

Imperial College London

Brand identity

Discovery: A summary

August 2023

Pentagram

The input before the answer

This is a summary of the findings so far from the research and discovery phase of the Imperial Brand project. It's a chance to play back what people have told us and what we've uncovered through our research and discovery stage.

We'll use this as input for our **recommendations** and **brand brief**. These will guide our brand work (design, messaging, tone of voice, brand architecture etc).

What we'll cover

1. Audiences we researched

2. What we heard

3. Imperial compared to its alternatives

Appendix

Highlights from our supporting data

1. Audiences we researched

Audiences we've covered

Students

- Current students
- Potential students
- Alumni

Staff

- Current

External

- Donors, philanthropists
- Business and industry

Including international / global stakeholders in each group

Wider community

- South Kensington, White City, North Acton etc
- London
- The general public

Research and discovery: a summary

Primary research

Stakeholder interviews

- 30 people

Focus groups

- 4, covering:
 - Students
 - Staff
 - Alumni

Immersion sessions

- 4, covering:
 - Brand and comms
 - Student recruitment and marketing

Site visits

- South Kensington / North Acton
- White City
- Silwood Park
- Carbon Capture facility
- Enterprise Lab

Quantitative survey

- 2,437 responses
 - 1,455 alumni
 - 674 staff
 - 308 students

Competitors

- Desk research and analysis

Secondary research

Students

- Understanding and Connecting With a Diverse Audience, (An Outsider, 2023)
- Student Union - all officially published minutes

Underrepresented groups

- STEM Futures Research Report (Cosmos, 2022)
- Widening Participation at Imperial College London (YouthSight report, 2019)

Donors and funding

- Regular Giving Acquisition Appeal Development (PS, 2022)

International students

- Pentagram insights into US student market

General public perceptions

- Imperial College London Brand Awareness and Perceptions Tracking (Britain Thinks, 2022)

Business School

- Brand Development Research, Phase 1, (Breathe, 2023)

History and development of Imperial College London

- Community Report from the History Group (Imperial College London, 2021)
- Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, Charter and Statutes

Higher education and competitors

- World University Rankings (Times Higher Education)
- The Guardian University Guide 2023 (The Guardian)
- QS World University Rankings (Quacquarelli Symonds)

2. What we heard

Insights on relevance

In our discovery phase, your stakeholders told us how they perceive the Imperial brand today and what they'd like it to be doing more of. We've grouped our observations into two themes:

Create a clearer 'wow factor'

1. Stand for something clear and powerful
2. 'Remember the fundamental science'
3. Celebrate independent minds
4. Be a 'category of one' - not one of many
5. Tell a strong story of an 'ecosystem' - or risk being overlooked

Punch your weight

6. Be brave: stop hiding your successes
7. Appeal to the senses
8. Widen participation
9. Get maximum impact against well-funded alternatives
10. Alumni: talk about your global family with local impact

We'll explore each of these over the next few slides.

1. Stand for something clear and powerful

League tables and rankings matter - and attract people. But our interviews and research suggest that Imperial tends to attract people with a sense of **mission and purpose**. People who want to contribute something positive and meaningful to the world.

We heard from **staff** that the ability to translate research into impact - potentially world-changing impact - not only attracted them in the first place, but keeps them here. There's a sense that nowhere else would afford people the same kind of opportunities or potential - mainly because of access to infrastructure, funding, world-leading minds and external connections. Of course, practical aspects such as salary and location affect choice, but purpose contributes to attraction and loyalty.

Students also reflect this mindset, with the ideas of translation and impact coming up as common and important themes in focus groups and survey results. Students also told us that they value the entrepreneurial opportunities and view Imperial's ability to solve problems across faculties / departments as a differentiating factor.

Donors, philanthropists and businesses want to see impact for the money and support they give. This may be because they're coming to you to solve specific challenges (especially in business and industry) or because they want the halo effect of being associated with an institution that solves important societal problems. Either way, it's an important aspect of attracting funding and partnerships.

“I'm here to make a difference. I suspect many of us feel the same way. We're doing world-changing things. These are important problems. This is *the* place to come if you want to make a difference.”

Source: Pentagonam research. Staff interview. July 2023

2. ‘Remember the fundamental science’

Impact and translation are important parts of the story - but many interviewees, focus group attendees and survey respondents reminded us of the importance of the ‘fundamental science’.

Imperial’s reputation and rankings are ultimately based on world-leading research and teaching. There’s a belief that this needs to remain a key focus for the brand.

As one interviewee put it, “we forget the science at our peril”.

This may feel like an obvious point. But we must remember this in our work together. Many other attributes and characteristics need to come through in the brand expression - impact, London, EDI goals, an international outlook etc. But, without a strong reputation for world-leading scientific endeavour, the Imperial brand would lose its key point of distinction.

Many other institutions claim that they’re focusing on solving big global and societal problems - what separates Imperial from the pack is scientific curiosity and endeavour, which is critical to solving many of these major challenges.

“We forget the science at our peril!”

Source: Pentagram research. Staff interview. July 2023

3. Celebrate independent minds

Building on our previous point about ‘fundamental science,’ Imperial is an institution that needs curious minds, visionary thinkers and creative spirits. While the STEM subjects are often viewed as disciplined, rigid and focused, there’s a duality at play - breakthroughs and discoveries often call for free thinking and imagination.

Our interviews in particular told us that Imperial is a place where people are afforded freedom and independence - particularly in terms of where they take their research and discovery.

As one interviewee put it, “the freedom to imagine” is important.

This creative, risk-taking spirit is also evident through the investment in and take-up of the Enterprise Lab, for example. This is indicative of an institution that attracts bold, ambitious and visionary thinkers - an idea supported by the frequency of phrases related to “entrepreneurial spirit” that came up among students in our focus groups and survey results.

“We need to create an environment that gives people the freedom to imagine. We need to be able to explore new ideas and directions and see where they take us - but with the structures to turn ideas into action.”

Source: Pentagram research. Staff interview. July 2023

4. Be a ‘category of one’ (not one of many)

In our interviews and focus groups, we picked up on some potentially ‘hidden dangers’ in the way you talk about yourselves:

- Regular comparisons to being ‘almost as good as’ Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and other top-tier global universities
- A common phrase that belies a ‘second place’ mindset - “make us the MIT of Europe”

Our survey findings, conversations and focus groups presented a positive perception of Imperial as a unique institution. Your key stakeholders perceive you as being a world-leading scientific and technical institution, creating world-changing impact. Potential donors and other external stakeholders explicitly called out that your teaching and research is as good - if not better - than any global institution.

Plus, your focus enables you to achieve results and impact that other institutions can’t - and puts you in a unique position among competitors.

This all makes you a global top 10 university, with a twist. The brand should dial up these aspects - and make you ‘a category of one’. It should define Imperial by what it is: **a unique STEM MB university**, underpinned by teaching, research and impact that makes you an elite global institution.

“The quality of [Imperial’s] teaching and research is as good as any global institution. No, better in its field.”

Source: Pentagram research. External stakeholder. July 2023

5. Tell a strong story of an ‘ecosystem’ - or risk being overlooked

This insight came from external stakeholder interviews - representatives of potential investors, foreign governments and outreach partners. The broad logic went something like this:

- Imperial has a track record of entrepreneurship and fostering start-ups.
- The UK (and London / the Golden Triangle in particular) does have some success - but not as much as other countries (e.g. the US, Israel), particularly when it comes to scale-ups and spinouts.
- Other countries are perceived as having a stronger ecosystem and greater funding, which leads to more successful spinouts.
- Imperial is ideally placed to lead the UK to greater success - scientific discovery; engineering leadership; a focus on translation and impact; acumen from the Business School; excellent relationships with other institutions, especially in Europe; a strong reputation in Asia; and a London home - one of the few truly global hubs.
- To achieve greater impact, Imperial can't sit back and wait for the UK to become stronger - it has to spearhead the efforts.

This perspective on the UK is in line with what we're hearing from other clients. And it's clearly not a problem that brand alone can solve. But, taken together with the other insights in this section, Imperial has huge potential to start creating an impression of a strong ecosystem for investment and impact. The brand needs to call out your successes more strongly - and make your connections, networks and partnerships more visible and obvious.

“I look around the world regularly and see other countries with stronger ecosystems. The US and Israel in particular. Imperial needs to tell a stronger story of its ecosystem to compete...”

Source: Pentagonam research. External stakeholder. July 2023

6. Be brave: stop hiding your successes

Unlike many brands we work with, Imperial is actually doing pretty much all the right things to build a strong reputation. The challenge is that those things are hidden or not celebrated loudly enough.

Our focus groups and research told us that Imperial is a ‘best-kept secret’ and needs to ‘become a household name’. As one interviewee put it, “I get so frustrated when I see MIT appearing in the Iron Man films...I think, why aren’t we there instead? We’re just as good.”

One external interviewee (potential donor / investor) told us that Imperial’s successes are “not visible” - particularly when it comes to entrepreneurship and commercial innovation. Other institutions are bolder when it comes to promoting these kinds of successes.

Many focus group attendees and interviewees shared a view that Imperial needs to tell a better story about the world-changing impact of its work. External interviewees (representing business and international organisations) told us that the quality of research, teaching and impact is as good as any other leading university - but the brand today doesn’t reflect this. Other institutions - particularly well-funded US institutions - are more engaging and confident in the way they talk about their work.

They also told us that Imperial’s voice needs to be louder outside of academia. Imperial is well-known and well-respected within your own communities (science, research, higher education) - but is almost invisible in wider society.

“How many millions of people go through South Kensington station each year? They go to the Science Museum and the V&A. They get to the ‘gates’ of Imperial, but don’t see us. We need to be more visible.”

Source: Pentagram research. Staff interview. July 2023

7. Appeal to the senses

When asked about how people view the brand today, common responses included the brand being seen as cold, corporate and dated. The need to make the brand more attractive (to students, partners, donors and collaborators) was important, ranking as a top three concern among students, staff and alumni.

A common theme in our interviews and focus groups was that the brand needed to be warmer and more human in future. While a small number liked the current identity, there was a greater desire to see something less corporate - and, as one representative view put it, “something that makes us look less like a hospital or local authority building”.

As an interesting note, characteristics like ‘bold,’ ‘exciting,’ and ‘fast-paced’ ranked among the least-important characteristics among students, staff and alumni. Warmth and humanity were more important.

“Walking around the buildings, the branding feels like an NHS Trust. Let’s liven things up...make things more exciting and engaging.”

Source: Pentagram research. Staff interview. July 2023

8. Widen participation

Your brand is about creating impact and solving the big challenges facing humanity. To solve those problems, you need to be reflective of the people you're solving them for. That means Imperial needs to be a place that is diverse, inclusive and equitable.

There's good work happening in this area - but also a healthy sense that it's work in progress, not a job that's complete.

The brand needs to be appealing and attractive to people outside traditional audiences, encouraging people who may not naturally consider Imperial as a place 'for them'.

This doesn't mean lowering standards - we heard the phrase 'elite but not elitist' a number of times. The barrier to entry is high in terms of academic ability and that's not going to change. It's more about creating a brand that's attractive for high-achievers and potential high achievers outside of your traditional audiences. It needs to be representative of all communities that you're looking to engage. And we need to consider how to make it more accessible - particularly encouraging people from an early age, or a non-scientific background, making Imperial - and STEM subjects - appealing, relevant and accessible, without 'dumbing down'.

“We need to think about how we communicate science. It needs to be clearer and more engaging. [This is] important in breaking down stereotypes.”

“To solve society's problems, we have to be representative of that society.”

Source: Pentagram research. Staff interview (top). Student focus group (bottom). July 2023

9. Get maximum impact against well-funded alternatives

Our interviews and focus groups in particular raise the issue of ‘punching your weight’ among institutions with comparable expertise and abilities.

Given that many of your most direct competitors are US-based (especially MIT, Caltech etc) and are better funded, this raises a challenge: how do you compete for attention and awareness, given limited resources?

League tables and rankings are perhaps one of the most important ways in which people know of you. When it comes to students, you have a strong reputation in certain parts of the world (especially Asia) and among advisors who influence student decisions.

But what we found in discovery suggests that your reputation is:

- Weaker in the US
- Not strong across the whole of the UK
- Facing new / increasing competition in certain markets (e.g. Africa)

“The US institutions in particular are so well-funded. Imperial needs to work harder to compete.”

Source: Pentagonam research. External stakeholder. July 2023

10. Alumni: talk about your global family with local impact

You have more than 248,000 alumni around the world. In our discovery phase, they were the most responsive group for our quantitative survey - and our alumni conversations and focus groups demonstrated the passion and energy they have for maintaining connections and promoting Imperial.

Your alumni can be a huge source of power for your brand.

One thing we discussed in our focus groups (particularly with alumni) was how to use alumni to engage people all around the world - and demonstrate relevance in your key markets, (particularly outside London in the UK, and generally in the US). Alumni were keen to be a source of stories about a 'global institution with local impact' - stories that demonstrate how, from a London hub, Imperial has a global mindset that creates huge impact with and for people and communities all around the UK and the world. Alumni participants in our discussions felt they could be a huge source of credibility and legitimacy for this kind of story - stories that are much more credible, as they're told by real people, rather than an institution. They could be a particularly powerful voice in places where you don't have as strong a reputation.

“Alumni living in different parts of the world feel strongly about how [Imperial] is portrayed in and regarded in their neck of the woods, and they want to help improve the brand on both fronts...I'm particularly vested in this project and keen to support it...”

Source: Pentagram research. Alumni response. July 2023

Important considerations for the brand

Values

Imperial's values came up as a topic in several interviews and focus group discussions. When we asked how Imperial should be perceived, the values were often given as an answer - i.e. people should see and feel the outcome of Imperial's people demonstrating the values.

What does this mean for the Imperial brand?

Values are inextricably linked to the brand. As we've discussed, a brand is more than a logo and identity - it's how people perceive you. Values inform behaviour - and the way you behave influences what people think about you.

As we develop the brand identity and expression, we'll make sure it reflects and demonstrates your values. (For example, what does 'respect' mean for the way we write and tell your story? What are the implications of 'excellence' on the quality and standards for design?)



Widening participation

Widening participation is about recruiting people who have traditionally been overlooked, particularly disadvantaged and underrepresented groups:

- People in lower socio-economic groups
- People with disabilities
- People in some ethnic and minority groups
- People in families, neighbourhoods or schools where it's not the norm to go to university

This was a common theme in our interviews. People talked about the idea of 'removing barriers' and making Imperial - and science more generally - more accessible. High standards, but not elitist. This is all clearly a part of the Widening Participation and outreach activities.

What does this mean for the Imperial brand?

It's crucial to the brand. Solving the big problems facing society and the wider world means Imperial needs to reflect that world. It should represent the people, communities and societies that you're working to have an impact in. So we'll bear this in mind when it comes to

- Messaging and tone of voice - encouraging people by making sure that science is accessible and understandable
- Visual identity - making sure that the brand expression is representative of all stakeholders and communities
- Overall - making sure that it's a core part of the brand expression - not something separate or 'on the side', as it appears today

Our five tone principles

When we write anything this audience might see, we should always bear in mind our five principles:



Sustainability

Through our interviews and campus visits, we heard about the Imperial sustainability strategy - and how it's an important area of focus in terms of the positive impact Imperial can have. Our visits included Silwood Park and the Carbon Capture facility in South Kensington, both examples of Imperial investing resources in fundamental research and real-world impact.

One interesting point that came up regularly in focus groups - especially among students and staff - was a potential disconnect between the 'big picture' sustainability focus (through research and teaching) and the day-to-day experience of sustainability. People felt that sustainability was a big focus academically, but was sometimes let down by some practical omissions - e.g. a lack of recycling facilities in some locations.

What does this mean for the Imperial brand?

Sustainability is clearly an important part of the Imperial brand story and needs to be a theme for your messaging, in terms of the impact you have in the wider world.

A lot of the challenge around day-to-day action is down to perceptions. We know there's much good work being done, e.g. in procurement, construction, water and waste management. But if somebody can't find a recycling bin easily, it creates a disconnect in their minds. If we talk about it as part of the brand, people will expect it to be demonstrated consistently - inside and outside the labs.

Our themes



Resource management

Responsible management of resources is integral to Imperial's aims of achieving a sustainable, healthy, resilient and smart society. Our campuses should also reflect this vision for society, providing a clean and healthy environment in which the wellbeing of our staff and students is a priority.

[Find out more about resource management](#)



Academic excellence

Our goals to demonstrate sustainability in practice and share our learning with the world focus us on the impact of teaching and research - the 'handprint' of Imperial that goes well beyond our operational footprint.

[Read more about academic excellence](#)



Engagement

Students, staff, our local partners and the communities where we are based all have a stake in sustainability at Imperial and we are committed to working with them to drive change on the ground.

[Learn how we are engaging with our communities](#)

3. Imperial compared to its alternatives

Imperial's alternatives: according to students, staff and alumni

Through our brand survey (completed by 2,437 respondents, including Imperial students, staff and alumni) we saw that **Oxford** and **Cambridge** were overwhelmingly considered as alternative places to study or teach. Outside Oxbridge, alternatives were:

Academia

UCL, Harvard, Stanford, Caltech, ETH Zurich, Berkeley and **MIT** for students, staff and alumni.

Non-profit

Organisations such as the **Francis Crick Institute** and **Genomics England** featured, as well as international bodies including **WHO** and **UN**.

Business / commercial

Outside of academia, Big Tech organisations including **Apple, Microsoft, IBM** and **Google** showed up as opportunities for further learning or a teaching career. Students favoured large, reputable brands. Staff and alumni also named tech startups and incubators such as **Y Combinator**.

Imperial's alternatives: according to international students

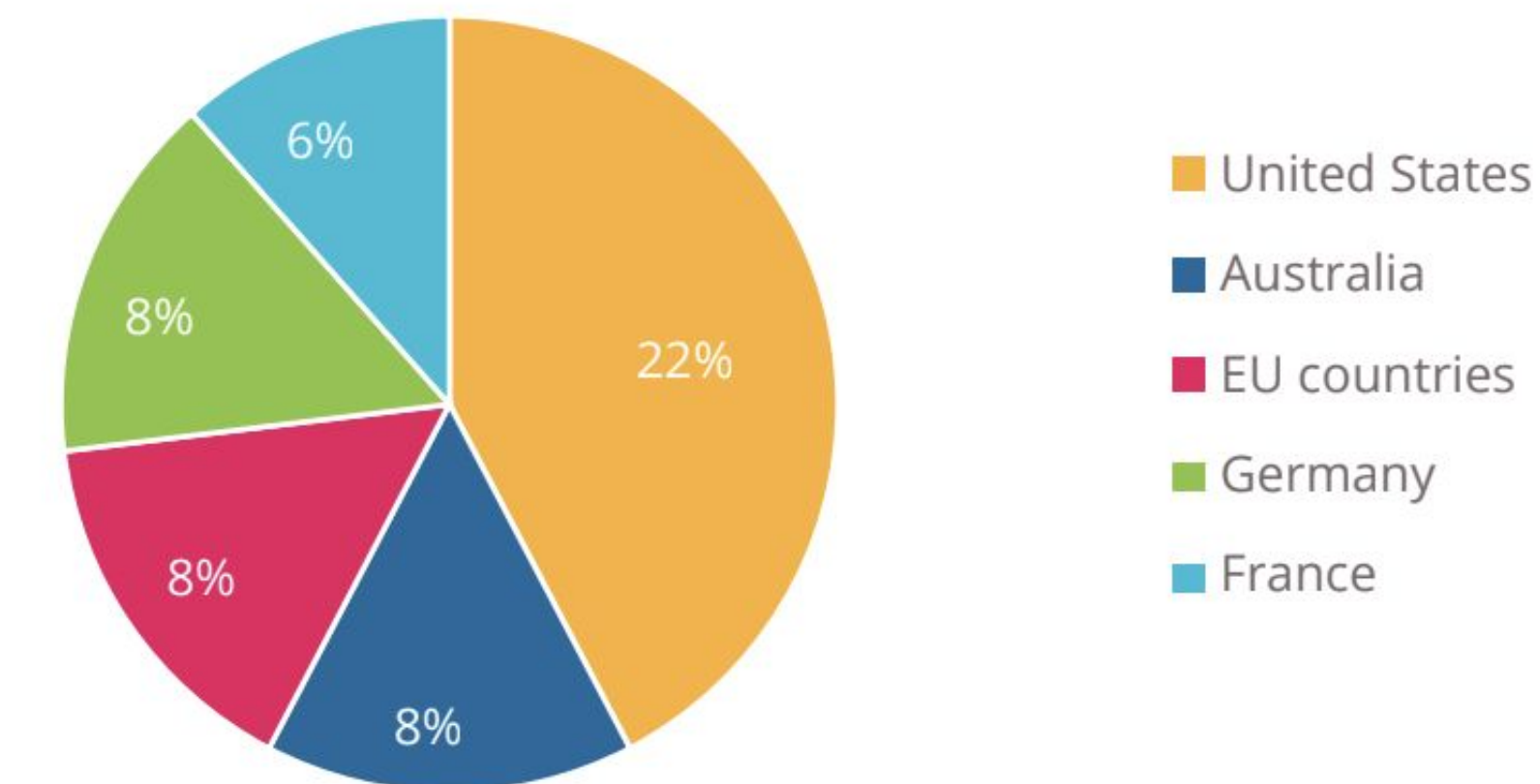
In 2019, Imperial conducted a piece of research with QS to inform Imperial's international recruitment strategy. You also wanted a better understanding of positioning against competitors.

Prospective students were asked which other universities they considered as an alternative to Imperial. Most of them were Russell Group universities. Below is the list of universities that featured:

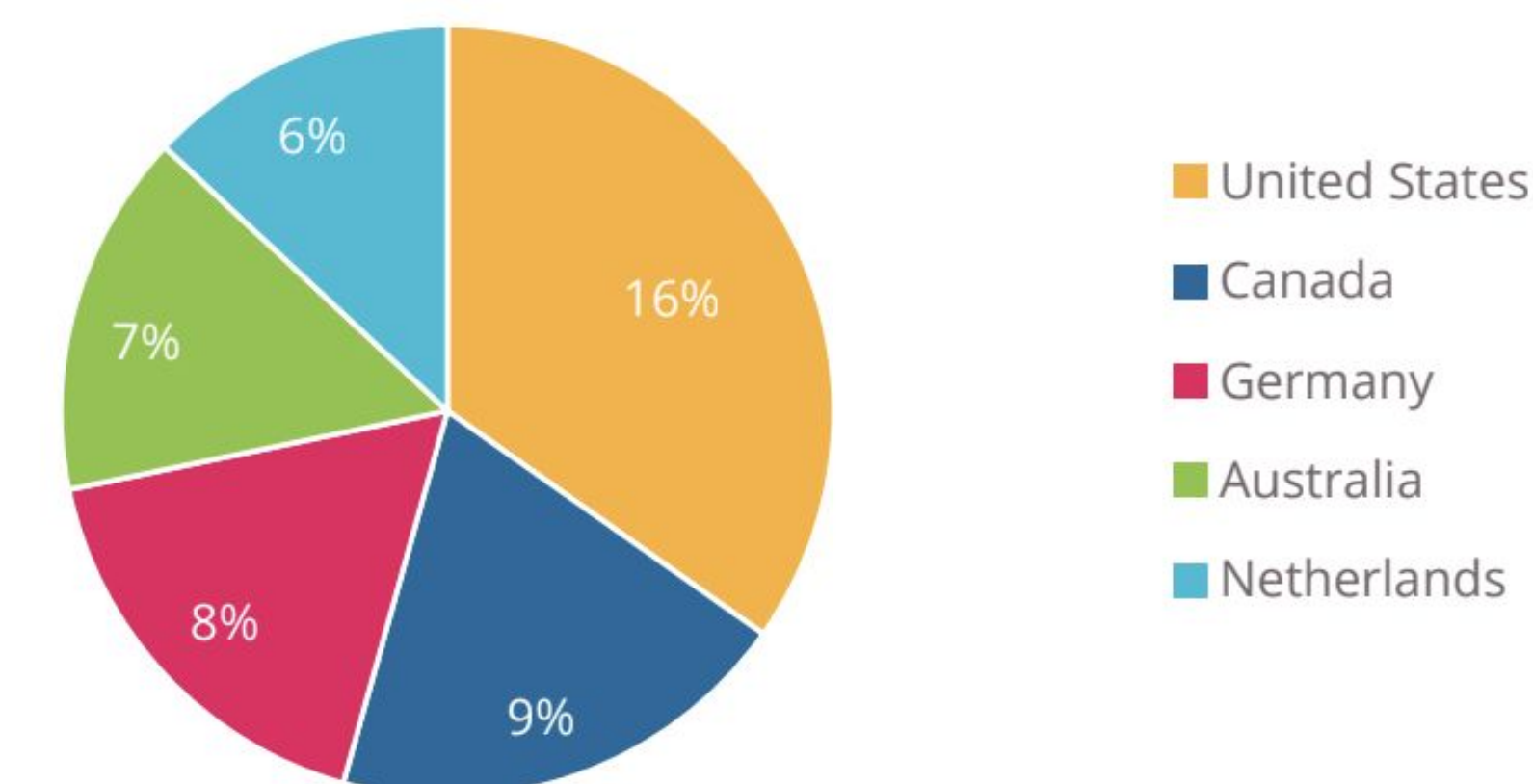
1. **University College London**
2. **University of Cambridge**
3. **University of Oxford**
4. **King's College London**
5. **University of Edinburgh**

As well as citing other academic institutions they would consider, current and prospective Imperial students also referenced alternative countries they would consider for places of study. As well as academic considerations, this largely came down to affordability and safety.

Alternative countries for current students



Alternative countries for prospective students



Source: Digital Strategy Report, QS, 2019

Imperial's alternatives: according to students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds

In a 2019 report by YouthSight, commissioned by Imperial with the aim of widening participation at the university, research showed students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds group Imperial alongside Cambridge and Oxford – “associated with success, but elitist and intimidating”.

According to the research, other Russell Group universities are seen as more “approachable, relaxed and friendly”, including:

1. **Durham University**
2. **University College London**
3. **Newcastle University**
4. **University of Manchester**
5. **University of Nottingham**
6. **University of Birmingham**

Several existing widening participation initiatives by different universities were also cited by respondents as being alternatives they would consider:

1. Bristol Scholars
2. Newcastle PARTNERS
3. York Shine
4. Hull/York Medical School – Pathways to STEM
5. Cardiff – Step-Up programme
6. Aberystwyth – Summer University
7. Northumbria – NU entry scheme
8. Princeton – Scholars Institute
9. Fellows Program (SFIP) Oxford – UNIQ



Source: Widening Participation at Imperial College London, YouthSight, 2019

Imperial's alternatives: our final shortlist

To make the comparison manageable, we'll compare Imperial to 11 other institutions, based on:

Quantitative insight. The main alternatives from our brand survey.

UCAS data. We were guided by your marketing and recruitment team, who considered UCAS application data to refine the shortlist.

Strategic ambitions. This input also considered the geographic areas where you want to focus recruitment efforts – India, Europe, US, Singapore, and England excluding London and the South East.

NOTE: We've also included a number of non-academic institutions in our comparisons, based on references in our quantitative survey and focus groups.

Academic alternatives

1. **University of Oxford**
2. **University of Cambridge**
3. **UCL**
4. **University of Manchester**
5. **University of Warwick**
6. **MIT**
7. **Stanford University**
8. **ETH Zürich**
9. **Technical University of Munich**
10. **Nanyang Technological University**
11. **Caltech / JPL**

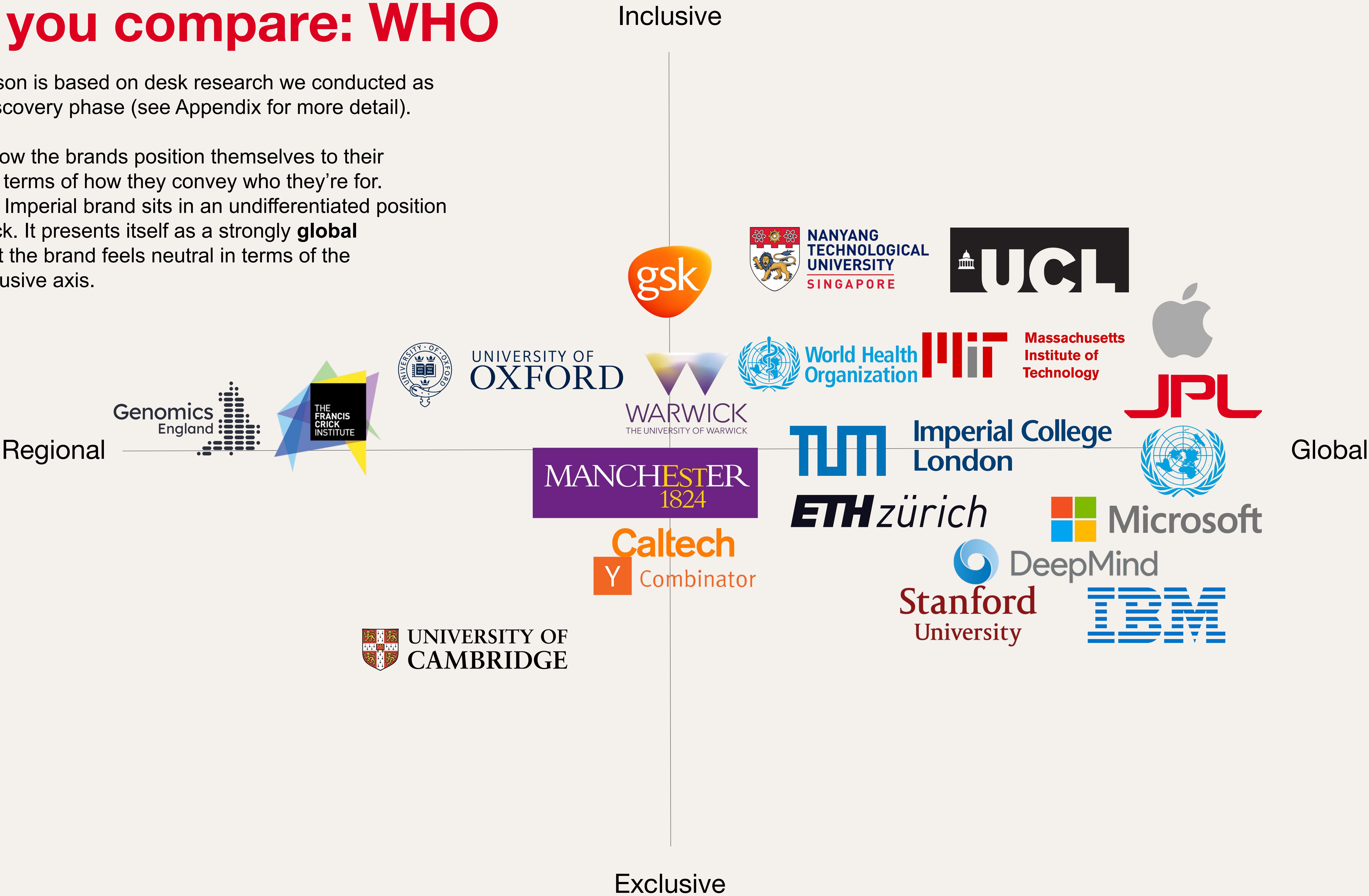
Non-academic alternatives

12. **Apple**
13. **DeepMind**
14. **The Francis Crick Institute**
15. **Genomics England**
16. **GSK**
17. **IBM**
18. **Microsoft**
19. **UN**
20. **World Health Organisation**
21. **Y Combinator**

How you compare: WHO

This comparison is based on desk research we conducted as part of our discovery phase (see Appendix for more detail).

It considers how the brands position themselves to their audiences, in terms of how they convey who they're for. Currently, the Imperial brand sits in an undifferentiated position within the pack. It presents itself as a strongly **global** institution, but the brand feels neutral in terms of the inclusive-exclusive axis.



How you compare: WHAT

This comparison is based on desk research we conducted as part of our discovery phase (see Appendix for more detail).

It considers how the brands position themselves to their audiences, in terms of what they do. Imperial's brand presents itself as focused (STEMMB) and tells a story of impact, but not as strongly as some other institutions.

Focused

World leading

World changing

Generalised



Generalised

How you compare: HOW

This comparison is based on desk research we conducted as part of our discovery phase (see Appendix for more detail).

It considers how the brands position themselves to their audiences, in terms of how they feel. Currently, Imperial's brand feels warmer than some institutions, but some of your main competitors are ahead of you. You're more modern than you are a 'heritage' brand, but there's a way to go in demonstrating a contemporary nature that some audiences are looking for.

Heritage

Modern

Warm

Clinical



Brand strengths, relative to alternatives

No institution has this combination:

A hyper-focus on STEMMB

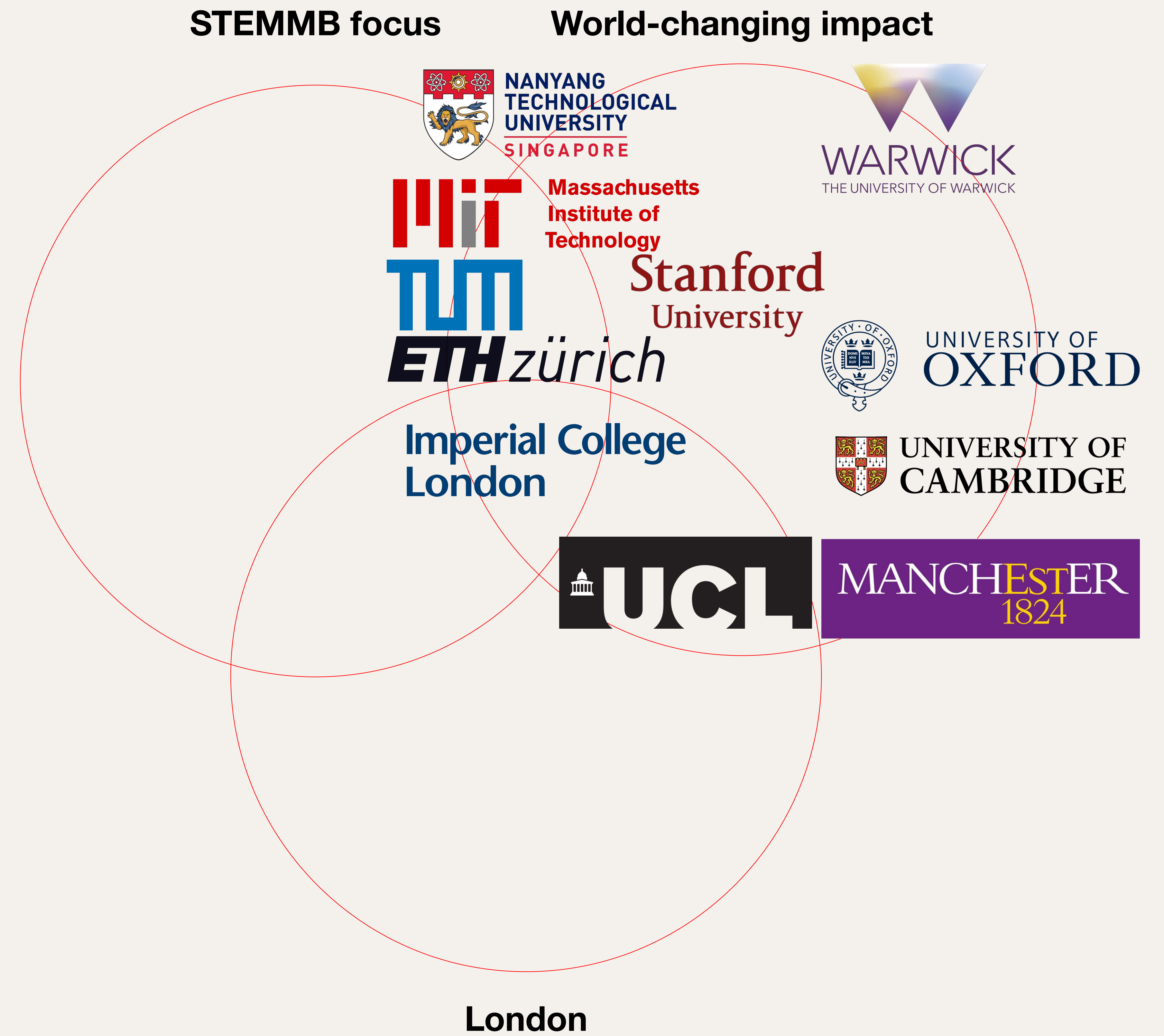
While other institutions have a focus on STEM, Imperial's focus in this area is magnified.

World changing impact

Imperial's research partnerships, Business School and industry collaborations mean research turns into action.

The London experience

We know students are looking for academic prowess, but when considering a student experience away from a campus, London is hard to beat for its diversity, vibrancy and safety.



Thank you

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Appendix: highlights from our supporting data

International students: important factors in decision-making

	Careers	Reputation	Ranking	Safety	Jobs while studying	Living abroad / broader experience	London / location	Teaching / learning	Language skills	Social life / culture
France	●	●				●	●		●	●
Germany	●	●				●	●		●	●
India	●	●	●		●		●			
Singapore	●	●	●	●			●			
US	●	●				●	●		●	

- Ranked as a top consideration
- Ranked as a secondary consideration

Source: *Pentagram assessment of 'Understanding and connecting with a diverse audience,' An Outsider, 2023*

Taking source material from the An Outsider report on recruiting international students, commissioned by Imperial in 2023, we interpreted and summarised what we read to be the main factors in decision-making, for the audiences they'd researched. Career prospects ('Careers'), reputation and location ('London') scored highest and more consistently across students from all locations.

Imperial's ranking appeared most important to students from India and Singapore - while more 'lifestyle' factors felt more important among French and German students.

Current students: what the brand should convey

How they perceive the brand today

Top 5 attributes

1. **Scientific**
2. **Technical**
3. **Prestigious**
4. **World-leading**
5. **Innovative**

What they think it should convey in future

Top 5 attributes

1. **World-leading**
2. **Innovative**
3. **Prestigious**
4. **World-changing**
5. **Scientific**

Implications for the brand

This tells us that students would like to see a brand that is more reflective of their perception of Imperial as a world-leading and innovative institution, with both of these attributes rising up the list to the top two positions.

'Scientific' doesn't drop out of the list, but drops lower down - suggesting it's still important.

Perhaps most importantly, 'world-changing' joins the list of what the brand should represent in future - something that didn't make it into the top five of how they perceive the brand today.

Source: new quantitative research of 308 students carried out in July 2023

Note on similarities with alumni and staff

We gave a list of potential characteristics to students, alumni and staff. They were able to pick as many as they wanted, which were then ranked in order of preference for each group, based on number of 'votes'. All three groups picked the same five characteristics for how they see Imperial today - just in slightly different orders of preference. What differed was what they think the brand should convey in future.

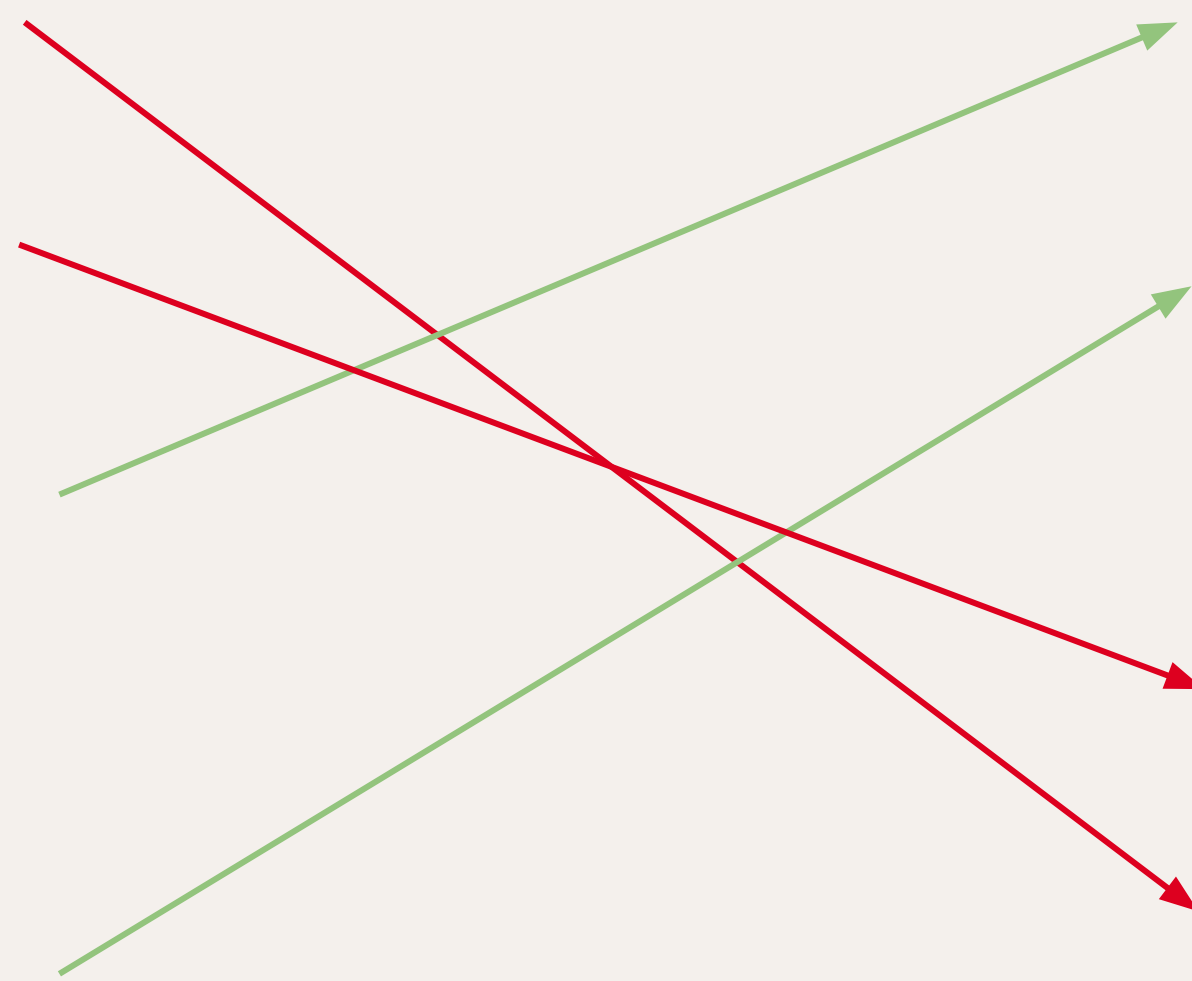
Alumni: what the brand should convey

How they perceive the brand today
Top 5 attributes

1. **Scientific**
2. **Prestigious**
3. **World-leading**
4. **Technical**
5. **Innovative**

What they think it should convey in future
Top 5 attributes

1. **World-leading**
2. **Innovative**
3. **World-changing**
4. **Prestigious**
5. **Scientific**



Source: new quantitative research of 2,486 alumni carried out in July 2023

Implications for the brand

This tells us that alumni share a similar view of the brand today as current students, with differences in rankings of the attributes.

They also share a similar view of what the brand should convey in future - but, again, ranking the attributes in a different order. Their choices suggest that the brand needs to dial up Imperial's impact and spirit of innovation.

The 'halo effect'

As with current students, it's important to alumni that the brand retains its sense of prestige and link to science. Even though these drop in the rankings, they show up with both groups. This perhaps isn't surprising - as we heard in our interviews and focus groups, Imperial's reputation matters in terms of both careers and personal reputation. When we combine this insight with with the insight from An Outsider (slide 67) we see that Imperial's brand plays a vital role in careers and reputations, so we need to make sure it conveys the sense of prestige and scientific focus to support this.

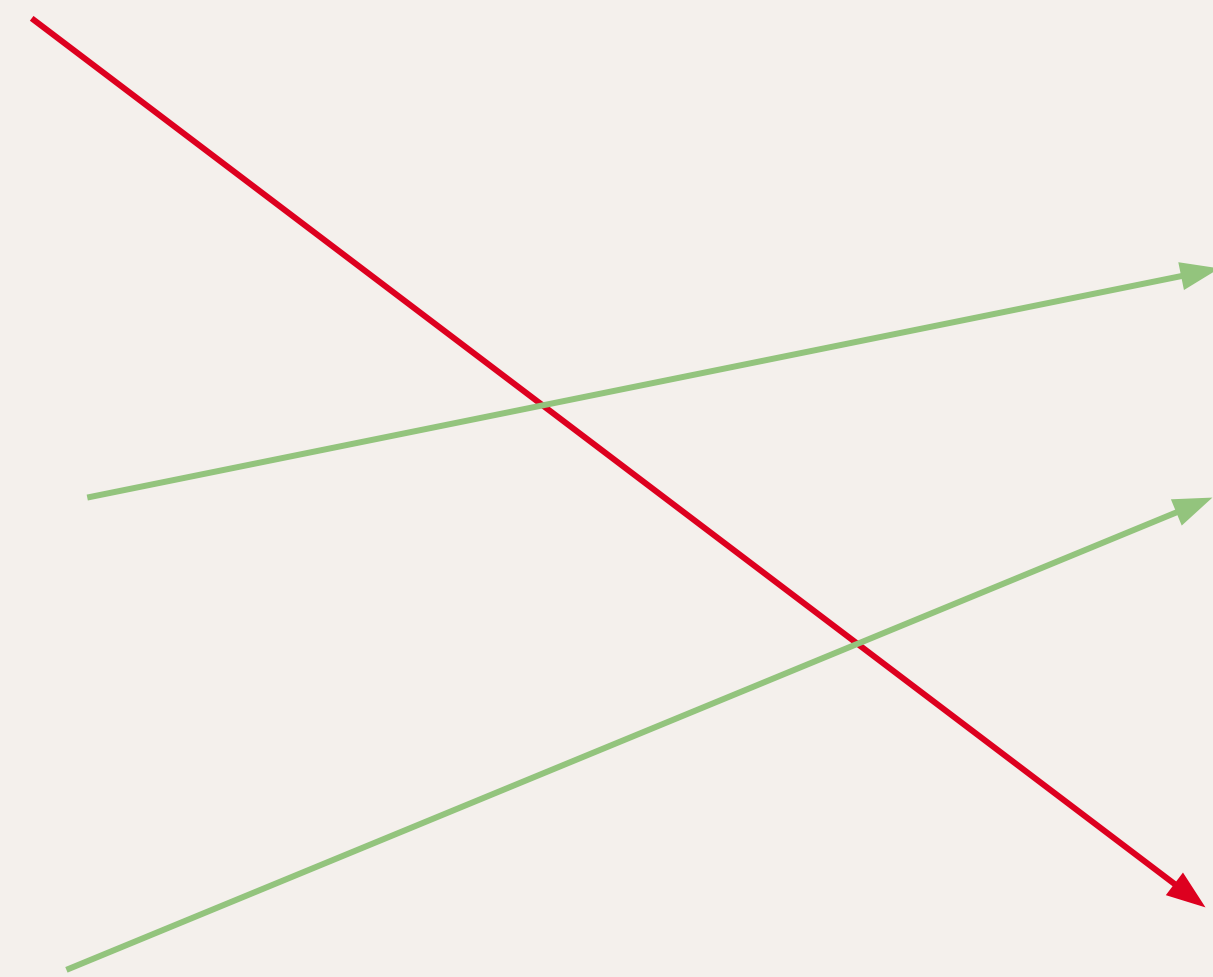
Staff: what the brand should convey

How they perceive the brand today *Top 5 attributes*

1. **Scientific**
2. **Prestigious**
3. **World-leading**
4. **Technical**
5. **Innovative**

What they think it should convey in future *Top 5 attributes*

1. **World-changing**
2. **World-leading**
3. **Innovative**
4. **Inclusive**
5. **Scientific**



Source: new quantitative research of 674 staff members carried out in July 2023

Implications for the brand

Today's perceptions were very similar to student perceptions - the same five characteristics were in the list, in different orders.

Interestingly, 'world-changing' entered the list for future characteristics - and jumped right to the top. 'World-leading' rose to number two, with 'innovative' rising to number three. This all suggests that staff would like to see a brand that demonstrates Imperial's impact and spirit of enterprise/innovation coming through more strongly.

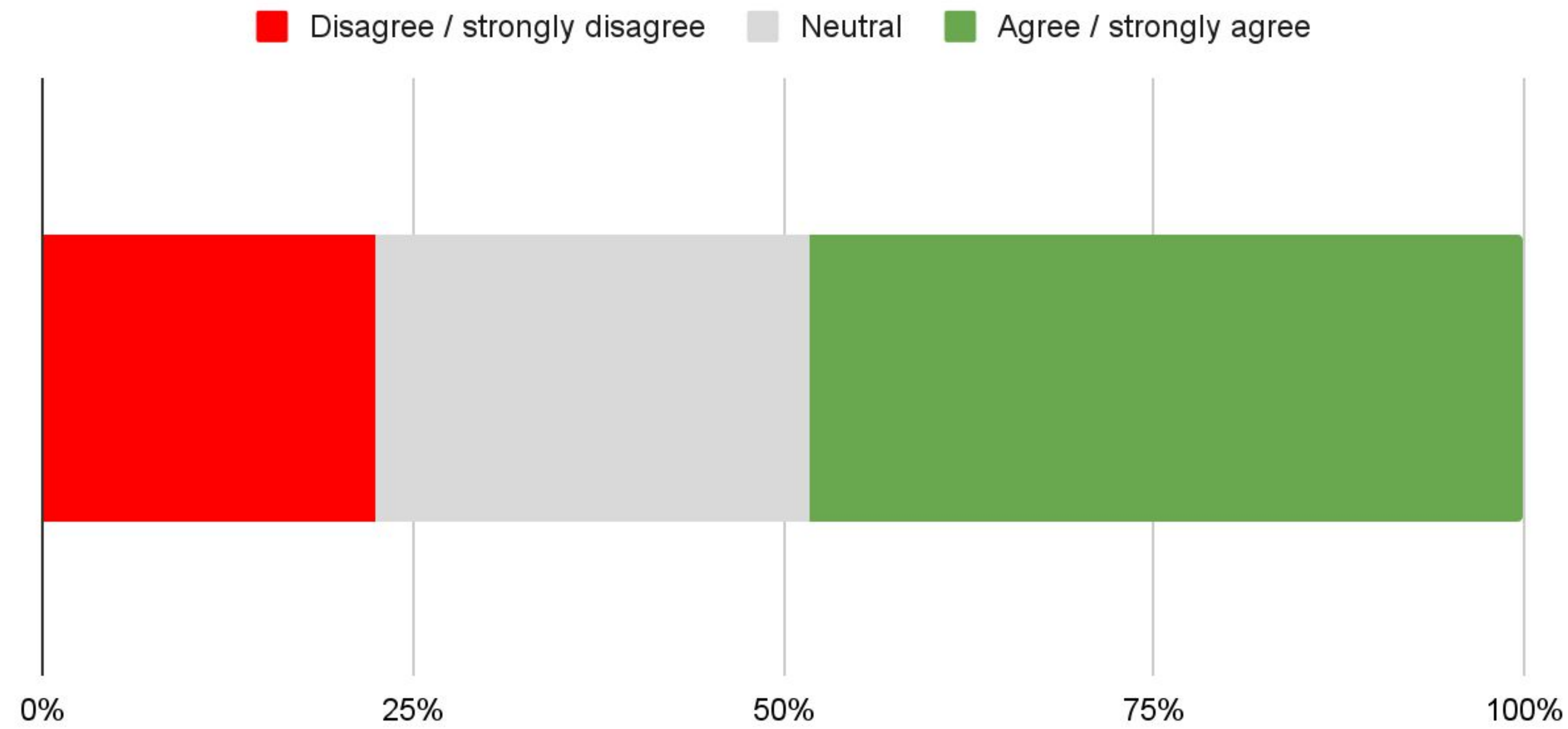
In addition, 'inclusive' entered the list - a key idea that was echoed in the interviews and workshops we ran with staff. It appears to be an important concern for them, i.e. improving EDI within the staff body.

As with students, 'scientific' dropped to fifth place - still on the list, so still an important consideration. Just displaced.

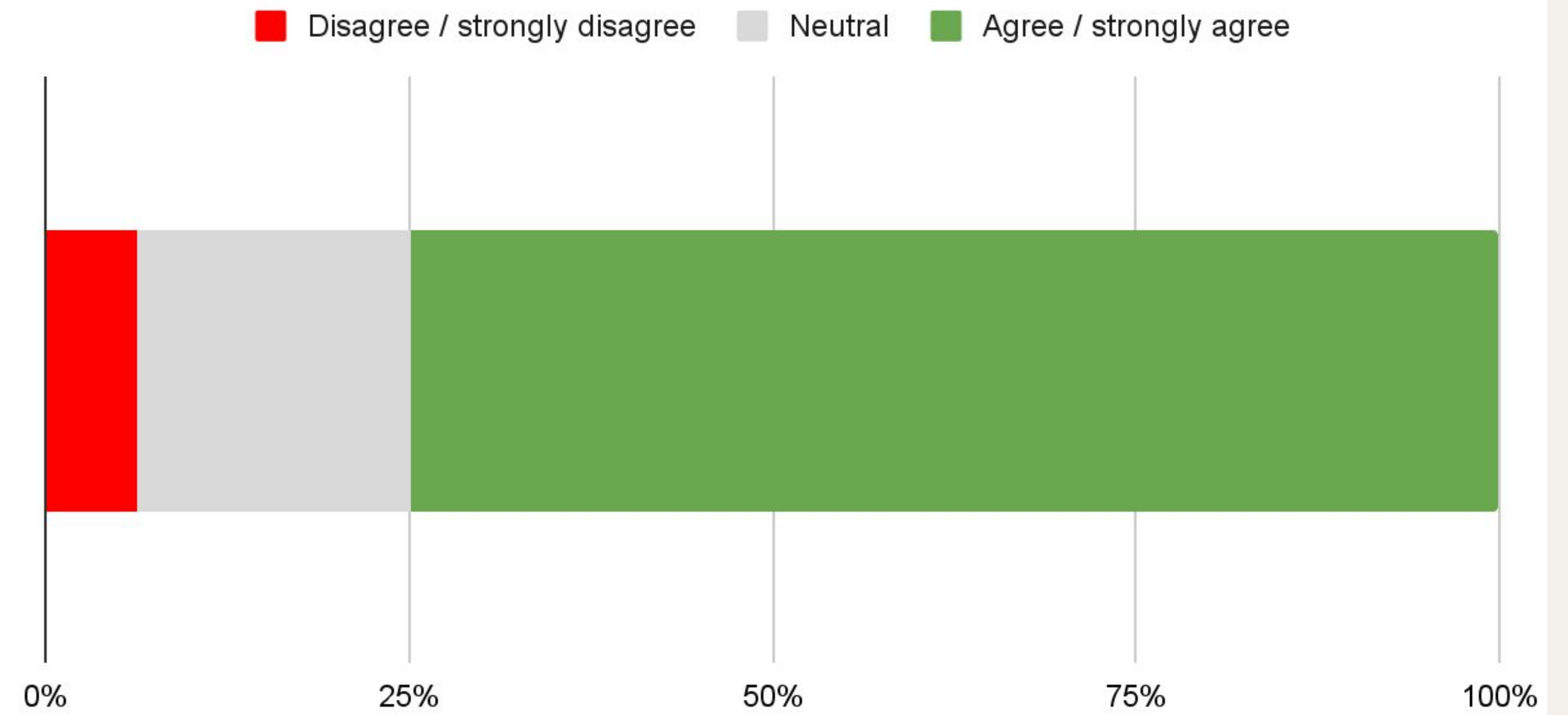
'Prestigious' and 'technical' dropped off the list completely.

Current students: 'London home, global mindset'

The Imperial brand should reflect more strongly our status as a London-based institution



The Imperial brand should more strongly reflect our global mindset



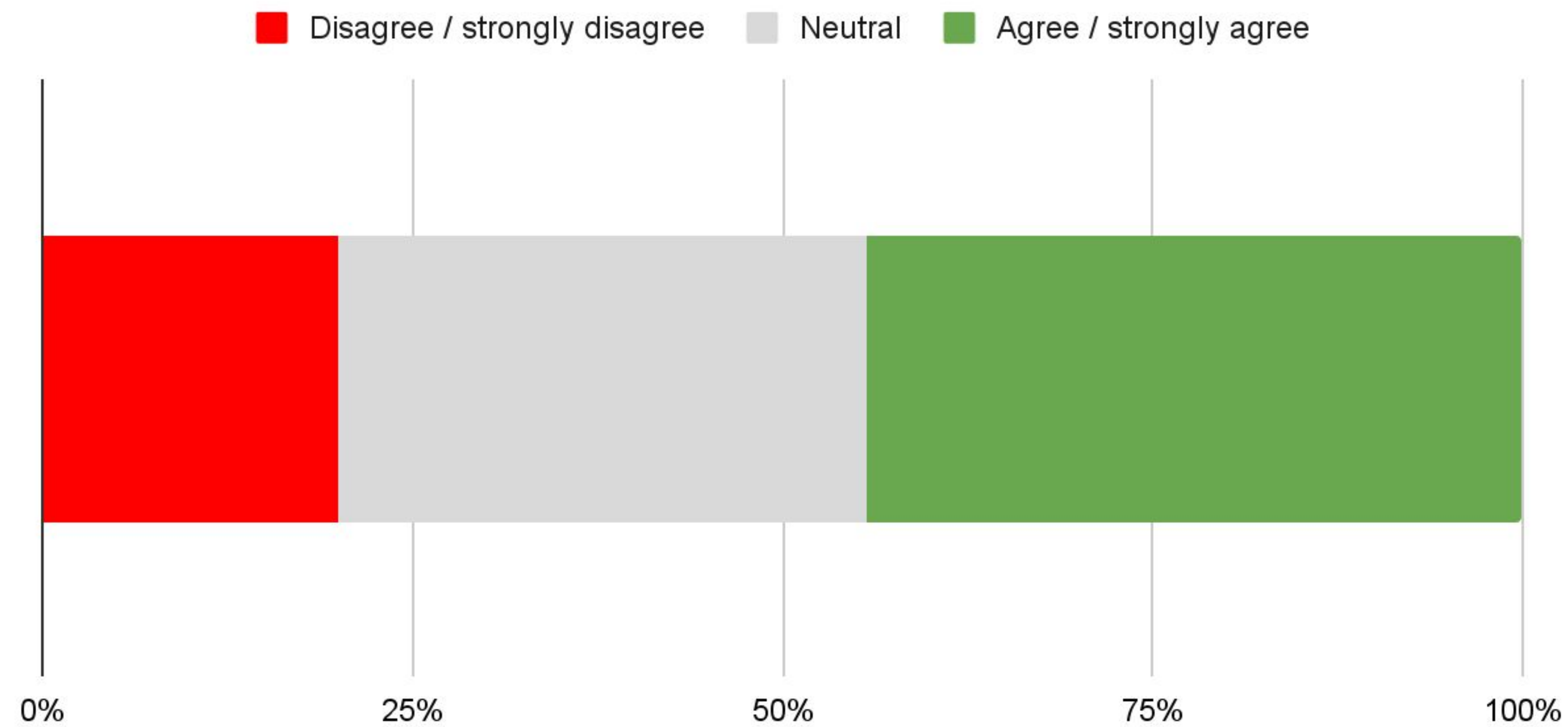
Source: new quantitative research of 308 students carried out in July 2023

As part of our quantitative survey, we wanted to find out how important the ideas of 'London' and 'a global mindset' were to students. The results tell us that 48% of students agree or strongly agree that Imperial's brand should more strongly reflect its status as a London-based institution. An overwhelming 75% agree or strongly agree that it should reflect a global mindset.

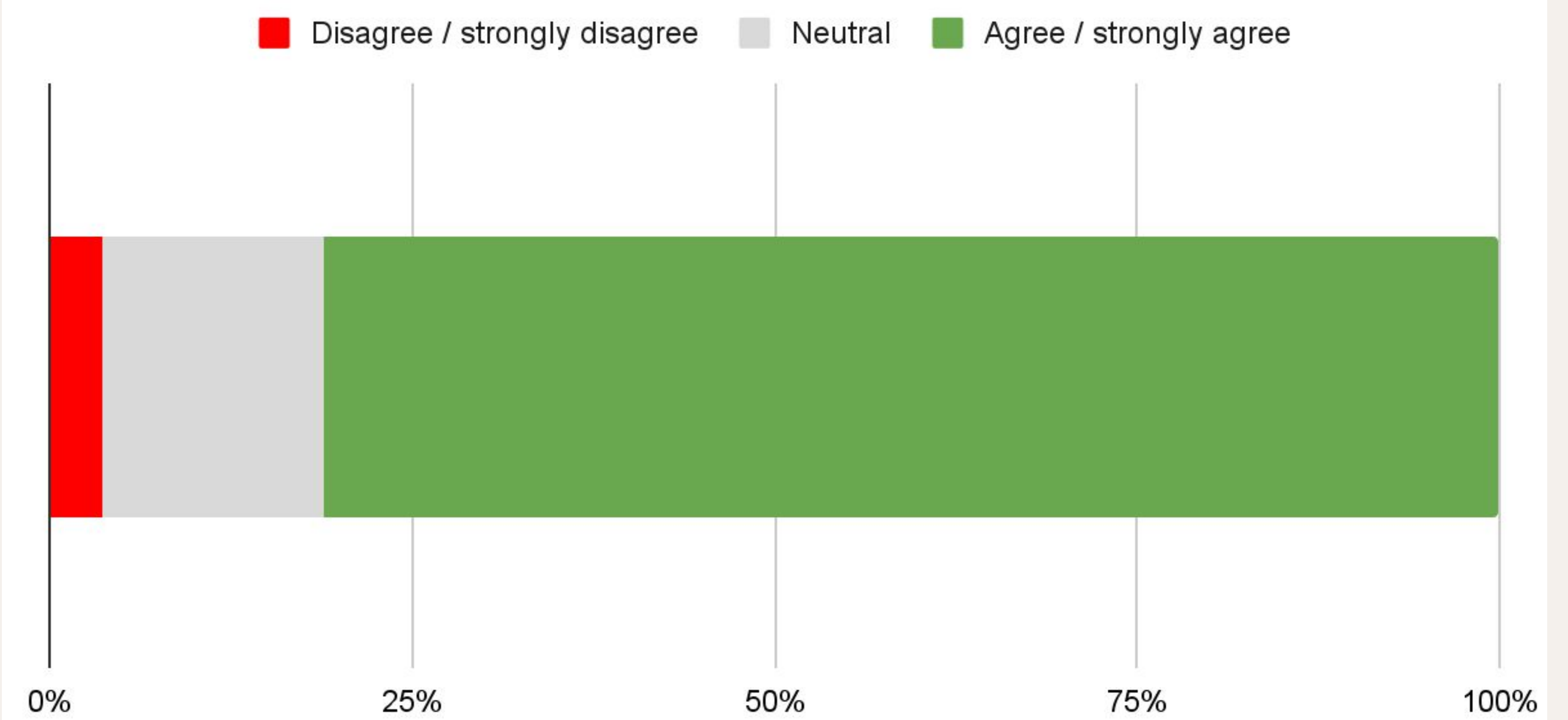
Combining this with insight from An Outsider (slide 67), as well as our focus group and discussion data, we believe the brand needs to reflect the idea of 'a global outlook from a global city'. Anecdotally, London is seen as an important hub and a great place to live (business, commerce, culture, lifestyle, diversity).

Staff: 'London home, global mindset'

The Imperial brand should reflect more strongly our status as a London-based institution



The Imperial brand should reflect more strongly our global mindset



Source: new quantitative research of 674 staff members carried out in July 2023

As with students and alumni, we wanted to find out how important the ideas of 'London' and 'a global mindset' were to students. The results tell us that 44% of staff agree or strongly agree that Imperial's brand should more strongly reflect its status as a London-based institution. An overwhelming 81% agree or strongly agree that it should reflect a global mindset.

These results are consistent with current students and alumni, suggesting that the 'global outlook from a global city' idea would resonate with staff too.

Wider public: knowledge of Imperial

17. Have you been introduced to an organisation(s) you hadn't heard of before?

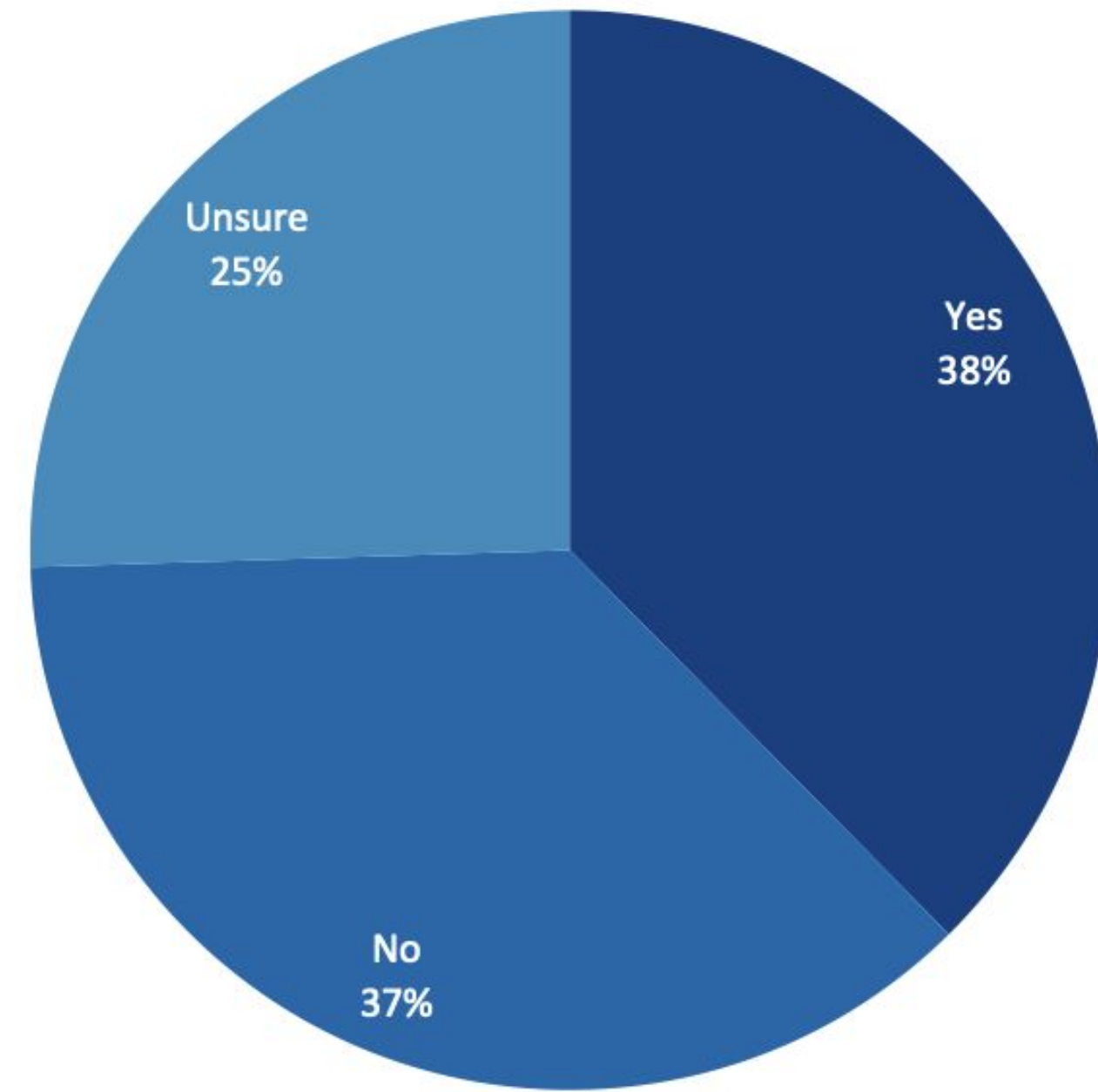
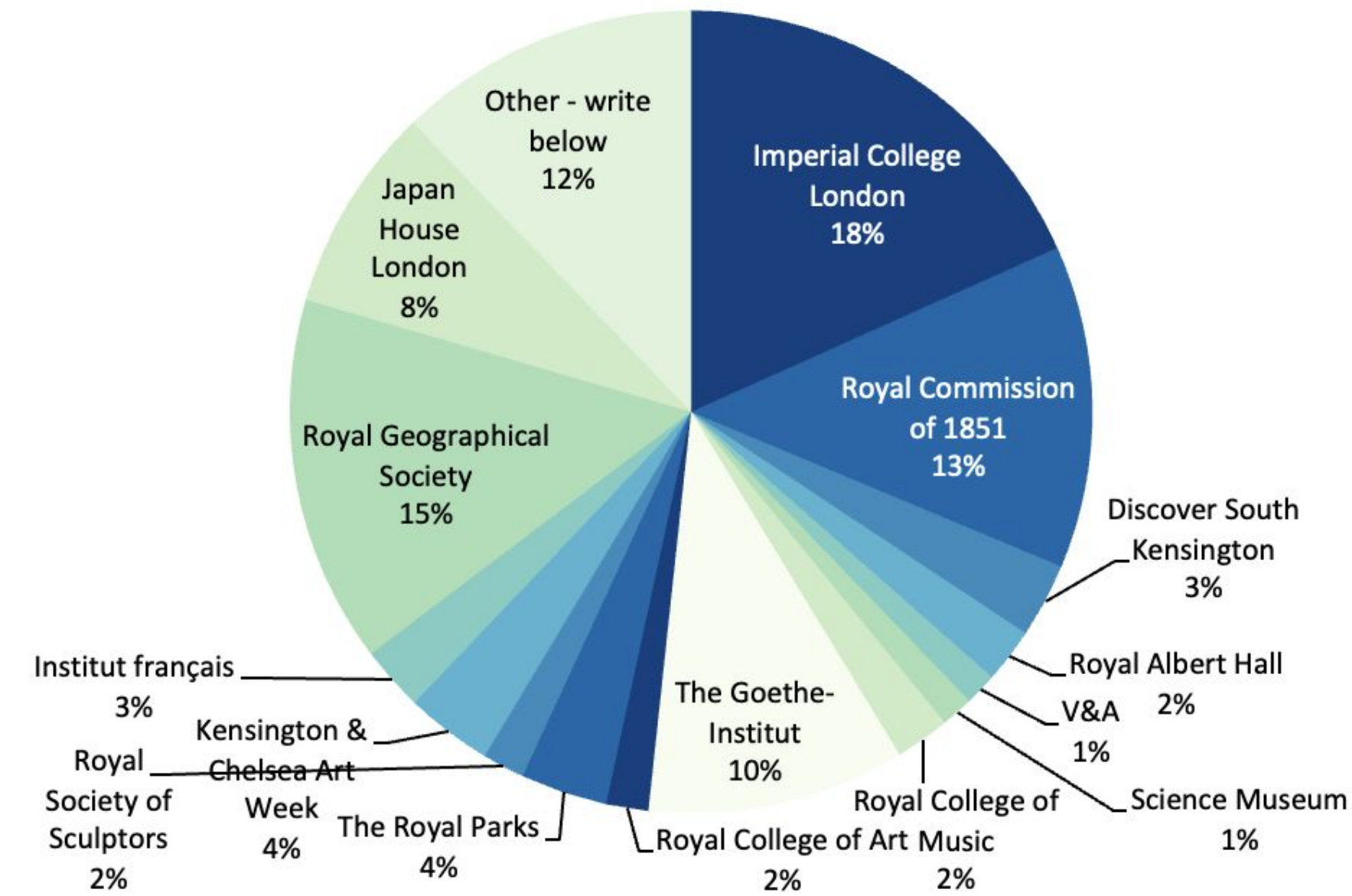


Chart Area

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	37.6%	243
No	36.9%	239
Unsure	25.5%	165
Totals		647

19. What is the name of the organisation(s)?



Value	Percent	Count
Imperial College London	18.3%	42
Royal Commission of 1851	13.0%	30
Discover South Kensington	3.0%	7
Royal Albert Hall	2.2%	5
V&A	1.3%	3
Science Museum	1.3%	3
Royal College of Music	2.2%	5

Taking the Great Exhibition Road Festival survey results as one data point, we see a mixed story about recognition of Imperial.

A large proportion of attendees already knew about or were connected to Imperial - and had an interest in science.

But we were interested in the people who hadn't heard of Imperial...

Of the 38% who had been introduced to an organisation they hadn't heard of before, the highest answer for 'which organisation?' was Imperial (18%).

On the surface of it, that means 7% of attendees hadn't heard of Imperial before (18% of 38%). While that doesn't seem like a negative result, it's a lot higher than any other organisation - lagging behind the Royal Commission, Discover South Kensington and the Royal College of Music.

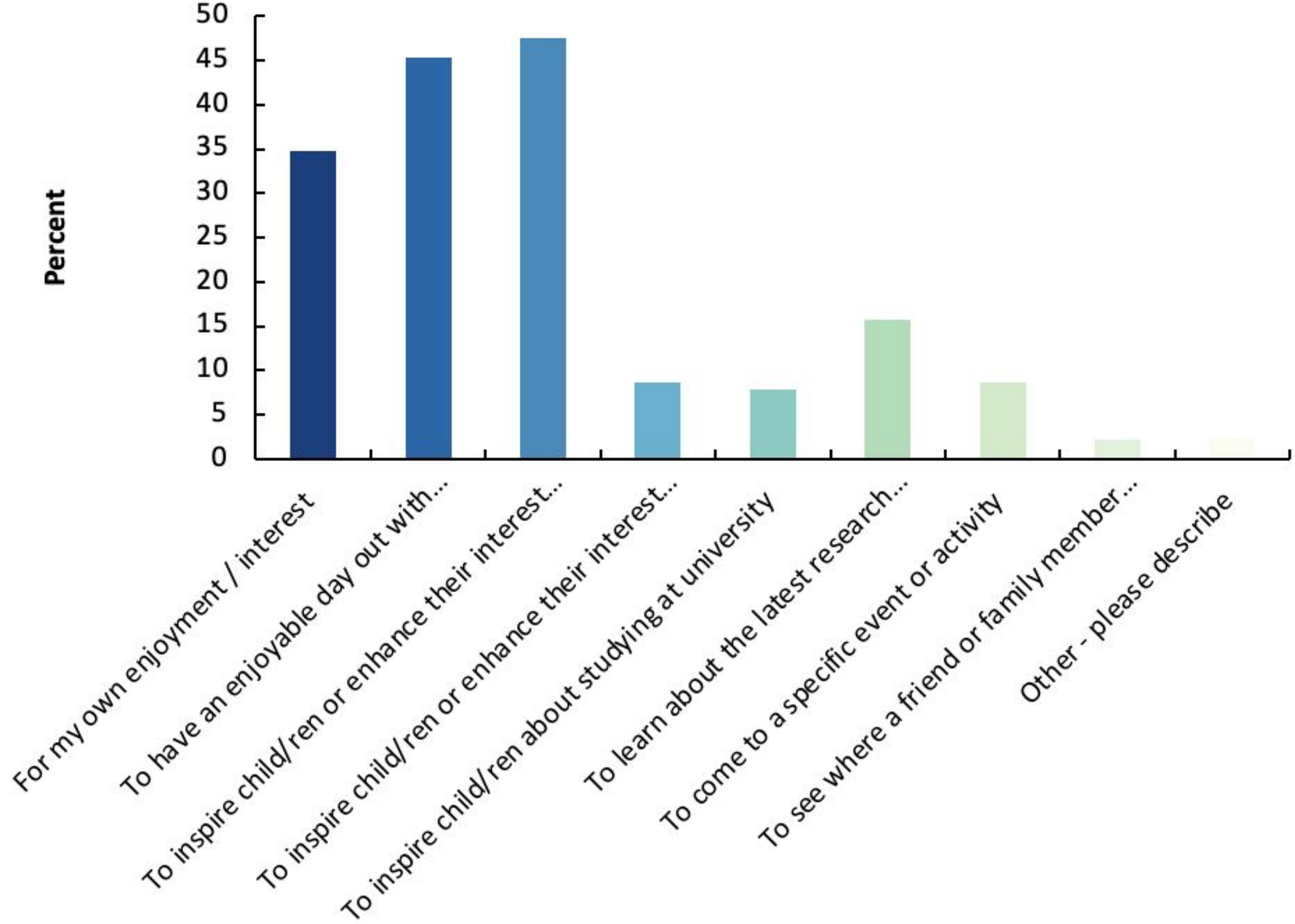
Given that the attendees were primarily interested in science, based on answers to other questions, we expected a higher level of recall / awareness.

Source: Great Exhibition Road Festival visitor survey, July 2023

General public: a missed opportunity?

3.What were your main reasons for visiting the Great Exhibition Road Festival? (choose up to 2)

(choose up to 2)



Value	Percent	Count
For my own enjoyment / interest	34.8%	263
To have an enjoyable day out with friends/family	45.4%	343
To inspire child/ren or enhance their interest in science	47.6%	360
To inspire child/ren or enhance their interest in arts	8.7%	66
To inspire child/ren about studying at university	7.8%	59
To learn about the latest research developments	15.7%	119
To come to a specific event or activity	8.6%	65
To see where a friend or family member studies/works	2.2%	17
Other - please describe	2.4%	18

When asked the ‘main reason for visiting’, 47.6% of people said ‘inspiring children in science’ was the motivator - which is a good result.

But ‘inspiring children to go to university’ was chosen by just 7.8%. This feels like a missed opportunity.

Given the number of families and children attending, we think this kind of event is a big opportunity to ‘plant the seed’.

Source: Great Exhibition Road Festival visitor survey, July 2023