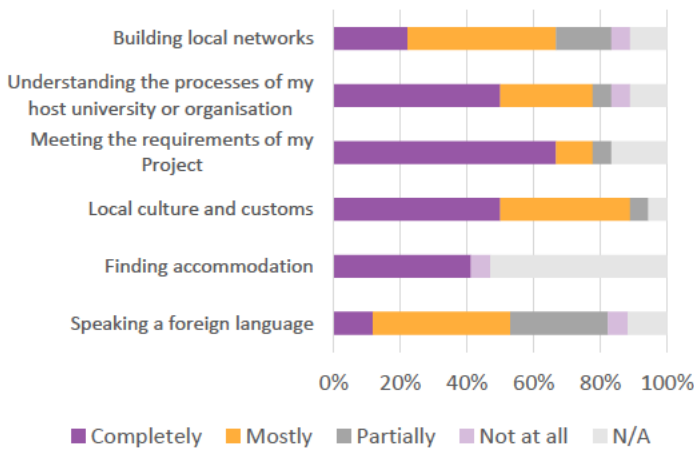*SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

FIGURE 2.12 – **OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES BY HOST LOCATION**
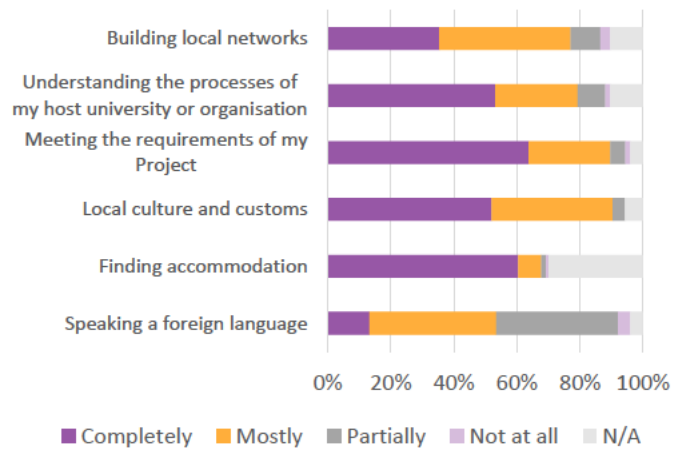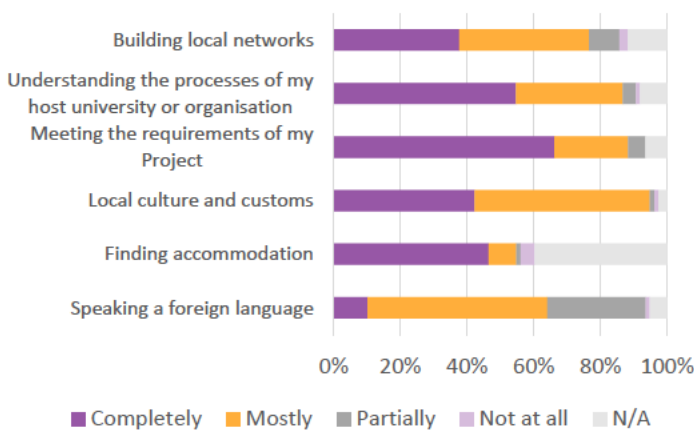
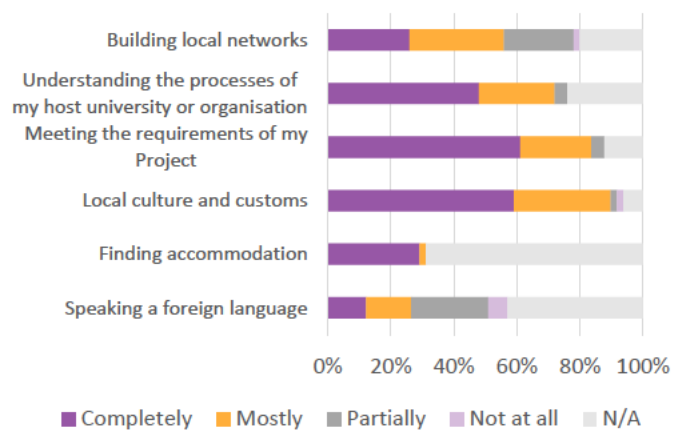**Overall**

A: Hong Kong SAR

B: Indonesia

C: Japan

D: Singapore

Note: 1. n = 259-269; nA = 17-18; nB = 124-127; nC = 73-78; nD = 48-50. 2. *Question A: 29. You may have experienced some challenges during your Mobility Project. Please identify the degree to which you overcame the challenge.*

SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

2.2.8 Overall experiences

Respondents were asked to consider a range of statements which reflected their overall Mobility Pilot Program experiences. These statements were used to better understand the overall level of satisfaction students gained from participation in the Program. The aggregated results for this part of the survey are provided in Figure 2.13 and broken down by country in Figure 2.14.

FIGURE 2.13 – OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Note: 1. n = 274-276. 2. *Question: 33. Taking your whole Mobility Pilot Program experience into consideration, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?*
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.13:

— A high overall level of satisfaction was reported amongst respondents who participated in the Mobility Pilot Program. For example:

  – 97 per cent of respondents would recommend the Mobility Pilot Program to other students.
  – 96 per cent of respondents had a rewarding experience.
  – 86 per cent of respondents reported being more Asia-capable and work ready.

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FIGURE 2.14 – OVERALL EXPERIENCE BY HOST LOCATION

A: Hong Kong SAR

B: Indonesia

C: Japan

D: Singapore

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Not sure
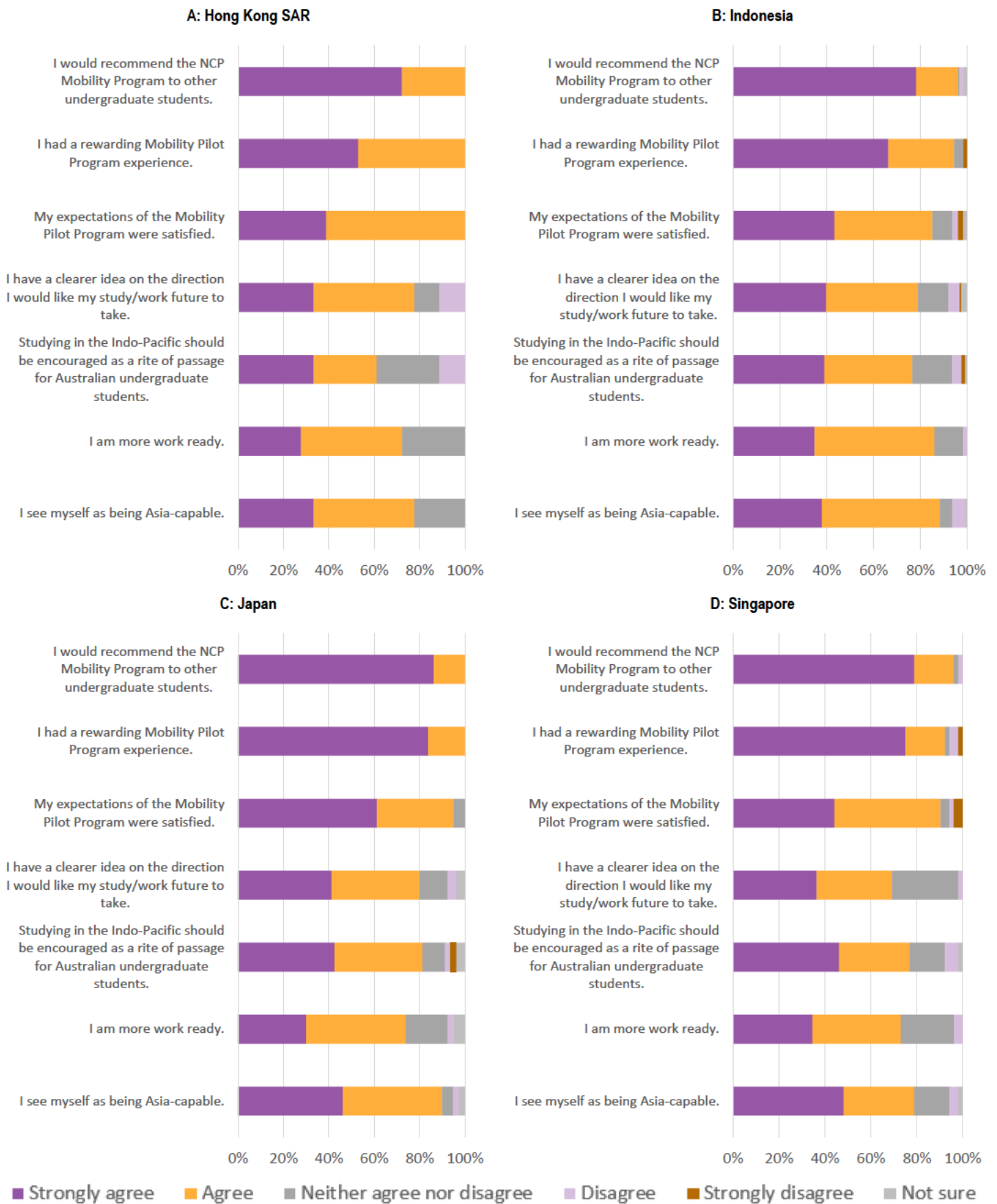
Note: 1. nA = 17-18; nB = 128-129; nC = 80; nD = 52. 2. Question: 33. Taking your whole Mobility Pilot Program experience into consideration, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?
SOURCE: MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 2.14:

— 100 per cent of respondents from Hong Kong SAR and Japan identified they would recommend the program to others. Only 2 per cent of respondents in the other host locations 'would not' or 'were not' sure if they would recommend the Mobility Pilot Program to others.

— All respondents from Hong Kong SAR and Japan identified that they had a rewarding experience.

— Respondents who visited Indonesia and Japan reported themselves to be the most Asia-capable of the host locations.

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SCHOLARSHIP: INTERIM SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Survey administration

The Scholarship Pilot Program survey was distributed to 15 students between January and April 2015. Surveys were distributed to students on a one-by-one basis to ensure information is captured from students as they return to Australia. This approach was adopted to maximise accurate recall about their Scholarship experience.

At the time of writing this report, ACIL Allen had received 13 completed responses to the survey. Those students who had not submitted a response received follow-up (reminder) correspondence from the evaluation team. Another 10 surveys are planned for distribution between May and June.

To date all host locations have been represented in the completed responses, with 4 responses from Hong Kong SAR; 3 from Indonesia; 2 from Japan; and 4 from Singapore. All of these respondents participated in a one semester program/project which was predominantly delivered in English. Engineering and related technologies and the natural and physical sciences were the most popular fields of study reported by respondents.

3.2 Headline results

3.2.1 Language and cultural training

Survey respondents were asked to identify whether they received any language and/or cultural training as part of their Scholarship experience. They were also asked to identify whether the training was delivered in Australia, at the host location or a combination of both.

Figure 3.1 indicates that 54 per cent of respondents received some form of language and/or cultural training, and the majority of this training occurred in the host location.[1]
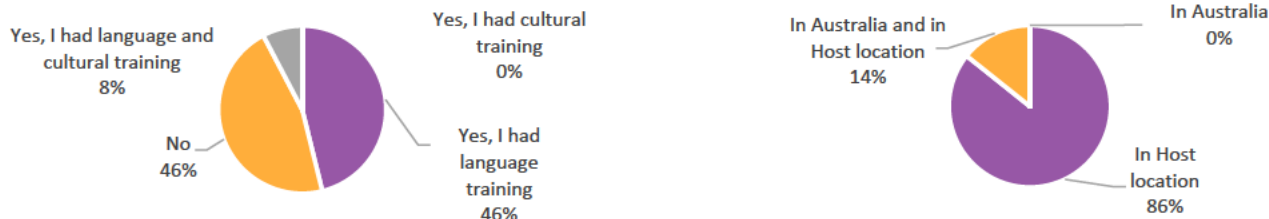
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[1] It is important to note that in-country language training and not cultural training is supported by the Scholarship Pilot Program.

FIGURE 3.1 – **LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL TRAINING UNDERTAKEN**

Note: 1. nA = 13; nB = 7. 2. Question A: 8. Did you undertake any language and/or cultural training to assist your Scholarship experience? Question B: 9. Where was this training undertaken?
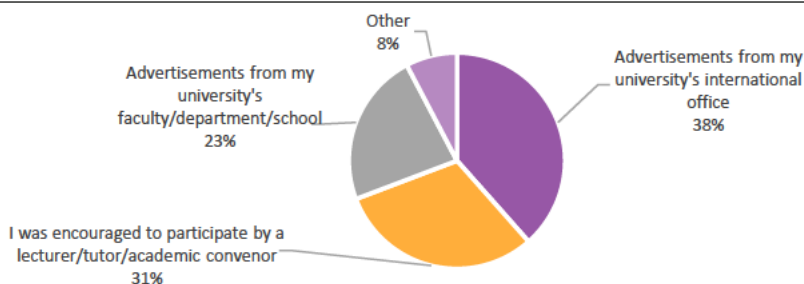*SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 3.1:

— Of the 54 per cent of respondents who received cultural and or language training:
  – 46 per cent received language training only.
  – 8 per cent received language and cultural training.
  – 86 per cent of respondents received the language and cultural training while in the host location.

— All respondents found the language training they received either very helpful or somewhat helpful (not pictured above).

— 60 per cent of respondents found the cultural training they received either very helpful or somewhat helpful (not pictured above).

3.2.2 Publicity of the Scholarship Pilot Program

Survey respondents were asked to consider aspects relating to the publicity of the Scholarship Pilot Program. In particular, respondents were asked to identify how they first came to learn about the Scholarship Pilot Program. Figure 3.2 identifies that the universities are the primary source of information about the Scholarship Pilot Program.

FIGURE 3.2 – **SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM**

Note: 1. n = 13. 2. Question: 17. How did you first learn about the New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program?
SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 3.2:

— University international offices (38 per cent) were the most important source of information about the Scholarship Pilot Program for respondents.

— However faculty members and lecturers, convenors and tutors were also important sources of information for students.

— Results suggest that survey respondents did <u>not</u> learn about the Scholarship Pilot Program from the following sources:

- Advertisements from Universities Australia.
- The websites of DFAT and Education.
- Other students (not pictured above).

3.2.3   Satisfaction with the Case Manager

Case managers are contracted by the Government to provide Scholarship holders with services including pre-departure briefings, advice on health and travel insurance, advice and assistance relating to accommodation, and payment of allowances. They are assigned to individual students for the duration of the Scholarship.

The survey results relating to the Case Manager are provided in Figure 3.3 below. They demonstrate an overall level of satisfaction with the Case Manager and the advice/support they provided to respondents.

FIGURE 3.3 – **SATISFACTION WITH CASE MANAGER**

Note: 1. n = 13. 2. *Question: 18. You were allocated a Case Manager from Scope Global to support you before, during and after your Scholarship. How satisfied were you with your Case Manager's handling of the following tasks?"*
SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 3.3:

- Respondents were 'very satisfied' with their Case Managers in the areas of:
  - Being friendly and approachable.
  - Initiating regular contact.
  - Confirming the receipt of important documents.

       — Ensuring the financial entitlements of students were available as scheduled.

— A small number of respondents felt the case manager was unsatisfactory in the areas of:

       – Providing advice on accommodation.

       – Helping students to arrange and confirm Internship and Mentorship opportunities.

— 15 per cent (or two) respondents experienced a critical incident during their Scholarship Pilot Program (not pictured). Both respondents reported being very satisfied with the Case Manager's ability to help them resolve the critical incident (not pictured above).

3.2.4 Funding

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the adequacy of funding provided by a Pilot Program Scholarship. The results show that all respondents felt that their stipend was adequate to cover monthly accommodation and living costs in the host location (not pictured). These results cover each of the host locations which participated in the Scholarship Pilot Program.

3.2.5 Experiences

Survey respondents were asked to place a qualitative value on the different types of activities or experiences they had prior to and during the Scholarship Pilot Program project. The results from respondents are provided in Figure 3.4 below.

FIGURE 3.4 – **VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIP ACTIVITIES**
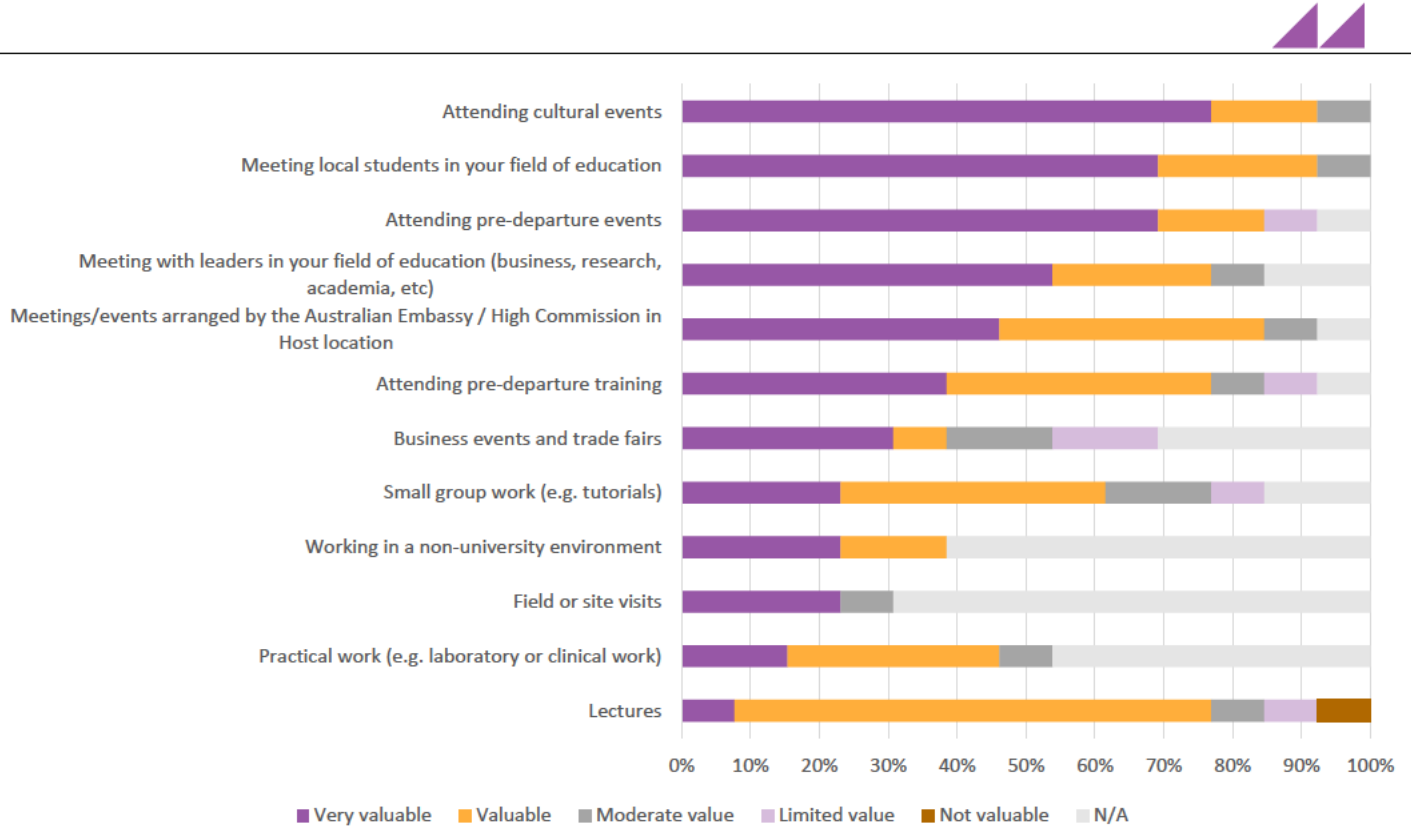
Note: 1. n = 13. 2. *Question: 24. Your Scholarship should have provided you with different academic, professional and social experiences. Please indicate how valuable you found each of the following experiences.*
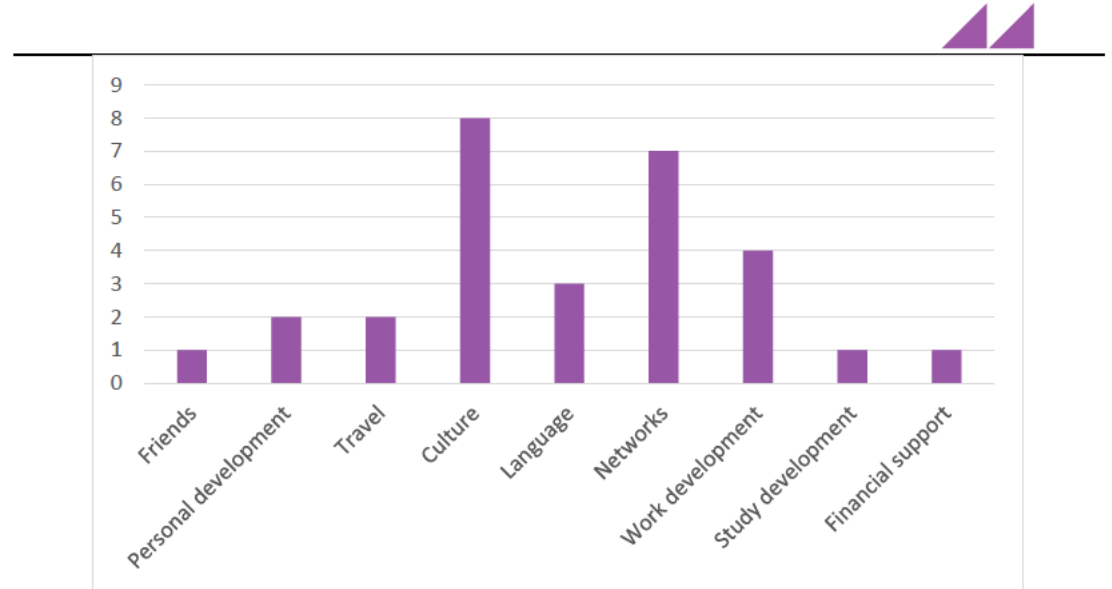*SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 3.4:

— Respondents considered that attendance at cultural events, the ability to meet local students, attendance at pre-departure events and the meetings/events arranged by Australian Embassies/High Commissions in host locations to be the 'most valuable' experiences of the Scholarship Pilot Program.

— Approximately 69 per cent of respondents attended business events and trade fairs while in their host location. Approximately 45 per cent of respondents found business events and trade fairs to be of 'moderate' or 'limited value'.

3.2.6   Benefits

Students were asked to identify the benefits they gained from participation in the Scholarship Pilot Program. Students were provided with an opportunity to identify up to three key benefits of NCP using free form text boxes. The distribution of benefits identified by respondents is provided in Figure 3.5 below.

FIGURE 3.5 – **FREQUENCY OF BENEFITS: IMPACT ON STUDY AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCE**

Note: 1. N = 13. 2. *Question: 25 You may have experienced some key benefits during your Scholarship. Please identify up to three key benefits from your experience.*
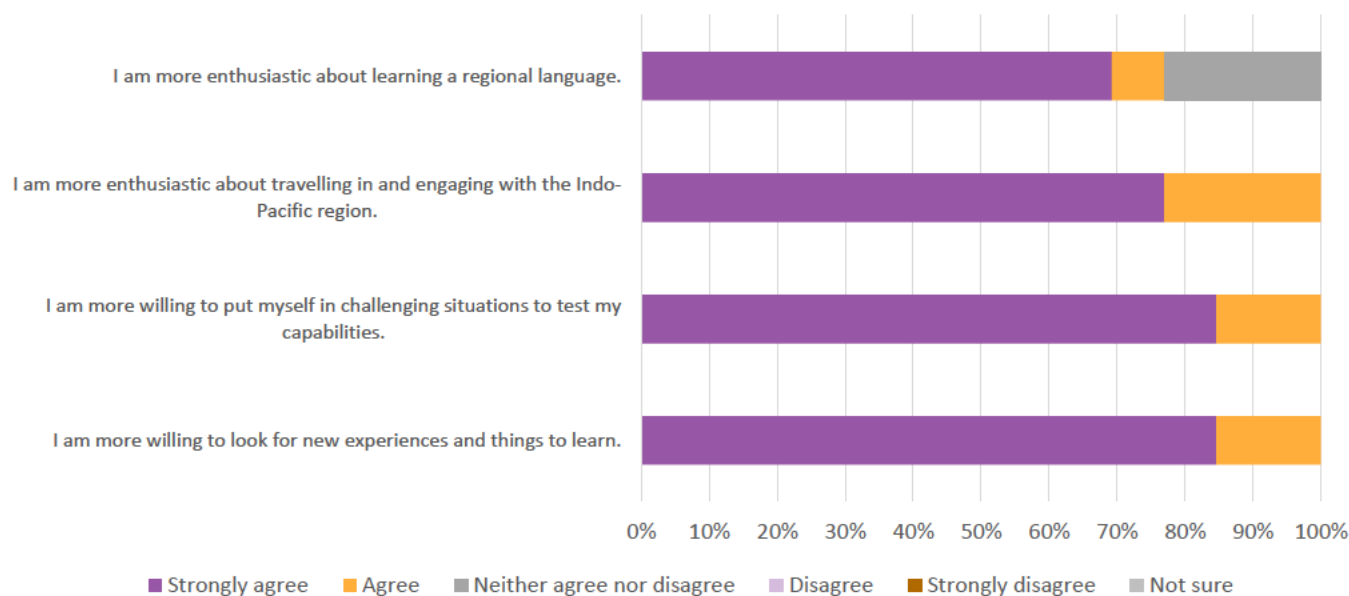*SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 3.5:

— The main benefits to students were increased cultural awareness and the formation of networks.
— Benefits relating to study, friends and financial support and travel were reported as benefits by respondents on fewer occasions.

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3.2.7   Personal development

In addition to the benefits outlined above, respondents were asked to consider the personal development arising from their Scholarship experience. The results from this feedback are provided in Figure 3.6 below.

FIGURE 3.6 – **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT DUE TO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Note: 1. n = 13. 2. *Question: 29. To what extent do you agree the following statements regarding how you have developed personally as a consequence of participating in a Scholarship. Having completed a Scholarship...*
SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 3.6:

— All respondents identified that they were more:
  – Enthusiastic about travelling in and engaging with the region as a result of the Scholarship experience.
  – Willing to tackle challenging situations as a result of the Scholarship experience.
  – Willing seek out new experiences and try new things as a result of the Scholarship experience.
— 78 per cent of respondents were more enthusiastic about learning a language of the region as a result of their Scholarship experience.
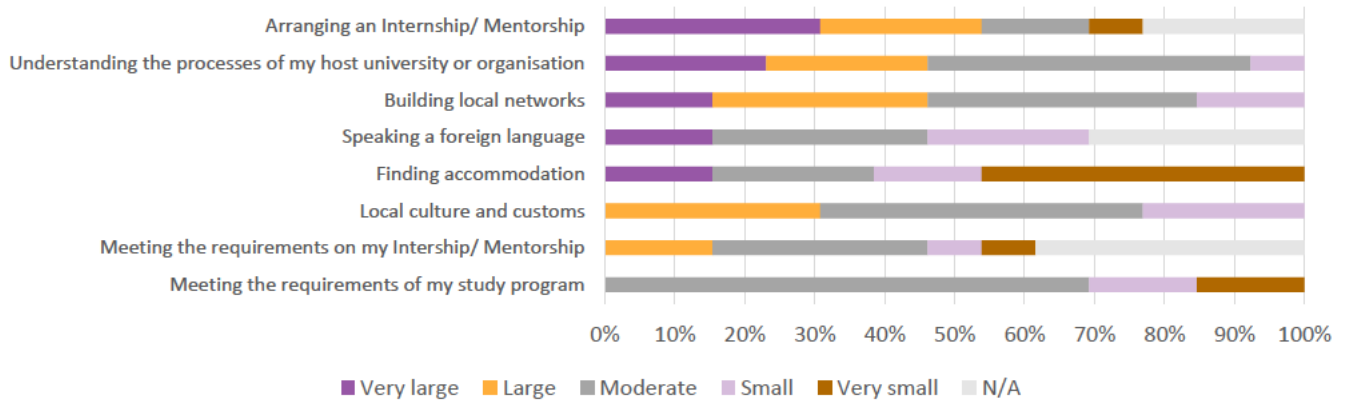
3.2.8 Challenges

Survey respondents were asked to consider the challenges they may have faced during their Scholarship Pilot Program experience. The results presented in Figure 3.7 below.
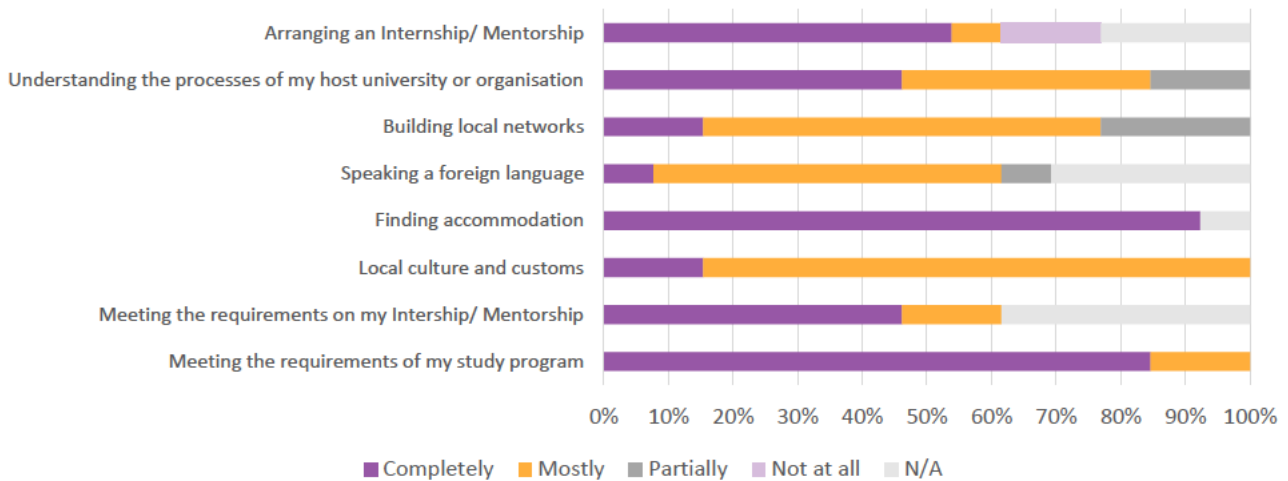
FIGURE 3.7 – **CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED**

A: Challenges experienced

B: Extent challenges overcome

Note: 1. nA = 13; nB = 13. 2. *Question: 26. You may have experienced some challenges during your Scholarship. Please identify: A: the extent to which each of the following was a challenge; B: the degree to which you overcame the challenge.*

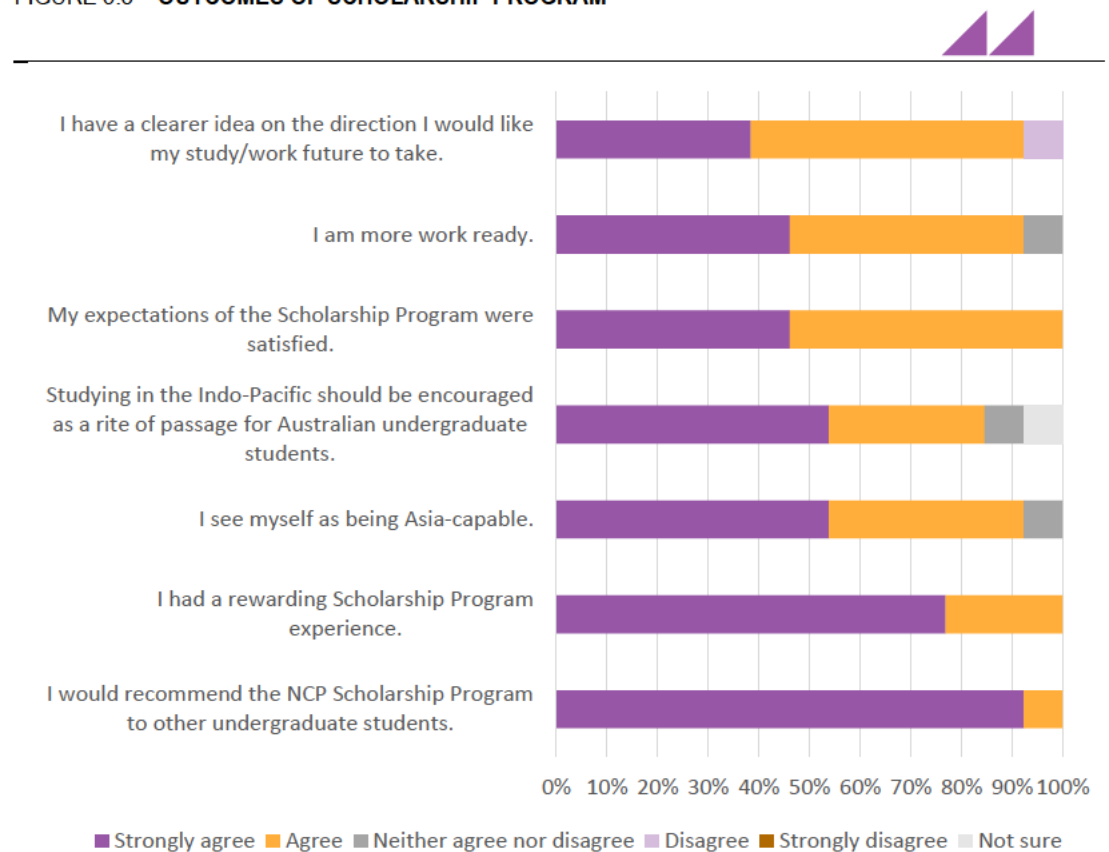*SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY*

Key points for Figure 3.7:

— The main challenges associated with the Scholarship Pilot Program included:
  – Arranging an Internship/Mentorship (with 54 per cent finding that this challenge was either 'very large' or 'large').
  – Understanding the processes of the host university or organisation (with 45 per cent finding that this challenge was either 'very large' or 'large').
  – Building local networks (with 45 per cent finding that this challenge was either 'very large' or 'large').
— The academic requirements of respondents' study programs were only seen to be of a moderate to low level challenge for respondents.

— The ability to arrange an Internship/Mentorship was the only challenge not completely overcome by respondents. Results indicate that 15 per cent of respondents reported not overcoming this challenge at all.

3.2.9   Overall experiences

Respondents were asked to consider a range of statements which reflected their overall Scholarship Pilot Program experiences. These statements were used to better understand the overall level of satisfaction students gained from participation in the Program. The aggregated results for this part of the survey are provided in Figure 3.8 below.

FIGURE 3.8 – **OUTCOMES OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Note: 1. n = 13. 2. Question: 30. Taking your whole Scholarship Program experience into consideration, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?
SOURCE: SCHOLARSHIP PILOT PROGRAM SURVEY

Key points for Figure 3.8:

— High overall level of satisfaction with the Scholarship Pilot Program amongst respondents.

— All respondents indicated they would recommend the Scholarship Pilot Program to other students. Approximately 92 per cent of respondents said they would *strongly recommend* the program, while 8 per cent of respondents said they would *recommend* the program to others.

— All respondents identified that they had a rewarding Scholarship experience. Approximately 77 per cent of respondents reported having a highly rewarding experience.

— 92 per cent of respondents reported being more Asia-capable and work ready.

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