



bioRender

State of U.S. Science Funding 2025 Report

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A note from Shiz Aoki

CEO and Co-founder of BioRender

To our scientific community,

At BioRender, our mission is clear: to accelerate the world's ability to learn, discover, and communicate science. Because when science is clearly understood, it advances faster—and that benefits everyone.

Right now, our community is facing something unprecedented. Federal funding cuts are rippling across the U.S. research landscape, affecting labs of every size and field. Scientific progress is at risk. For many—especially early-career researchers—uncertainty looms around funding, career trajectories, and the future of your work.

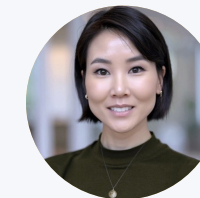
We've heard you. And we know our role has to extend beyond software and tools. That's why we created *The State of Science Funding*—a special report to better understand how this crisis is affecting scientists at every level: from administrators faced with impossible decisions to PhDs wondering how they'll make it through the next grant cycle.

Drawing on insights from over 300 scientists and research administrators, what emerged was sobering: real concerns about funding, the future of your work, your teams, and the research you've dedicated your careers to. From institutional leaders to early-career scientists, there's shared anxiety about sustaining progress as resources tighten.

But we also heard something else - persistence, creativity, community. In the midst of uncertainty, you find new ways to move forward, applying for more grants, teaming up across labs and institutions, exploring every possible path to keep the science going. You're doing what scientists have always done: adapting and pushing forward.

This report captures both the gravity of this moment and the strength of the people moving through it. We hope it offers a sense of solidarity - a reminder that whatever you're feeling, you're not alone.

At BioRender, we're listening. We may not have all the answers, but we're committed to understanding what you're going through and to standing with you as you navigate what comes next. This report is just the beginning of that commitment.



Shiz Aoki
CEO, Co-founder of BioRender

Survey Methodology (N=311)

West N=55

Berkeley Lab
California Institute of Technology
Children's Hospital Los Angeles
City of Hope Cancer Center
City of Hope National Medical Center
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
Seattle Children's Research Institute
Stanford University
The Salk Institute for Biological Studies
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, San Diego
University of California, San Francisco
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus
University of Southern California
University of Utah
University of Washington

Southwest N=31

Arizona State University
Baylor College of Medicine
Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation
Salk Institute
Texas A&M University
Texas Tech University
University of New Mexico
University of North Texas Health Science Center
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston

Midwest N=56

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
Indiana University School of Medicine
Mayo Clinic
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Northwestern University
The Ohio State University
The University of Chicago
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Kansas Medical Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
Van Andel Research Institute
Washington University in St. Louis

Southeast N=83

Augusta University
Duke University
Emory University
Georgia Institute of Technology
H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center
Johns Hopkins University
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Louisiana State University
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
Old Dominion University
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
Tulane University
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
University of Central Florida
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Tennessee Health Science Center
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Virginia Commonwealth University
Wake Forest University

Northeast N=86

Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Boston Children's Hospital
Boston University School of Medicine
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Brown University
Columbia University
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Harvard Medical School
Harvard University
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
Massachusetts General Hospital
Memorial Sloan Kettering
New York University
New York University School of Medicine
Rutgers University
State University of New York at Buffalo
The Pennsylvania State University
Thomas Jefferson University
Tufts University School of Dental Medicine
UMass Amherst
University at Buffalo
University of Connecticut Health Center
University of Massachusetts Medical School
University of New England
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
University of Rochester
Yale School of Medicine
Yale University

This report is based on data collected from 311 respondents across the U.S. academic research community. Respondents comprised two primary groups: senior academic leaders (VPs for Research, Provosts and Deans) and research scientists (Principal Investigators, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers). Approximately 70% of the respondents were BioRender users.

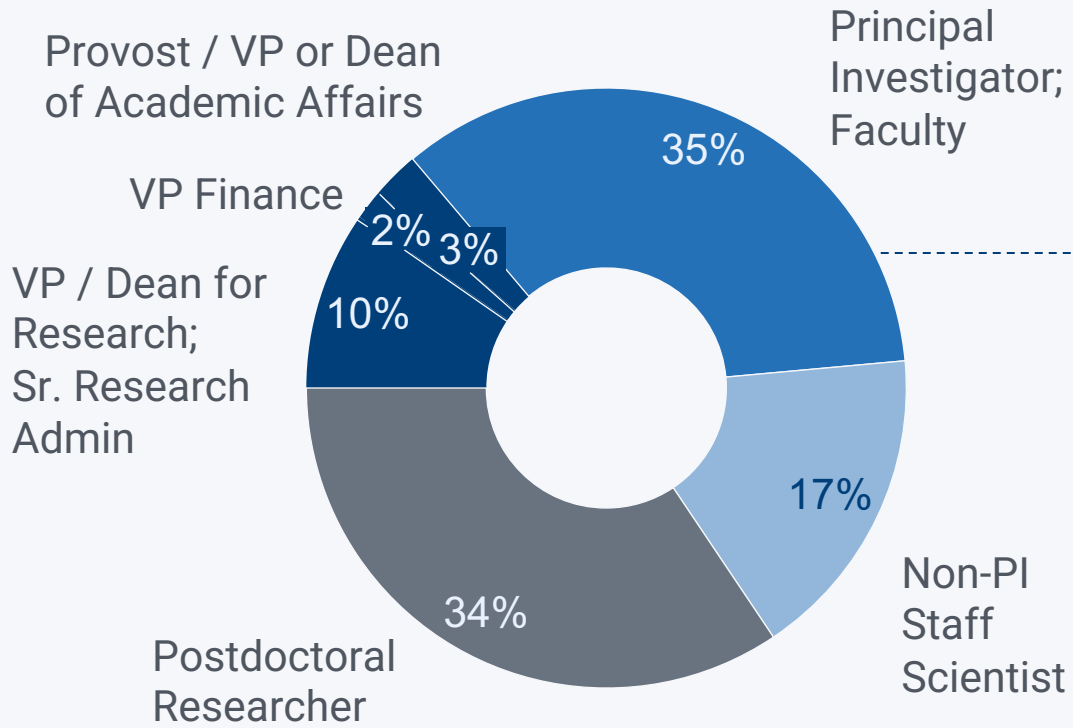
Seventy-five academic leaders and a small subset of Principal Investigators were recruited directly through an expert network platform beginning mid-April 2025. In late May 2025, an additional cohort of approximately 230 respondents was sourced from BioRender’s active user base through an in-app survey. This second group primarily included Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers, with some representation from Principal Investigators and administrative leaders. Data collection closed for all pools on June 12, 2025.

Respondents represented a diverse cross-section of U.S. research institutions, including public and private R1, R2 and R3 doctoral universities, medical centers and nonprofit institutes. They also spanned various research fields, though the vast majority came from biological, clinical and health sciences. Responses were geographically representative, with balanced participation across Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest and Western regions of the United States.

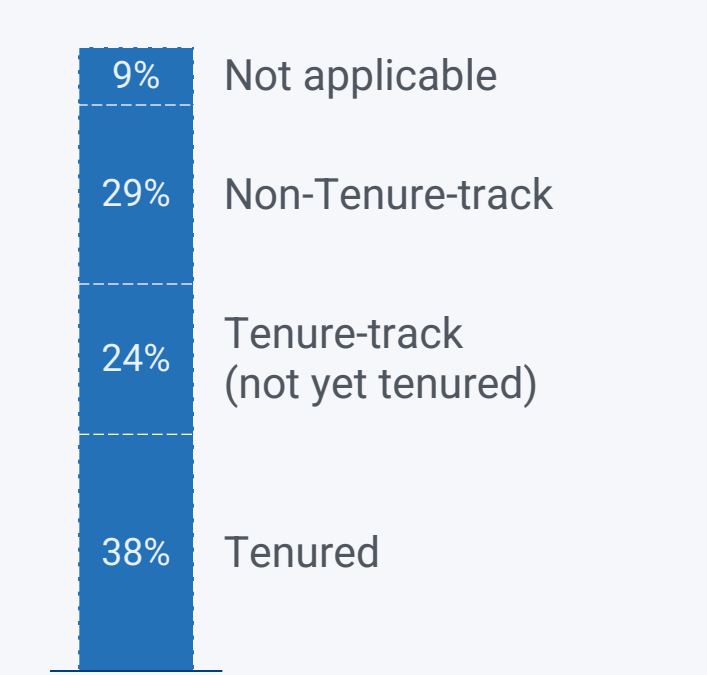
Participants were compensated for their time with a digital gift card.

Survey Methodology (N=311)

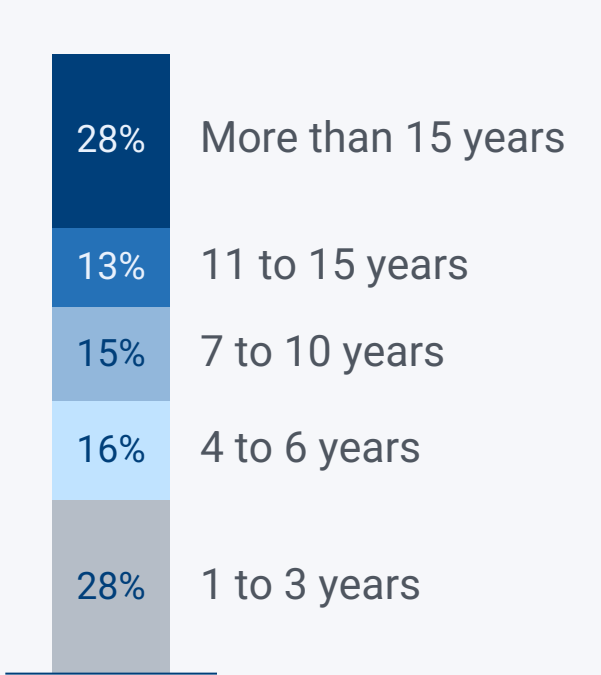
Role



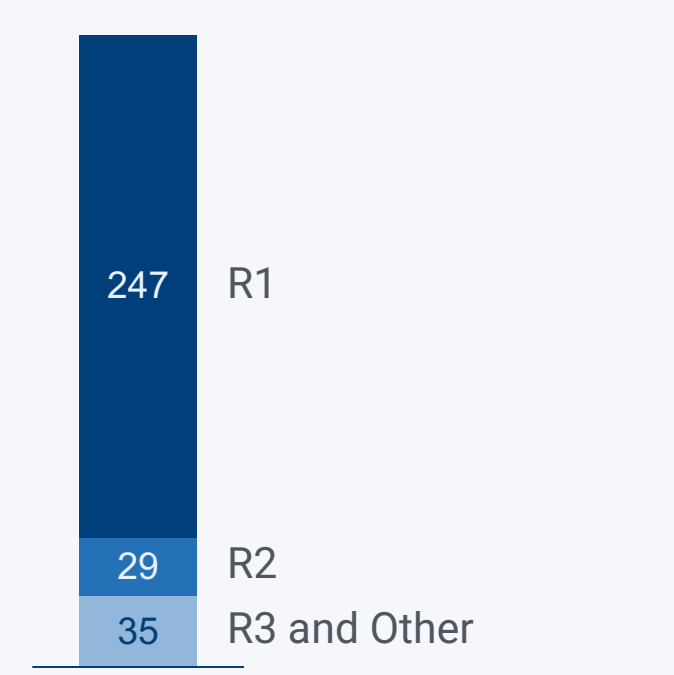
Tenure Status of Faculty



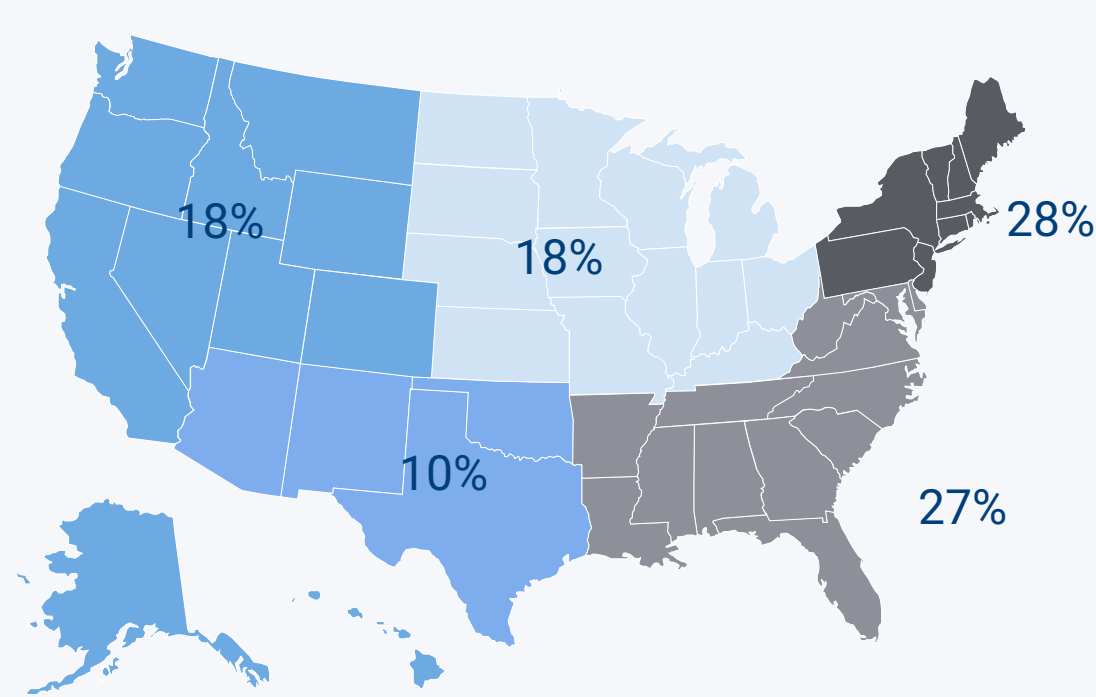
Years in Research



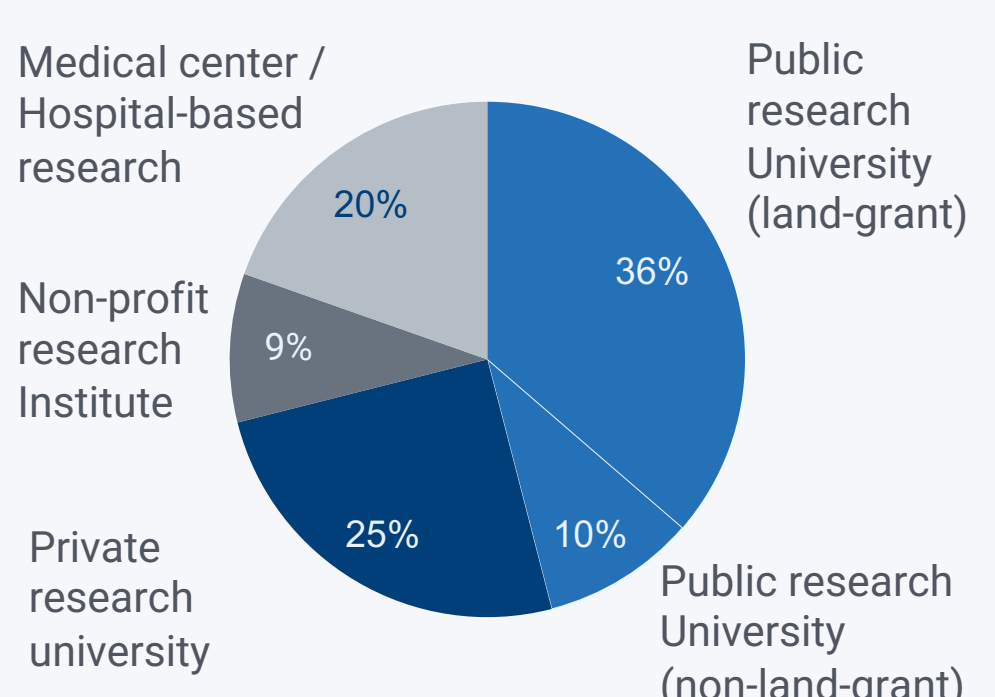
Carnegie Classification



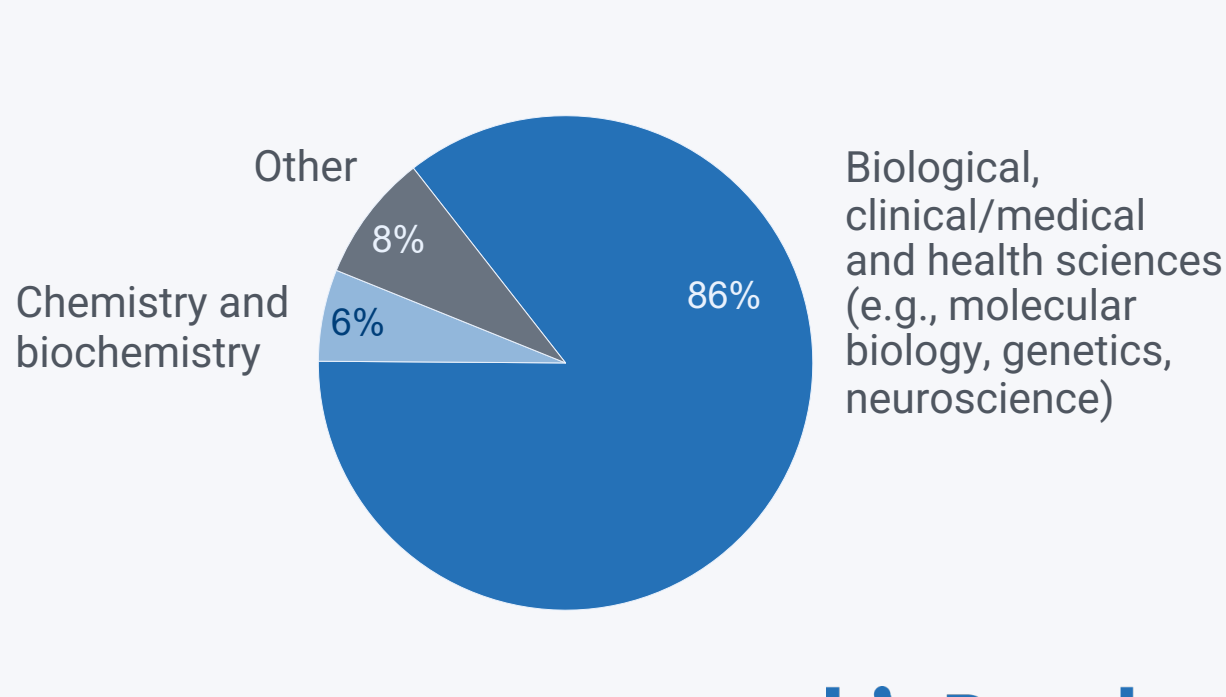
Region



Type of Institution



Field of research



1 Federal Funding Crisis

1 Federal Funding Crisis

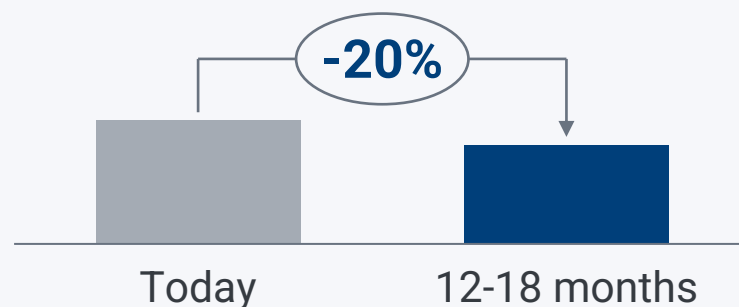
Key Findings



67%
of respondents express extreme concern about ongoing changes to federal funding



75%
of Research Administrators cite low faculty morale at their institutions



80% of respondents believe budgets will continue to decline over the next 18 months, by -20% on average



90%
of respondents believe budget cuts will hinder research progress

Summary

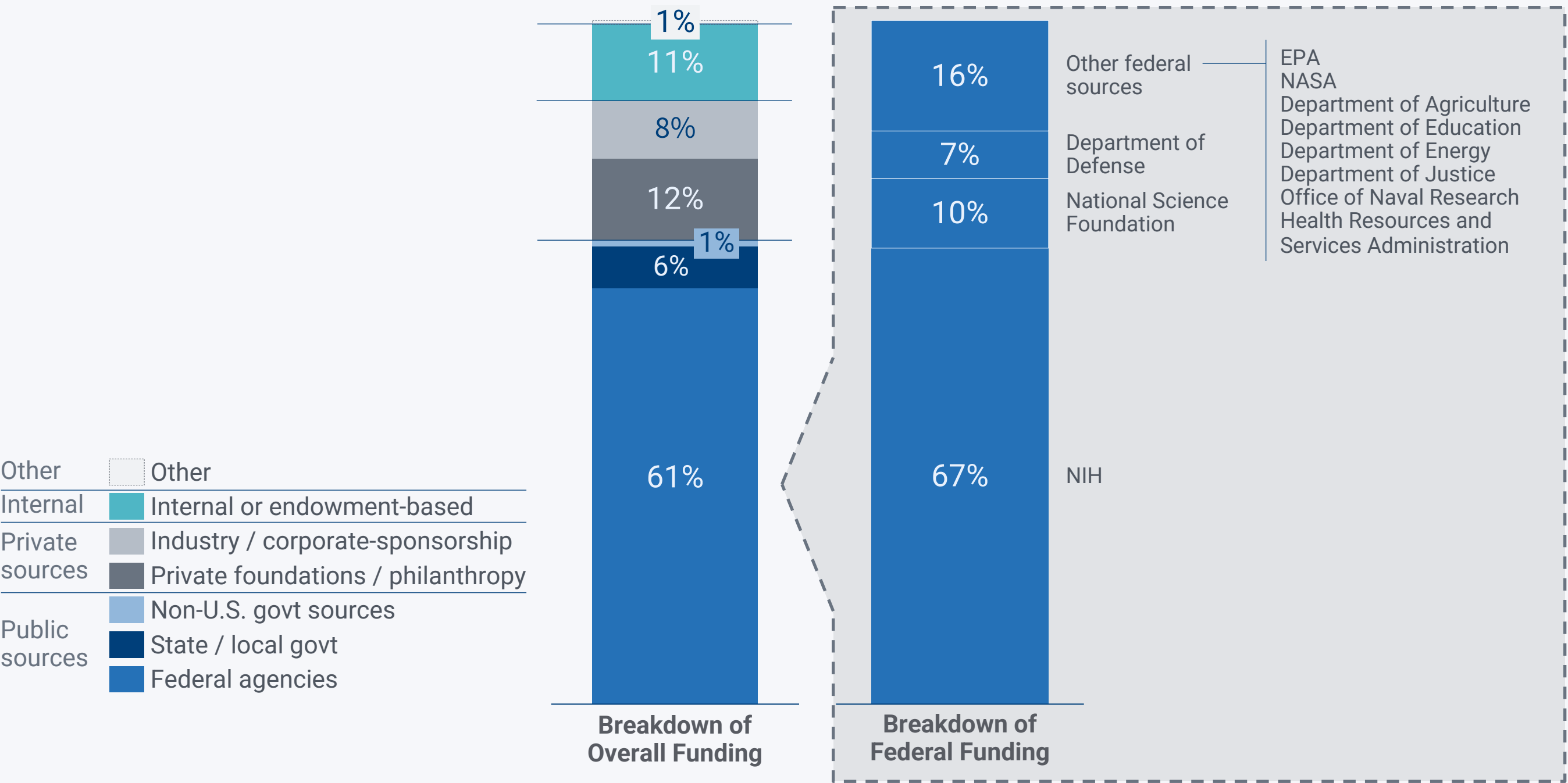
The contraction of federal funding has caused significant uncertainty across the research ecosystem. Federal agencies provide approximately 60% of university research funding, with NIH representing the largest share at 67% of federal research dollars.

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents express significant concern about the future, and over 90% of Principal Investigators (PIs) anticipate that research progress will be stifled. The outlook remains pessimistic - faculty morale is low at 75% of institutions, and over 80% of respondents expect the situation to worsen, projecting a 20% budget decline over the next 18 months. This underscores the urgency with which the academic community views current funding challenges.

Federal agencies fund ~60% of the average university research budget; most dollars come from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Breakdown of research funding by funding source

Mean % of total research budget (N=151, Research Administrators, PIs and Faculty only)



61%
of the average
institution's budget
comes from federal
agency sources

2/3
of federal funds
come from the
National Institutes
of Health

* Thinking about all of your external research funding in a typical year, please allocate a total of 100 points (representing 100%) across the following categories.
** Now, focusing on your total federal funding alone, let's suppose that adds up to 100%. Please allocate that 100 across the federal agencies that typically give your institution funding.

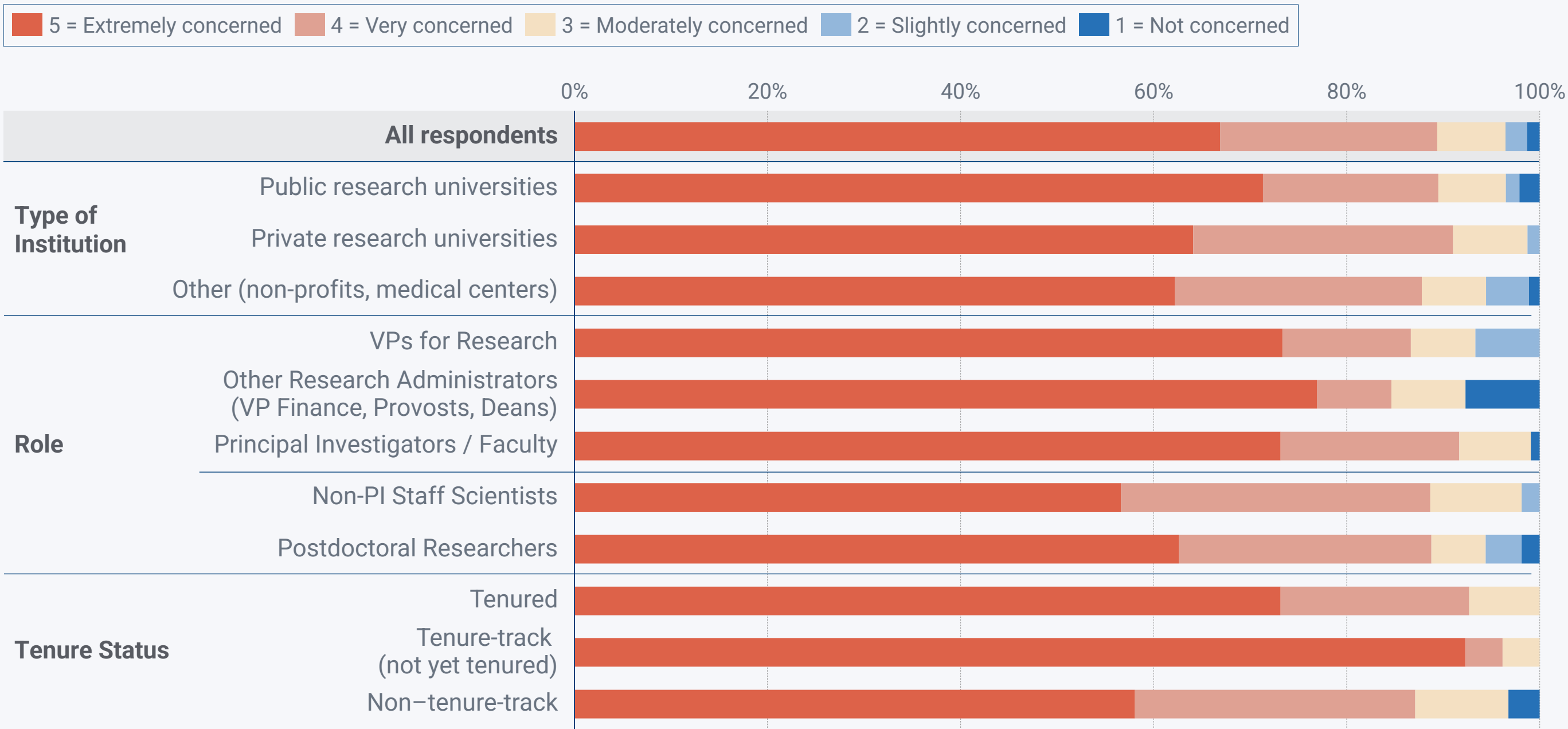
Federal funding cuts have raised extreme concerns across the research ecosystem

67%
of respondents
express extreme
concern about
ongoing changes to
federal funding

92%
of tenure-track
researchers report
extreme concern

Degree of concern about changes to federal funding

% respondents (N=311, all respondents)

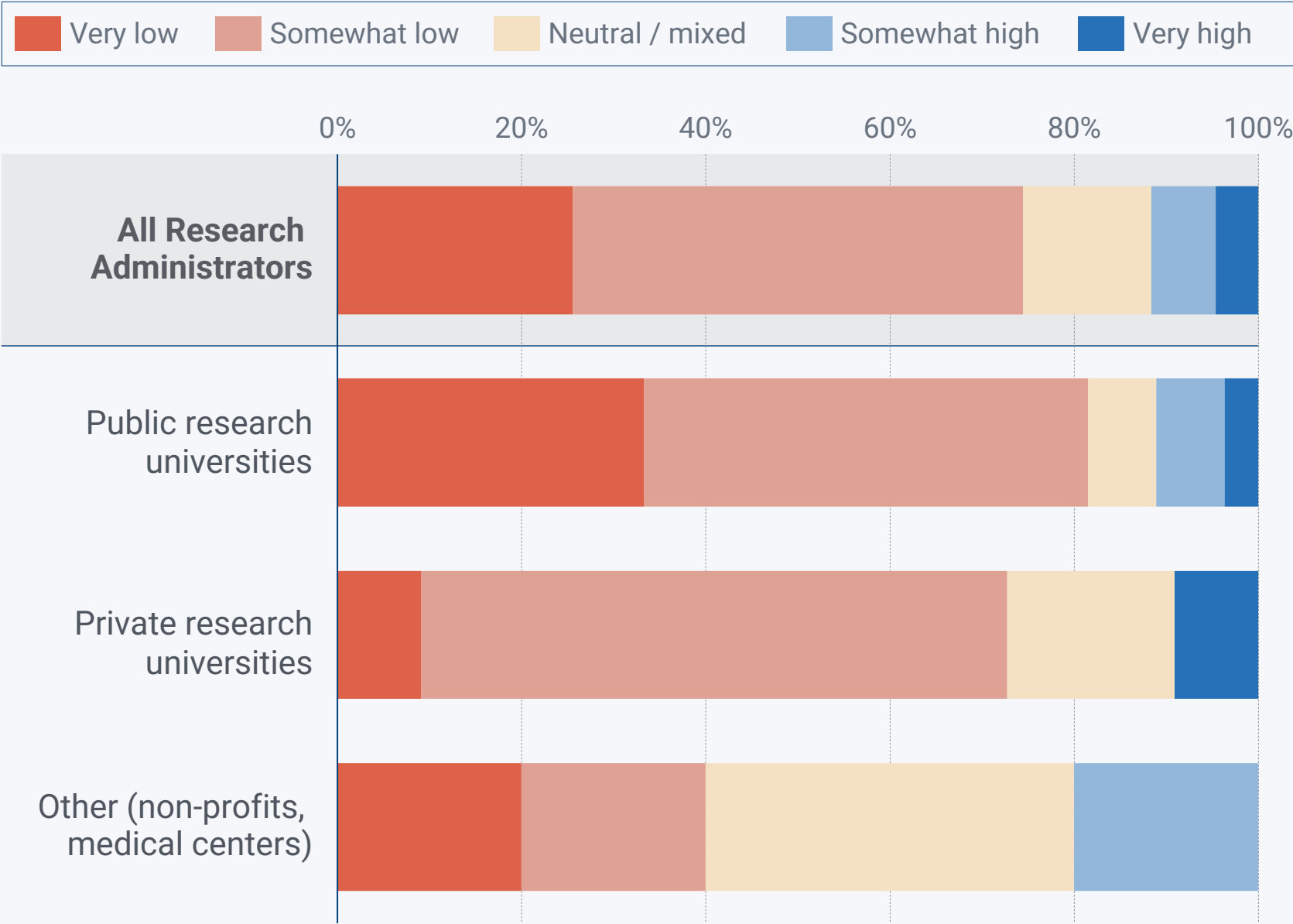


* How concerned are you about potential or ongoing changes to funding from NIH and other federal agencies (e.g., overhead/F&A caps, budget reductions)?

Morale is low among faculty at ~75% of institutions

Morale among faculty, according to Research Administrators

% respondents (N=43, Research Administrators only)



This is really **damaging the morale of a whole generation** of scientists.

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center (West)

These changes threaten to eliminate an entire generation of scientists and the discoveries they might make. **It threatens the US's position as a scientific leader**, but more importantly... this threatens to result in **thousands if not millions of preventable deaths in the future** due to impaired scientific progress.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

It's a disaster for morale; a disaster for innovation, science, and technology for the United States; and a potential disaster for my research trajectory as a non-tenured new PI.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (West)

It's making life in the USA very hard. The success of a research environment depends upon the passionate pursuit of many individuals. Poor financial circumstances create an environment that is insecure, and feels futile, sapping passions and reducing success.

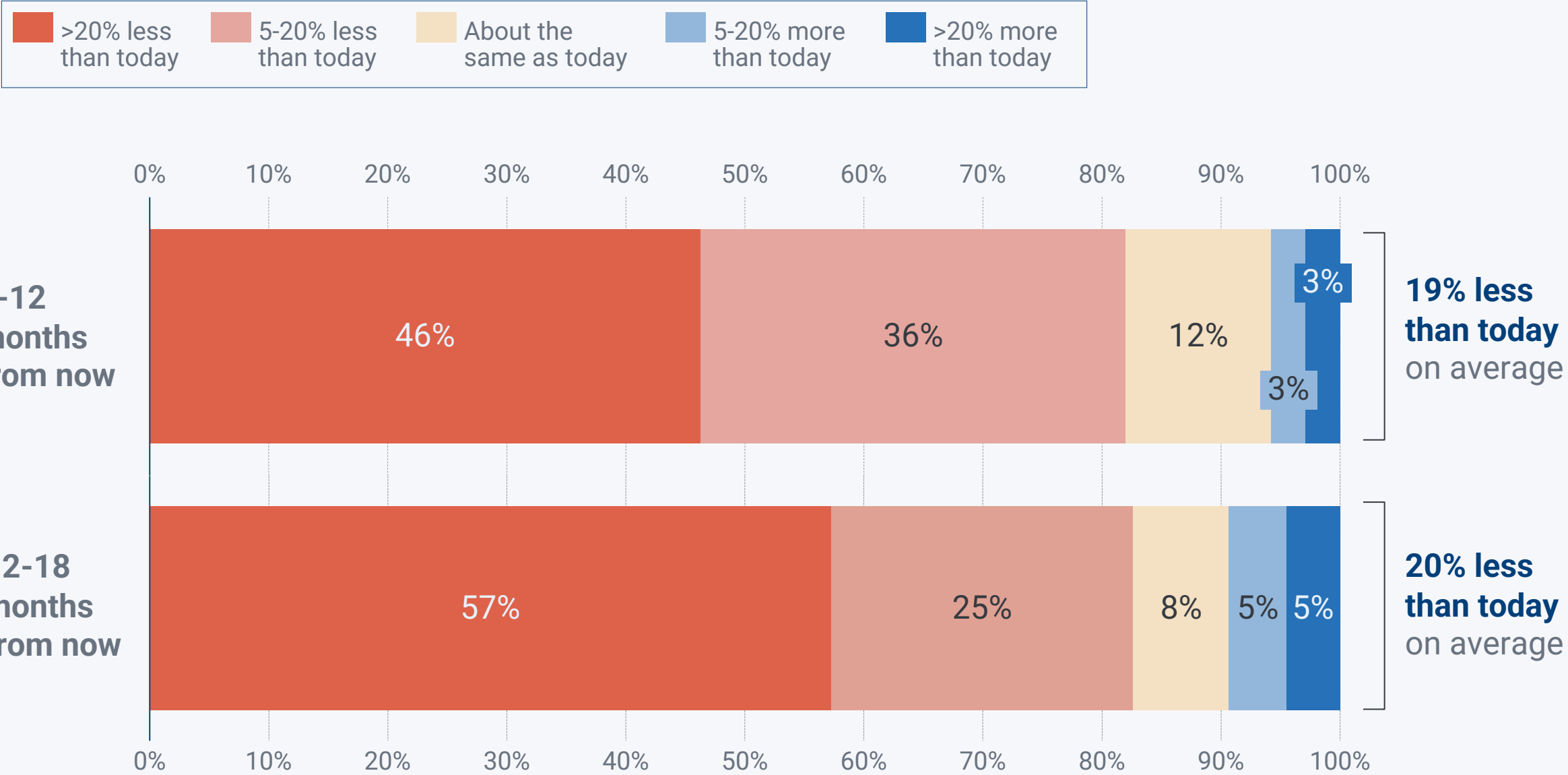
— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

* How would you describe faculty morale at your institution given current and potential funding shifts?

>80% of respondents believe the situation will continue to worsen through 2026, falling another ~20% from current state

Outlook on how grant funding will change: 6-12 months vs. 12-18 months

% respondents (N=311, all respondents)



Some NIH grants have already been halted or delayed, leading to less funding. **Scientific review and/or council review and final funding decisions have been delayed** on many other grants, meaning the impact on funding is likely to **keep worsening as time goes on.**

— VP / Dean for Research
R2 Private Research University (Midwest)

At our institution, grants are being discontinued by the NIH at a steady rate and existing grants are **having such delays in Notice of Award that they are effectively being discontinued.** I expect that this will continue and that **the proposed restructuring to the NIH will further diminish federal funding.**

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

Some of our funding that has already been approved (officially) has not been received on time, and costs are going unpaid or being paid from other budgets, creating a **chain reaction of budget deficits.** This is a separate issue from awards suddenly being rescinded or grants cancelled.

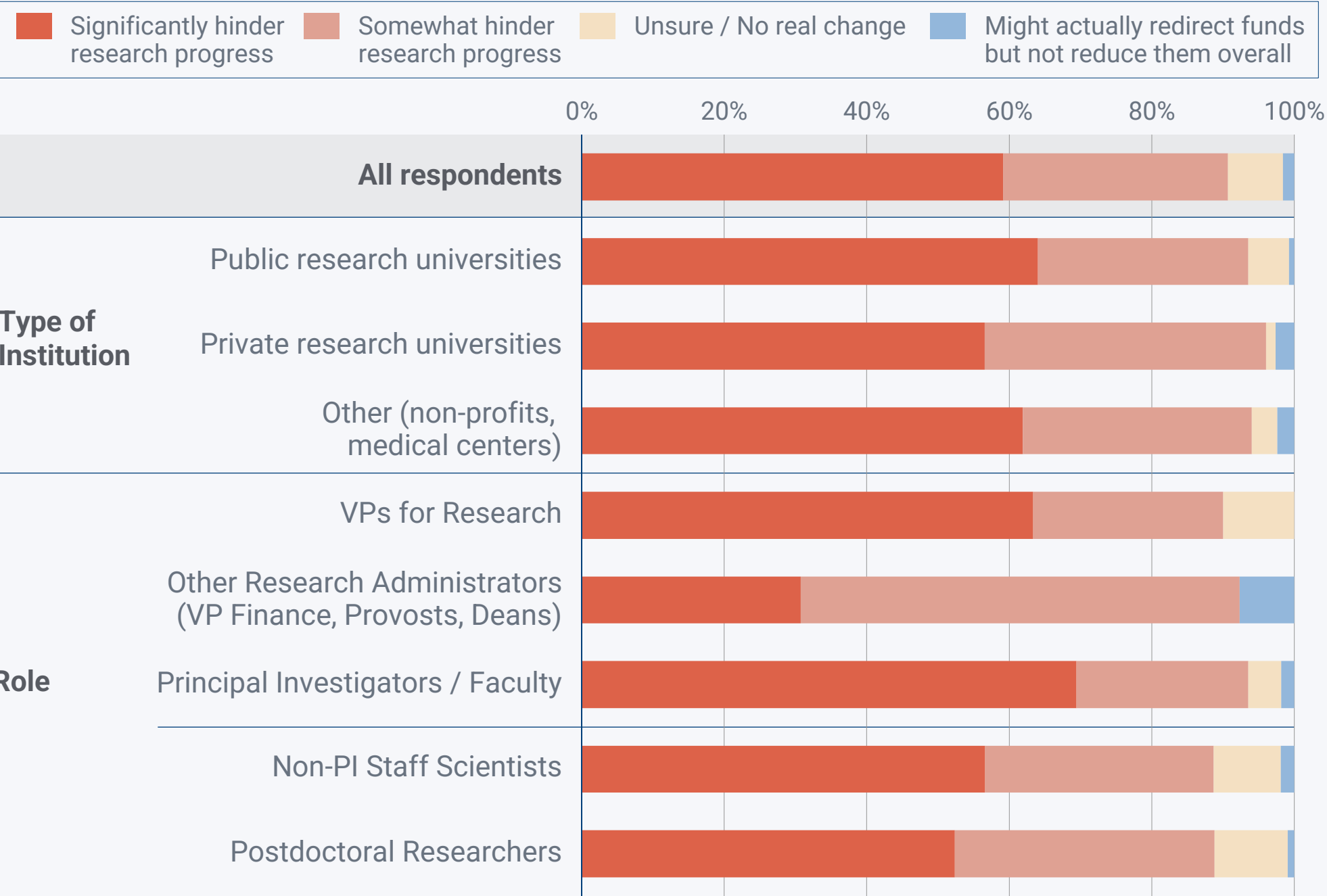
— Postdoctoral Researcher,
Medical Center (West)

* Which best describes your outlook on how grant funding from federal funding sources will be in the below time periods?

90% of respondents believe these funding changes will hinder research progress

Outlook on how grant funding will affect research progress

% respondents (N=311, all respondents)



* How do you think these funding changes will affect your ability to conduct research or guide research at your institution over the next 1–2 years?

The uncertainty in funding is more paralyzing than the actual budget cuts. It limits our planning and investment.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

Yes, funding changes have a noticeable impact. The resources will be limited and very competitive. **This can stifle innovation and discourage high-risk, high-reward research.**

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
Medical Center (Midwest)

The federal funding changes will significantly reduce innovative research because of the disproportionate reduction in trainees and early career investigators. The key to my own research work is the influx of new perspectives and skills that the undergrad, graduate, post-doc and early career faculty bring.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

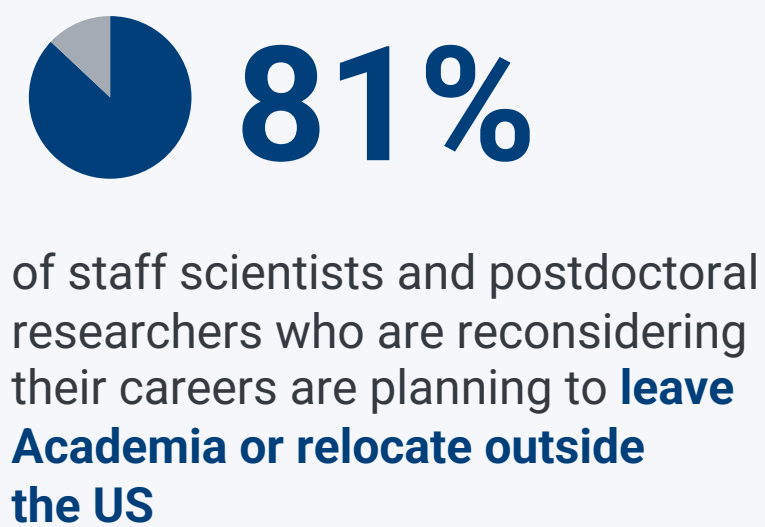
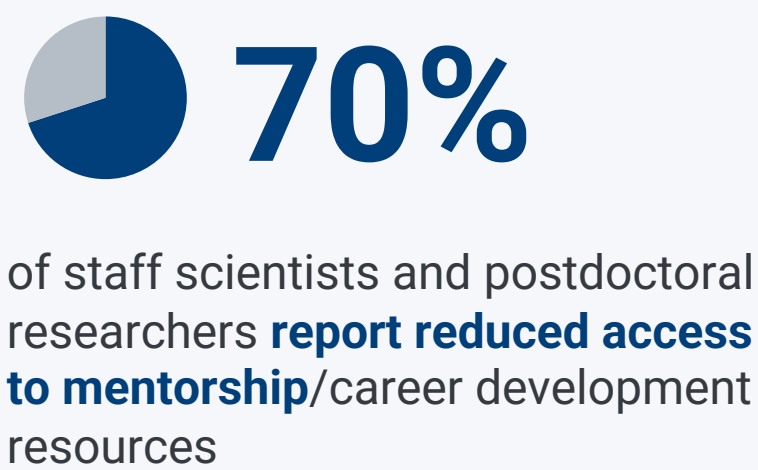
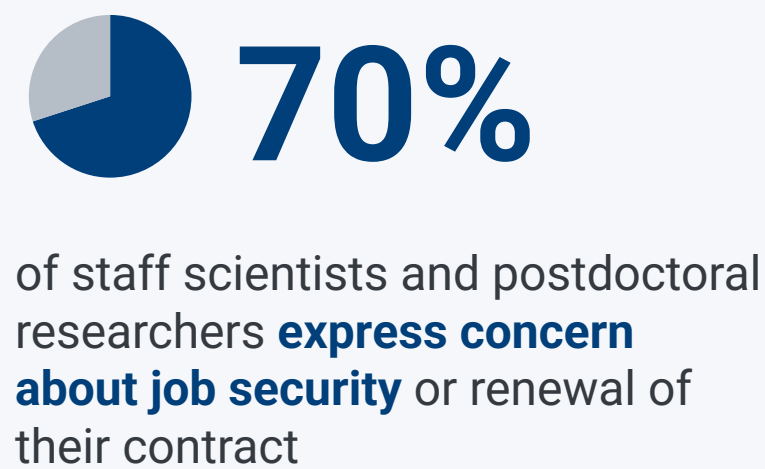
Uncertainty is making it very difficult to ultimately plan experiments. Good experiments boost publishing and funding, but the burden of cost is all upfront. **This uncertainty makes it less likely for a PI with moderate budget to splurge on a big experiment, which will be detrimental for the success of their lab.**

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

2 Challenges for Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers

2 Challenges for Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers

Key Findings



Summary

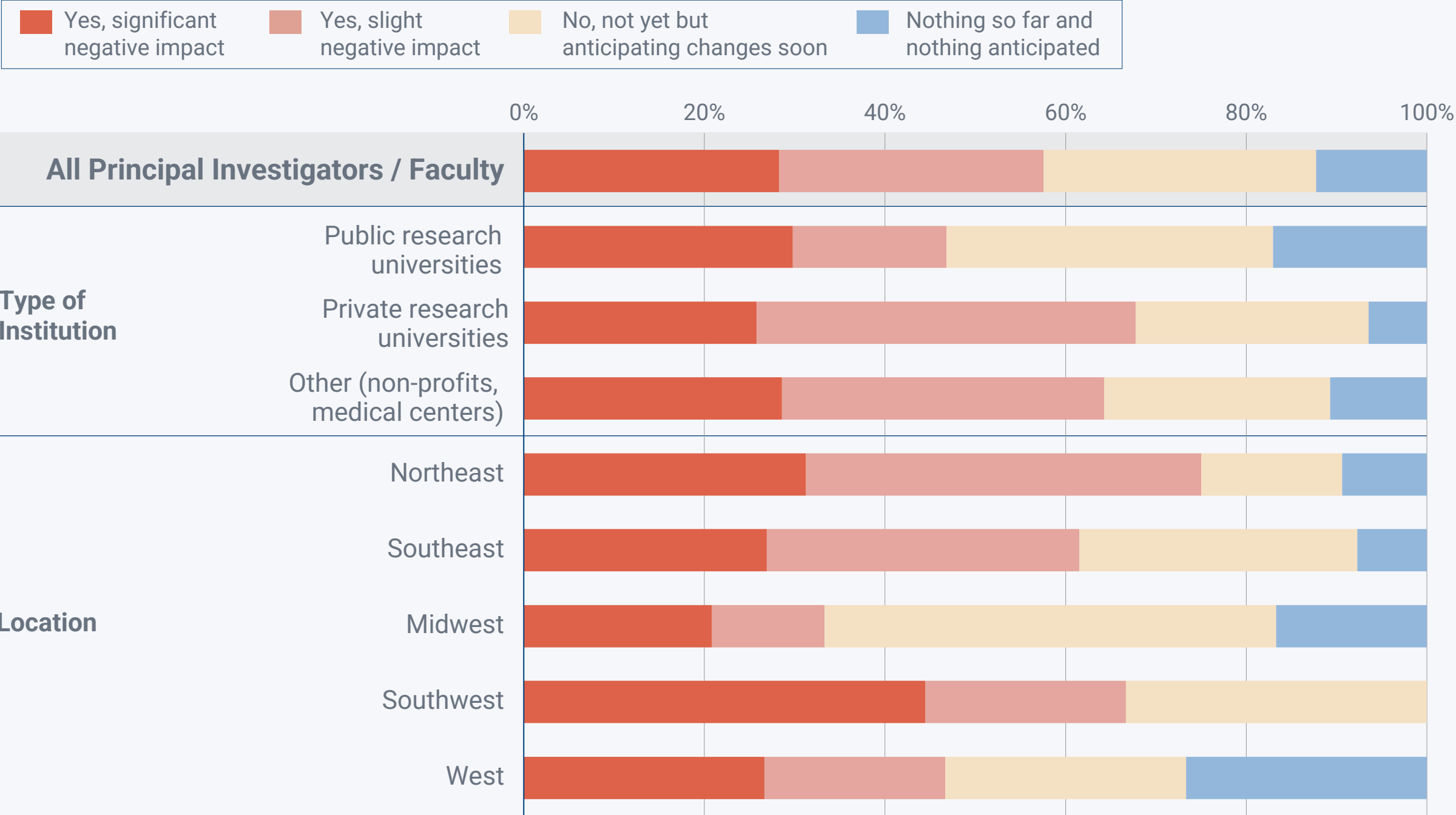
The effects of funding cuts are already visible in the laboratories. More than half of Principal Investigators (PIs) report that their labs have already faced significant negative financial impacts, with an additional 30% expecting changes in the near future. These pressures are prompting career reconsiderations.

About 70% of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers are concerned about their job security over the coming year, with many considering leaving academia or relocating outside the United States. Communication gaps compound these challenges, with only one-third of staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers satisfied with institutional transparency about funding-related changes.

Swift and widespread impact: 87% of labs affected or expecting disruption

Impact on labs' financial sustainability

% respondents (N=108, Principal Investigators / Faculty only)



We are making sure to spend down our budgets and not save too much because [saving funds] might look bad and **[the govt] could try to take it from us.**

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center (West)

As a PI, these funding uncertainties are having a tangible impact on nearly every aspect of our lab operations. Hiring is the first area affected.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

[It's] definitely affecting my hiring, experimental scope and conference attendance. **I am reducing all of them: avoid[ing] expensive experiments and hiring less."**

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

The US research ecosystem is **very intertwined**. Cuts to one area will affect ability to conduct research in other areas and **may even affect price and access to research materials and supplies.**

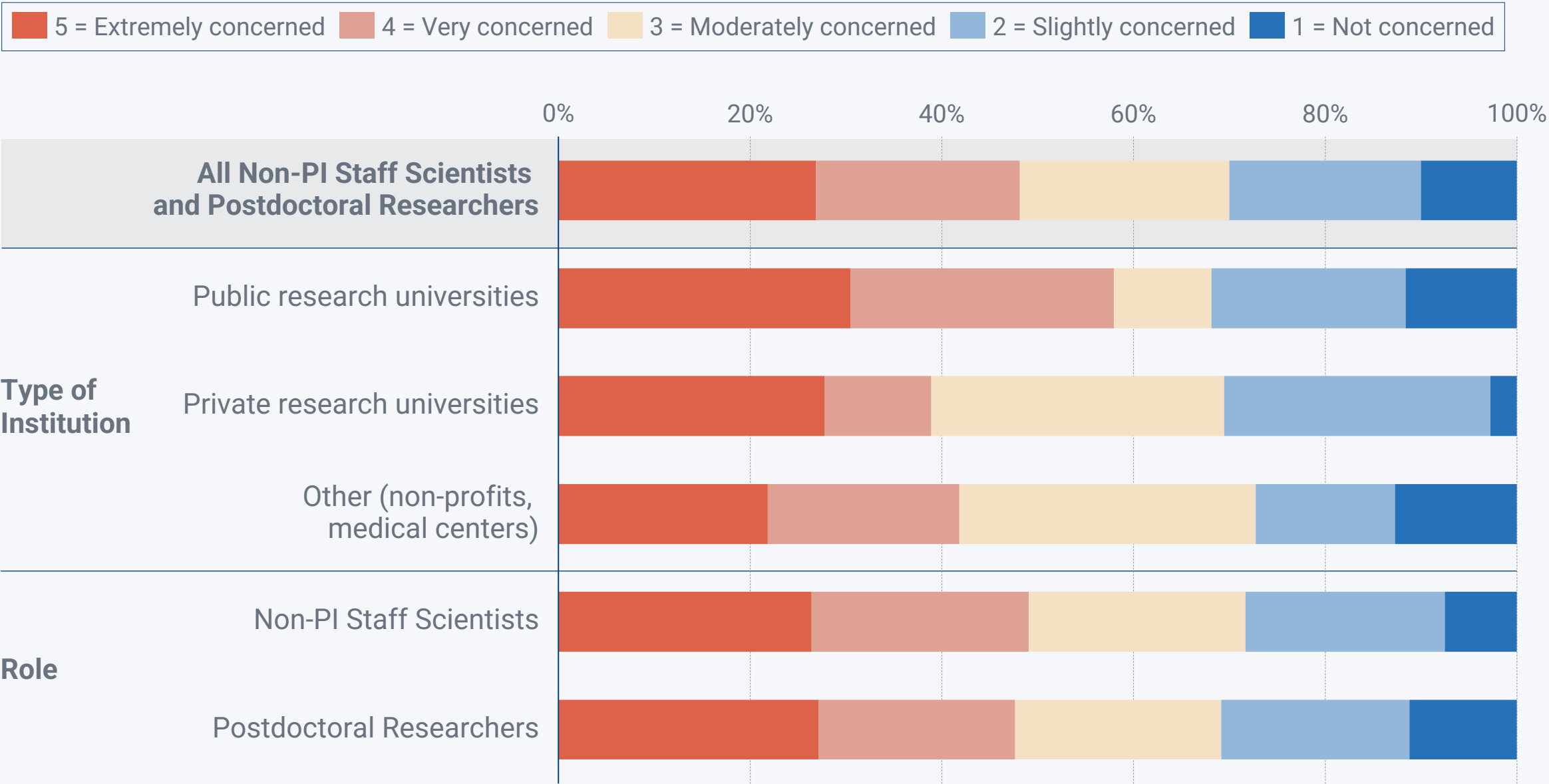
— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (West)

* Have you already seen any direct impact on your lab's financial sustainability from changes to NIH funding?

Across all types of institutions, 70% of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers express at least moderate concern about the security of their position or contract

Degree of concern about contract/position renewal

% respondents (N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)



Researchers are extremely worried and **the scientists who have not had funding cut yet are feeling a lot of ‘survivor’s guilt’.**
— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

We are unsure if we will have the funding to keep our staff, myself included, and if we have no staff then no experiments can be done.
— Non-PI Staff Scientist
Medical Center (Southwest)

I am concerned that I cannot keep my current position if the funding is affected.
— Postdoctoral Researcher
Medical Center (Southwest)

[My biggest concern is] **that I will be jobless very soon.**
— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

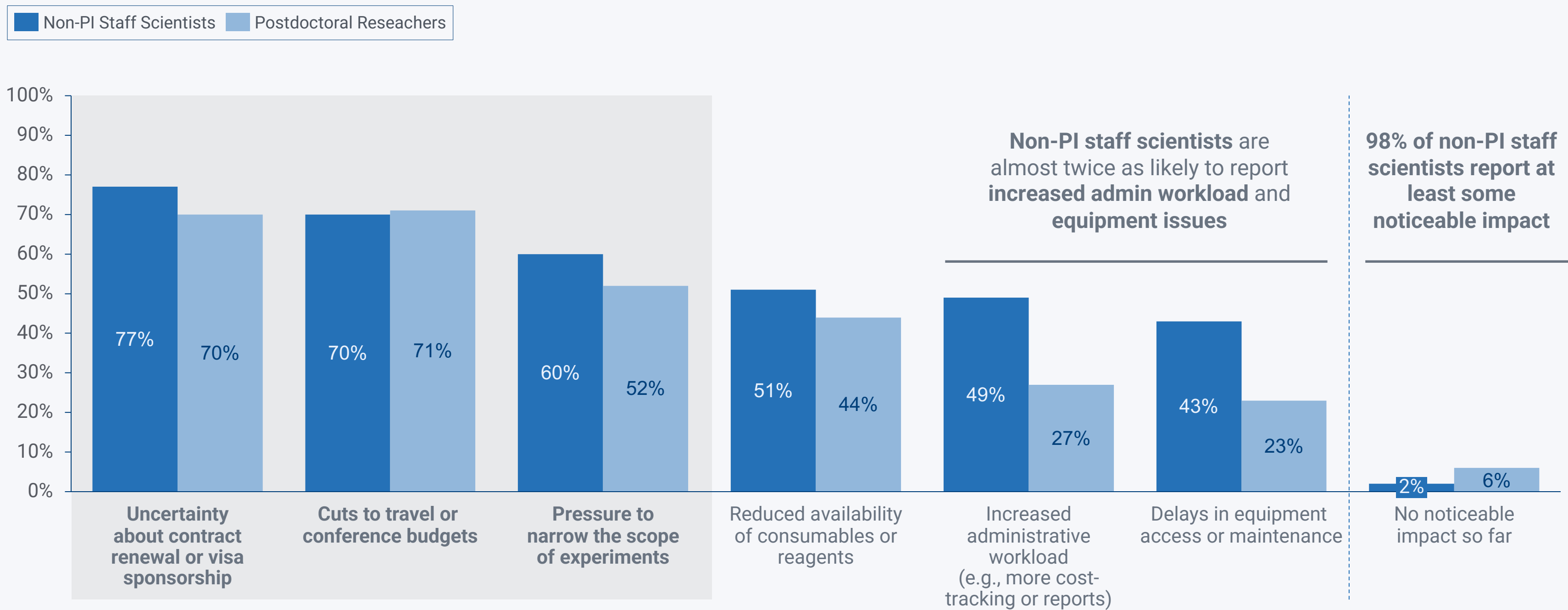
The chances of successfully having a career in academic research and becoming a lab head feel slimmer and slimmer.
— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

* How concerned are you about your position or contract being reduced, not renewed, or otherwise affected in the next 12 months?

The majority of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers report uncertainty about job security, cuts to travel budgets and pressure to narrow the scope of experiments

Effects of funding uncertainty on Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers

% respondents selecting each option, select all that apply (N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)

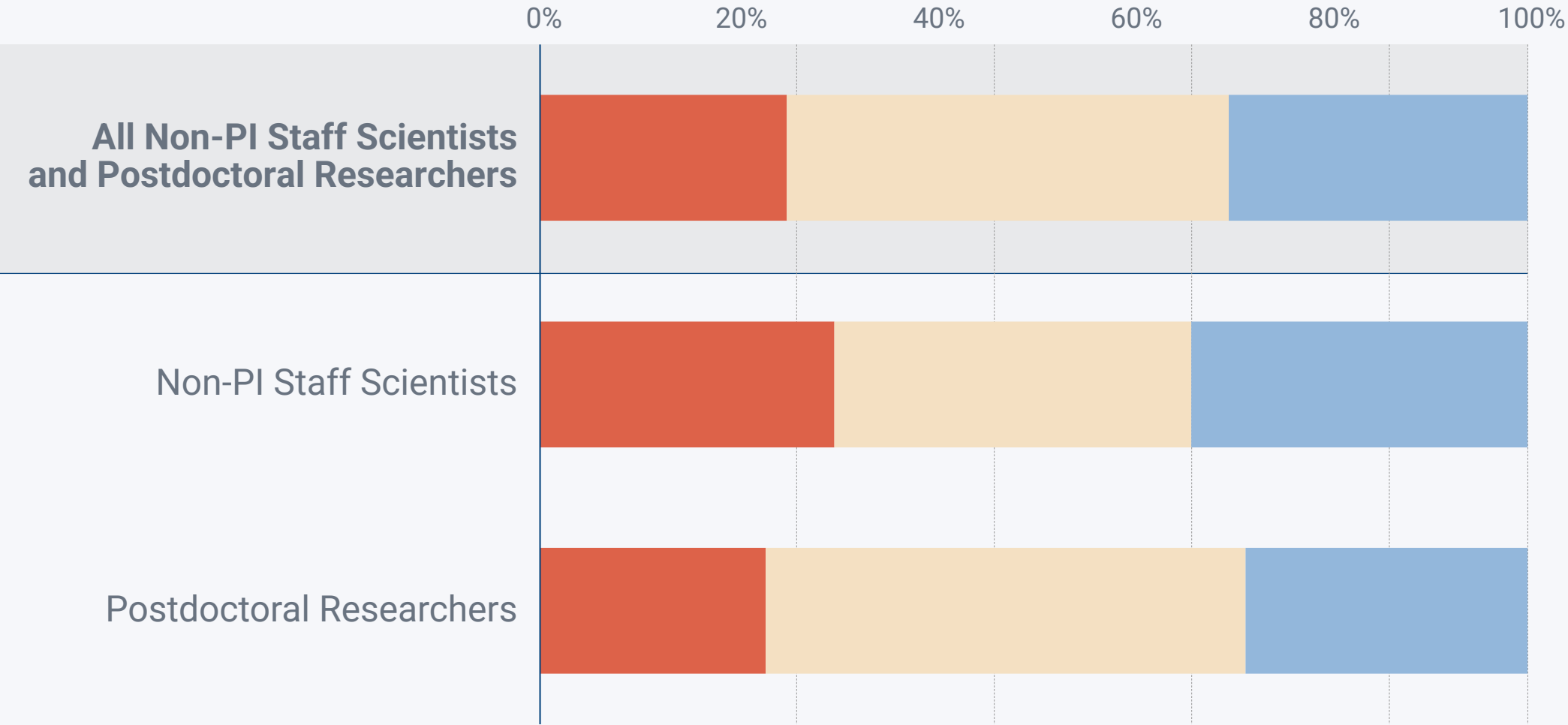
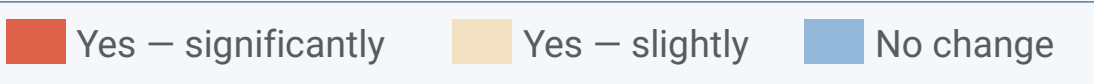


* Which of the following effects have you already experienced—or do you expect to experience—because of current funding uncertainty?

70% of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers report reduced access to mentorship and training resources

Reductions in mentorship, training and professional development

% respondents (N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)



With uncertain funding, it becomes risky to invest in ambitious, high-impact work that requires multi-year stability. **This unpredictability** also disrupts collaboration, delays innovation, and **makes it harder to mentor early-career researchers who depend on consistent support and training opportunities.**

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

[I've experienced] open hostility from perceived constraint on resources and who should have access to them. [As well as] **restricted number of projects and mentoring support.**

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

Decreased support for trainees (whose experiments/studies are typically funded by mentor); decreased trainee travel support.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

The biggest concern is losing talent and **declines in graduate student training.** These changes will result in future declines in discovery, research, and the talent pipeline needed to keep the US competitive.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

* Have recent funding constraints reduced your access to mentorship, training workshops, or professional-development resources?

Among the ~70% of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers reconsidering their career plans, 81% plan to leave the U.S. or leave Academia altogether

Have recent conditions changed your near-term career plans?

% respondents

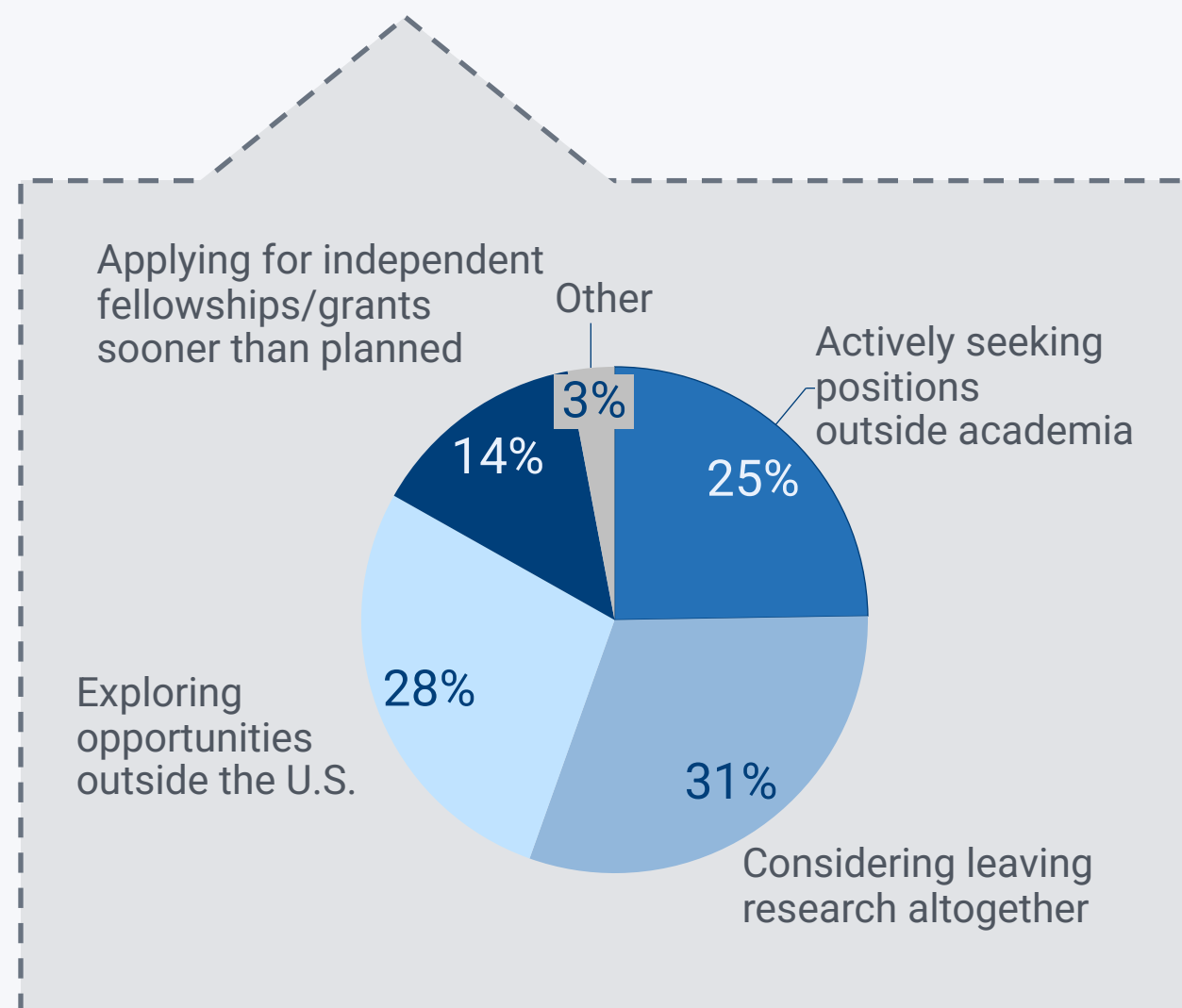
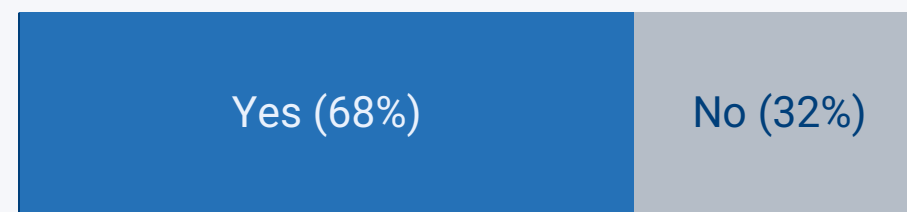
(N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)

If yes, how have they changed your near-term career plans?

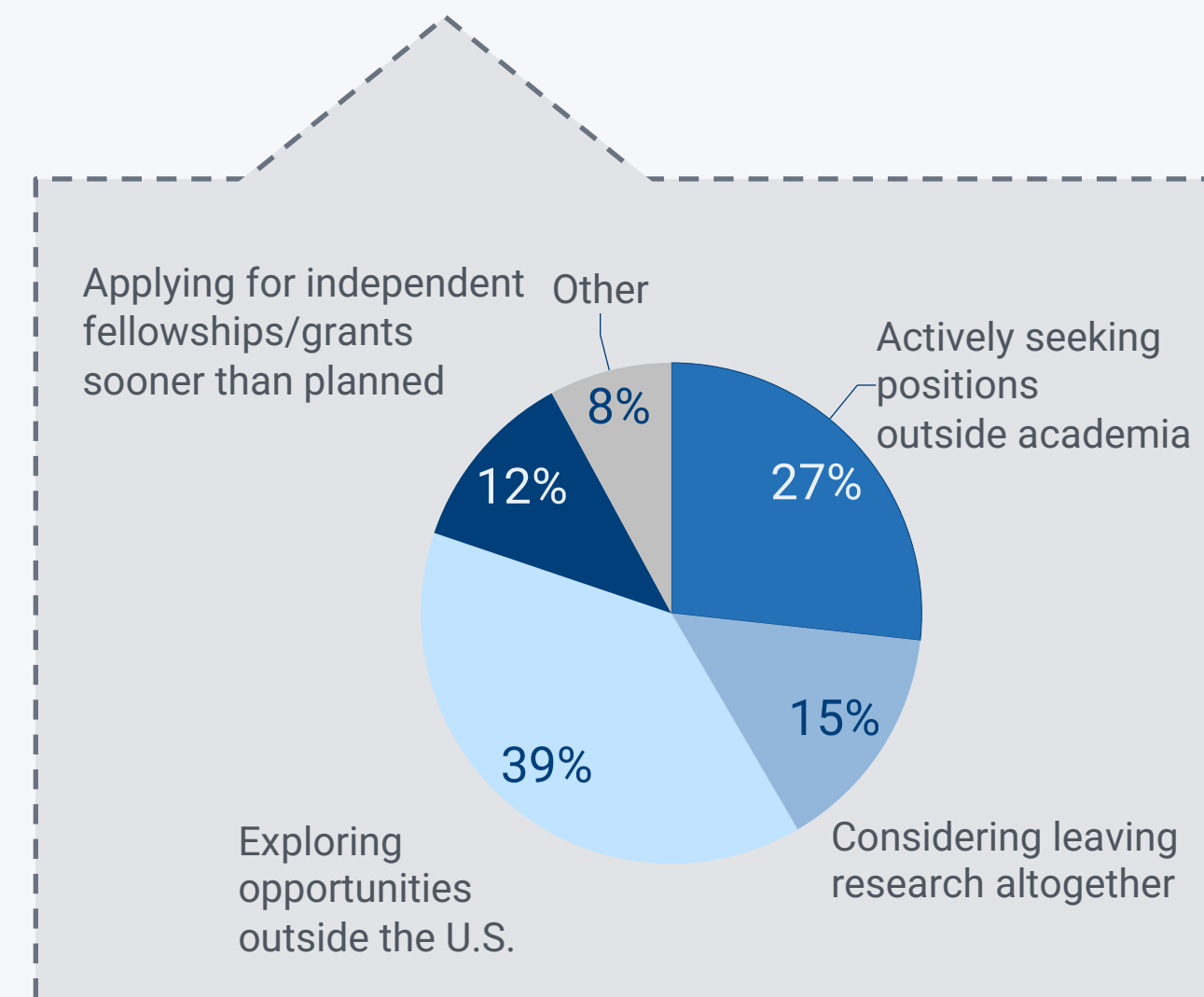
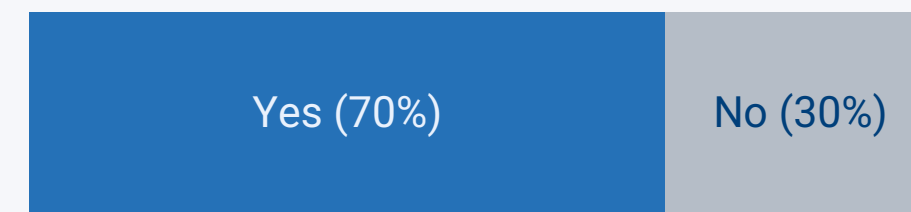
% respondents, select 1

(N=111, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers who answered "Yes" to preceding question only)

Non-PI Staff Scientists



Postdoctoral Researchers



Among the ~70% of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers reconsidering their career plans, 81% plan to leave the U.S. or leave Academia altogether

I fear significant brain drain, with leading and top researchers moving abroad to pursue research careers elsewhere, or leaving behind academia and research all together to pursue other careers.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

[I feel] extreme uncertainty about the important next steps in my career. Applications to NIH for independent funding is uncertain too. Academic jobs that were supposed to be available are not listed any longer.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
Medical Center (Northeast)

We are actively looking for jobs outside academia. We also had to reduce the lab personnel. Time to close up lab in few years.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

Everyone is making plans to leave or work in other areas. Every watercooler conversation is about the funding cuts and how many layoffs there will be.

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R1 Private Research University (West)

My postdoc timeline is being cut short due to my fellowship that was cancelled. While I did want to stay in the US (as a citizen) to continue working either at NIH or industry, **I no longer feel safe or valued in the US.** Thus, I am applying for research positions overseas.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R1 Private Research University (West)

I might leave the country in the next few years. Many colleagues are already looking abroad. We are losing valuable contributions from **foreign scientist living here as they feel afraid and targeted...** and [are] **leaving to countries where they may not end in jail** just for being foreigners and scientist[s].

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Southeast)

I may need to leave academia because I cannot afford to stay in a low paying role with these funding cuts with uncertainty of promotion.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
Non-profit Research Institute (Northeast)

I fear that I will be out of the research work force when the grant currently funding my salary runs out. **Several personal factors have led to me having to dip into my retirements savings,** so the possibility of losing my job causes me severe anxiety.

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R2 Private Research University (Northeast)

I am no longer actively pursuing a future as a professor. I am actively looking for an industry job or core facility job. I worry that we could lose funding because we used words like "environment" and "climate change" in our grants.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
Non-profit Research Institute (Northeast)

I did not want to go into consulting or private equity, but I do know jobs in those sectors are opening up - and **I may need to alter my career plans to shift to that industry.**

— Postdoctoral Researcher
Medical Center (Northeast)

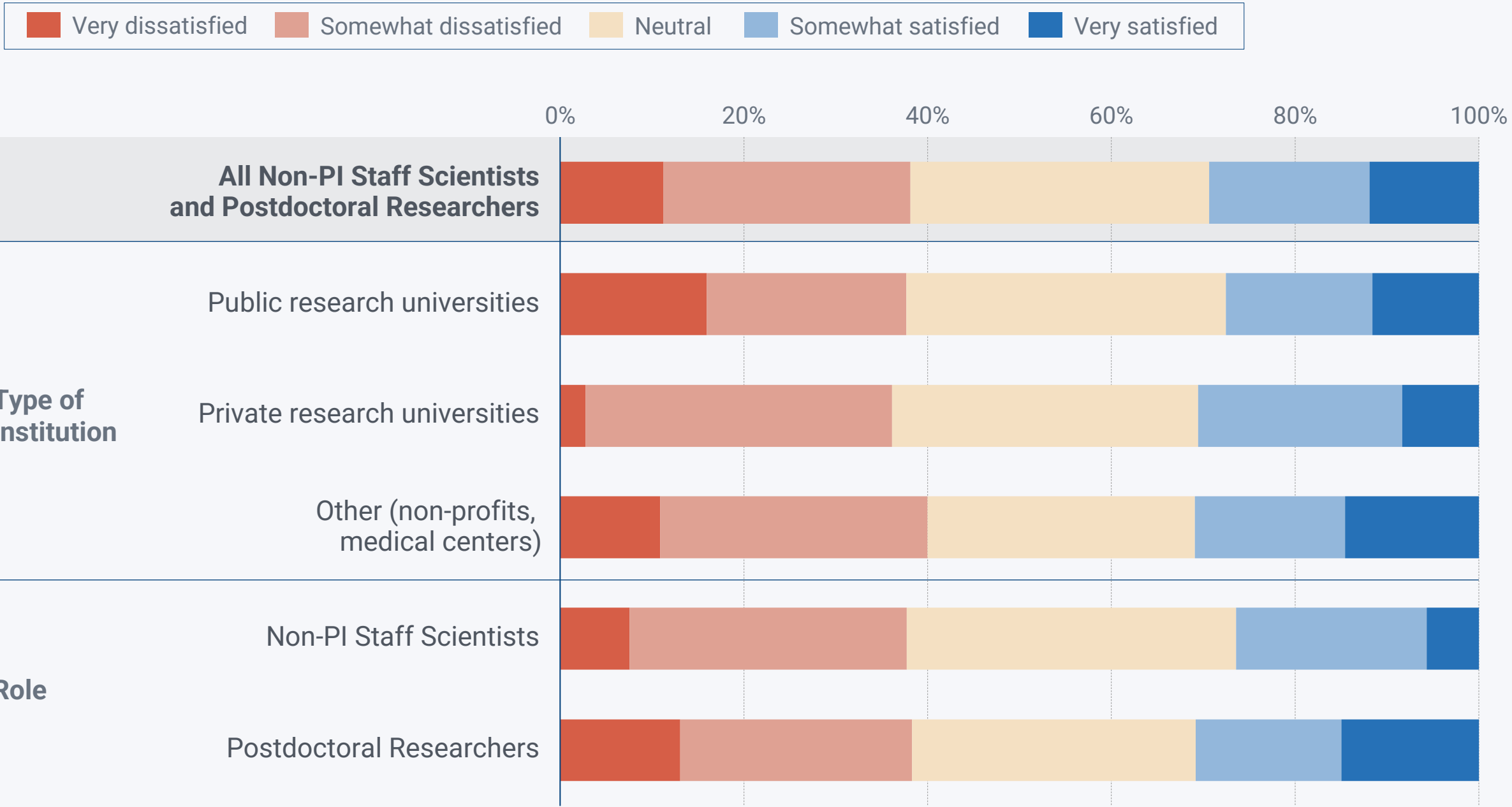
The uncertainty around the availability of research funding is prohibiting me from recruiting new graduate students. **The students themselves are discouraged and are seeking graduate degrees elsewhere. Some international students are afraid to come to the U.S.**

— Principal Investigator,
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

Less than 1/3 of non-PI staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers are satisfied with how their institutions have communicated about funding changes

Satisfaction with communication from Admin about funding changes

% respondents (N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)



Morale at my institution is pretty bad.

The leadership is gaslighting us that "nothing has changed" when many are facing imminent layoffs due to non-renewed grant funding.

They are also continuing with new faculty hires due to a large number of anticipated retirements, which will suck even more resources. I am going to try to hang on because I think a lot of people will leave science, and I really hope to still be here to see a better future.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (West)

* How satisfied are you with the clarity and timeliness of information your institution provides about funding-related changes (e.g., hiring freezes, core-facility fees, visa renewals)?

3 Institutional Priorities

3 Institutional Priorities

Key Findings

Research Administrator Ranked Priorities

Core Research Facilities
Tenured Faculty



of Principal Investigators **rank 'losing or not renewing staff / postdocs' as their #1 concern**

Principal Investigator Ranked Priorities

Supporting staff / postdoctoral researchers
Continuing Experiments



of Principal Investigators express worry about **having sufficient budget to fund graduate students and postdoctoral researchers**

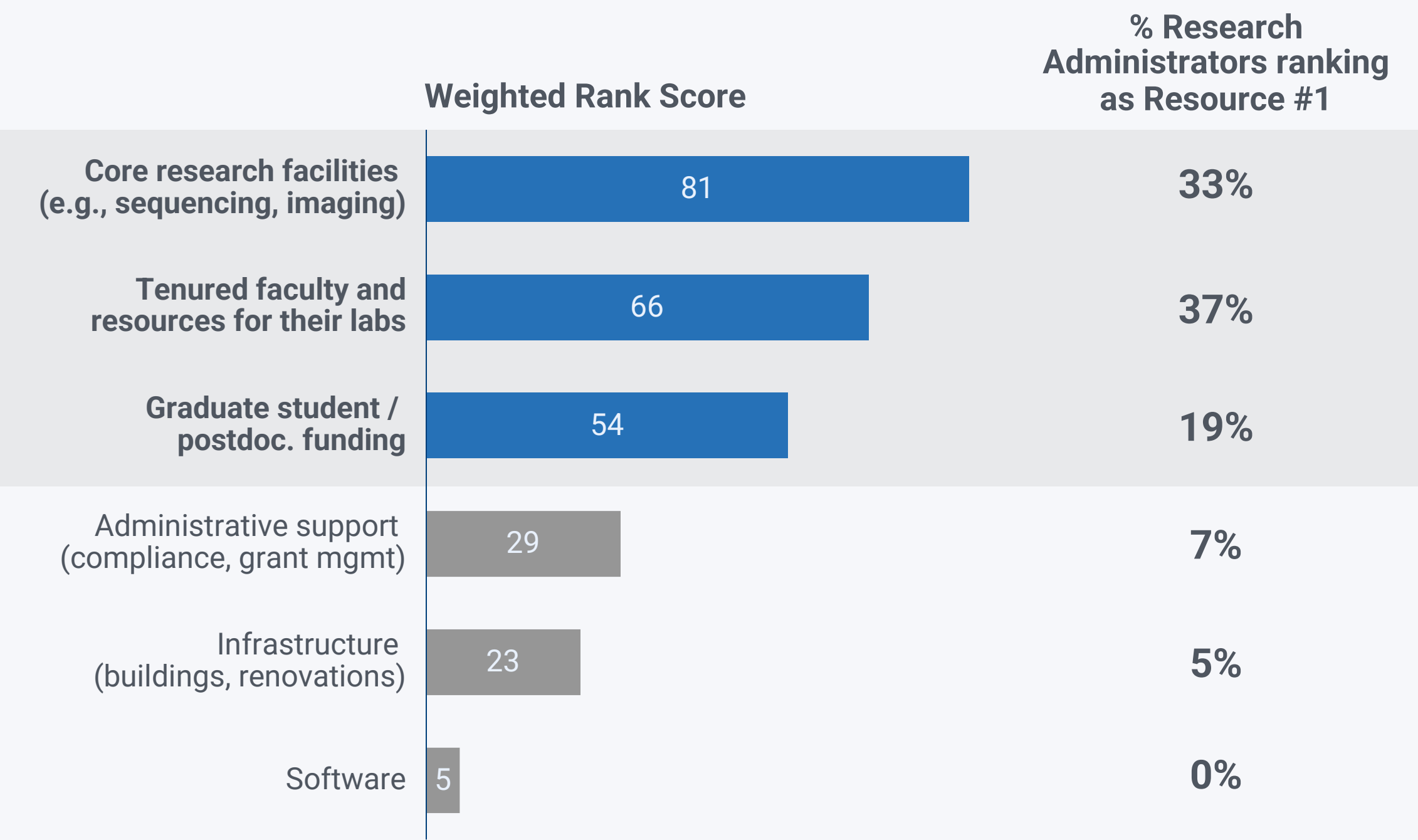
Summary

Research Administrators are prioritizing the protection of core research facilities, tenured positions, and support for trainees. Their main concerns are retaining key personnel, maintaining morale, and ensuring research continuity and competitiveness. Principal Investigators are most worried about retaining skilled staff and students, as well as maintaining the operational capacity of their labs.

For Research Administrators, maintaining core research facilities, supporting tenured faculty and funding graduate students/postdoctoral researchers are the highest priority resources to protect

Research Administrators' ranking of resources to protect at all costs

Weighted rank score; Rank 1 = 3 points; Rank 2 = 2 points, Rank 3 = 1 point (N=43, Admin only)



Due to loss of longevity and funding, we [may] also **lose space to *do the science***. Once you lose your research space (which is based on indirect recovery) it is a **downward spiral** and nearly impossible to recover from.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

The **core facilities are running on reduced hours**. These budget cuts **[affect] all research operations from the top down** and tie our hands about what science can be done.

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R1 Public Research University (Southwest)

Service operations of research facilities in climate and other fields are **delayed**, impacting public safety and operational planning.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

Many of the core facilities will cease to function. We are already seeing cuts and closures in the core facilities.

— Principal Investigator
Public Research University (Midwest)

* In your opinion, which resources are the most critical to protect at all costs, even if budgets shrink?

For Research Administrators, maintaining core research facilities, supporting tenured faculty and funding graduate students/postdoctoral researchers are the highest priority resources to protect

I am afraid it will decrease the service and research of faculty members across campus. **I am also afraid that faculty lines will have to be eliminated** if the cuts remaining dollars continues.

— VP Finance
R3 Public Research University (Southeast)

A huge fear is hemorrhaging talent because people are **fearful for their jobs**.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southwest)

[My biggest fears are a] **significant reduction in the size of research institute**, inability to expand academic offerings, [and] inability to impact the future of healthcare and other research, etc.

— VP / Dean for Research
Medical Center at R1 Research University (West)

[My biggest fear is the] loss of an entire generation of young people who can not be trained as scientists; **some of our very best undergraduates have already had PhD program admissions rescinded** due to funding (at major ivy league programs). **We will not have research infrastructure** needed to introduce students to research.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

A loss of their (faculty) identity as a researcher is deeply concerning. And the diminished patronage from federal sources to research will adversely affect the enthusiasm and inspirations to conduct research. And faculty might look overseas for other opportunities or move to industry. So innovations from higher ed institutions might not come out at the same pace as before.

— VP / Dean for Research
R2 Public Research University (Midwest)

A big fear is the amount of **time it will take to restart the multiple campus research programs** once things hit bottom. We know **it will not be "pushing the button and everything returns to [how they were last year]."** It will take years to regain everything that has been lost. **It will be like a lost generation of faculty and students** in research and education.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (West)

There will be a **long term shift toward direct costs** which could greatly **limit the flexibility of operations** and ultimately drive costs up as you are more restricted on shared service models.

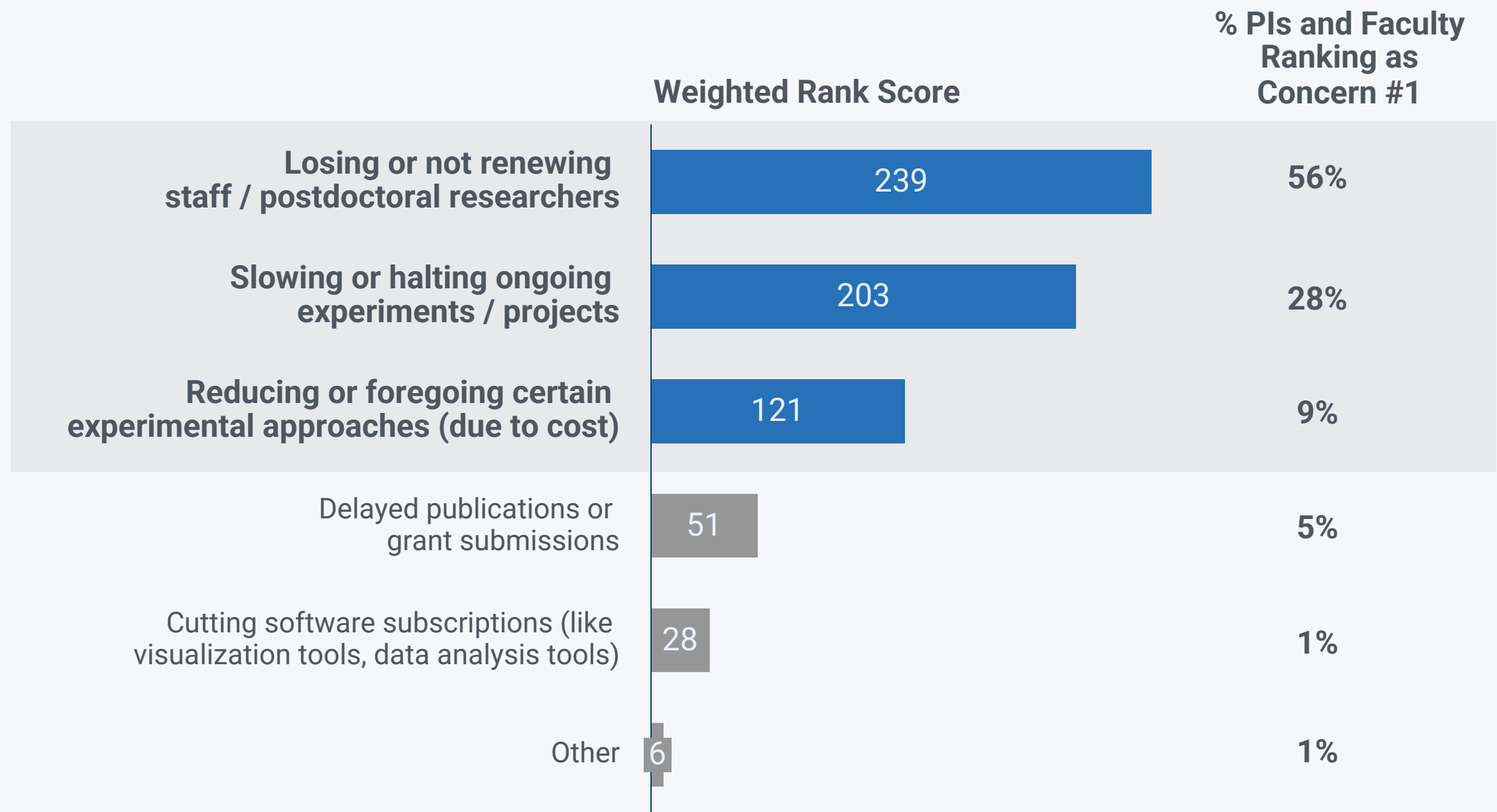
— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

* As a VPR or research leader, what is your biggest fear regarding destabilization of your organization if cuts to federal funding become permanent or deeper?

Principal Investigators care deeply about postdoctoral researchers, students and staff; they express most concern about having sufficient budget to support their team

PI and Faculty ranking of concerns

Weighted rank score; Rank 1 = 3 points; Rank 2 = 2 points, Rank 3 = 1 point (N=108, PIs and Faculty only)



I am very worried about ensuring that I can pay for graduate students, so am hesitant about taking on more students.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

I am not taking new staff or students on. I am not conducting pilot or already funded experiments. I am planning to retire early, or look for a non-academic job, or leave the country.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

[I’m] hurrying to graduate remaining students [and] figuring how to get them funded.

— Principal Investigator
R2 Private Research University (Northeast)

* If you had to absorb more costs within your lab budget (e.g., F&A/overhead no longer covers certain fees), which of the following would you be most worried about?

Principal Investigators care deeply about postdoctoral researchers, students and staff; they express most concern about having sufficient budget to support their team

Resources that PI and Faculty worry most about losing

% respondents checking “Yes” for each lab resource (N=108, PIs and Faculty only)

	Graduate student / postdoc. funding	Technical staff (RAs, lab managers)	Equipment maintenance / upgrades	Core facility access (e.g., mass spectrometry, microscopy)	Travel /conference budgets	Software	Other
All Principal Investigators and Faculty	85%	77%	60%	61%	56%	34%	6%
Public universities	87%	77%	60%	72%	49%	38%	4%
Private universities	87%	77%	65%	52%	68%	45%	6%
Other (non-profits, medical centers)	80%	77%	57%	53%	53%	17%	7%

I am **not taking on any new grad students or postdoc trainees** unless I secure additional external funding.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Northeast)

[I’ve had to] decrease staff and [accept] a **lower base salary for myself.**

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center, R2 Research University (Northeast)

The budget for my lab is significantly decreased, so the **postdoc in the lab is reduced to <80% effort and will need to be let go** if new funding is not received in the next 6 months - 1 year (unlikely).

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (West)

* Beyond actual research funding, which of these lab resources are you most worried about losing or seeing reduced due to budget constraints? (select all that apply)

Principal Investigators care deeply about postdoctoral researchers and staff; they express most concern about having sufficient budget to support their team

Staff and junior faculty is very worried so I **need to spend more effort providing assurance** [to them].

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

I **am not recruiting any new lab members until the "dust settles."** I am spending less funds in anticipation of cuts.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

I **will not be recruiting any new personnel** (graduate students or postdocs) in the upcoming year, **until I am more certain** about the funding landscape and the security of my current awards.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

It's everything. I'm **concerned about** my ability to do research both in **directly paying people** but also having colleagues to collaborate with in the future.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

We are **2 faculty short, and will be losing 2 more** in the next couple years, and have been told that **we will not be replacing them right now.** We've been told that our costs will increase for core equipment usage and for service contracts which will strap us even further.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Southwest)

Not taking new students this next year, may have to lay off staff next year. Animal facility may be closing; my colony may get reduced.

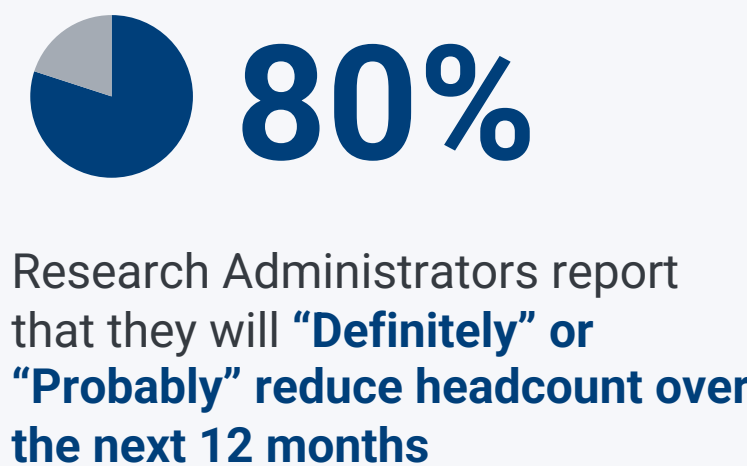
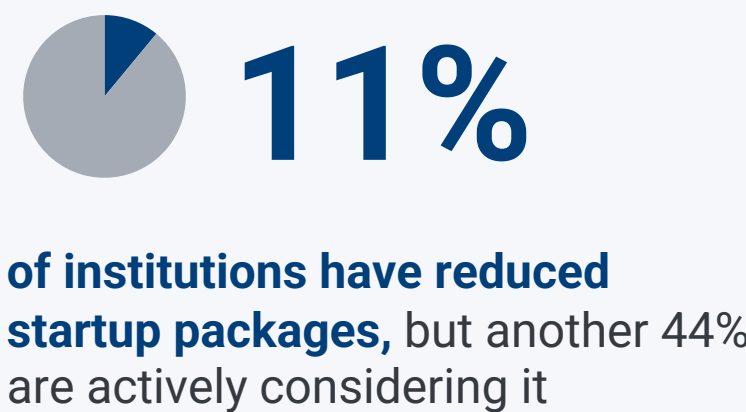
— Principal Investigator
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

* In your opinion, which resources are the most critical to protect at all costs, even if budgets shrink?

4 How is the Community Adapting?

4 How is the Community Adapting?

Key Findings



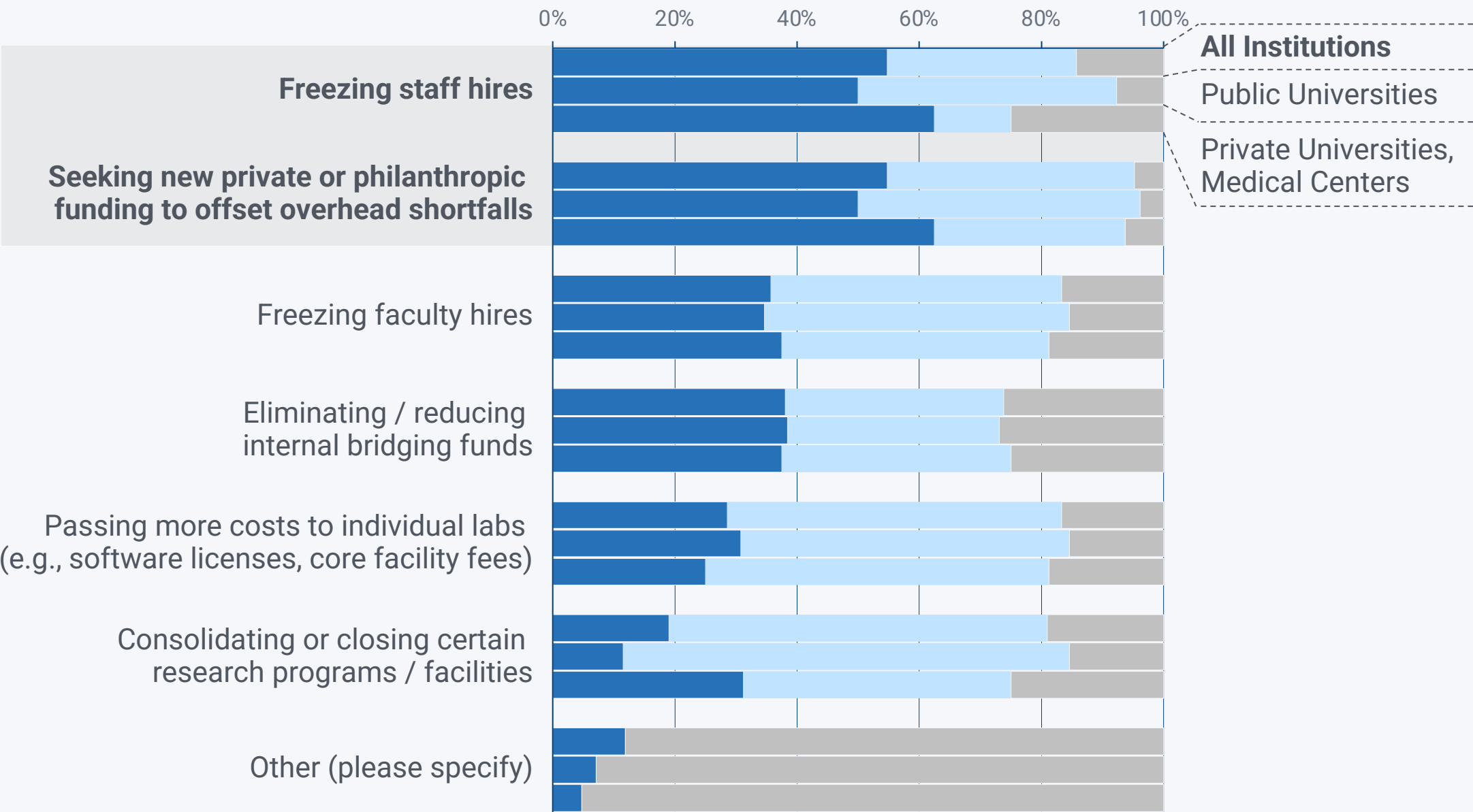
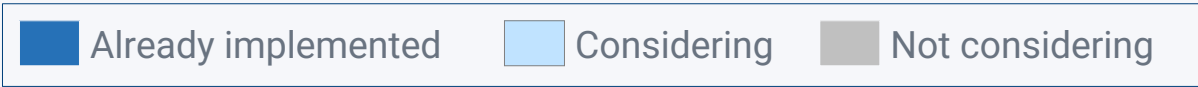
Summary

Despite these pressures, the research community is responding with resilience and flexibility. The most common strategies include seeking private and philanthropic funding, freezing new hires, and, in some cases, considering reductions in startup packages for new faculty. About 40% of institutions expect to reduce headcount—primarily among research and administrative staff—with another 40% likely to follow. Principal Investigators are preparing for tighter budgets, which may increase administrative responsibilities and threaten research productivity.

Institutions prioritize hiring freezes and new funding sources. Facility cuts remain rare, but startup package cuts are looming

Actions that Research Administrators are taking or plan to take

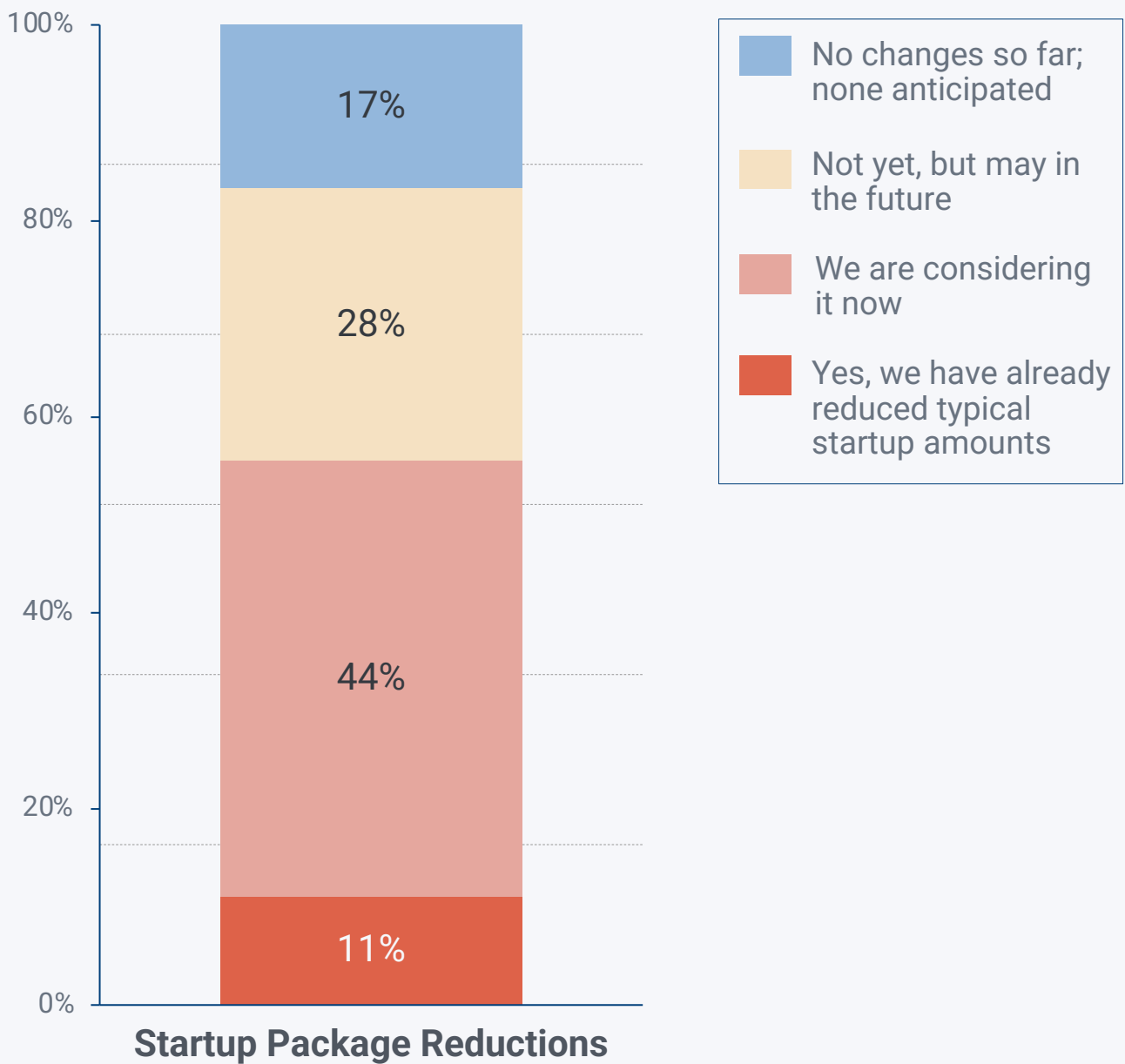
% respondents (N=43, Research Administrators only)



* Which of the following cost-saving or revenue-generating measures are you considering or have already implemented?

Actions taken on startup packages

% respondents (N=43, Research Administrators only)

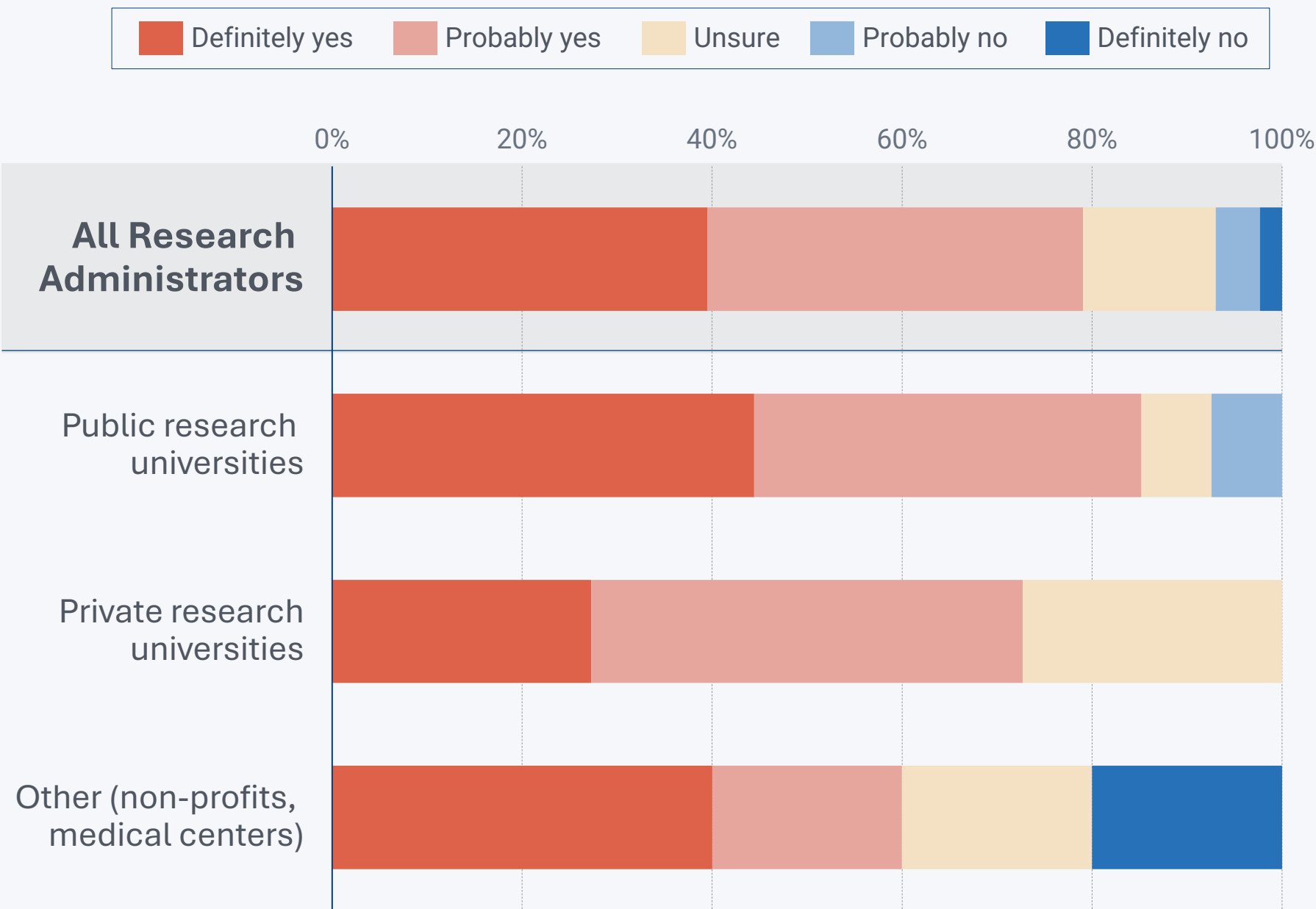


* Has your institution changed or considered changing startup packages for new faculty hires in response to uncertainty around funding from NIH and other federal agencies?

~40% of institutions will reduce headcount over the next 12 months, most likely affecting research staff and administrative or support staff

Expectations of reducing faculty and/or staff headcount over the next 12 months

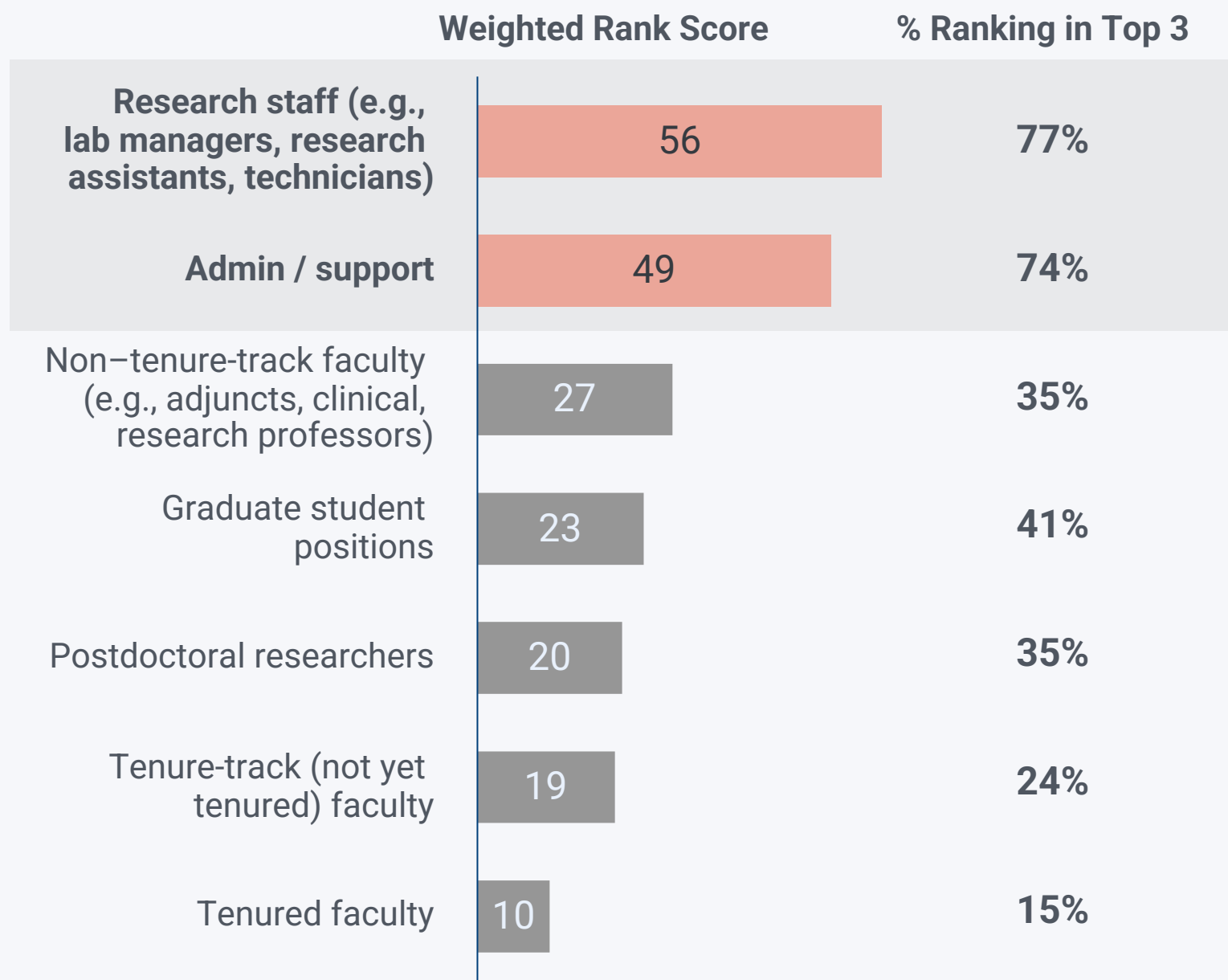
% respondents (N=43, Research Administrators only)



* Do you foresee any headcount reductions of faculty and/or staff at your institution in the next 12 months due to concerns around funding from NIH and other federal agencies?

Most likely groups to be affected by headcount reductions

Weighted rank score; Rank 1 = 3 points; Rank 2 = 2 points, Rank 3 = 1 point (N=34, Research Administrator respondents who answered “Definitely yes” or “Probably yes” to previous question only)



* Which are the top 3 categories of headcount that you anticipate reducing over the next 12 months?

Principal Investigators frequently report pivots in the focus of their research or experimental scope

I would change my focus some more, such as if animal research is not promoted, we will switch to in vitro system. **If we can, we will also work on clinical research more.**

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

Will have to restructure projects, pull back on equipment purchases, try to figure out how to save money on projects. Definitely will consider not renewing contracts.

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center at R1 Research University (West)

We have to be less creative [with experimental procedures] to save money on reagents; trying to **pause some projects** to save money on reagents as well. Rethinking if I should go to national meetings even though they are important for my career.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

Mostly we'll be doing "cheaper" science: no HT-seq experiments, back-to-basics with PCR, those kinds of things. More ambitious global or high-throughput projects would be on hold.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Northeast)

We will not be able to replace aging equipment so we will have to **simplify our experimental procedures.**

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

[We're adjusting by] reducing size of lab [and] **foregoing more expensive experiments.**

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

5 A Path Forward

5 A Path Forward

Key Findings



of Principal Investigators have **increased their grant submission volume** (trying to “cast a wider net”)



of PIs and Research Administrators are at least **‘Likely’ to pursue alternative funding sources**



of PIs and Research Administrators intend to stay at their institutions, with only 2% of Research Administrators expressing any intent to relocate, change institutions or leave Academia

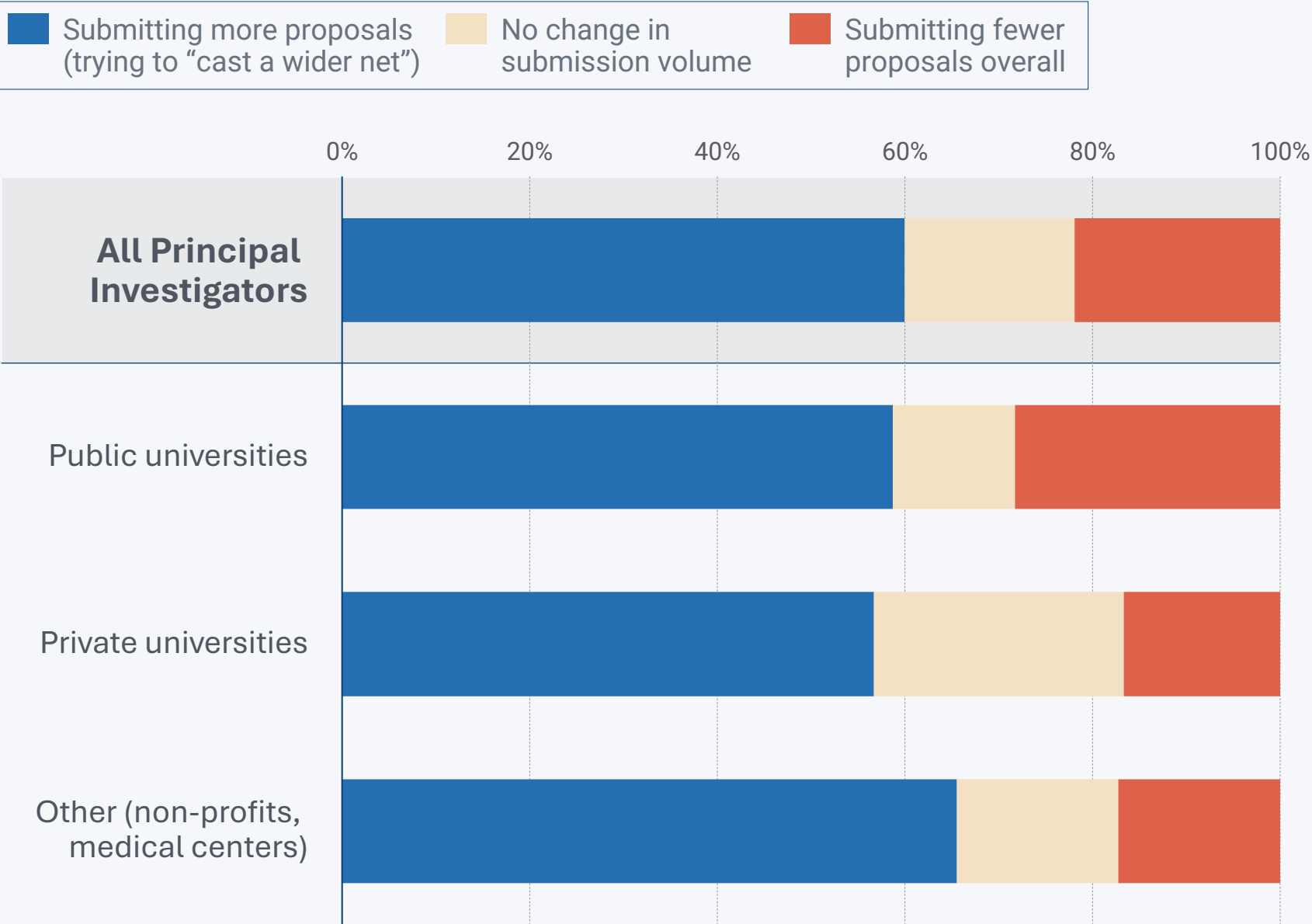
Summary

The research community’s primary response has been to increase grant submissions, with 60% of Principal Investigators submitting more applications and staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers taking on greater grant-writing and administrative responsibilities. There is strong momentum toward diversifying funding sources, including industry partnerships and private foundations, and strengthening collaborations.

60% of PIs are submitting more grants; staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers are helping out, with ~50% taking on more grant-writing and administrative tasks than before

Principal Investigators: change in grant submissions

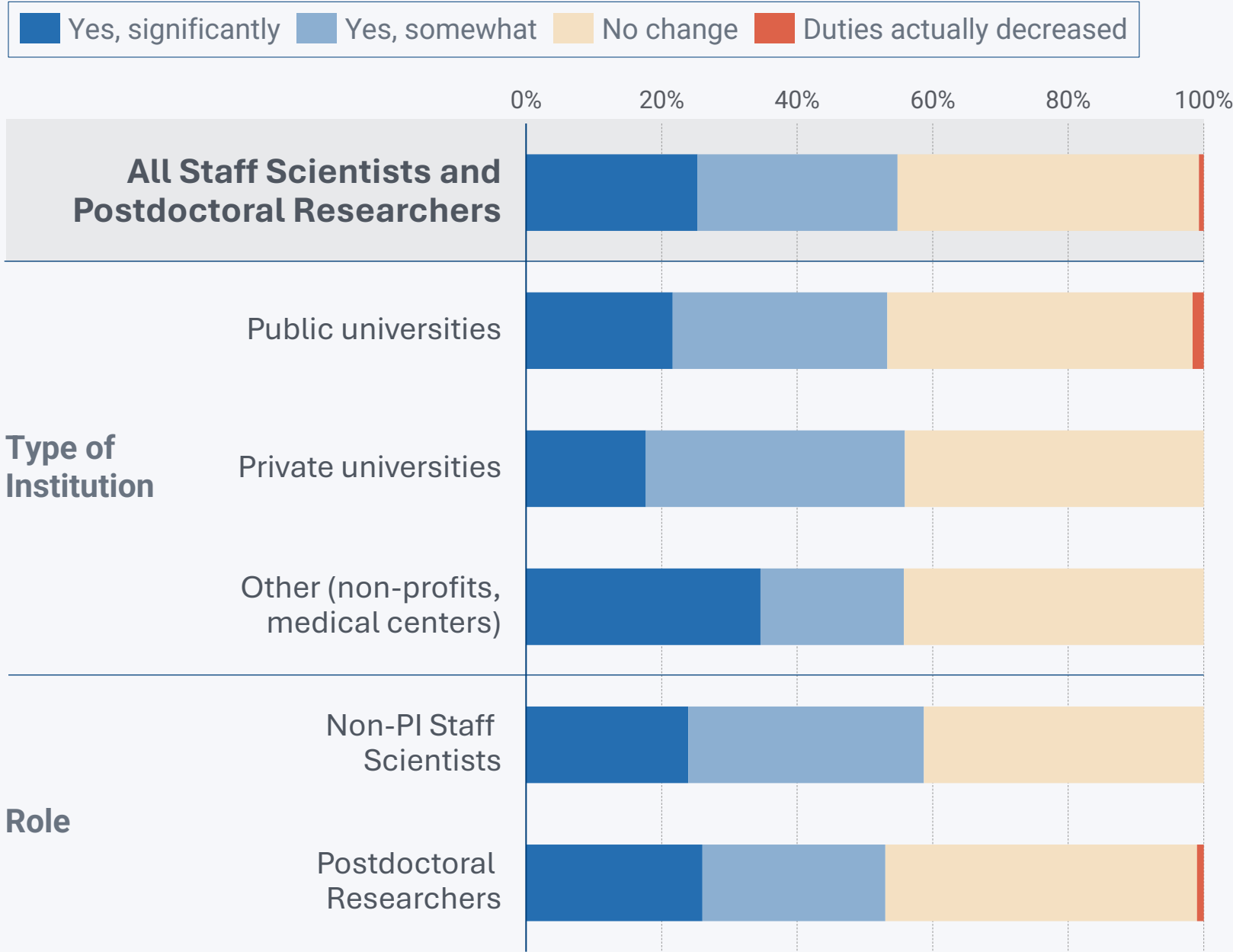
% respondents (N=108, PIs and Faculty only)



* Have you changed your grant submission behavior in response to the current NIH/federal funding environment?

Postdoctoral researchers and non-PI staff scientists: change in grant-writing tasks

% respondents (N=160, Non-PI Staff Scientists and Postdoctoral Researchers only)



* Have you been asked to take on more grant-writing or administrative tasks because of budget pressures?

60% of PIs are submitting more grants; staff scientists and postdoctoral researchers are helping out, with ~50% taking on more grant-writing and administrative tasks than before

I have no private life now, cause I have to apply for as must grants as possible. **I work 12-16 hours a day.**

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center (Northeast)

University scientists are also demoralized and **spending time on how to respond** rather than on scientific discoveries.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (West)

I am continuing to work on whatever I can each day to submit new grant proposals to maintain my funding sources. I am also noticing that the day-to-day involves **more administrative paperwork and cost tracking.**

— VP / Dean for Research (also a PI)
R1 Public Research University (West)

I've managed to submit two grants per cycle, but there's a trick to it: one of them is a resubmission that requires a lot less work than a new submission... [For a given cycle], you put in one [submission], and before that comes back, you start on the next one. Then by the third cycle, you're submitting both: you're just constantly stacking them on top of each other. **But everything else suffers: you can't work on a manuscript and then grants, unless you're working sixteen hours a day (which I'm not).**

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

I have changed my day to day dramatically. I no longer review science publications or grant applications and say no to any new requests by my department or programs for teaching. **100% of my effort is focused on obtaining new grant funding.** I have fired and let half of my staff go and will not replace them until new federal funding is obtained. **I submit one new grant each cycle and will continue to until one is funded or I am fired.**

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (Midwest)

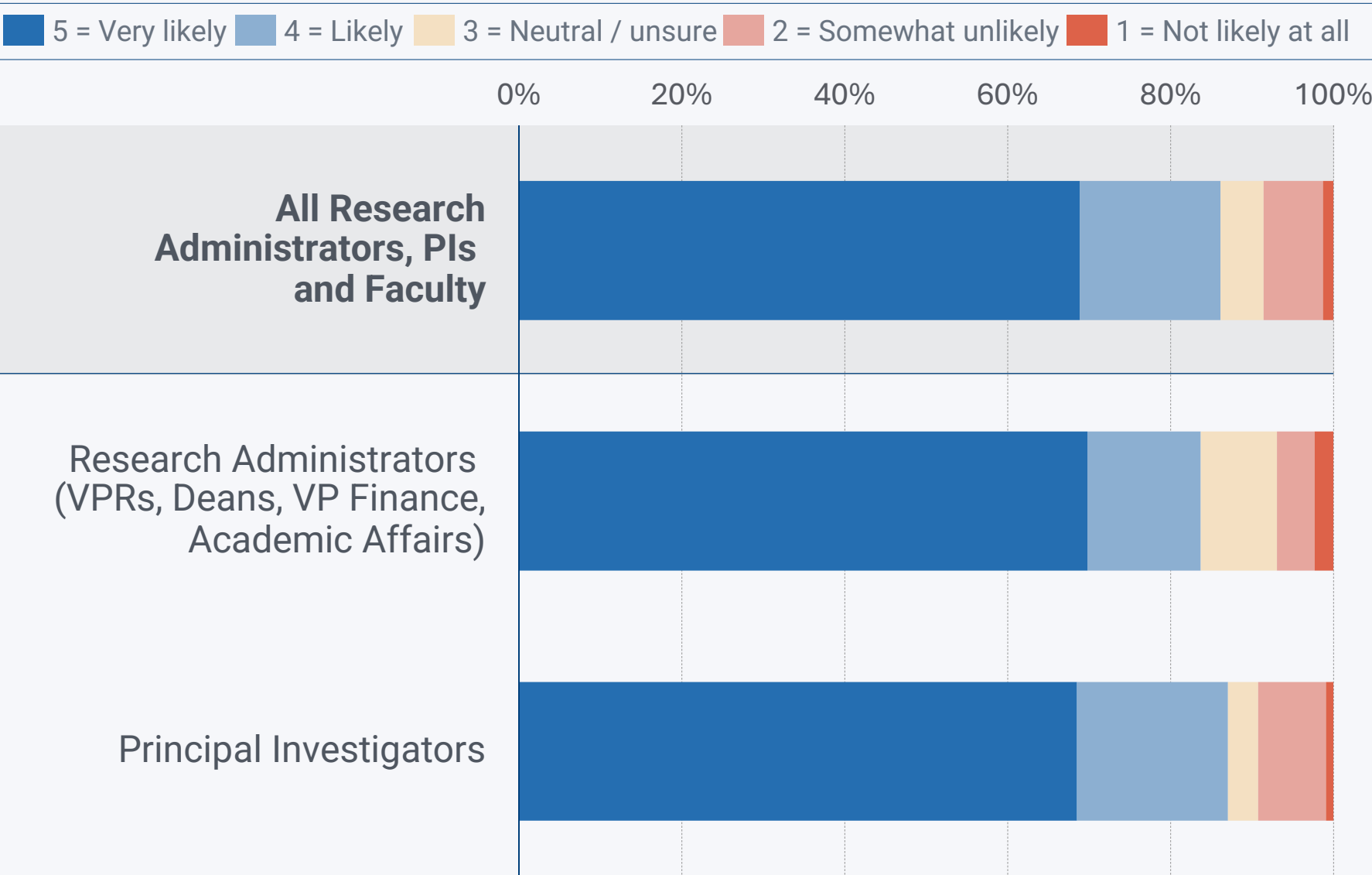
My lab manager will have to take on substantially more administrative duties as our institutional admins are going to be the first ones to go.

— Principal Investigator
Non-profit Research Institute (Midwest)

Beyond increasing grant submission volume, the overwhelming majority of leaders plan to pursue alternative, non-federal funding sources

Plans to seek alternative funding sources in place of federal funds

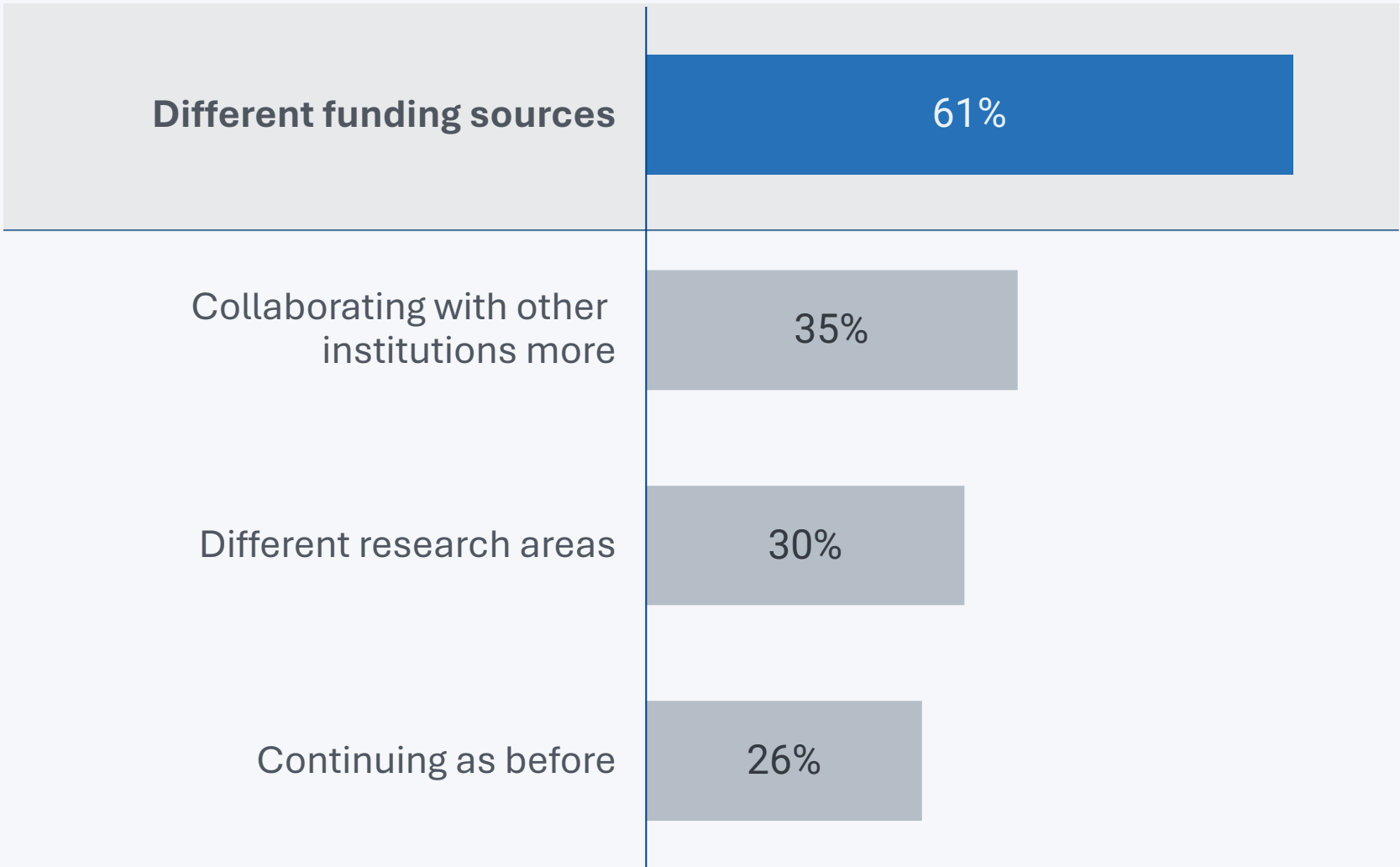
% respondents (N=108, Admin, PIs and Faculty only)



* How likely are you to seek (or encourage seeking) alternative funding sources (e.g., private foundations, industry partnerships) if NIH, NSF and other federal funds are restricted?

Anticipated changes in grant application strategy, beyond volume

% respondents (N=23, PIs who indicated “No change in grant submission volume” only)



* If your grant submission strategy has changed at all—or if you anticipate it changing—how would you describe that change?

Beyond increasing grant submission volume, the overwhelming majority of leaders plan to pursue alternative, non-federal funding sources

I fear changes in the overall research programs at my institute will **never recover** to the levels we have seen in the past **without some other creative methods to fund them**. We are looking at **industry and partnerships to fill the gaps** in the foreseeable future.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southwest)

[We're] actually looking for private funds to increase hiring given many leaving fed positions. [We're also] re-scoping a lot of preliminary research to **make more suitable for immediate Pharma support**.

— Principal Investigator
Medical Center at R1 Research University (West)

I am writing more **non-government grant applications**.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (West)

PIs are increasingly eager to apply for private foundation grants rather than DOD or NIH grant because they know these huge NIH cuts will make the remaining funding increasingly competitive.

— Postdoctoral Researcher
R2 Private Research University (Northeast)

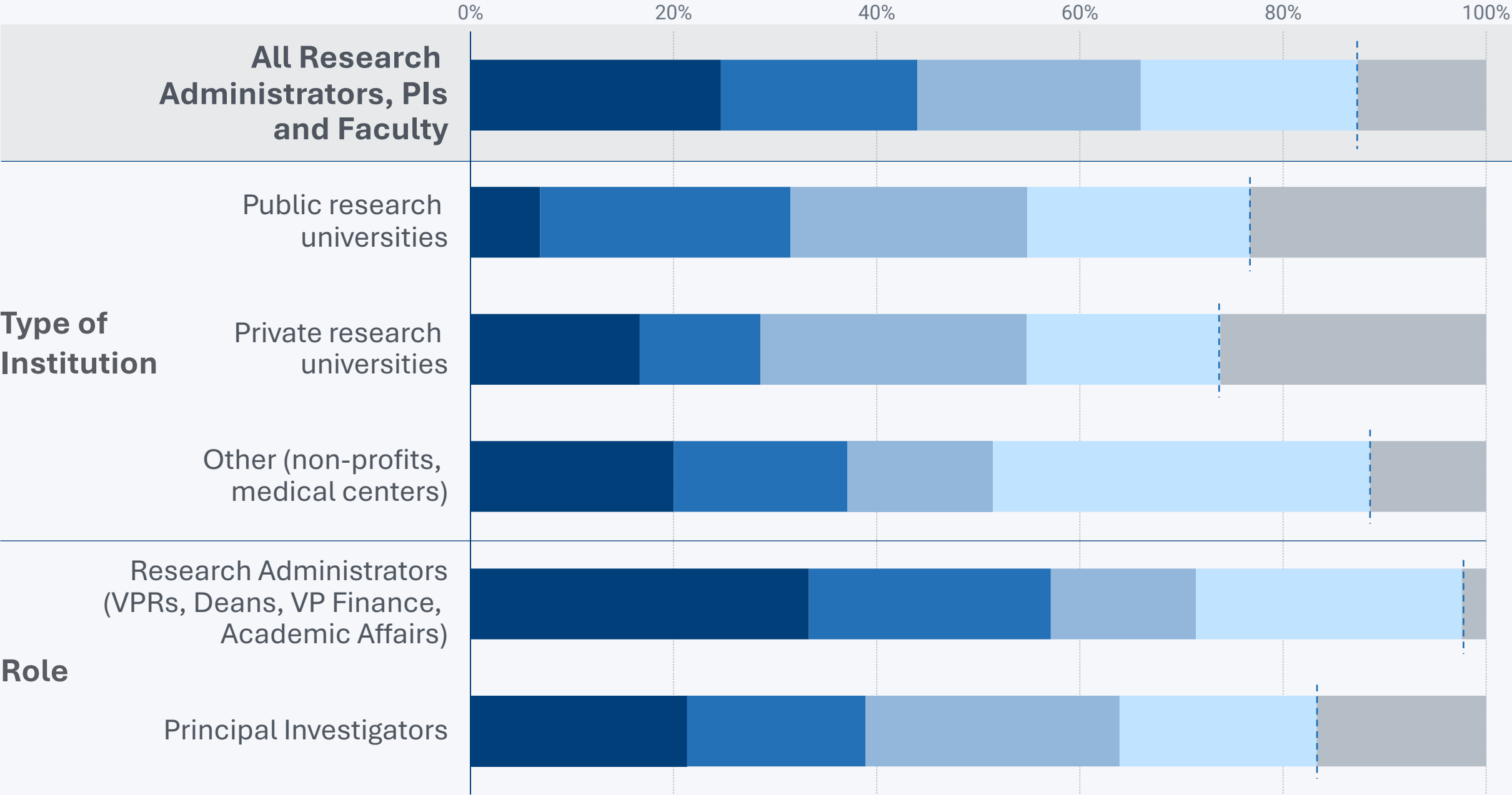
This [environment] will slow our research trajectory and **shift focus to smaller problems or industry-directed problems**. We are discussing types of research that require no funding.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southwest)

On a positive note, leaders are choosing to stay, drawing on a broad set of strategies to navigate challenges and ensure research continuity

Institutional and career strategies among leaders (PIs and Research Administrators)

% respondents (N=151, Research Administrators, PIs and Faculty only)



87%

of Research Administrators and Principal Investigators are choosing to stay, with only 2% of Research Administrators expressing intent to relocate, change institutions or leave Academia



* In an environment of potential NIH cuts, which best describes your near-term career or institutional strategy?

On a positive note, leaders are choosing to stay, drawing on a broad set of strategies to navigate challenges and ensure research continuity

Challenges such as these are always possible; we will persevere and adapt.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

This is not a time to delay decisions based on fear. Time is of the essence to preserve some of the most critical and core research functions within the academy.

— Provost / Dean of Academic Affairs
R1 Public Research University (West)

We are experiencing a monumental shift in the way we conduct research. **This is a sink or swim situation for many institutes, and new and creative methods need to be taken** if research is to continue.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

I think it's important to concentrate on what is concrete, not what could be. Speculation of negative outcomes that could happen only aids in placing fear.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southwest)

I lead STEM initiatives for the largest public institution in the United States. In this role I speak on behalf of the chancellor in STEM-related areas and focus my efforts in developing collaborative proposals with many faculty across the system. **I am encouraging faculty to pivot to state and foundational funding opportunities, to work with their advancement offices, to collaborate across disciplines, campuses, and higher educational systems**, and to make efforts to fit into the current administration research priorities. All of this will help them sustain their research and keep their morale up.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (West)

On a positive note, leaders are choosing to stay, drawing on a broad set of strategies to navigate challenges and ensure research continuity

Decreased morale but **overall sentiment at our institution to continue working nonetheless until we are no longer funded.**

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

There is an increased emphasis on doing **more clinical research with industry and later stage clinical trials.**

— Non-PI Staff Scientist
R1 Public Research University (Southeast)

It is possible to **explore alternative funding methods** not yet realized. **Thinking outside the box will be essential** for research institutes going forward.

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southeast)

Success is going to be determined by **how quickly researchers can pivot** to align with the federal priorities. **Honestly, after all of this blows over,** I believe we will end up with strategic scientific **priorities that mirror where we were before the cuts** (AI, biotech, etc.)

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Private Research University (Southeast)

Researchers are disconcerted but **hold strong to their purpose as scientists.** They are smart enough to **pivot their research focus and develop innovative ways to fund** their research.

— Principal Investigator
R1 Public Research University (West)

To our respondents

Thank you for your candid responses to our survey and for shining a light on the challenges in the current funding environment.

To our readers

Thank you for supporting science.

If you want to get more involved with our efforts to support the scientific community, or have feedback on the report, please email supportingscience@biorender.com

“

We must tell the story of science— i.e., how individuals and the broader community are benefitting in so many ways including **lifesaving treatments—** and we must do what we can to **preserve and protect our early career investigators.**

— VP / Dean for Research
R1 Public Research University (West)

“

I still plan to stay in academia because it is **my life's purpose.** I will remember everything about this time. **I will work to make things better.**

— Postdoctoral Researcher
Medical Center at R1 Private Research University (Northeast)