

Report of the AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

In May of 2023, the American Geosciences Institute (AGI) formed this Task Force and sent a questionnaire to AGI Member Societies and other geoscience societies. We asked that the questionnaire be completed by July 1, and we received completed questionnaires from 36, including 22 Member Societies (46%) and one Liaison Organization. The Task Force reviewed the responses and highlighted several areas of current and potential collaboration.

This PowerPoint presentation serves as the report of the Task Force. We recommend that the leadership of societies identify individuals to join Working Groups to follow up. Thank you all.



Societies that participated in the questionnaire

- American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG)
- Association of American State Geologists (AASG)
- American Geophysical Union (AGU)
- American Association of Geographers (AAG)
- American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)
- American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG)
- American Rock Mechanics Association (ARMA)
- American Water Resources Association (AWRA)
- Asia Oceania Geosciences Society (AOGS)
- Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S. (ARCUS)
- National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG)
- Imaging and Geospatial Information Society (ASPRS)
- Association for Women Geoscientists (AWG)
- Association of Applied Geochemists (AEG)
- Association of Earth Science Editors (AESE)
- Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists (AEG)
- Canadian Federation of Earth Science (CFES)
- Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CGIS)
- European Geosciences Union (EGU)
- European Federation of Geologists (EFG)
- Geochemical Society (GS)
- Geological Society of America (GSA)
- Mineralogical Society of America (MSA)
- National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT)
- National Earth Science Teachers Association (NESTA)
- Seismological Society of America (SSA)
- Society for Sedimentary Geology (SEPM)
- Society for Geology Applied to Mineral Deposits (SGA)
- Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration (SME)
- Society of Economic Geologists (SEG)
- Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG)
- Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP)
- Soil Science Society of America (SSSA)
- The Meteoritical Society (TMS)
- The Micropalaeontological Society (TMS)
- The Palaeontological Association (PalAss)

AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

Members – volunteers from AGI Member Societies

Jonathan Allen, AAPG
Ann Benbow, MSA
Nan Broadbent, SSA
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Dawn Garcia, AIPG
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Douglas E. Rambo, ASBOG
Deana Sneyd, ASBOG
Michelle Sutherland, AWG
Dana Thomas, NAGT
Jim White, SEG

Co-Chairs of the Task Force
Rebecca Caldwell, AGI Secretary
Sandy Carlson, Member at Large, AGI Board of Directors
Jon Price, AGI President

Jon Arthur, AGI Executive Director

Chris Keane, AGI Director of Geoscience Profession & Higher Education



Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
interested in:

Taking the
lead

Having another
society lead

MEETINGS/CONFERENCES/ETC.

In-person	H – M – L	_____	_____
Online	H – M – L	_____	_____
Hybrid	H – M – L	_____	_____
Recording	H – M – L	_____	_____
Field trips	H – M – L	_____	_____
Webinars	H – M – L	_____	_____
You Tube Channels	H – M – L	_____	_____
Social Media Posts	H – M – L	_____	_____
Specialty conferences	H – M – L	_____	_____
Software (registration, etc.)	H – M – L	_____	_____
Advertising/exchange of information	H – M – L	_____	_____
Discounts for members of other societies	H – M – L	_____	_____
Other _____	H – M – L	_____	_____

Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
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Taking the
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Having another
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PUBLISHING

Software	H – M – L	_____	_____
Peer review	H – M – L	_____	_____
Editing	H – M – L	_____	_____
Graphic design	H – M – L	_____	_____
Printing	H – M – L	_____	_____
(Snail) Mailing	H – M – L	_____	_____
Distribution via social media/email	H – M – L	_____	_____
Open access	H – M – L	_____	_____
Archiving digital files	H – M – L	_____	_____
Co-publishing (journals, books)	H – M – L	_____	_____
Copyrights	H – M – L	_____	_____
Marketing	H – M – L	_____	_____
Other _____	H – M – L	_____	_____

Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
interested in:

Taking the
lead

Having another
society lead

MEMBERSHIP

Software & databases

H – M – L

Joint membership possibilities

H – M – L

Universal Membership (one fee covers all)

H – M – L

Data on past & current trends

H – M – L

Retention

H – M – L

Fees

H – M – L

Other _____

H – M – L

Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
interested in:

Taking the
lead

Having another
society lead.

ADMINISTRATION (first part)

Association software

H – M – L

Donor software

H – M – L

Shared services

Programming (to modify software)

H – M – L

IT services

H – M – L

Accounting

H – M – L

Webinar hosting/Zoom services

H – M – L

Website design & maintenance

H – M – L

Social media

H – M – L

Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
interested in:

Taking the

lead

Having another
society lead

ADMINISTRATION (second part)

Insurance

General liability

H – M – L

Liability for directors & officers

H – M – L

Identity theft & IT ransom

H – M – L

Property

H – M – L

Vehicle

H – M – L

Health (for members & staff)

H – M – L

Shared/rented office space in location
(e.g., Washington, DC area, Denver)

H – M – L

Shared personnel for

H – M – L

(e.g., phone calls, public outreach, information)

Other _____

H – M – L

Questionnaire

Part 1. Areas of Potential Collaboration

Priority
If interested, please circle
High, Moderate, or Low

Check if your society may be
interested in:

Taking the

lead

Having another
society lead

POTENTIAL MERGERS

Merger with other societies

H – M – L

With which societies (if known)?

OTHER AREAS

H – M – L

Questionnaire

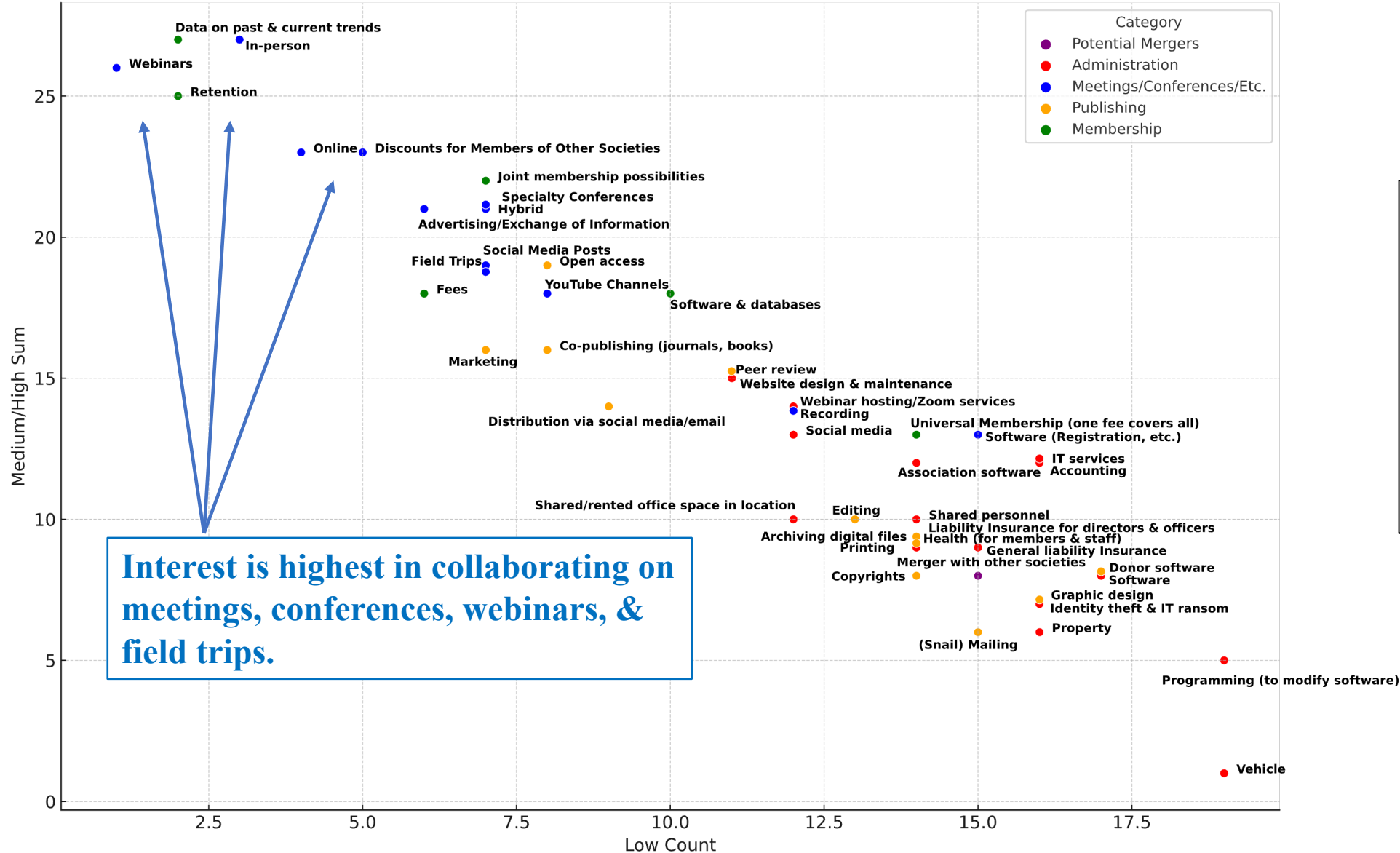
Part 2. Elaboration

Please elaborate on any **potential collaborations** that your society would **like to explore**, and any questions or comments you may have about the form that those collaborations might take.

Please describe any **collaborations** that your society currently has with **other organizations**, and how or why you view them as successful (or not).

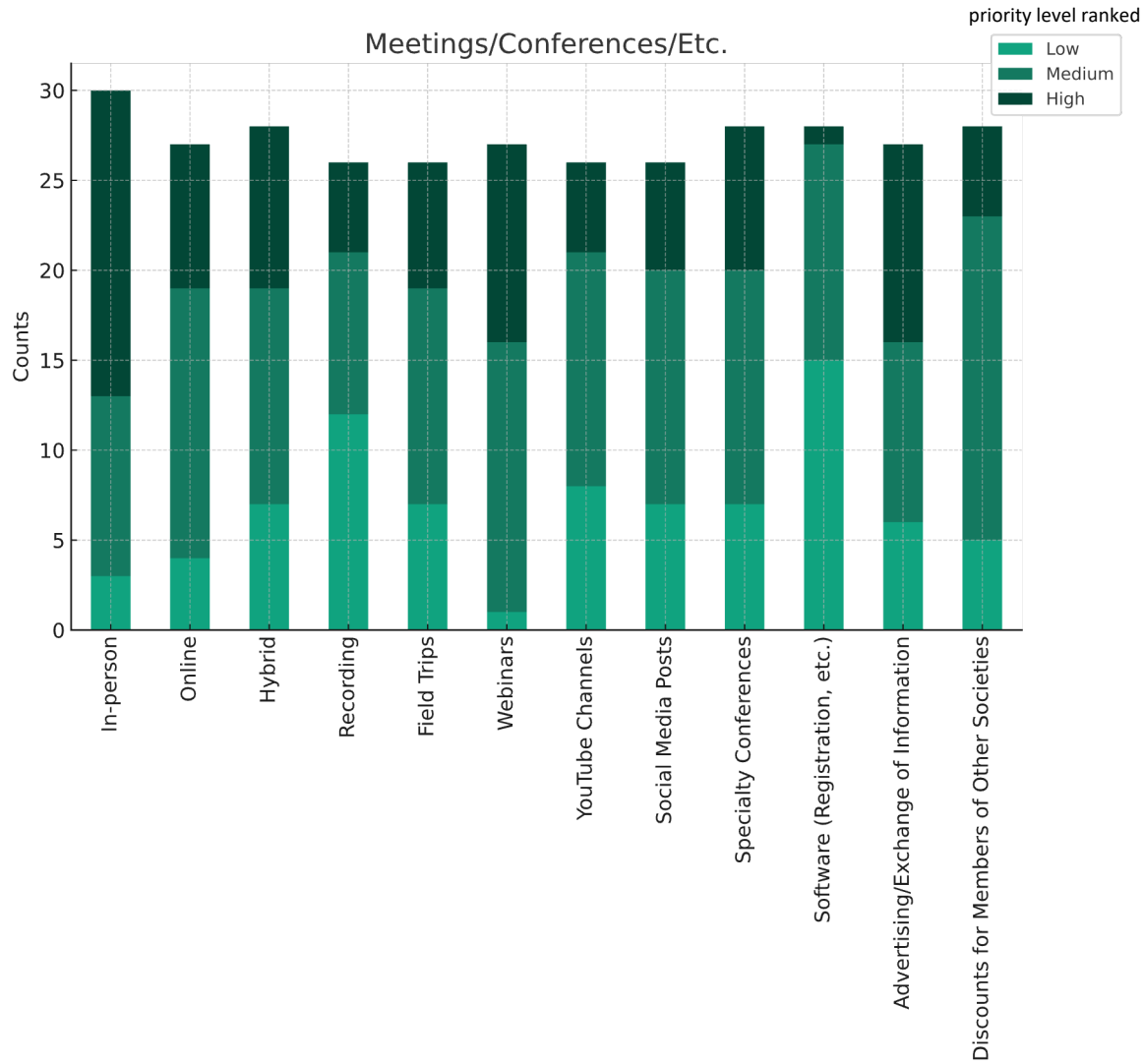
Questionnaire Results – How important are different areas of potential collaboration to your society?

Scatter Plot of Medium/High Sum vs. Low Count

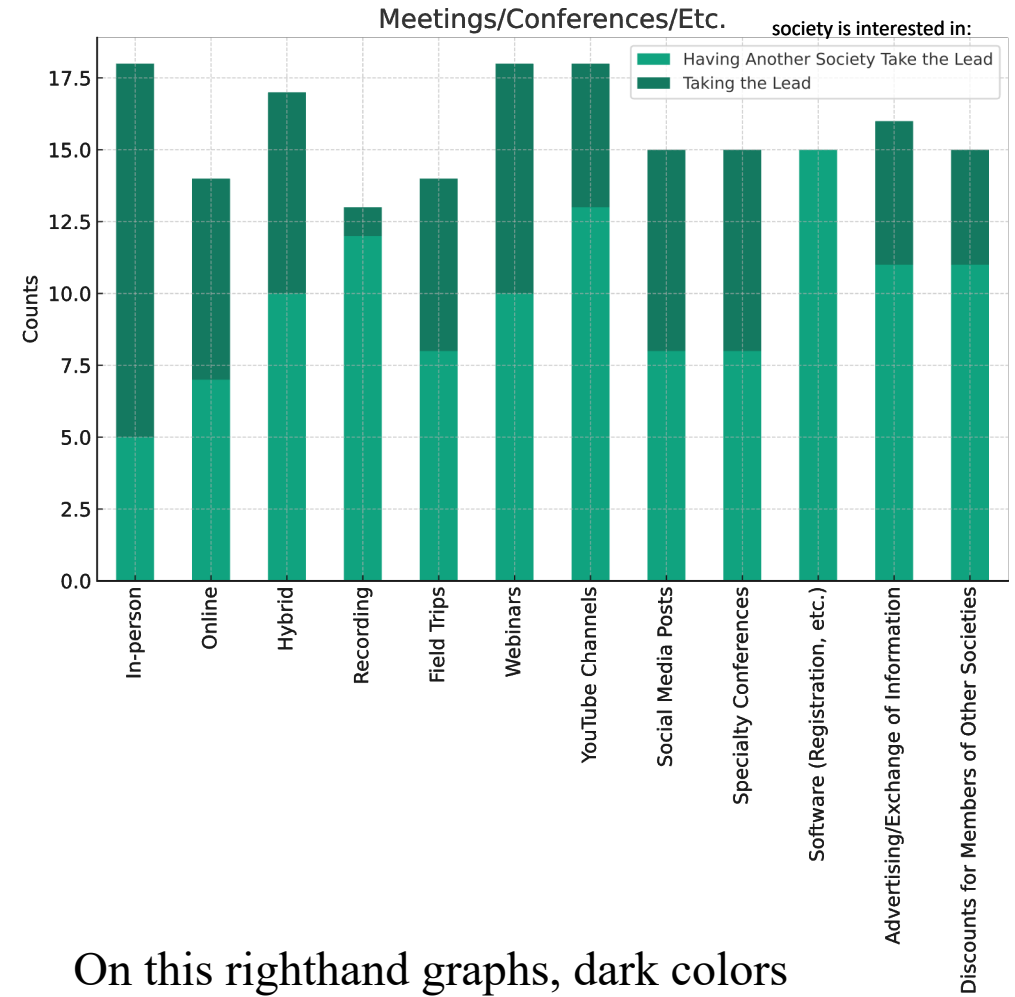


Interest is highest in collaborating on meetings, conferences, webinars, & field trips.

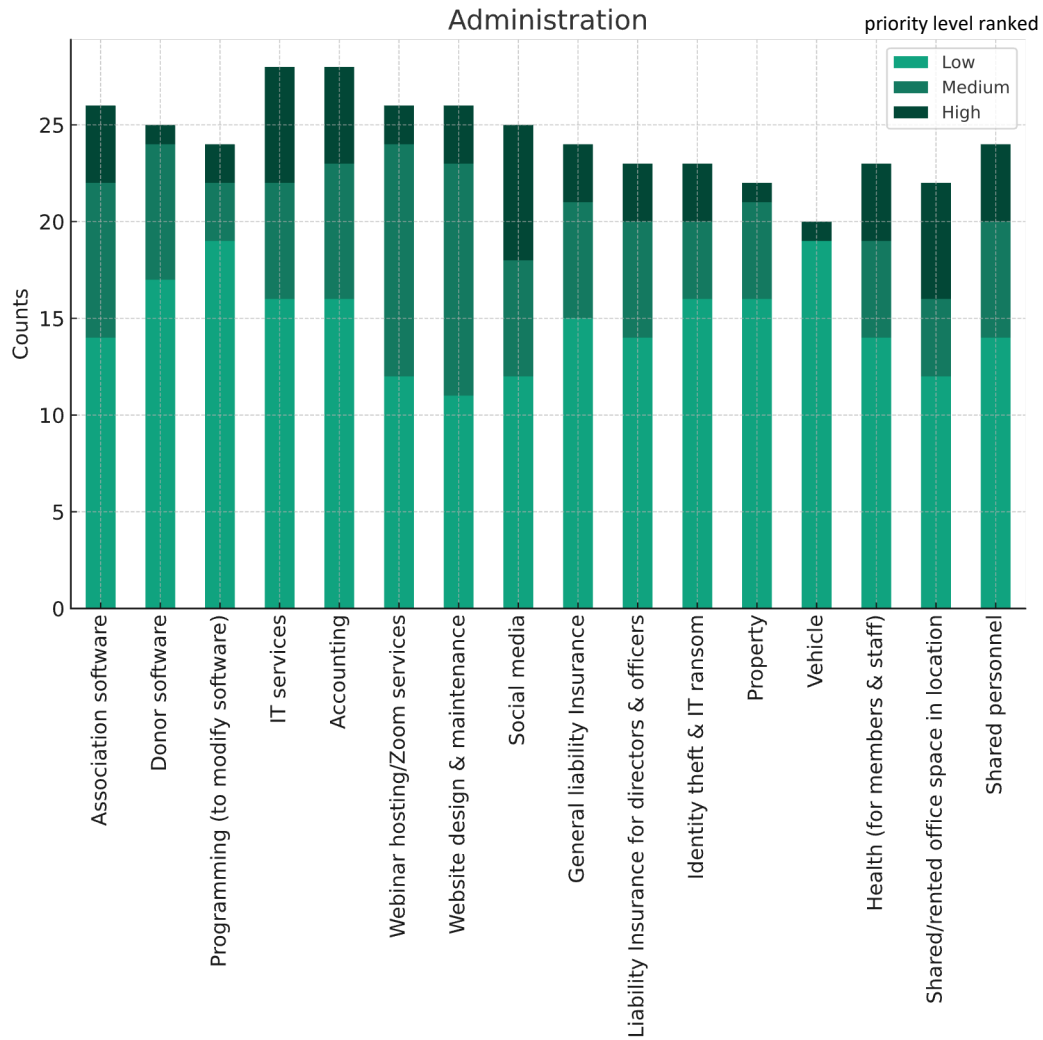
- “Medium/High Sum”: Total number of societies that ranked an area of collaboration as being a medium or high priority.
- “Low Count”: total number of societies that ranked an area of collaboration as being a low priority.



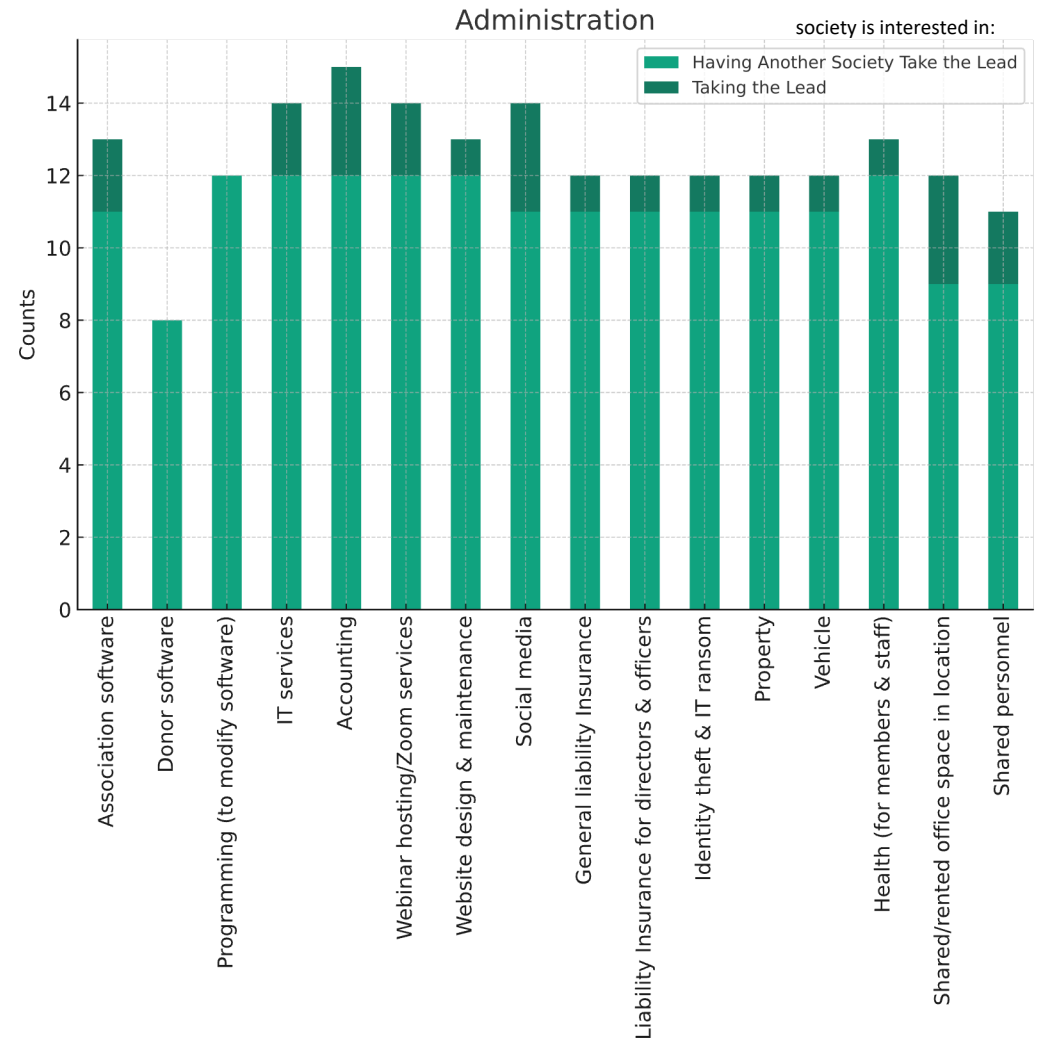
On this lefthand graph, dark colors indicate high interest in collaborating on aspects of meetings & conferences.



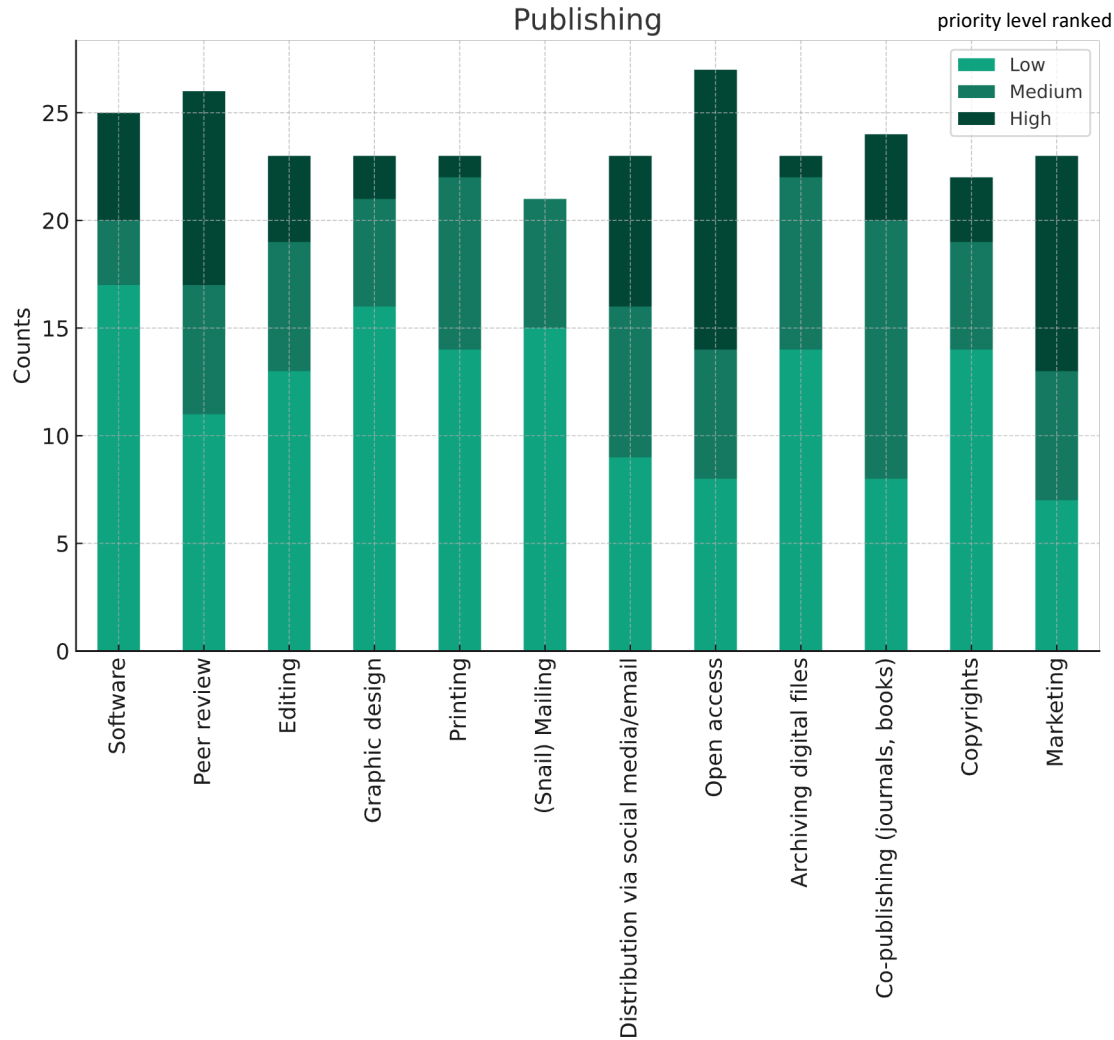
On this righthand graphs, dark colors indicate interest in taking the lead, whereas light colors indicate interest in having other societies take the lead.



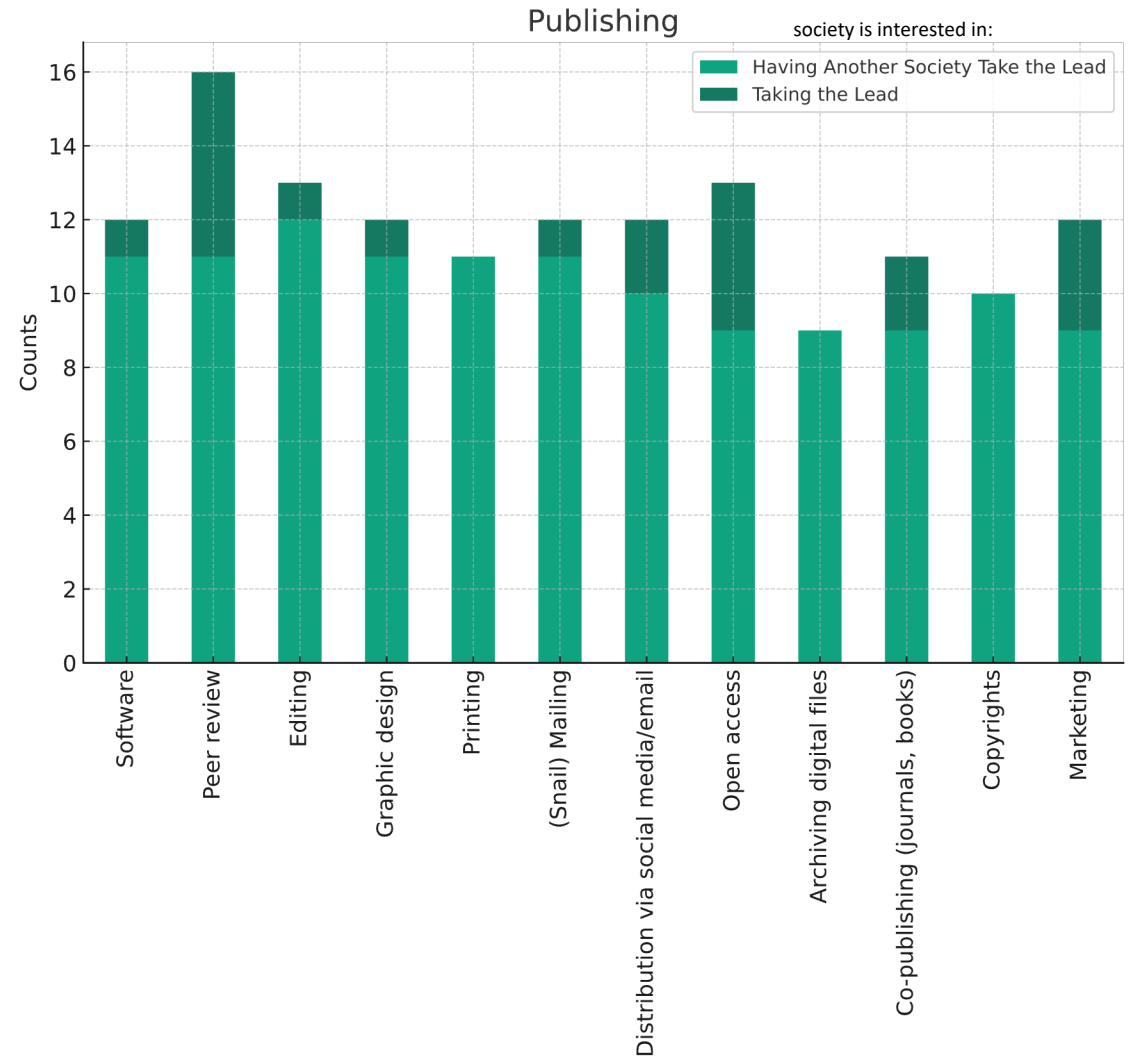
On this lefthand graph, dark colors indicate high interest in collaborating on aspects of society administration.



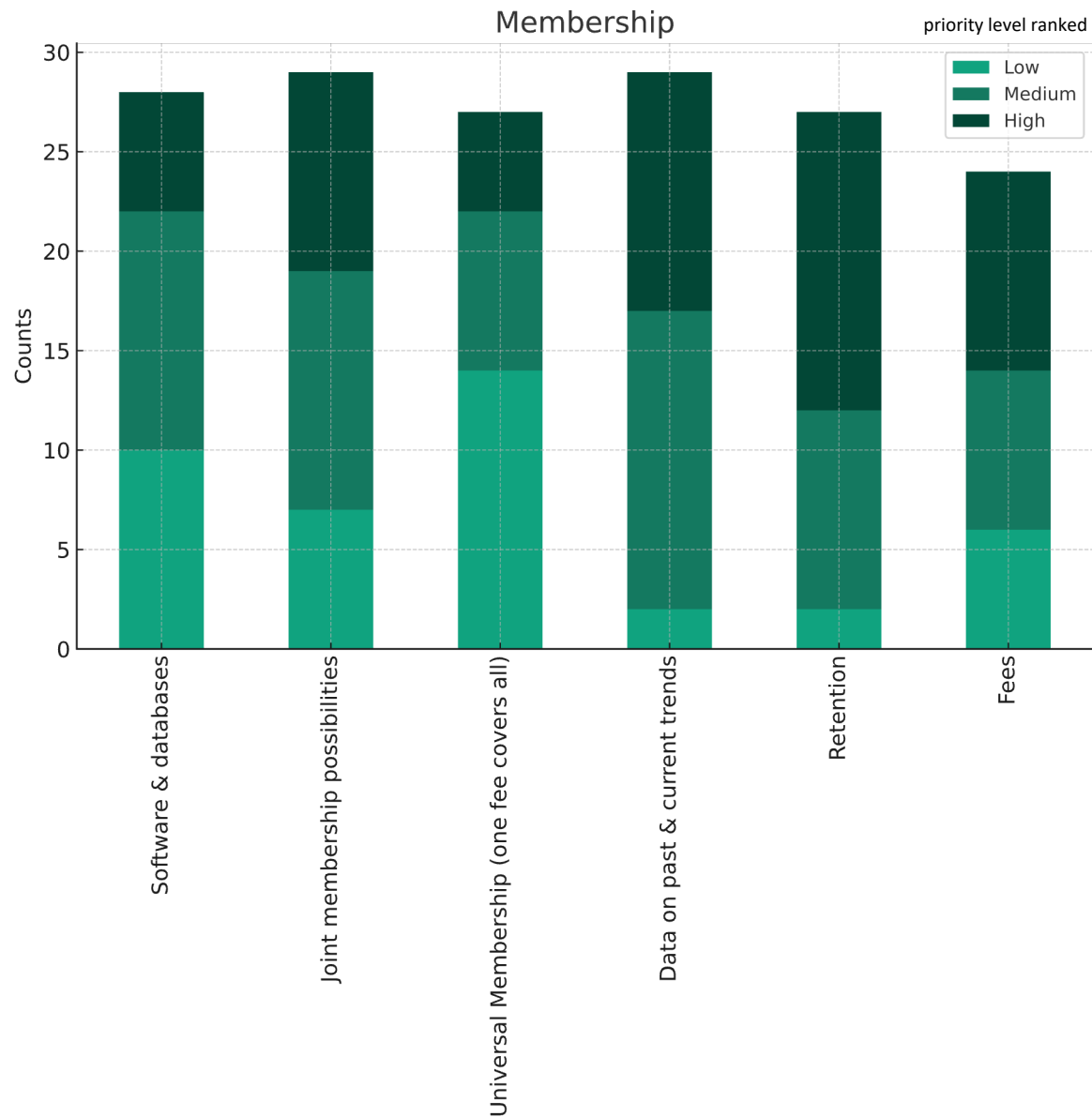
On this righthand graphs, dark colors indicate interest in taking the lead, whereas light colors indicate interest in having other societies take the lead.



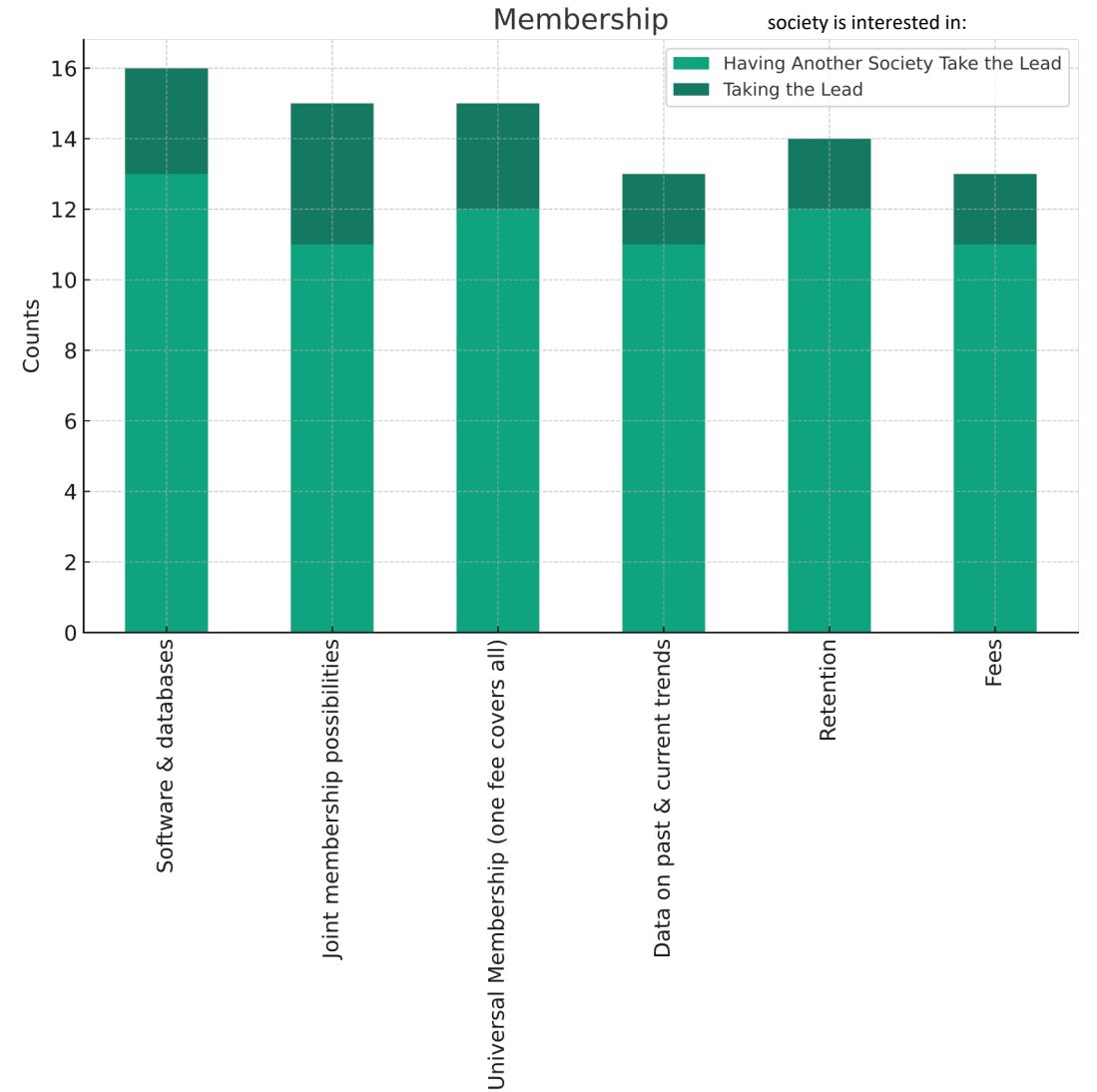
On this lefthand graph, dark colors indicate high interest in collaborating on aspects of publishing.



On this righthand graphs, dark colors indicate interest in taking the lead, whereas light colors indicate interest in having other societies take the lead.



On this lefthand graph, dark colors indicate high interest in collaborating on aspects of membership.



On this righthand graphs, dark colors indicate interest in taking the lead.



On this lefthand graph, dark colors indicate high interest in collaborating on potential mergers.

On this righthand graphs, dark colors indicate interest in taking the lead, whereas light colors indicate interest in having other societies take the lead.

Willingness to Take a Lead Meetings/Conferences/Etc.

- In-person
 - Geochemical Society
 - American Water Resources Association
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - AOGS Asia Oceania Geosciences Society
 - Cartography and Geographic Information Society
 - Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - Association of Applied Geochemists
 - AAPG
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - AGU
 - Society of Exploration Geophysicists
- Online
 - Geochemical Society
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - National Earth Science Teachers Association
 - Mineralogical Society of America
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
- Hybrid
 - Geochemical Society
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - Cartography and Geographic Information Society
 - National Earth Science Teachers Association
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - American Association of Geographers
 - AGU
- Recording
 - Soil Science Society of America
- Field Trips
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - AAPG
 - AGU
 - AASG
- Webinars
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - National Earth Science Teachers Association
 - Mineralogical Society of America
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - Association of Applied Geochemists
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
 - NAGT
- YouTube Channels
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - Cartography and Geographic Information Society
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
- Social Media Posts
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Cartography and Geographic Information Society
 - Canadian Federation of Earth Science
 - National Earth Science Teachers Association
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
- Specialty Conferences
 - Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc
 - Mineralogical Society of America
 - Association of Applied Geochemists
 - AAPG
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
 - AGU
- Advertising/Exchange of Information
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Canadian Federation of Earth Science
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - AGU
- Discounts for Members of Other Societies
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - Association of Applied Geochemists
 - AAPG
 - AGU

Willingness to Take a Lead

Membership, Administration, and Mergers

Membership

- Software & databases
 - Geochemical Society
 - Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc
 - AAPG
- Joint membership possibilities
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
 - AGU
- Universal Membership (one fee covers all)
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - AGU
- Data on past & current trends
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - AGU
- Retention
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
- Fees
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization

Administration

- Association software
 - Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc
 - AAPG
- IT services
 - AAPG
 - AGU
- Accounting
 - AAPG
 - AGU
 - Society of Exploration Geophysicists
- Webinar hosting/Zoom services
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
- Website design & maintenance
 - European Federation of Geologists
- Social media
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
- Shared/rented office space in location
 - Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc
 - Soil Science Society of America
 - AGU
- Shared personnel
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - AAPG

Potential Mergers

- Merger with other societies
 - American Water Resources Association
 - American Institute of Professional Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America
 - NAGT
 - American Association of Geographers
 - AGU

Willing to Take a Lead

Publishing

- Software
 - Society of Exploration Geophysicists
- Peer review
 - Society of Economic Geologists
 - American Water Resources Association
 - Society for Geology Applied to Mineralization
 - AOGS Asia Oceania Geosciences Society
 - AGU
- Editing
 - Society of Economic Geologists
- Graphic design
 - Society of Exploration Geophysicists
- Distribution via social media/email
 - European Federation of Geologists
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
- Open access
 - American Water Resources Association
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Association of Applied Geochemists
 - AGU
- Co-publishing (journals, books)
 - AAPG
 - AGU
- Marketing
 - Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
 - Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
 - Soil Science Society of America

Current Collaborations

- Many societies are involved in collaborations, ranging from joint events and conferences, or shared marketing initiatives, to formal partnerships with Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements.
- Collaborations involving shared services, such as accounting and membership services, are present and appreciated for their efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- Many societies have affiliations with other organizations based on shared interests and objectives. These affiliations often include agreement to advertise each other's initiatives and updates.
- Joint awards and recognitions in partnership with other organizations are prevalent and are viewed positively, helping to increase engagement across the global community.
- Several societies have expressed the benefit of collaboration in terms of broadening their horizons and extending their reach, enabling them to offer more to their members.
- The idea of collaboration in the form of an umbrella organization or federation is present and viewed positively, as it brings together different societies and associations, promoting the exchange of information and experiences.
- Formal agreements, multiple points of connection, resource/staff time investments, regular interactions, and shared leadership are highlighted as factors that contribute to the success of collaborations.
- Collaborations that lead to jointly produced products or events, and shared marketing, are seen as successful and beneficial.

Current Collaborations

- **Affiliations and Advertising:** Some societies have affiliations with other organizations, primarily for the purpose of advertising each other's initiatives.
- **Liaisons with Other Organizations:** Liaisons with other relevant organizations have been established to collaborate on specific tasks and/or events.
- **Management Contracts:** Management contracts with other organizations provide beneficial services, such as part-time workers, bookkeeping, accounting support, and website database support.
- **Formal Agreements, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), contribute to the success of collaborations by providing clear expectations and obligations for each party; they allow for sharing of societal offerings and broaden the horizons for members of each organization.**
- **Joint Awards:** Collaborative efforts to produce joint awards with other organizations are seen as important for the community.
- **Multiple Points of Connection and Shared Leadership:** Successful collaborations often involve multiple points of connection, shared leadership, and investments from both organizations.
- **Regular Interactions: Regular interactions between organizations contribute to the success of collaborations.**
- **Global Relationships:** Strong working relationships with non-US commissions help societies fulfill their missions and increase engagement across the global community.
- **Event-specific Collaborations:** Collaborations around specific tasks or events, such as joint awards luncheons or webinar series, are viewed as successful.

Stated Interests in Future Collaborations

- There is a general openness to collaborations, particularly around efforts to bring societies together to support the development of new interdisciplinary projects, enhance scientific community management, increase membership diversity, assess community needs, and promote broader impacts.
- Collaborations that can aid in streamlining administration or make it more efficient are welcomed. This could include joint initiatives, sharing of best practices, and potentially shared administrative services.
- Joint programming, information sharing, geoscience education, and social media collaborations are areas of interest.
- There is an interest in shared meetings, conferences, and technical sessions. This could extend to jointly organized events or cross-promotion of events, scholarships, and opportunities.
- The idea of an umbrella organization that combines all administrative functions but allows for technical and niche functioning of individual societies has been suggested.
- There is an expressed need to maintain individual identities, programs, and certifications that are already recognized in the field, even in the face of potential collaborations.
- Interest exists in utilizing improved data management systems, specialized skills, and shared resources. This could lead to cost benefits and efficiency in operations, including healthcare for employees.
- There is an openness to exploring collaborations that could lead to merging of smaller journals or incorporating them under a larger banner.
- Collaborations focused on career development, such as student career workshops and professional development, are of interest.

Collaboration ideas

- Information Sharing: Societies are interested in collaborations that facilitate the sharing of information and experiences.
- Joint Programming: Collaborations involving the creation and execution of joint programs were mentioned.
- Education: Several societies expressed interest in collaborative efforts related to geoscience education.
- Social Media: There's interest in exploring joint social media initiatives or campaigns.
- Joint Conferences or Webinars: Jointly holding scientific conferences, technical sessions, or webinars is a commonly suggested form of collaboration.
- Jointly Owned Management Company: The idea of creating a jointly owned association management company to serve multiple organizations was proposed.
- Match-Making for Webinar Series: There's an interest in potential match-making between different societies' webinar series to feature and co-promote each other's work.
- Legal Constraints: The existence of legal constraints, such as those related to open access pricing, that could prevent certain forms of collaboration was acknowledged.
- Several societies are open to mergers; some are not.
- Collaboration through AGI: The value of existing collaborations through the American Geosciences Institute (AGI) was recognized.

Admin Services Willing to Share

- Shared bookkeeping staff may be of interest.
- Secretariat
- Accounting, event planning, digital marketing

Cities in which to Share Space

- Washington, DC, USA (AGI, AGU, MSA, GSA +)
“Sharing space with AGI has been great for our society.”
- Denver - Littleton, Colorado, USA (SME, AIPG, GSA +)
- Brussels, Belgium (Euro-societies, +)

AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

This PowerPoint presentation serves as the final report of the Task Force. **Task Force members have volunteered to help follow up with Working Groups.** AGI can provide some support to the Working Groups (site to store files for sharing, website for posting results & suggestions).



Working Groups cover Three General Areas:

Meetings/Conferences and Publishing

Membership and Other Areas of Collaboration

Administration and Potential Mergers



Working Group Leaders:

Meetings/Conferences and Publishing

Kevin Johnson, kjohnson@geochemsoc.org

Membership and Other Areas of Collaboration

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Administration and Potential Mergers

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AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

As an example, the Working Group on Membership might organize a workshop on FEES, led by the societies that expressed interest in taking the lead in collaborating on this topic. They would create an agenda for a virtual meeting, ask societies to participate, and guide the group to define action items and connect societies willing to further discuss working together (e.g., on reduced fees for individuals joining multiple societies.)



AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

The Working Group on Membership might also organize workshops on other topics, including

- Software and Databases
- Joint Membership Possibilities
- Universal Membership
- Data on past and current trends
- Retention
- Topics identified in other workshops.



Working Groups

These groups will meet soon to prioritize the possible areas for collaboration and discuss ways to put them into action. **If your society is interested in collaborating on any of these topics, please designate a representative(s) to the working groups by November 1.** This may be a volunteer leader or member of your staff. Feel free to designate different people for the three working groups.



**Please send names and email addresses
to the Working Group Leaders:**

Meetings/Conferences and Publishing

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Membership and Other Areas of Collaboration

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Administration and Potential Mergers

Howard Harper, hharper@sepm.org



AGI Task Force on Collaboration among Geoscience Societies

AGI is holding one-hour *Geoscience Caucus* online meetings every other month or so to informally discuss topics of mutual interest among the leadership of geoscience societies.

For contacts with the leadership of other geoscience societies, please check the Internet or contact

Jon Arthur, AGI Executive Director, jarthur@americangeosciences.org .

Thank you all.

