

USC Annenberg

*Center for Climate Journalism
and Communication*



Temperature Check

24-25

Climate communication lessons and forecast

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Foreword

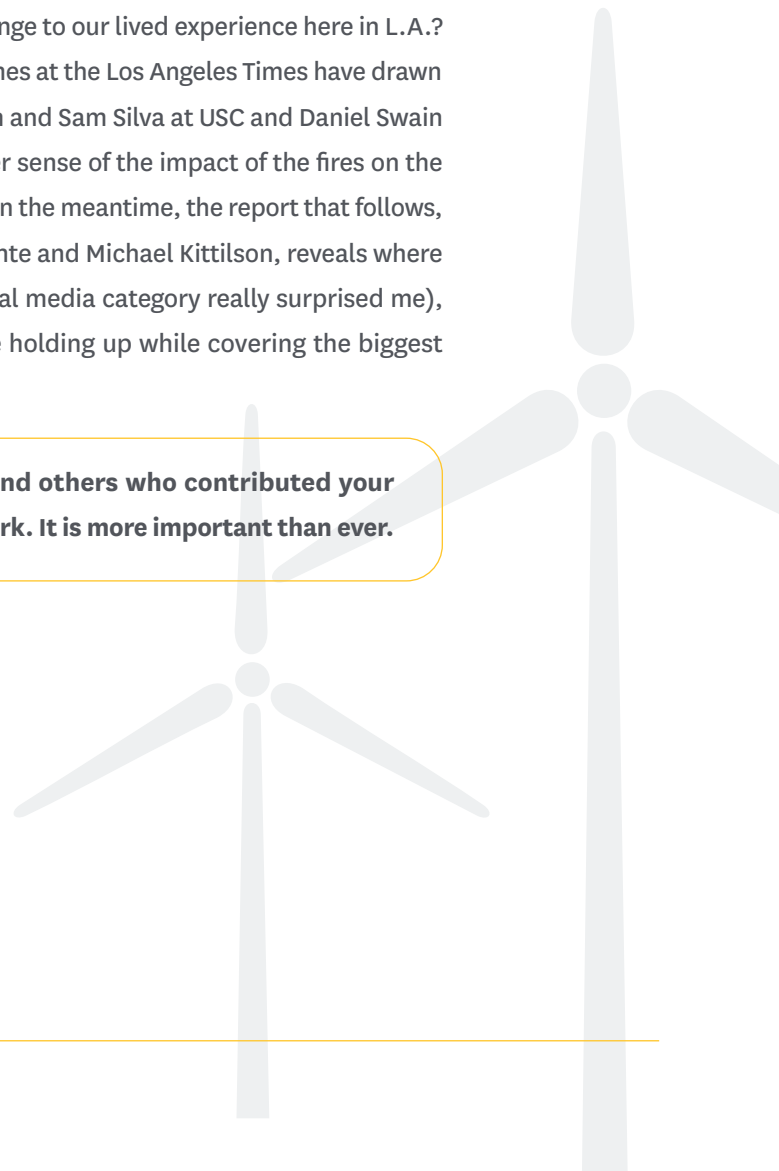
We sent out our second annual Temperature Check survey for climate communicators in mid-November 2024. Donald Trump was elected U.S. president by then, but he would not take office until after the survey closed. Paging through responses from this unique moment, we have the perspective of more than 100 participants who knew change was coming but who were not yet sure what it would mean. At that time, concern amongst participants about the challenges of climate change communications because of the president's political positions were low. One phenomenon that concerned climate communicators the most was extreme weather and, in particular, wildfires.

Weeks after the survey closed, on the day of President Trump's inauguration, Los Angeles was burning. The fires are now considered among the deadliest in California history, taking 30 lives, destroying over 16,200¹ structures and resulting in property losses and damages estimated to be as high as \$164 billion².

Climate change, what once may have seemed a distant proposition, knocked on our front doors in Los Angeles. Will the fires impact the way we relate climate change to our lived experience here in L.A.? Journalists in the city like Sammy Roth, Rosanna Xia and Ian James at the Los Angeles Times have drawn the connection between the two and researchers like Seth John and Sam Silva at USC and Daniel Swain at UCLA have done the same. Next year, we hope to get a better sense of the impact of the fires on the way climate communicators here and elsewhere do their work. In the meantime, the report that follows, spearheaded by Rhysea Agrawal with support from Grace Galante and Michael Kittilson, reveals where climate communicators get their news (the findings in the social media category really surprised me), what was hampering their efforts the most, and how they are holding up while covering the biggest story of our time.

To the journalists, scientists, researchers, analysts, and others who contributed your insights to this report — thank you. We see your hard work. It is more important than ever.

Allison Agsten
Director, Center For Climate Journalism and Communication
USC Annenberg School



Key Findings

This year saw a shakeup in the platforms climate communicators are using to share their messages. Concerns about funding were a big issue in the 2023-2024 Temperature Check report³ and in this one too. Above all, climate communicators are concerned about the impacts from extreme weather events; many also have expressed serious concern about using artificial intelligence in their work.

Media Engagement

Climate communicators get their climate information mostly from newspapers, followed by academic journals and social media platforms. LinkedIn, Instagram and Bluesky were the most popular social media platforms in the 2024 survey, overtaking Twitter/X in terms of popularity compared to the 2023 survey that rated Twitter/X as the most popular social media platform for climate communicators.

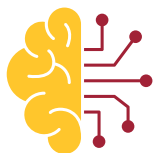
Climate Issues

When we asked climate communicators to choose the top environmental/climate risks in the regions where they work, they overwhelmingly chose extreme weather events over issues such as the water crisis, pollution, food insecurity, and rising insurance bills. The top five extreme weather events ranked by respondents were, in this order: wildfires, heatwaves, droughts, floods, and hurricanes.

Challenges and Support

Climate communicators are very concerned about lack of funding, less governmental support for their climate initiatives, and increasing disinformation/anti-climate rhetoric because of the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election. Other challenges climate communicators are concerned about include lack of interest and apathy from the public on climate change, lack of knowledge, and prevalence of misinformation.

BONUS: Artificial Intelligence



More than 40% of our respondents disagree or strongly disagree that AI can be beneficial for climate communication. About 30% of these respondents never use AI for their climate communication work, and about 80% of these respondents are concerned about inaccuracies in the information they glean from AI.

Our Respondents

104 climate communicators responded to our second annual Temperature Check survey.



Almost 35% of our climate communicators primarily identify as journalists

Other climate communicators who responded to our survey primarily come from fields such as academia, nonprofits or NGOs, communications and/or PR, corporate sustainability, governmental organizations, advocates, influencers and students.



Academia	18.27%
Advocate or Influencer	3.85%
Communications and Public Relations	13.46%
Corporate Sustainability	5.77%
Governmental Organization	4.81%
Journalist	34.62%
Nonprofit or NGO	15.38%
Student	3.85%

Media Engagement

Top news sources

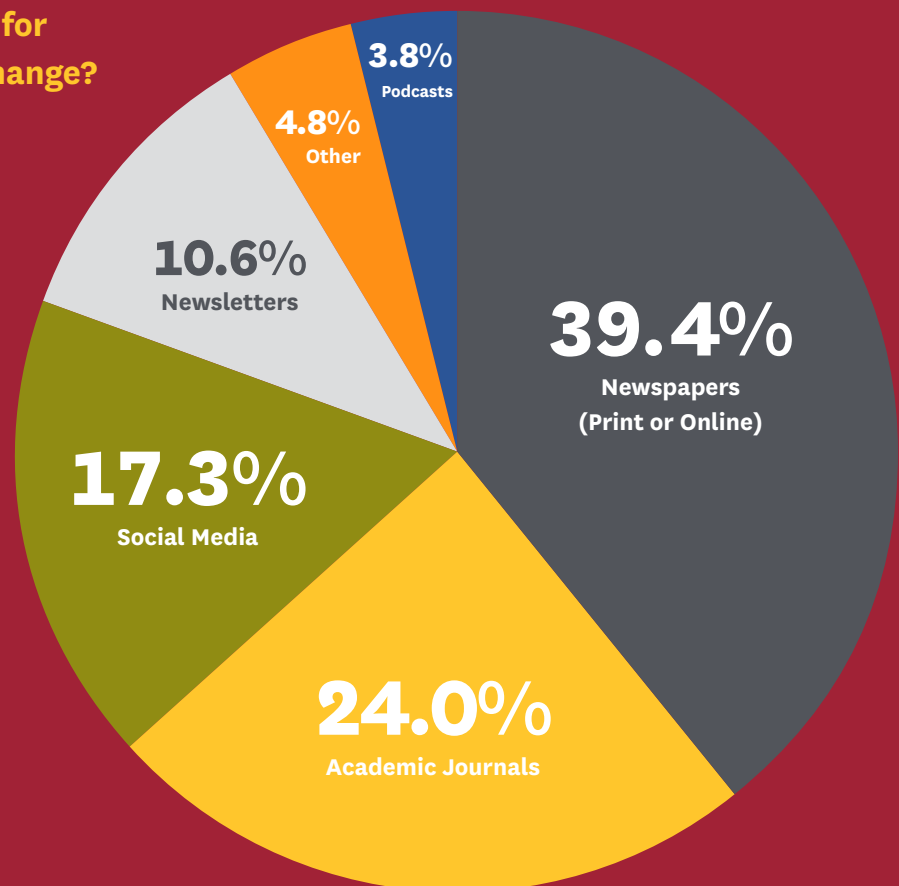
Newspapers are the primary source of information about climate change for respondents, followed by academic journals and social media platforms.

Among those who work in communications and/or in public relations, newsletters are a more popular source of climate information (**42.86%**) than other sources.

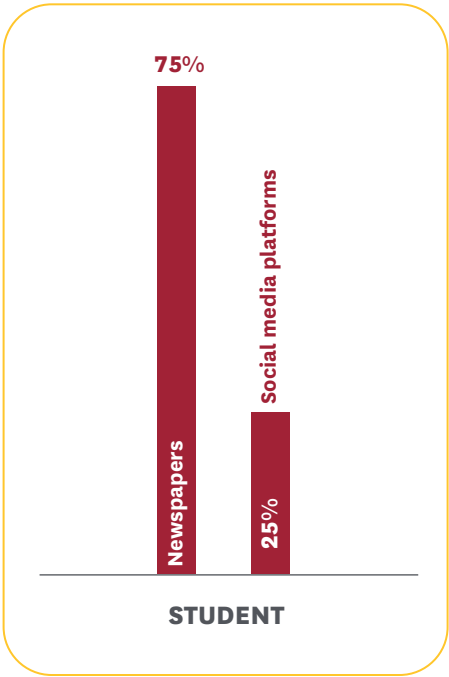
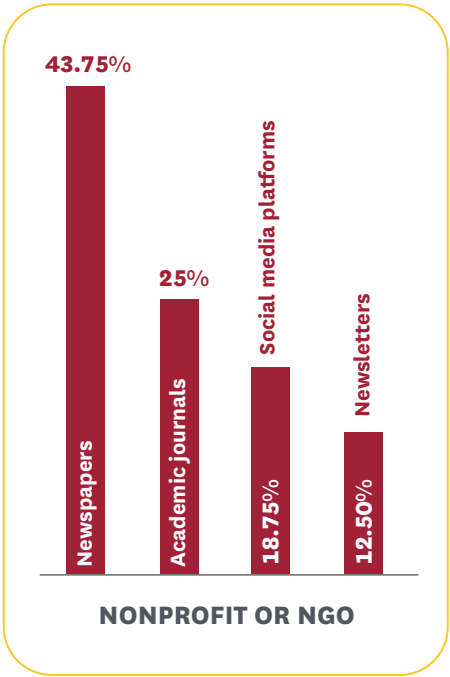
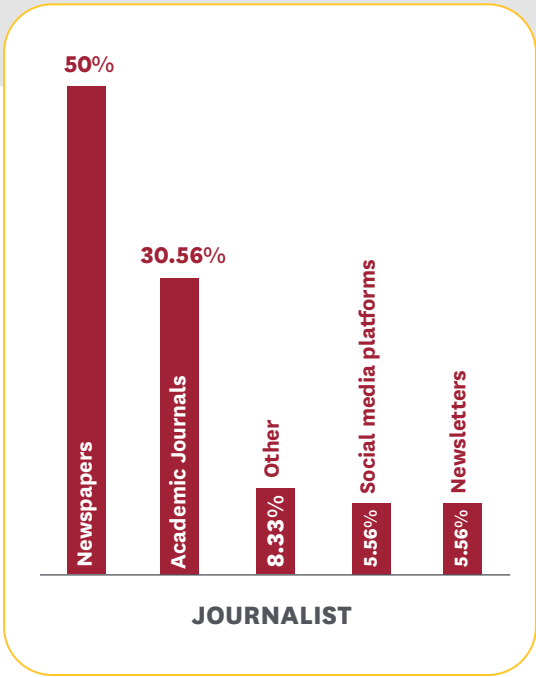
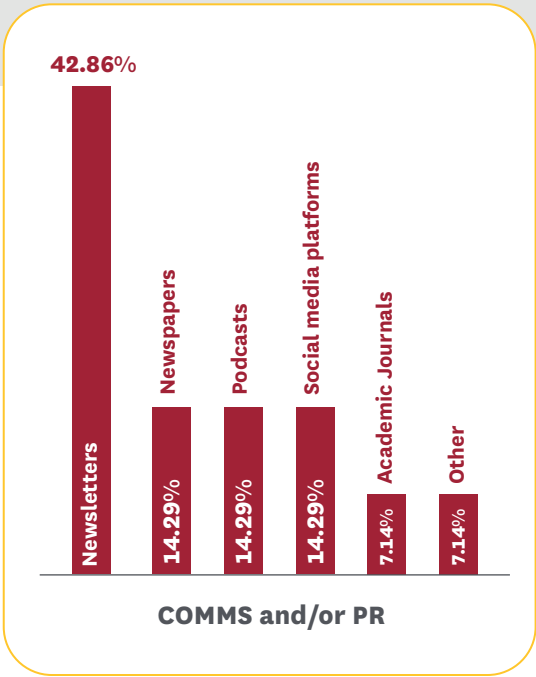
Social media platforms are the most popular source of information among corporate sustainability professionals (**50%**).

Student respondents primarily got their climate news from newspapers (**75%**) and social media platforms (**25%**).

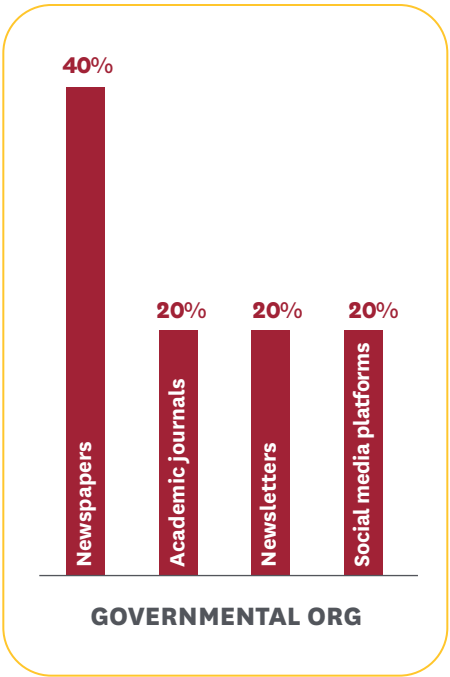
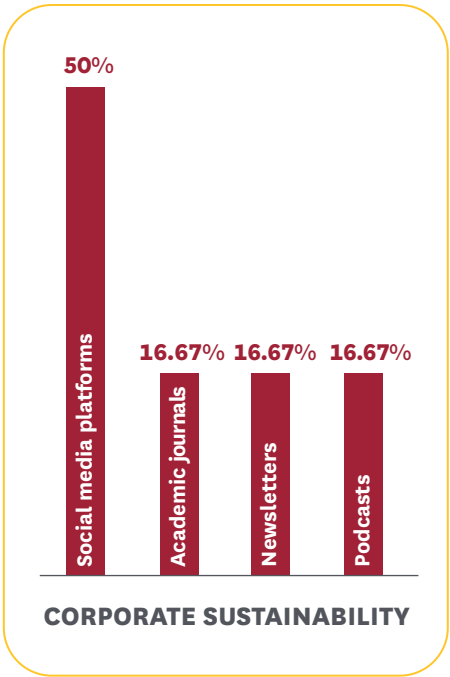
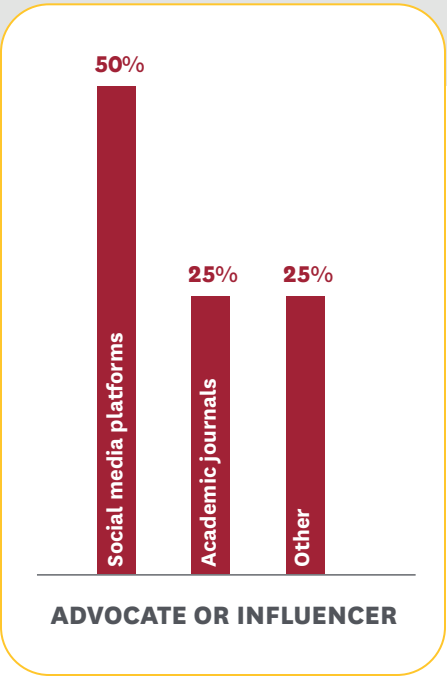
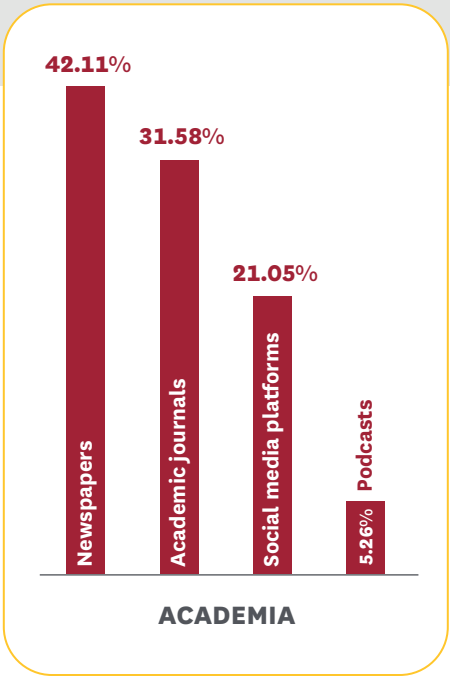
» What is your primary source for information about climate change?



How respondents get their climate news based on job type



How respondents get their climate news based on job type



We asked respondents to list the top three specific sources they use to access information about climate change.

Among traditional media sources, these are the outlets our respondents mentioned most often:



#1

New York Times



#2

The Guardian

Inside Climate News

#3

Inside
Climate News



#4

Grist



#5

Bloomberg Green

Among newsletters, our respondents most often mentioned the following:



#1

Heatmap



#2

Covering
Climate Now



Climate Forward

#3

New York Times
Climate Forward



#4

Society of
Environmental
Journalists EJToday



#5

Yale Program
on Climate Change
Communication

Nature was the most mentioned academic journal that our respondents go to for climate information. Multiple respondents also mentioned the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication as one of their top sources of information from the academic sector.

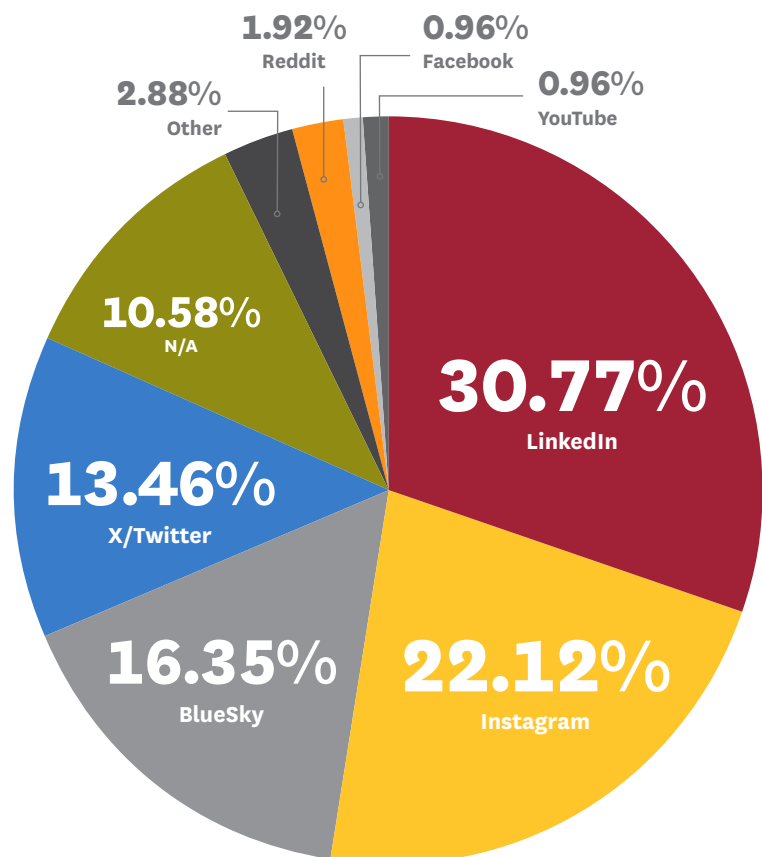
Social Media

In our survey report last year, we found that X (formerly known as Twitter) was the most popular social platform among climate communicators when it came to acquiring information. This year, X was cited as the 4th most popular social media platform among climate communicators, preceded by LinkedIn, Instagram and Bluesky.

Analyses show that users have been quitting X en masse since owner Elon Musk started campaigning for Donald Trump in 2024⁴, and site visit numbers have been falling even faster since Donald Trump's win in the election. Meanwhile, Bluesky (which was born as a research project under Twitter) crossed 15 million followers the week after Election Day, becoming popular among the "Twitter quitters" due to a similar user experience as X⁵.

A news article in *Science*⁶ shows how Bluesky is replacing X as the new hub for communication for scientists, who find the platform convenient to "distribute and discuss preprints and published papers, post job openings and conference invitations, and communicate their research to the public."

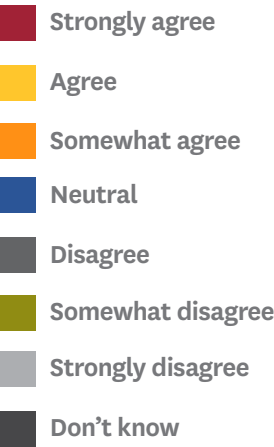
➤ **Respondents share their go-to social media platforms to engage with climate change media**



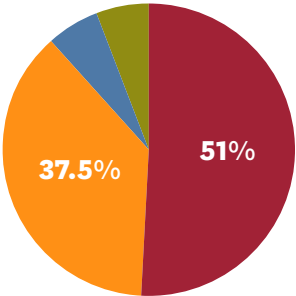
Actionable impacts from climate communications

When we asked climate communicators whether their audience cares about climate change and trusts their communication on climate change, over 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. According to a 2024 Yale Program on Climate Change Communication survey, almost three-quarters of Americans think global warming is happening and about half think that they or their families will be affected by it⁷.

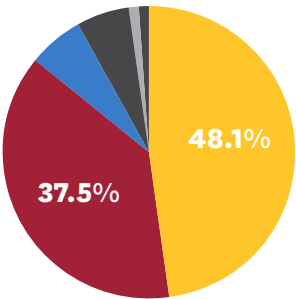
Over 85% of respondents also believe that their work in climate change makes an impact or difference.



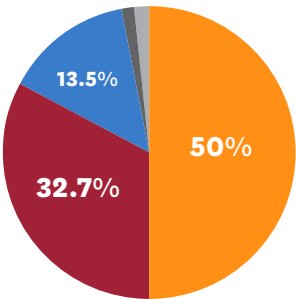
My audience/community cares about climate change



My audience/community trusts my communication about climate change



I believe that my work communicating about climate makes an impact or difference



In their own words:

Respondents tell us about the impact of their work

“In 2022, the provincial government in Ontario, where I work, opened up sections of the Greenbelt — a protected zone of green space that helps regulate the climate and prevent floods — for housing development. I collaborated with journalists at the Toronto Star, a newspaper, to investigate, and we found that the move would enrich a select group of well-connected land developers. The revelations prompted two watchdog investigations and public outrage, which resulted in the provincial government undoing the changes 10 months later and giving the Greenbelt a little bit more protection than before.”

Emma McIntosh, Reporter for The Narwhal

“My work in climate communications has inspired my students to take action by launching their own environmental and social ventures, turning ideas into impactful solutions that address real-world challenges.”

Misha Kouzeh, TEDx Speaker, Social Entrepreneur, Consultant, and Distinguished University Lecturer at USC

“In 2021, UNDP launched the ‘Don’t Choose Extinction’ campaign that had a dinosaur barge into the UN General Assembly hall and give a speech focusing on fossil fuel subsidies reform. The campaign was a hit and resulted in billions across the globe watching the video. The campaign was launched just before COP26 and in the final communique of the COP, fossil fuel subsidies reform was for the first time on agenda. This is due in large part to the campaign.”

Boaz Paldi, Chief Creative Officer, United Nations Development Programme

“Our global TV series, ‘Years of Living Dangerously,’ caused one out of every two viewers to take action on climate change — and the show was seen by tens of millions of people. We also have run numerous media-based action campaigns that have led to major legislative changes.”

Joel Bach, Executive Director, The Years Project

But other respondents do not agree that their work makes an impact, their audience cares, or that their audience trusts their communication about climate change. Some say it is hard to measure impact or feel positive about the work they do, due to factors such as over-politicization of climate change, anti-climate rhetoric, and lack of time and resources.

“I don’t track impact, mostly because journalism work is so tenuous and I’ve had an assortment of newsrooms I’ve worked for so it’s difficult to track my work’s impact when I’m just trying to stay employed.”

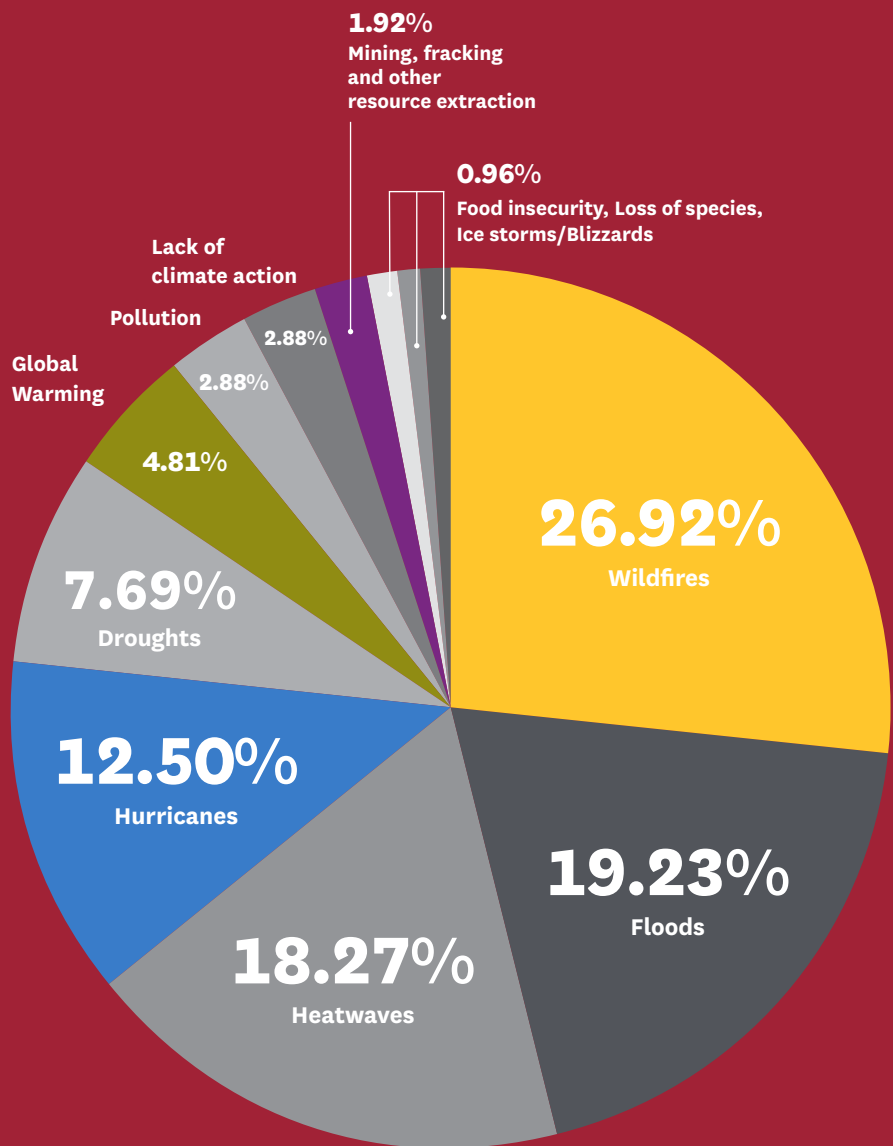
Siri Chilukuri, Freelance Journalist

Climate Issues

Extreme weather emerges as top environmental concern

When we asked respondents which top environmental issues they are most concerned about in the regions that they communicate or report in, most respondents (85.57%) selected extreme weather events such as droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, hurricanes, floods, etc. Others (14.42%) selected issues such as pollution, global warming, resource extraction, loss of species, food insecurity and climate inaction.

What are the top climate/environmental risks in the region where you work?



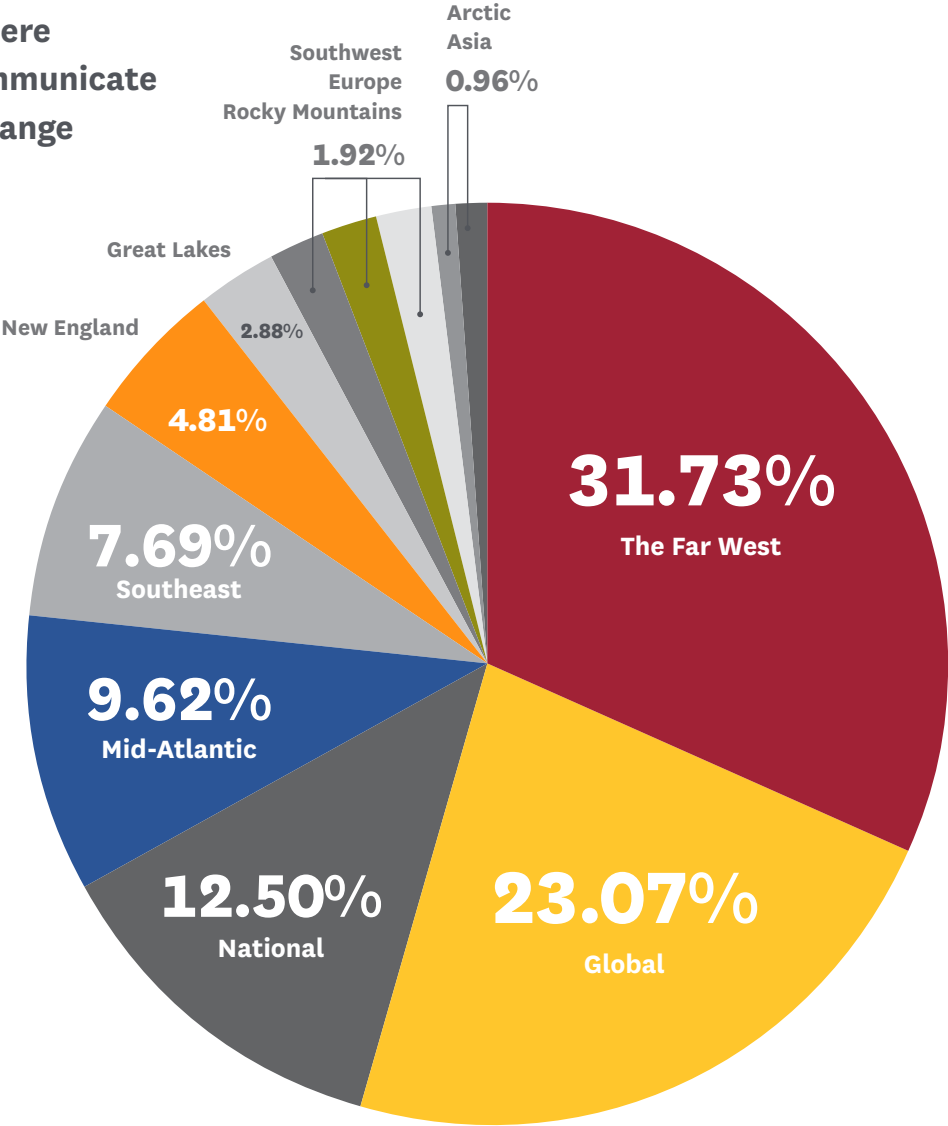
Top climate issues for respondents

A majority of our U.S. respondents communicate or report about climate change in the Far West where droughts, heatwaves and wildfires are a top issue. Other major groups report or communicate in regions such as New England, Mid-Atlantic and the Southeast, where hurricanes and floods have also been a top issue.


For respondents who report mostly in the Far West, wildfires were by far the top issue of concern, followed by heatwaves and droughts. This is not surprising given about 30% of our respondents are from Los Angeles, where the wildfires this winter were amplified by climate change and displaced about 150,000 residents while destroying tens of thousands of structures. (This survey closed before those fires started.)

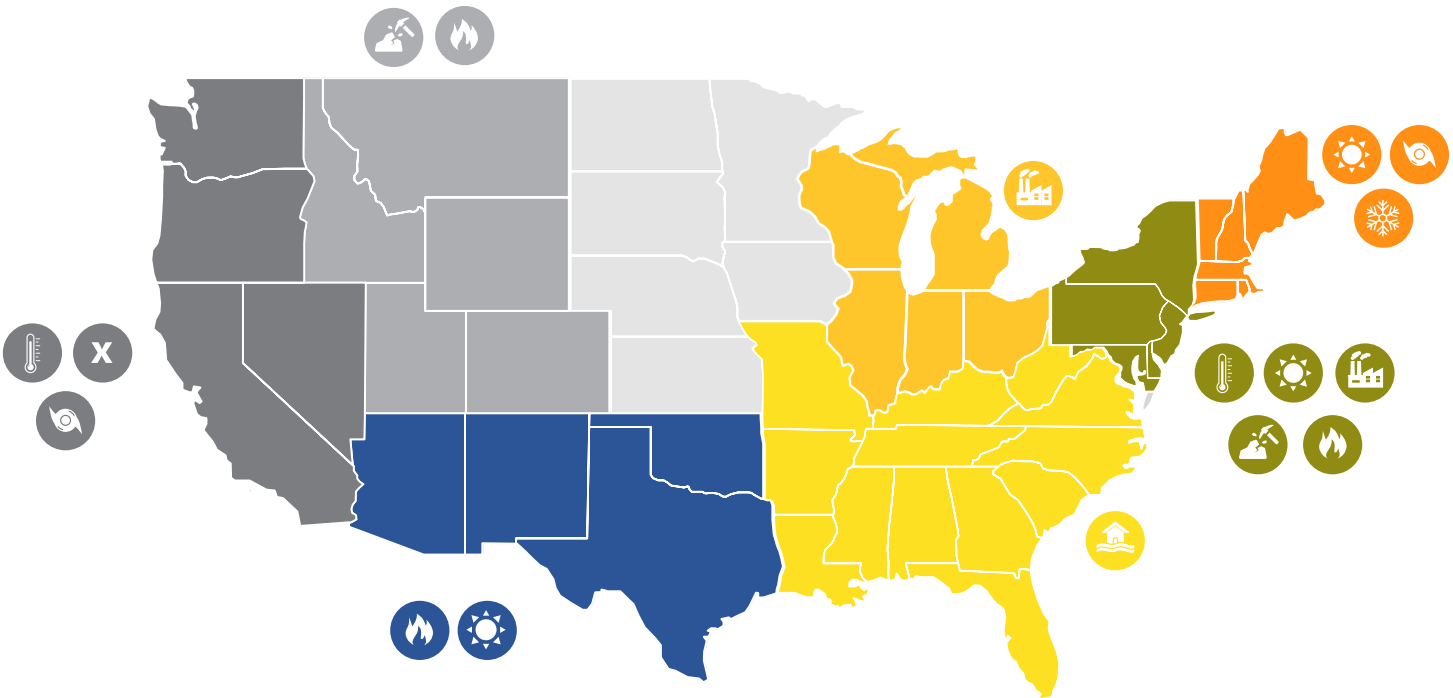
For respondents who report or communicate outside the U.S., floods were the biggest issue of concern, followed by heatwaves.

Geographical locations where respondents primarily communicate or report about climate change



What’s your top issue of concern in your geographical region?

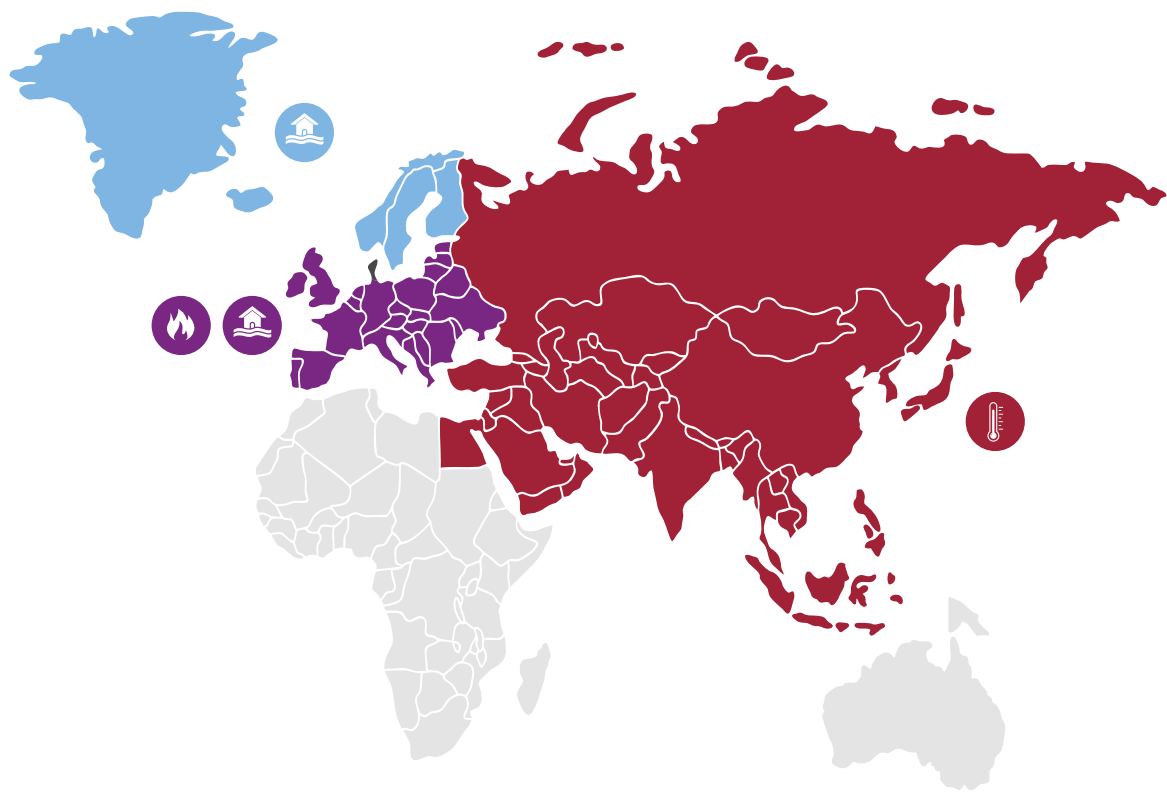
National = 



					
Hurricanes	Global Warming	Food Insecurity	Floods	Wildfires	Pollution
					
Droughts	Heatwaves	Mining/Fracking	Lack of Climate Action	Blizzards/Ice Storms	Loss of Species

What’s your top issue of concern in your geographical region?

Global =   



					
Hurricanes	Global Warming	Food Insecurity	Floods	Wildfires	Pollution
					
Droughts	Heatwaves	Mining/ Fracking	Lack of Climate Action	Blizzards/ Ice Storms	Loss of Species

Communicators favor solutions-based messaging

When we asked climate communicators what kind of messaging they have observed that leads to climate action, most communicators chose solutions-based messaging (messaging that highlights potential solutions and actions that can be beneficial for the environment), followed by balanced messaging (messaging that balances both positive and negative aspects of climate change), and action-based messaging (messaging that highlights the urgency of solutions and actions and prompts individuals to take action).

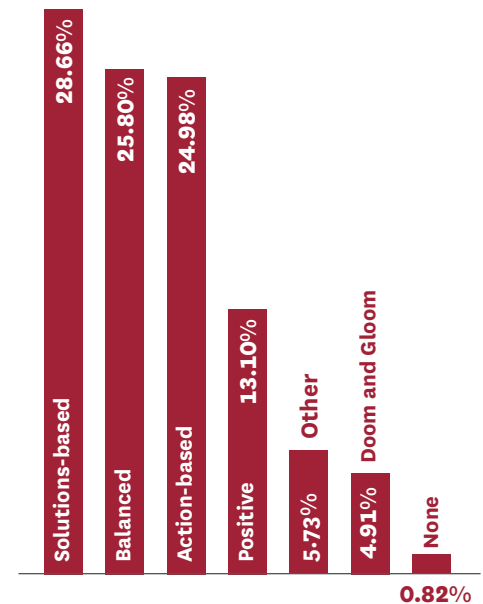
Some respondents had other thoughts on what kind of messaging works best:

Arthur Sprogis, external senior advisor for the U.S. Department of Energy, writes, **“Don’t mention climate at all. Talk about everything but climate: public health, costs, jobs.”**

Katherine Markova, who works as a partnerships manager for Climate Interactive, thinks a visionary approach to climate messaging is the most effective. **“Visionary,”** according to her, **“asks the question: ‘What would you love about being part of a world on track to making a thriving future happen?’”**

Emily Prettyman of Redwood Climate Communications said it is important to highlight the **“other benefits to climate action”** such as energy becoming cheaper, cleaner air and more efficient products. Journalist Jon Biemer said the messaging should be about environmental justice that motivates those who are most affected to make changes.

However, Los Angeles Times’ climate columnist Sammy Roth may have summarized it best by writing, **“Different messages work for different audiences; there is no one message that appeals to everyone.”**



Challenges and Support

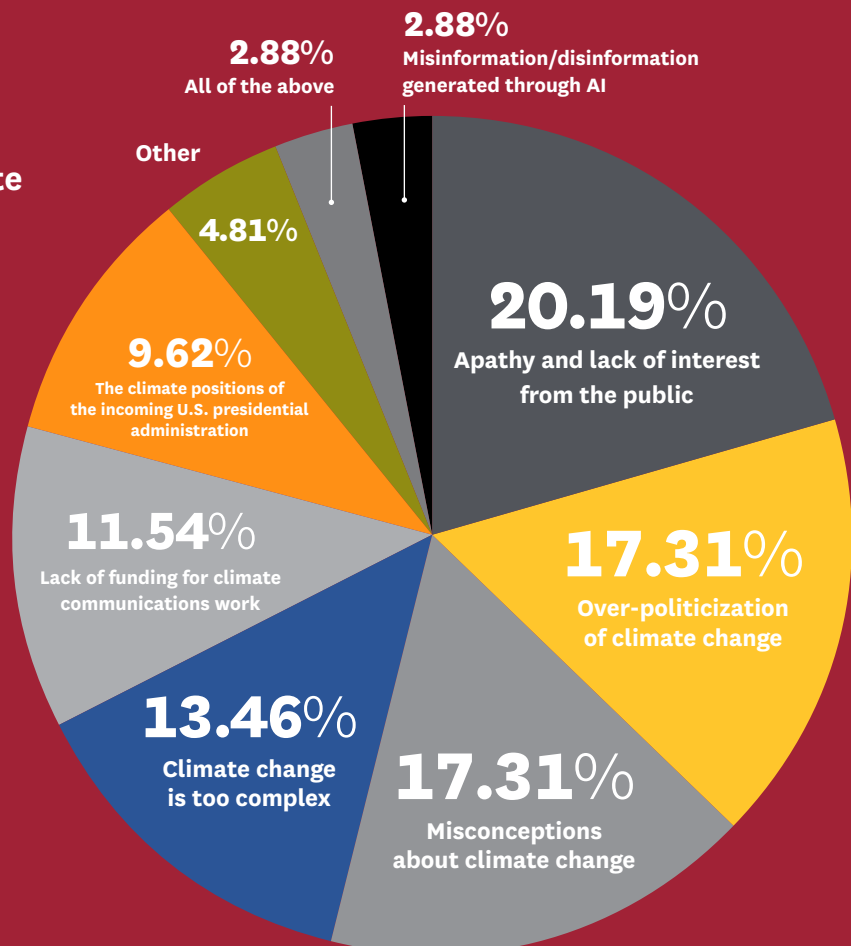
Biggest challenges for climate communicators

When we asked climate communicators what they think are the biggest challenges when it comes to communicating about climate change, the top answer was apathy and lack of interest from the public, followed by over-politicization of climate change, misconceptions and lack of knowledge about climate change and that climate change is too complex or overwhelming.

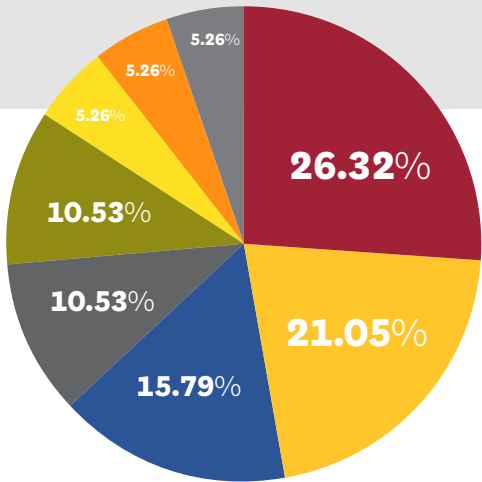
In 2023, when we asked the same question in our survey, the top response was “climate change is too complex or overwhelming” followed by misconceptions and lack of knowledge about climate change, apathy and lack of interest from the public, and over-politicization of climate change.

Those who work in communications and PR consider over-politicization of climate change and lack of funding for climate communications to be the top challenges in their climate communication. Meanwhile, for those who work in nonprofits and NGOs, the climate positions of the incoming U.S. presidential administration are the biggest challenge for their climate communications initiatives.

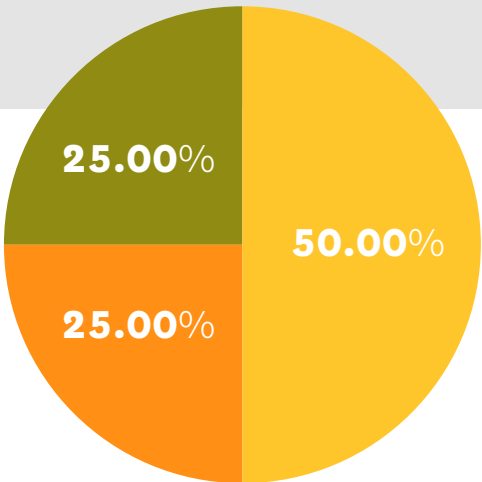
Respondents share their biggest challenges with climate communication



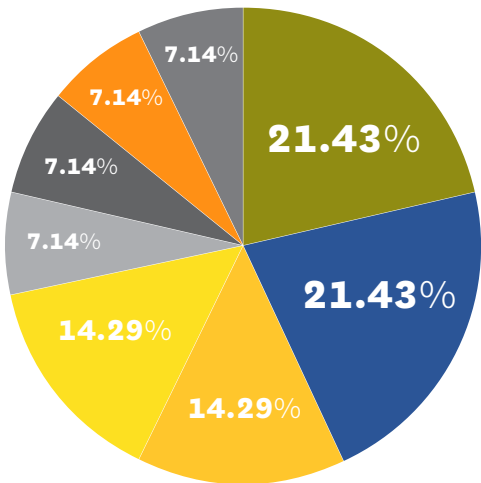
How respondents view challenges based on job type



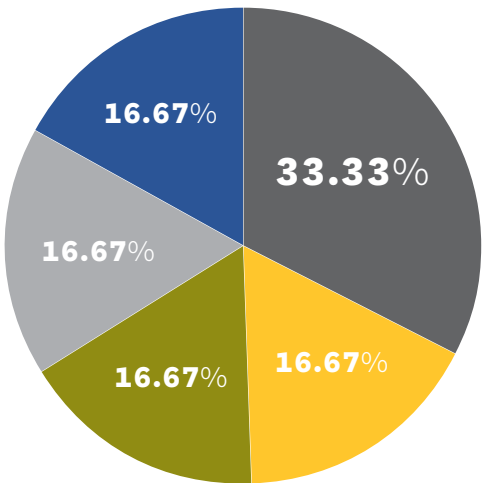
ACADEMIA



ADVOCATE OR INFLUENCER



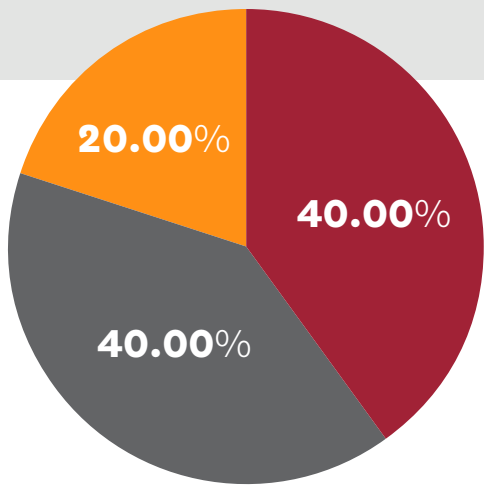
COMMS AND/OR PR



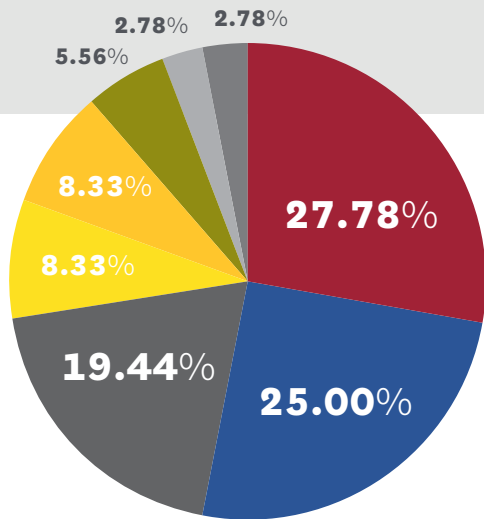
CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

- Apathy and lack of interest from the public
- Climate change is too complex or overwhelming
- Over-politicization of climate change
- Misconceptions and lack of knowledge about climate change
- Lack of funding for climate communications work
- The climate positions of the incoming U.S. presidential administration
- Other
- All of the above
- Misinformation/disinformation generated through AI

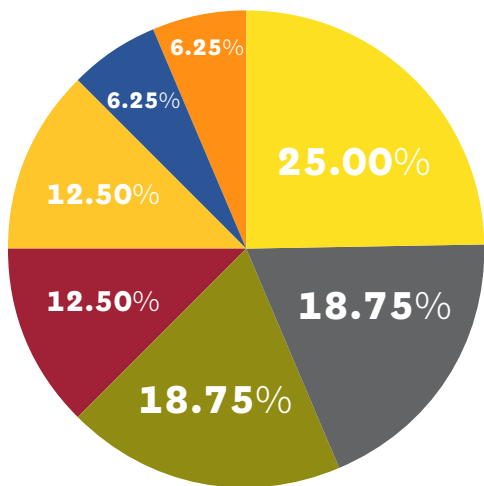
How respondents view challenges based on job type



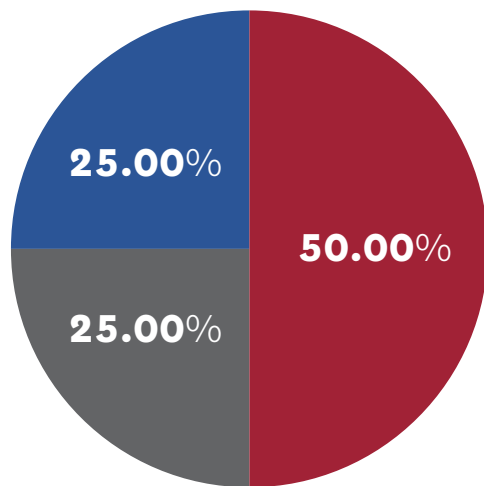
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION



JOURNALIST



NONPROFIT OR NGO



STUDENT

- Apathy and lack of interest from the public
- Climate change is too complex or overwhelming
- Over-politicization of climate change
- Misconceptions and lack of knowledge about climate change
- Lack of funding for climate communications work
- The climate positions of the incoming U.S. presidential administration
- Other
- All of the above
- Misinformation/disinformation generated through AI

Other challenges that respondents mentioned

“Our shared ideological dogma makes effective communication about climate next to impossible. Even calling it the climate crisis is part of the problem, because it is really a global environmental crisis and a crisis of capitalism.”

Helene Langlamet, Climate Communication Researcher

“Speaking from the museum field, it is a lack of coordinated efforts: so many museum associations, individual museums, and cultural sector professionals are working on this and it could be so much more powerful with aligned strategy.”

Danielle Sakowski, Program Manager at Environment & Culture Partners

“General lack of ecological literacy, no understanding of science basics.”

Bob Berwyn, Journalist

“Left-leaning bias of climate communications; dis- and misinformation generally; ‘climate speak’ as opposed to relating climate to what people actually care about; the isolation of the ‘climate comms’ field as a separate field; lack of collaboration within climate comms; media bias/incentives/headlines.”

Laur Hesse Fisher, Vice President of Impact and Learning at DEPLOY/US

“Profit seeking by oil and gas companies and the finance industry.”

Arthur Sprogis, External Senior Advisor for the U.S. Department of Energy

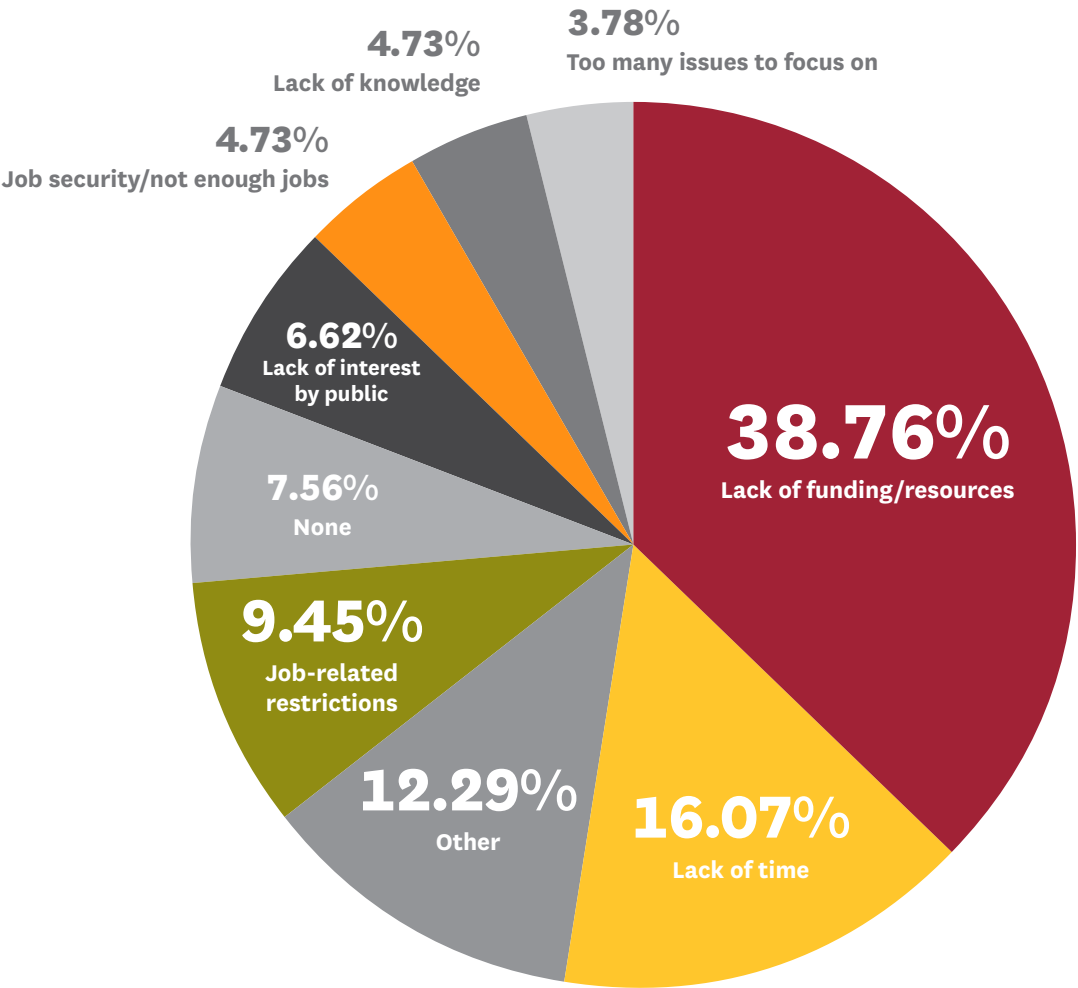
“In general: people are consuming information (not all of it credible) on hundreds of topics daily. I suspect climate only rises to the surface when it directly affects a person or is a major event getting regional, national or global attention.”

Peg McNichol, Multimedia Journalist

What limits climate communications?

When we asked climate communicators what limits the depth and/or frequency of their climate communications initiatives, the biggest factor that respondents mentioned was lack of funding/ resources, followed by lack of time and job-related restrictions such as restrictions with use of language and “needing to be careful about what you say,” as one respondent put it.

➤ Respondents share factors that limit their climate communication initiatives



Role of the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election

Between November 19 and December 31, 2024, we asked respondents:

How do you anticipate the outcome of the U.S. presidential election will impact your work?

These are the top issues, ranked, as mentioned by that respondents:

1. Major changes in funding sources

“People are worried about potential impacts on universities, about changes in policies, funding, etc. I’m worried that it emboldens those with perspectives that climate change isn’t caused by humans, or isn’t connected to the extreme weather, or isn’t something we should care about or act on, etc.”

- Hannah Findling, Sustainability Program Administrator at USC Sustainability Office

2. Less government cooperation

“Many nations around the world are impacted by American leadership. The measures that follow could either directly or indirectly affect how climate change concerns globally if the elected president is unconcerned about climate change and how to save the planet Earth.”

- Andi Aisyah Lamboge, Environmental Reporter

3. Misinformation/disinformation, and increased anti-climate rhetoric

“It will be significantly harder to get climate data and have governmental sources talk to us. The anti-climate stances of the new administration will exacerbate impacts of climate change, disproportionately affecting poor, Black, and Brown people.”

- Alex Ip, Editor and Publisher of The Xylom

4. Censorship

“More censorship, loss of opportunities for being too political in my identity of work.”

- Isaias Hernandez, Founder of QueerBrownVegan

5. Reframing communications

“It will change the way we frame our work, but not what or how we research. We will need to talk about the advantages of climate action in ways that emphasize the economic, health, and security benefits, which are more likely to resonate with conservatives.”

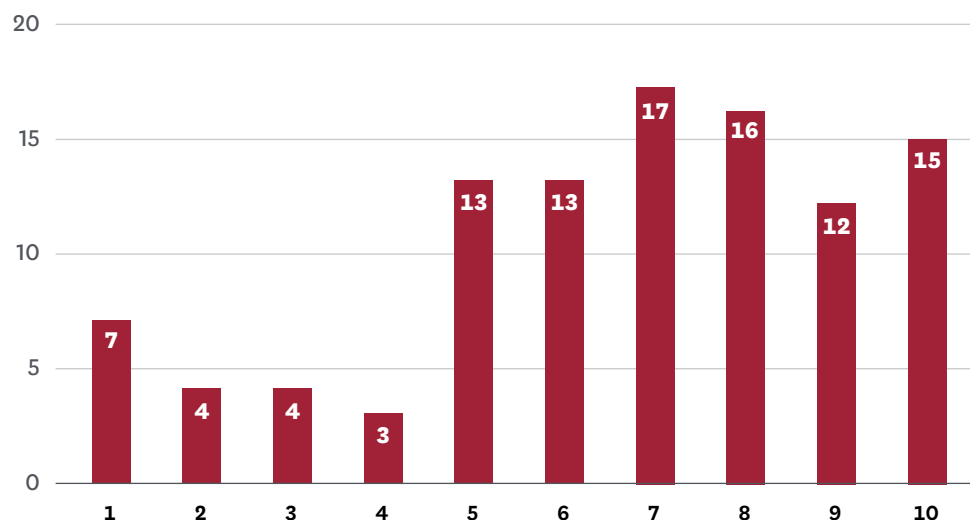
- Liz Hanlon, *Communications and Outreach Specialist at Harvard’s Belfer Center*

“I hope it will force climate communicators to start breaking out of the climate bubble; to get interested in and creative about how to un-brand things as “climate” and infuse decarbonization along with / inside existing concerns, values and priorities. We could take a lesson from how center-right / center-left politicians talk about climate change; it’s relatable and understandable to a much, much wider audience.”

- Laur Hesse Fisher, *Vice President of Impact and Learning at DEPLOY/US*

We asked respondents to rate their perceived level of job security on a scale of 1-10.

After the election and before the presidential inauguration of Donald Trump on Jan. 20, climate communicators were concerned about funding sources, but most did not show concern about their job security. Those working in academia and nonprofits showed the least concern about job security, while those working in journalism, communications and PR, and climate advocacy showed the most concern.

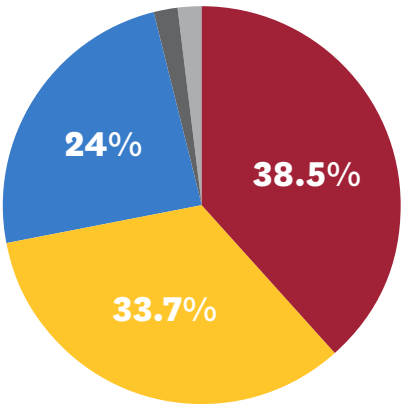


Community and support in the climate space

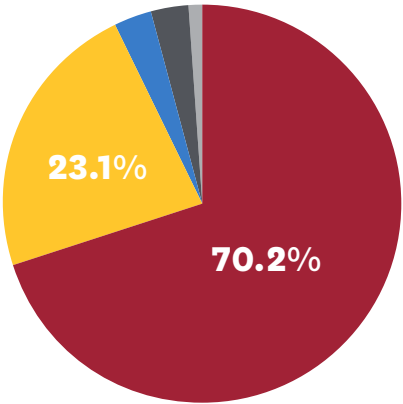
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

While climate communicators feel confident about being able to discuss their personal views and feelings on climate change in professional spaces, they are less confident about how their organization's climate goals align with its climate actions.

My organization's stated goals about climate change communications align with its actions



I can openly discuss my views and feelings about climate change in professional spaces

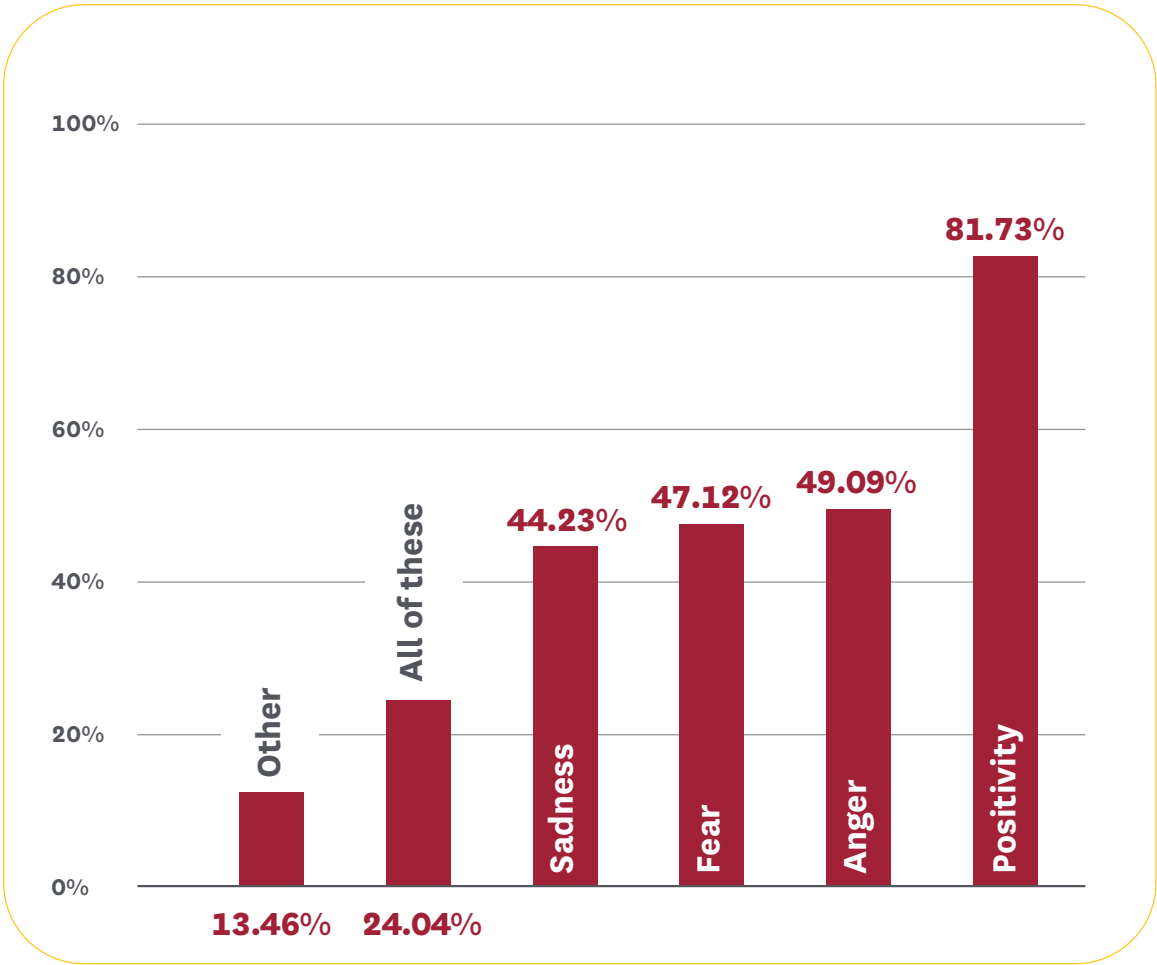


Climate emotions

Over 80% of respondents say they feel positive emotions when engaging with work on climate change. Almost 50% of respondents say they feel anger and fear, and almost 45% of respondents say they feel sadness when engaging with work on climate change. About 25% report feeling all kinds of emotions when engaging with climate change work.

Other respondents said they try to avoid feeling any climate emotions because they think of it as “just an issue we need to work on” or they are worried about climate emotions affecting their reporting or communications on climate change.

» **What kinds of emotions do you feel when you engage with work on climate change?**



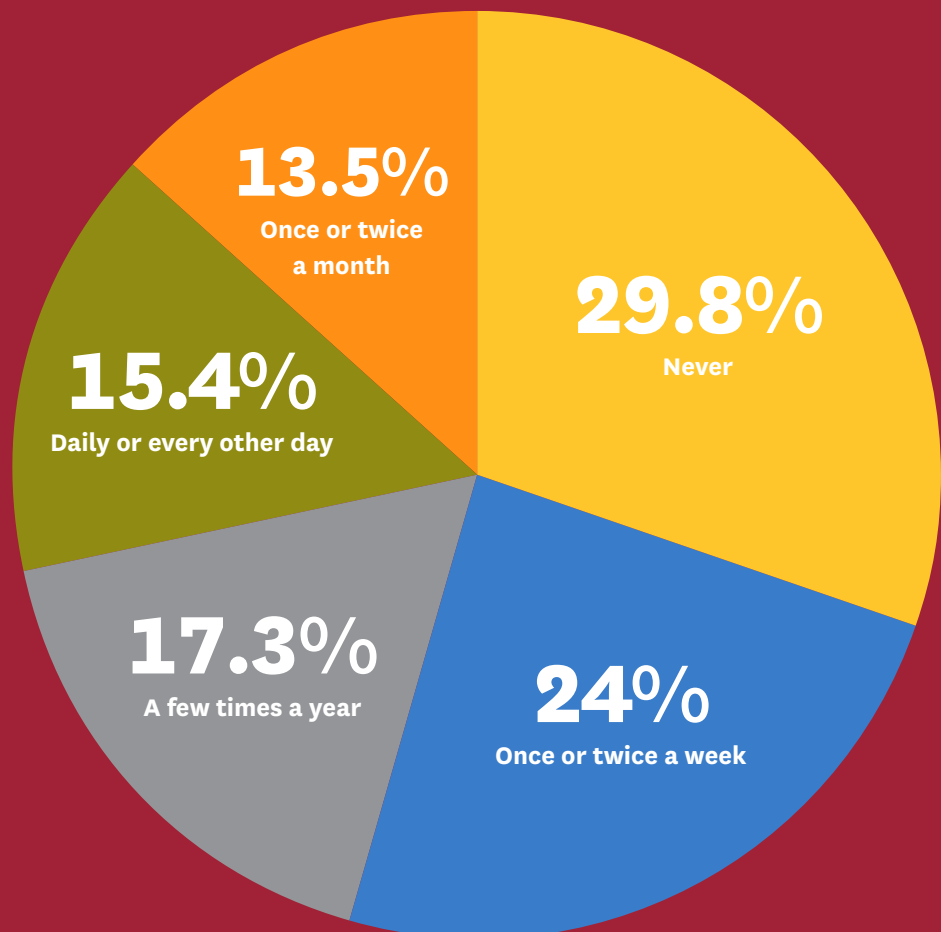
Artificial Intelligence

Use of AI in climate communication

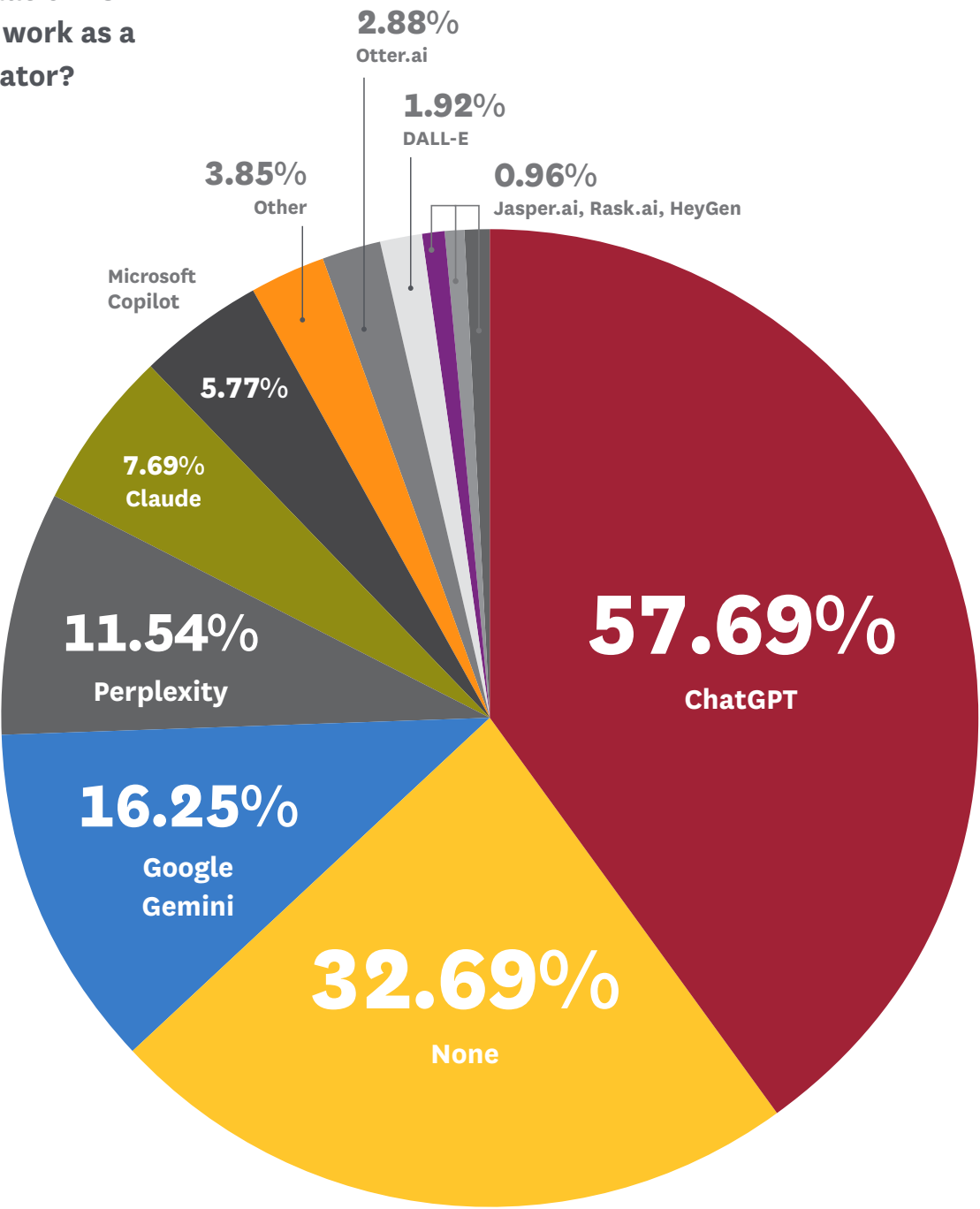
When we asked respondents how often they used AI for climate communication, almost 30% of our respondents said they never used AI in their climate communication work.

About 40% of respondents frequently use AI in their climate communication work, which means they use AI at least once or twice a week.

» In your work as a climate communicator, how often do you use AI?



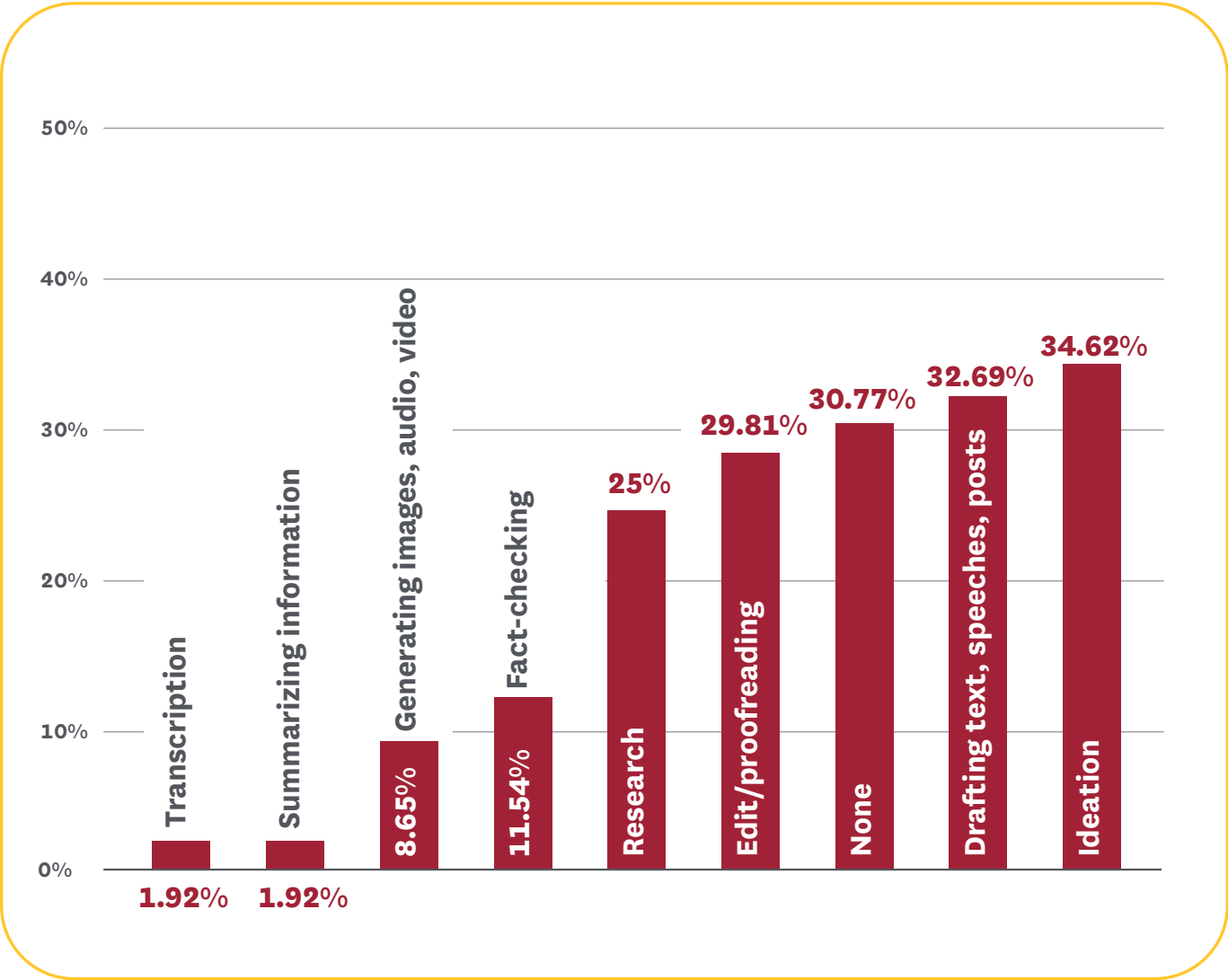
What AI tools or platforms do you use in your work as a climate communicator?



ChatGPT was the most used AI tool by our respondents, followed by **Google Gemini** and **Perplexity**.

In what ways are you using AI for climate communication?

Our respondents top use of AI for climate communication was ideation, followed by drafting text, editing/proofreading and research.



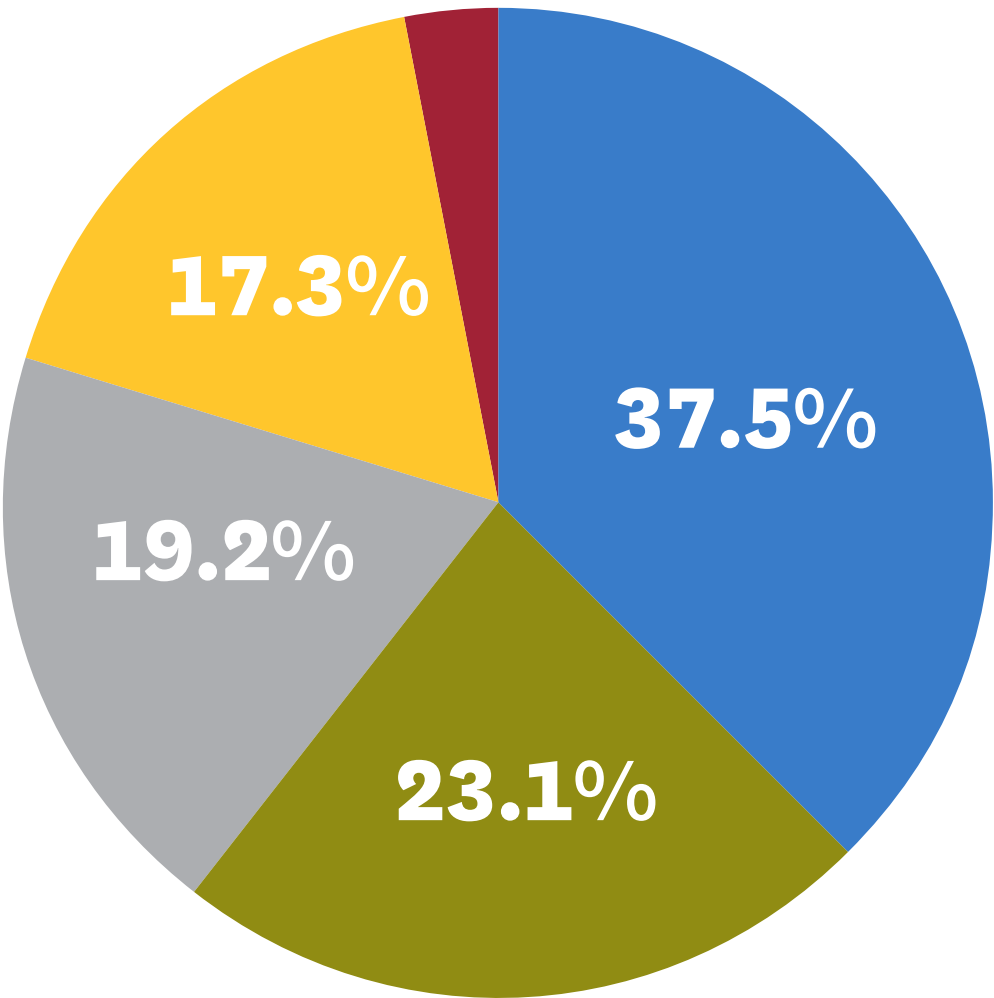
Can AI play a positive role in climate communication?

We asked our respondents: To what extent do you agree with the following statement:
“AI has a positive impact on climate change communications.”

More than 40% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that AI has a positive impact on climate change communications.

AI has a positive impact on climate change communications

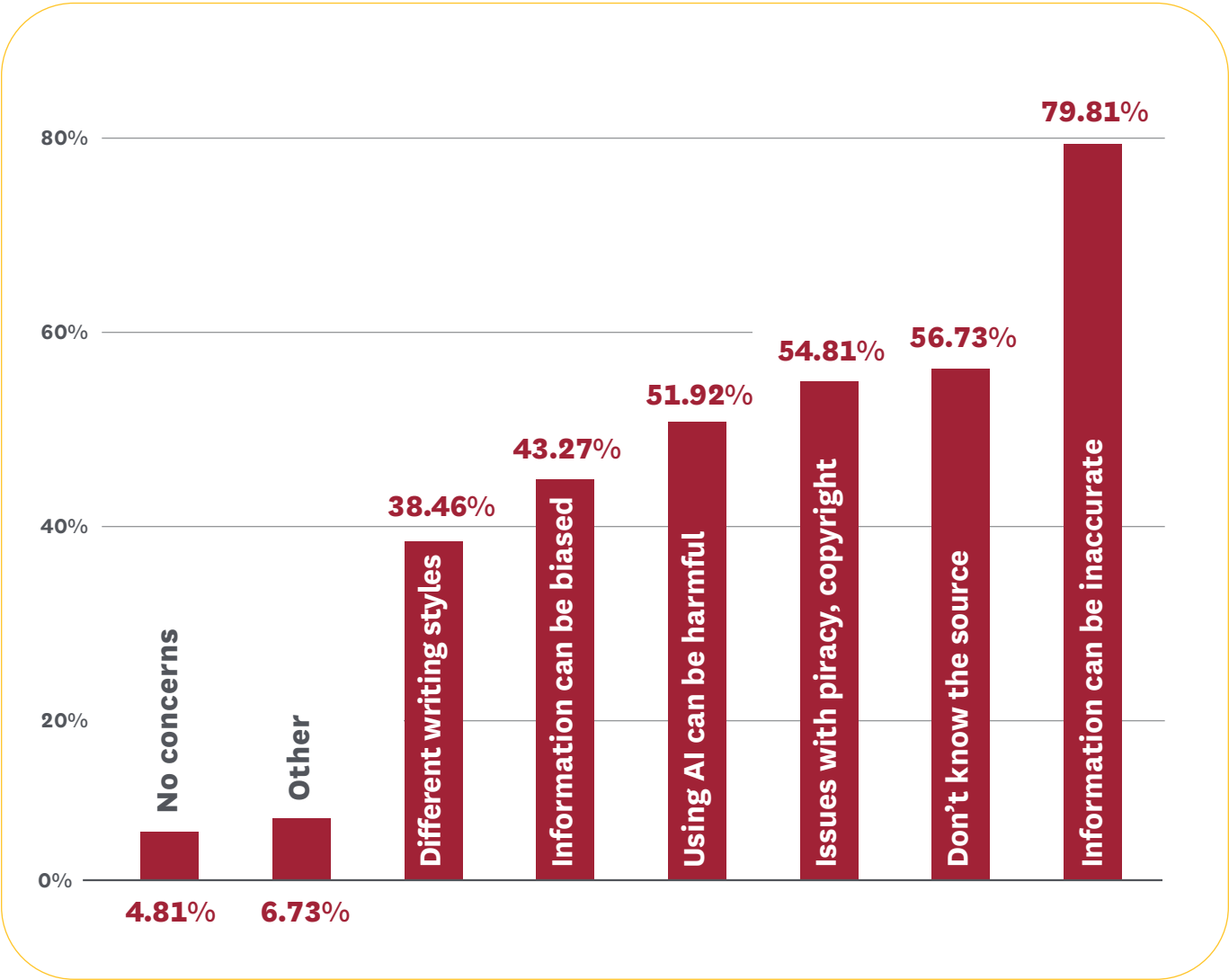
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree



Concerns with AI use

The biggest concern that climate communicators have with AI use for climate communication is accuracy.

Some respondents mentioned that they worry AI may “reduce our ability to think critically and be creative on our own” and can be harmful to professionals like journalists because “at times [it takes] information produced by journalists, without paying them for their work, and reproduce it for audiences who don’t have to pay for it (thus further undermining the financial stability of journalism).”



Analysis and **Forecast**

After his inauguration on January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump signed executive orders accelerating domestic fossil fuel production and infrastructure, withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris Climate Agreement and other international climate treaties, and repealing initiatives and mandates to expand infrastructure and access to renewable energy⁸. As a result, the landscape of climate action and communication has been fundamentally transformed in just a few months.

In our mid-November 2024 survey, climate communicators shared that the biggest challenges they face when communicating about climate change are apathy and lack of interest, misconceptions and lack of knowledge, and overpoliticization of climate change in the public forum. This means that even as federal websites get scrubbed of their climate language, we need to continue to talk about the biggest issue of our lifetimes.

While ranking climate and environmental issues, most of our respondents said extreme weather issues are of top concern. Wändi Bruine de Bruin, a behavioral scientist at USC, published a study in 2021⁹ that showed how sharing stories about personal experiences during severe weather can “make climate impacts concrete.”¹⁰

But how do we frame compound hazards like wildfires and hurricanes without using the words “climate change”?

Perhaps these limitations can also force us to become more creative. Research from the University of Bergen in Norway has shown that audiences find it hard to understand climate issues because of the “uncertainty and complexity” that the issues involve¹¹.

This means it is important to know what resonates with your audience, which is one of the key tips that we offer to climate communicators. As our accepted lexicon shifts during these turbulent times, climate communicators will have to constantly check the temperature of their audiences and respond with words and messages that resonate the most in that given moment.

When I was a rural climate reporting fellow for the Center in 2023, I found myself living in a town in Southeastern Oregon where the townsfolk did not agree with my use of the phrase “climate change.” But that didn’t stop me from telling climate stories — I found myself using phrases such as “unpredictable weather patterns” or “climate variability” within stories that focused on the specific issues the local community was concerned about, such as the length of the wildfire season or new innovations that can save their crops during severe weather.

At a time of crisis such as this one, people need hope that is rooted in real solutions and action. A study by the University of Oregon has found that solutions-based messaging is one of the most effective ways to spur people towards climate action¹² — a finding that mirrors what our respondents have observed in their work.

Climate reporter Michelle Alfini has written about climate solutions such as weatherization updates to homes, which can not only reduce the impacts of extreme weather, but can also reduce energy bills. “I’ve had viewers reach out to me saying they learned about weatherization assistance through my reporting, which allows them to lower their household bills while improving their home’s energy efficiency,” she said.

Meanwhile, climate organizer and communicator Maksim Batuyev has been developing and organizing climate cafes (informal, community-led space where people can gather to talk about the impacts of climate change, solutions as well as ways to take action) as one of the solutions to eco-anxiety and climate distress¹³. “I drove sign-ups for activist workshops, and have led a lot of digital campaigns,” he said. “Others have started Climate Cafes because of what I’ve shared online and I’ve reached millions of people with information and resources about mental health.”

Artificial intelligence is one of those tools that has the potential to be a climate solution¹⁴, if we can find a way to make it sustainable¹⁵. A majority of our respondents are concerned about the use of AI for various reasons — and rightly so — but Annenberg adjunct professor Olivia Smith has been teaching our partners how to reduce some of the risks and concerns through an ethical and judicious use of the technology. In an interview for this essay, Olivia said climate communicators need to learn the AI tools used to generate climate misinformation to be able to spot misinformation and deep fakes and counter them. She will teach how to leverage AI in sustainability and climate communications for Annenberg’s first professional Certificate in Sustainability Communication that will launch this summer.

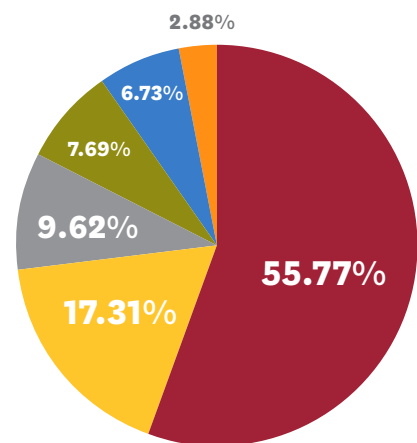
Finally, while unfortunate, it is not a surprise to hear our respondents say their work is limited mainly due to a lack of funding and resources within the climate space, with more than half saying that they would benefit most from financial support.

As President Trump cuts down funding for federal climate projects¹⁶, our survey results show that the majority of climate communicators are worried that climate support will slow down at a time when we need more action than ever, not to mention the thousands of jobs that have been lost¹⁷ and countless more that are at risk as a result of funding cuts.

What gives me hope during this time is our community of climate communicators that continues to take on this very important task with strength and resilience even as the situation looks bleak. On the next page, you will find some words of advice from our respondents for our next generation of climate communicators. I found them thoughtful and heartwarming, and I hope you do too.

Rhysea Agrawal

Engagement Coordinator, Center For Climate Journalism and Communication
USC Annenberg School

Respondents share the type of support that would be most meaningful for their work

- **Financial support**
(increased wages, reporting stipends, grants)
- **Trainings and workshops**
- **Public events and programs featuring climate experts**
- **Community events**
- **Climate cafes and discussion groups**
- **Other**

Words of advice for young climate communicators

“You’re already doing the first, and most important piece to make a difference — talking about climate change! So find goodness in that. Next allow yourself to feel all the things, sadness, anger, and even joy. More often than not, I hope you find that joy, hope, and positivity in this work as you get to observe all the climate-positive advances — awareness of people seeking out knowledge, actions like clean energy innovations and adoption, community-building in climate resiliency — and interact with people and communities that are doing that work. Remember, you don’t have to do this alone.”

Danielle Sakowski, Program Manager at ECPRS

“Avoid the pitfalls of black and white journalism. Climate solutions like all technologies have their pluses and minuses. The key is to focus on what technology is best suited for the region. Avoid the one-size fits all approach. Stay open minded.”

Amena H. Saiyid, Washington Correspondent at Cipher News

“Communicating climate to our communities in equitable and accountable ways is critical as we need everyone to understand climate change. We need to catalyze communities to take action to support and secure their communities’ safety and security as climate change disrupts every part of our lives and the lives of all living beings on earth.”

Fara Warner, Executive Director at the Metcalf Institute,
University of Rhode Island

“I would quote Margaret Meade: ‘Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it’s the only thing that ever has.’”

Lois J. de Vries,
Executive Director of the
Sustainable Gardening Institute

Methodology

Distribution and Response Rate

The survey was distributed to thousands of climate communicators using Google Forms, which enabled us to reach respondents from a variety of fields across the world, including journalists, researchers and other professionals whose job involves some degree of climate communication.

We received responses from 104 people, out of which 15 were international, while the rest were based in the United States.

This broad target group was strategically chosen to capture a diverse range of insights and experiences within the field. To maximize the number of respondents, we implemented a strategy of frequent follow-ups with our audience base. However, better strategies can be implemented in the future, including offering incentives upon filling the survey etc.

Survey Duration and Timing

We released the survey on November 19, 2024 and kept it open until December 31, 2024 so that respondents could use this time to reflect on the work they did throughout the year.

Data Collection and Analysis

The survey consisted of a series of structured questions, crafted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Some of the qualitative responses were categorized into bins to allow for quantitative analysis.

Limitations and Considerations

Certain limitations are inherent in this type of research. The responses represent a subset of the targeted population, and the views expressed by respondents may not fully encapsulate the entire spectrum of opinions in the field of climate communication.

For our next survey, we would like to reach a broader group and large number of climate communicators, especially from certain target professional groups that were underrepresented in our latest survey.

Acknowledgement

About The USC Annenberg Center for Climate Journalism and Communication

The USC Annenberg Center for Climate Journalism and Communication empowers professionals across media, public relations, strategic and corporate communications and the sciences to become effective storytellers who advance a deeper understanding of the consequences of climate change — from the global to the local and from the collective to the individual.

About USC Annenberg

The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California is an international leader in education and scholarship in the fields of communication, journalism, public diplomacy and public relations. With an enrollment of more than 2,200 students, USC Annenberg offers graduate and undergraduate degree programs that prepare the most promising minds to inquire, innovate and lead at the global crossroads of media, technology and culture.

Authors

Allison Agsten, Director

Rhysea Agrawal, Engagement Coordinator

Grace Galante, Research Assistant

Michael Kittilson, Research Assistant

Anahita Mehra, Research Assistant

Design

Anne Marie Singer, Singer Design Studio

Administration

Pawan Ahuja, Academic Program Administrator

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