

# State of Start-Ups Survey 2024

**Scale**Ireland

Scale Ireland's 2024 'State of Start-Ups Survey' offers critical insights into Ireland's start-up ecosystem with data drawn from a record 340 founders and CEOs of tech start-up and scaling companies.

This year's findings highlight the potential of AI, funding challenges, optimism for new investment incentives, mixed trends in recruitment and retention and the poor uptake of state supports and schemes which remain unattractive. The findings also clearly show there is a need to focus on promoting sustainability and diversity in the sector.

## 1 Artificial Intelligence

82% are deploying or preparing to deploy AI, while 83% believe AI will have a positive impact on their business. Almost half (49%) think it will increase productivity and 17% believe it will increase market growth.

## 2 Finance

Almost 80% of respondents feel it is difficult or very difficult to attract capital, which remains unchanged from last year, reflecting the funding situation.

## 3 Budget

Almost 80% believe that the 5% increase in the R&D tax credit will have a positive impact, while 58% believe the reduced CGT rate for angel investors will have a reasonably positive or big impact.

## 4 EIIS

65% of respondents are unaware of new EU State Aid rules which reduce investor relief under the EIIS scheme (Employment investment incentive scheme).

## 5 State Supports

Uptake of state supports remains unattractive - 89% of respondents don't use the KEEP share options scheme to retain/recruit staff (83% last year), 64% are not availing of the R&D tax credit (66% in 2023), and 54% find it complicated (49% in 2023).

## 6 Sustainability

66.5% of founders/CEOs questioned did not have a sustainability plan, which remains virtually unchanged from last year (66.9%).



Gníomhaireacht Bainistíochta an Chisteáin Náisiúnta  
National Treasury Management Agency

Ciste Inbheistíochta Straitéisí d'Eirinn  
Ireland Strategic Investment Fund



**Enterprise  
Ireland**

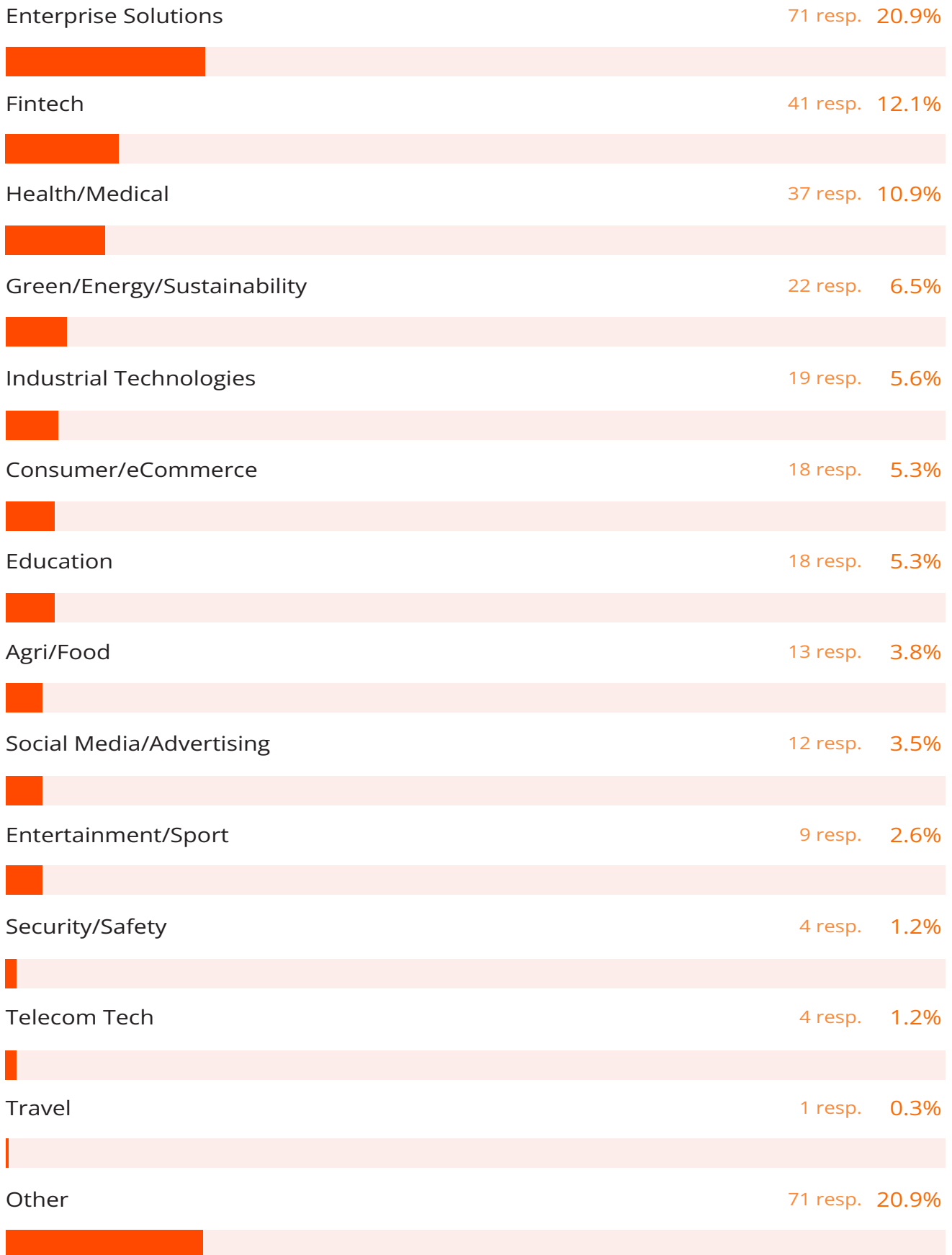


**ATLANTIC  
BRIDGE**

# State of Start-Ups Survey 2024

## Q1: What sector is your company in?

340 out of 340 answered



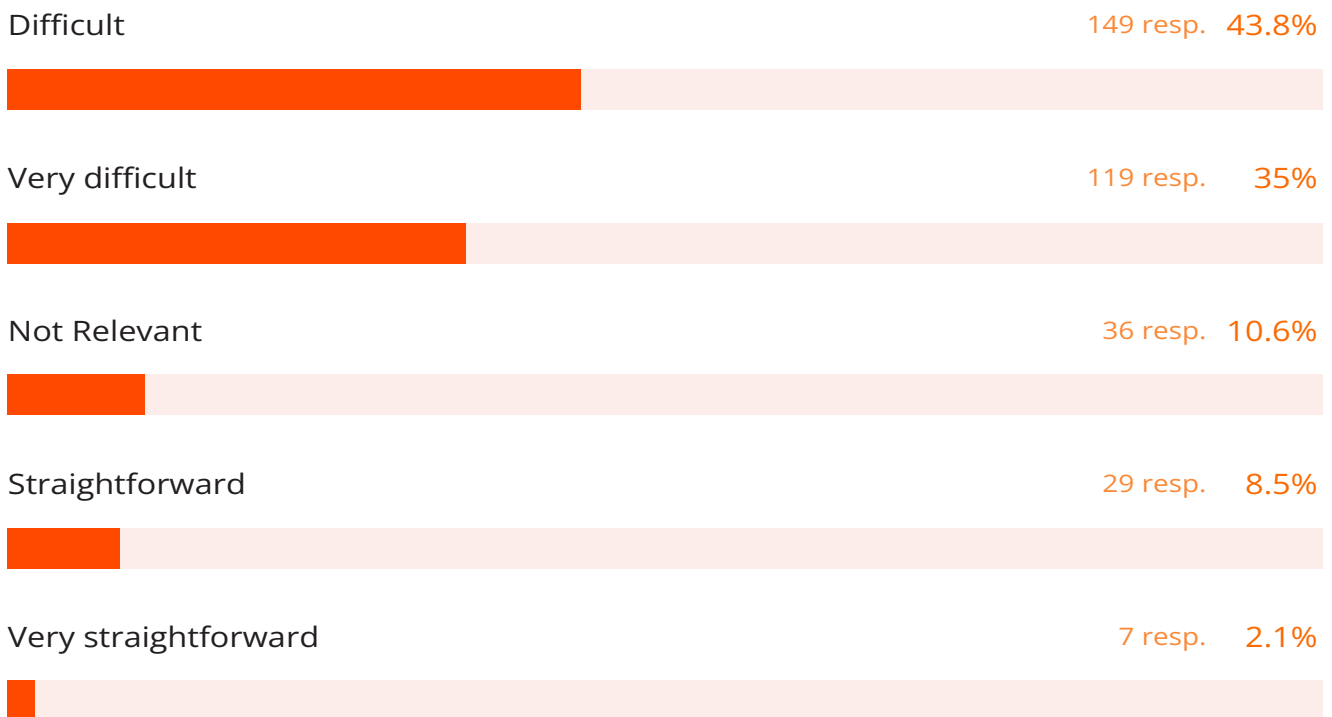
## Q2: What is the biggest challenge facing Irish start-ups?

340 out of 340 answered



## Q3: How difficult is it to attract private capital?

340 out of 340 answered



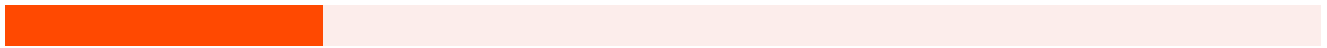
#### Q4: How do you think the Government's new reduced rate of CGT (16%-18%) for angel investors will improve the funding environment?

338 out of 340 answered

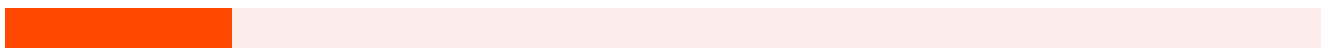
A reasonably positive impact 177 resp. 52.4%



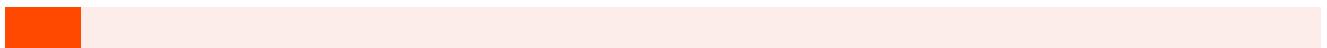
Won't have any impact 83 resp. 24.6%



Don't know 59 resp. 17.5%



A big impact 19 resp. 5.6%



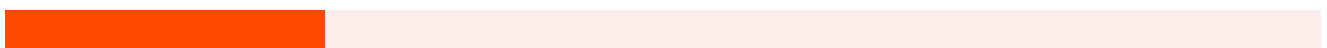
#### Q5: Have you found it more difficult to recruit or retain staff in the last year?

340 out of 340 answered

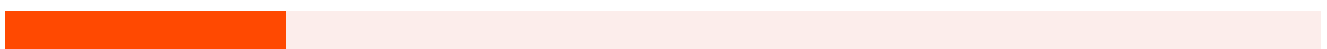
Same as before 184 resp. 54.1%



Yes 83 resp. 24.4%



No 73 resp. 21.5%



#### Q6: Have you lost staff in the last year?

340 out of 340 answered

No 223 resp. 65.6%

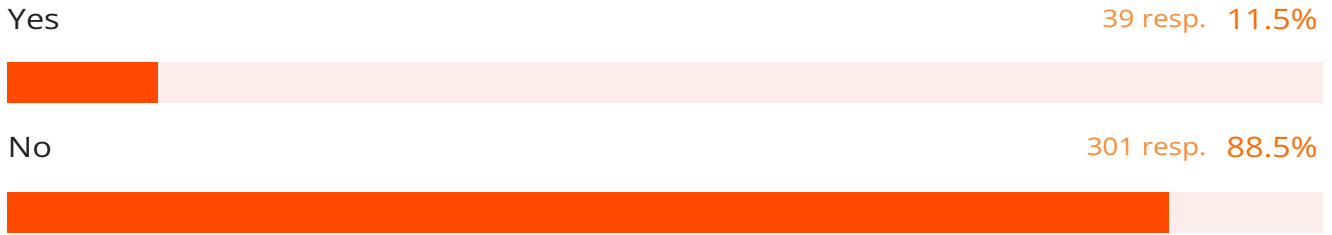


Yes 117 resp. 34.4%



### Q7: Have you let go of staff in the last year?

340 out of 340 answered



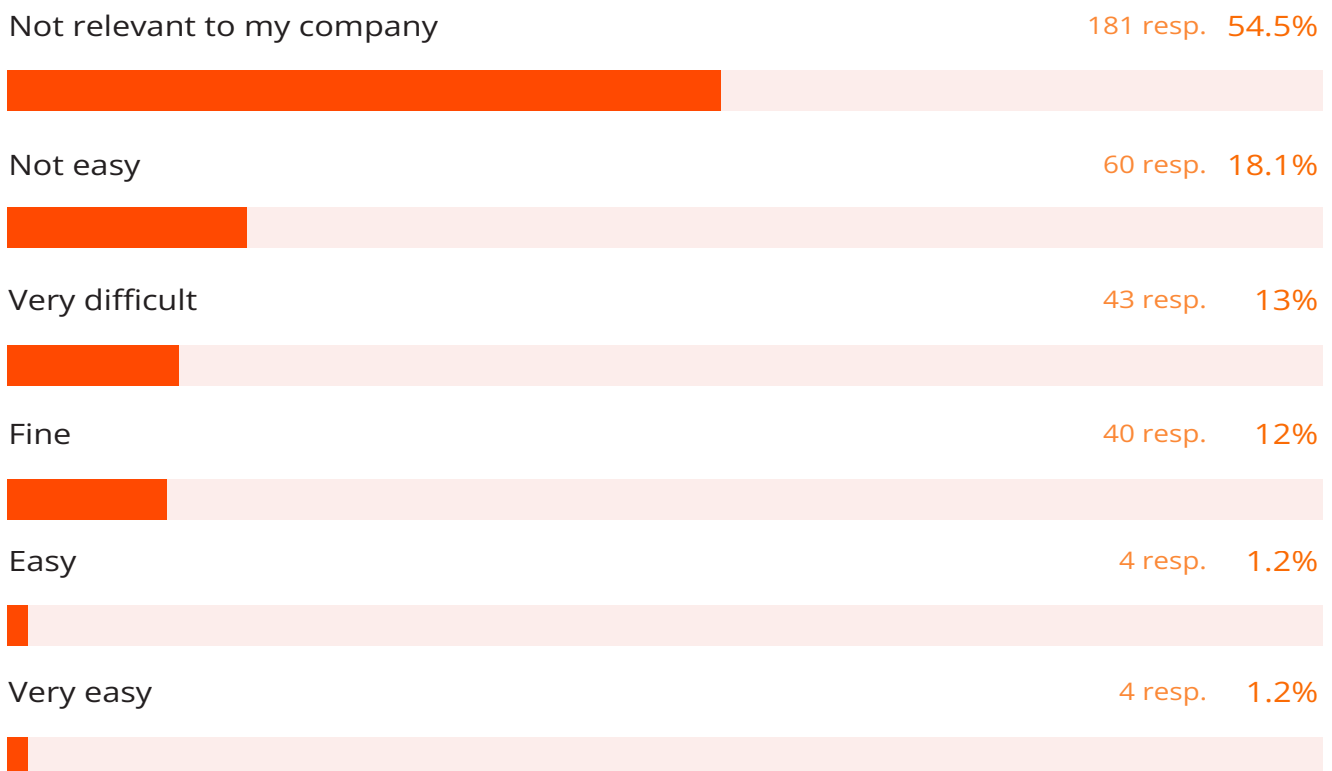
### Q8: Have you used the Key Employee Engagement Programme scheme/KEEP share options as a means of attracting/retaining staff?

340 out of 340 answered



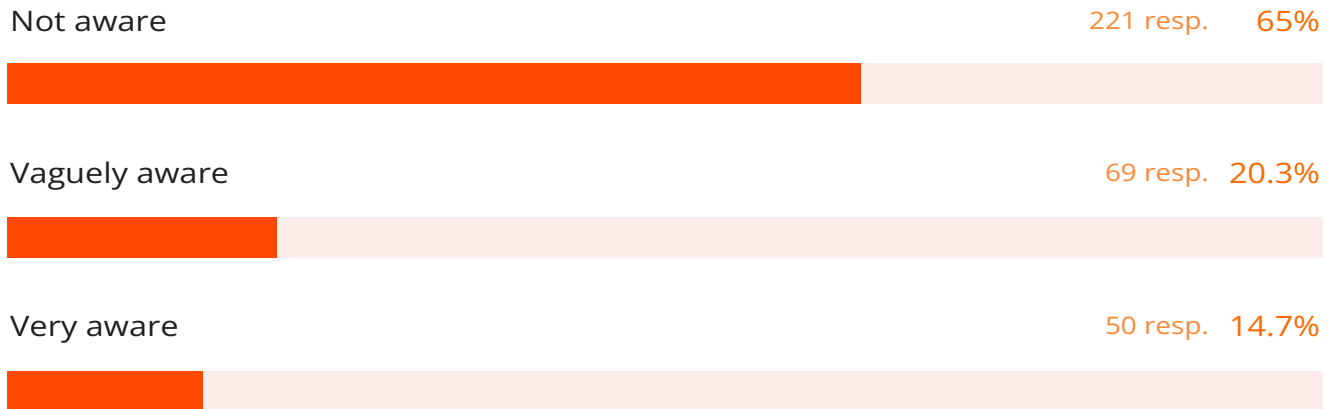
### Q9: If you have availed of the Employment Investment Incentive Scheme (EIIS) or have considered availing of it, how easy or difficult did you find the process?

332 out of 340 answered



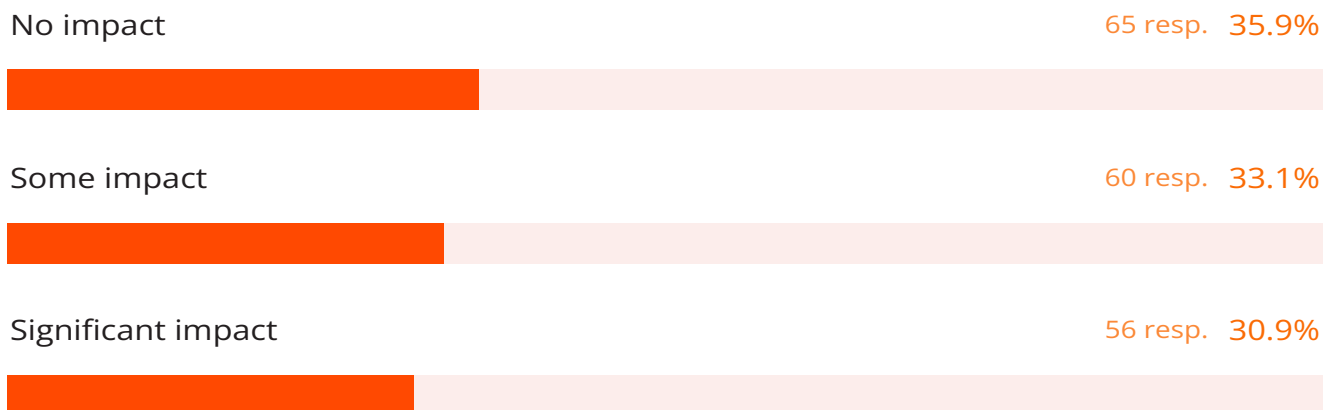
### Q10: Are you aware of the new EU state aid changes which will reduce the level of investor relief for the EIS scheme?

340 out of 340 answered



### Q11: If you answered A (very aware) to the previous question, what impact do you think the changes will have on investment through the scheme?

181 out of 340 answered



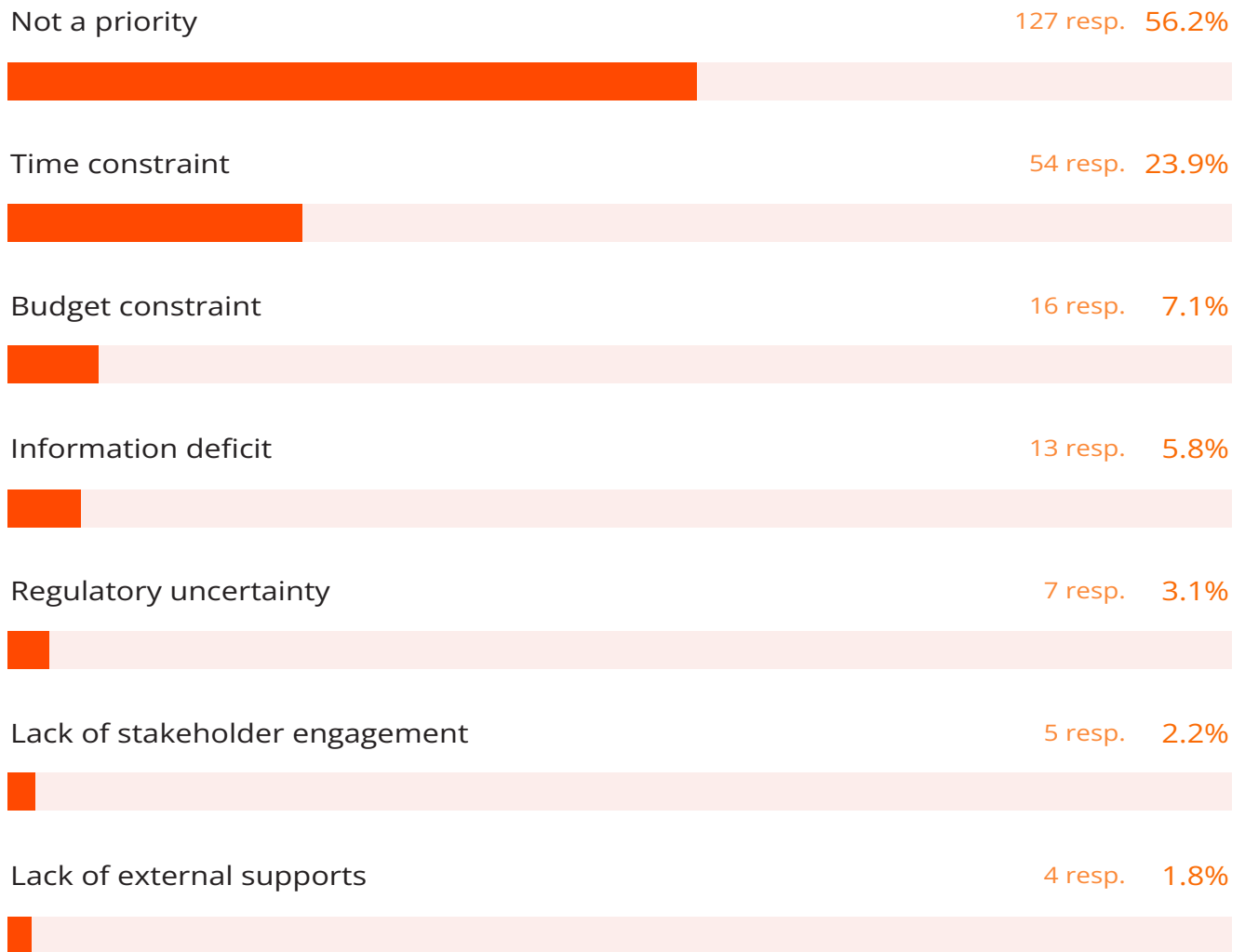
### Q12: Does your company have a Sustainability/Climate Action plan?

340 out of 340 answered



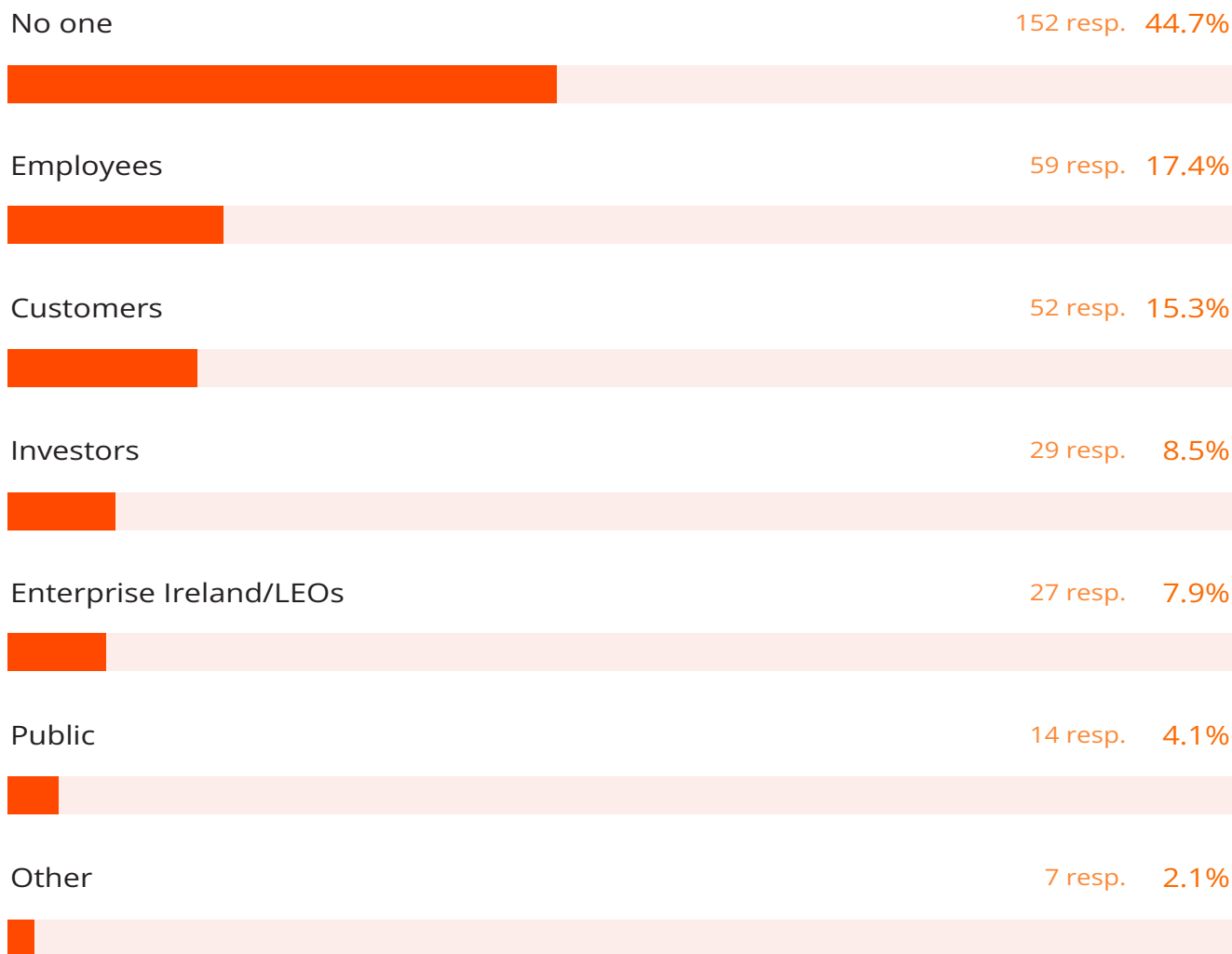
### Q13: What are the key challenges for your organisation to introduce a Sustainability or Climate Action plan?

226 out of 340 answered



## Q14: Which of your stakeholders are most encouraging/supportive of your organisation having a sustainability plan?

340 out of 340 answered



## Q15: Has your company sought to avail of the R&D Tax Credit?

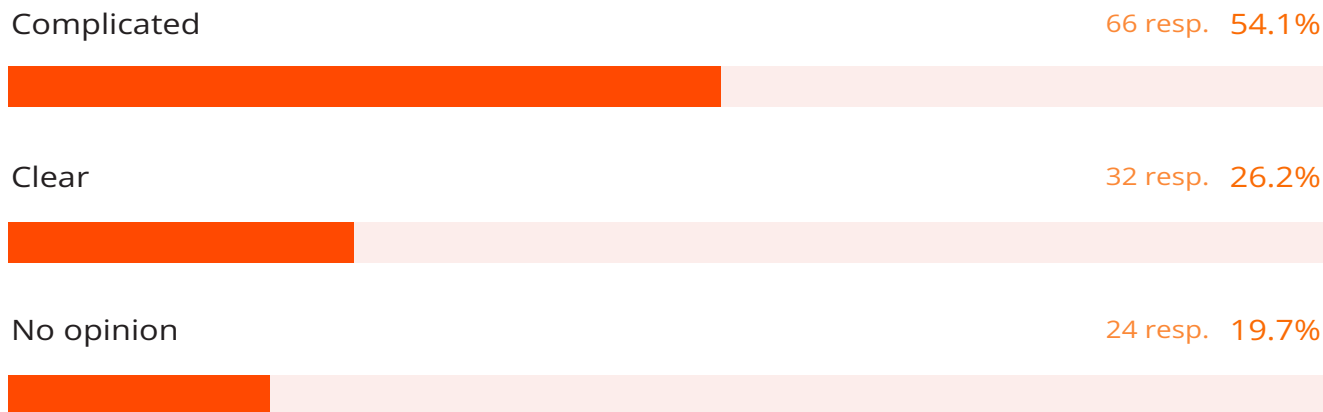
340 out of 340 answered





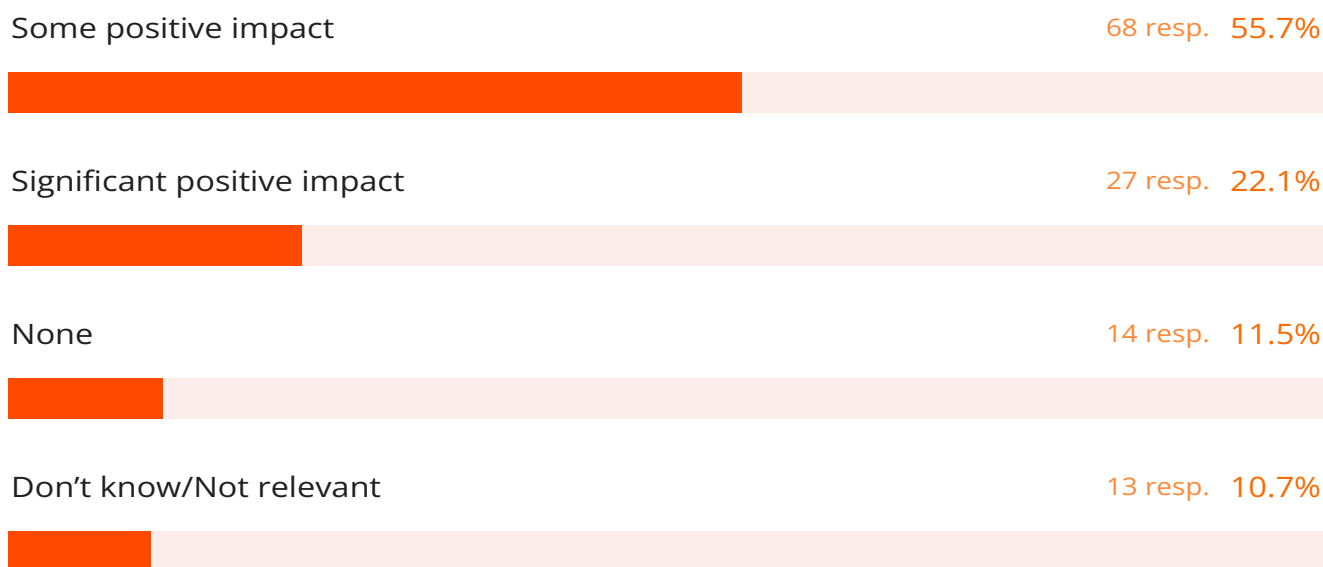
## Q16: How have you found the application process for the R&D Tax Credit?

122 out of 340 answered



## Q17: What impact will the new 5% increased rate for the R&D Tax Credit scheme

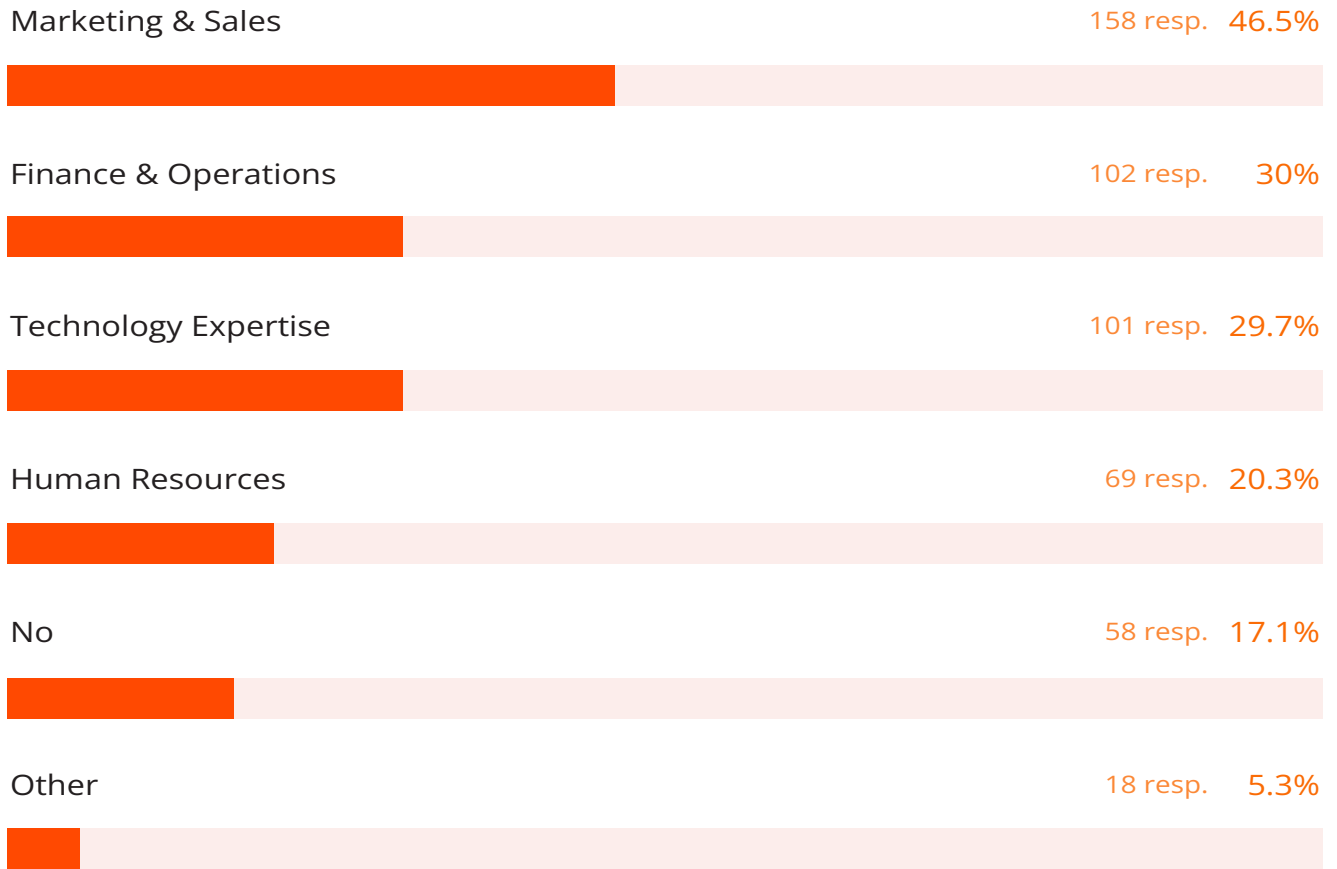
122 out of 340 answered



## Q18: Does your company lack certain skill sets or experience?

(multiple options selection)

340 out of 340 answered



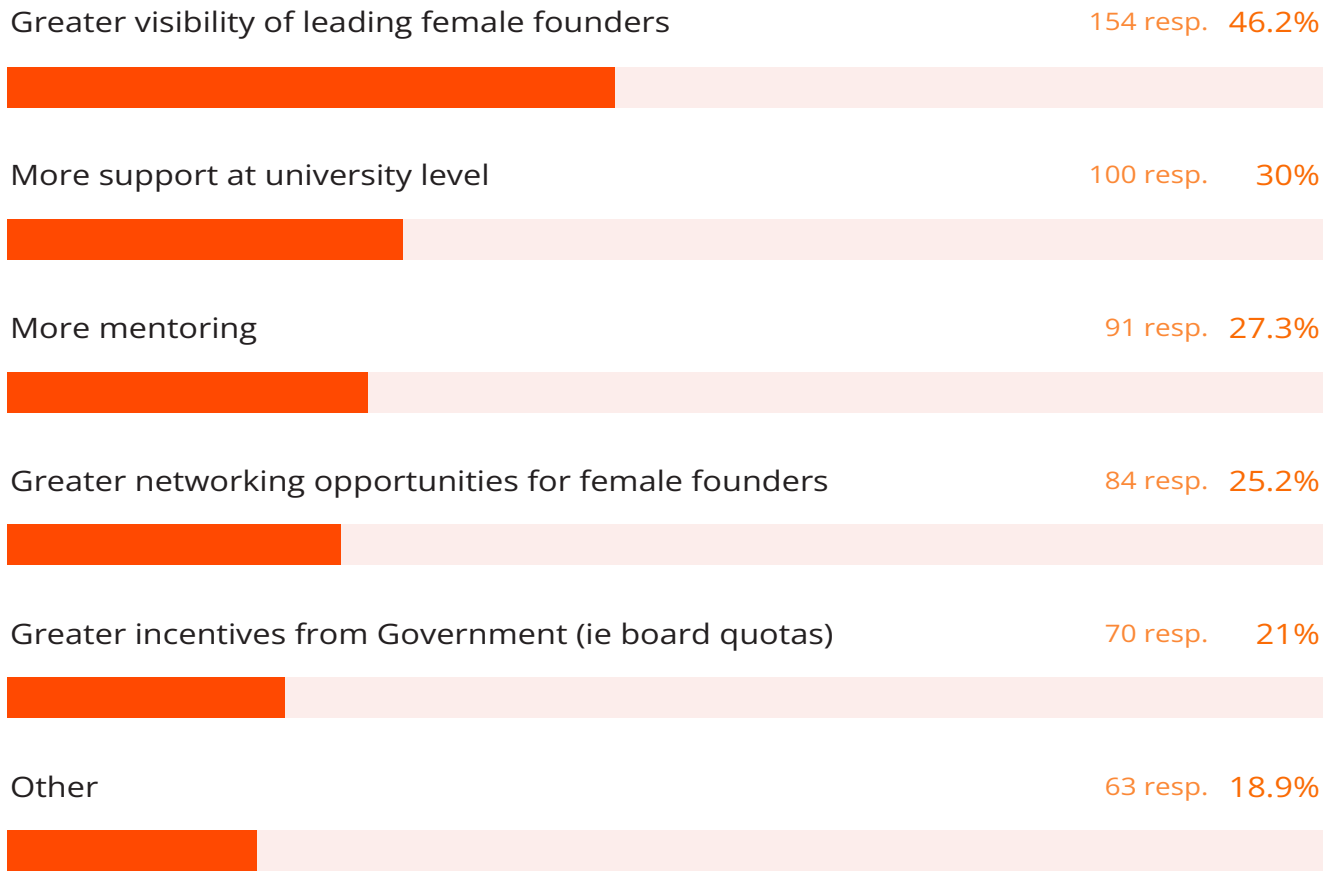
## Q19: Does your company have a female founder or senior (c-level reporting to CEO) staff that are female? (i.e. CTO, CFO)

340 out of 340 answered



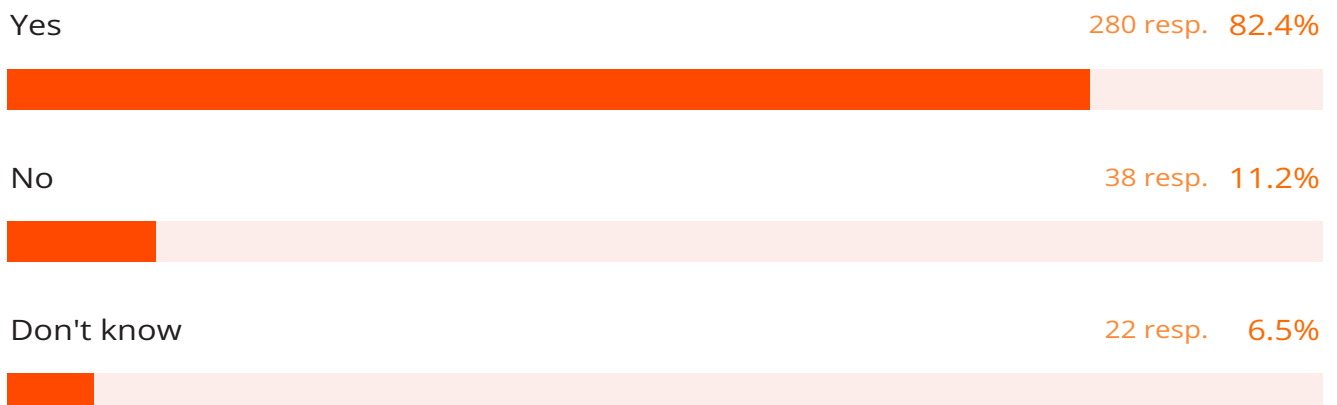
## Q20: What do you think would help increase the number of female founders in Ireland? (multiple options selection)

333 out of 340 answered



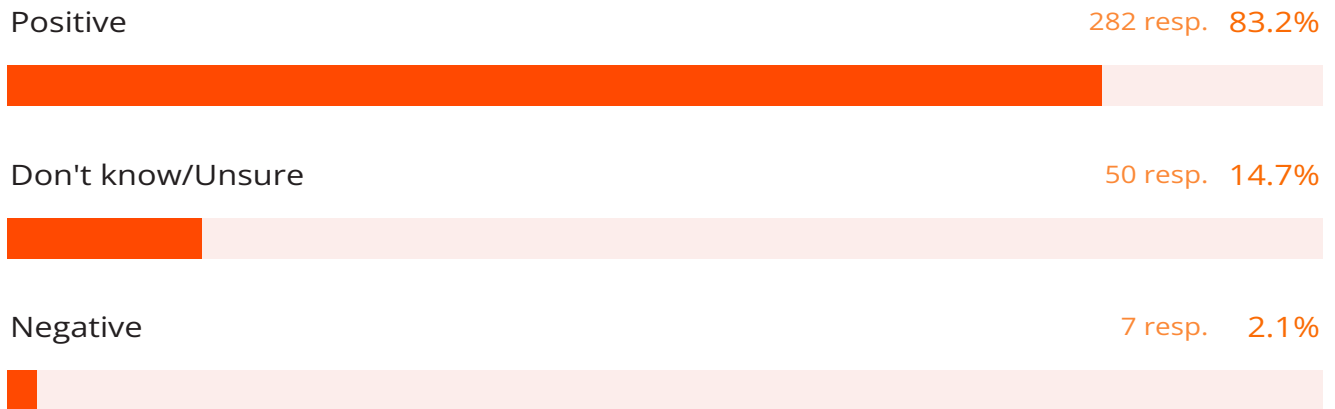
## Q21: As a Founder/CEO, is your company deploying or considering deploying AI as part of its solution?

340 out of 340 answered



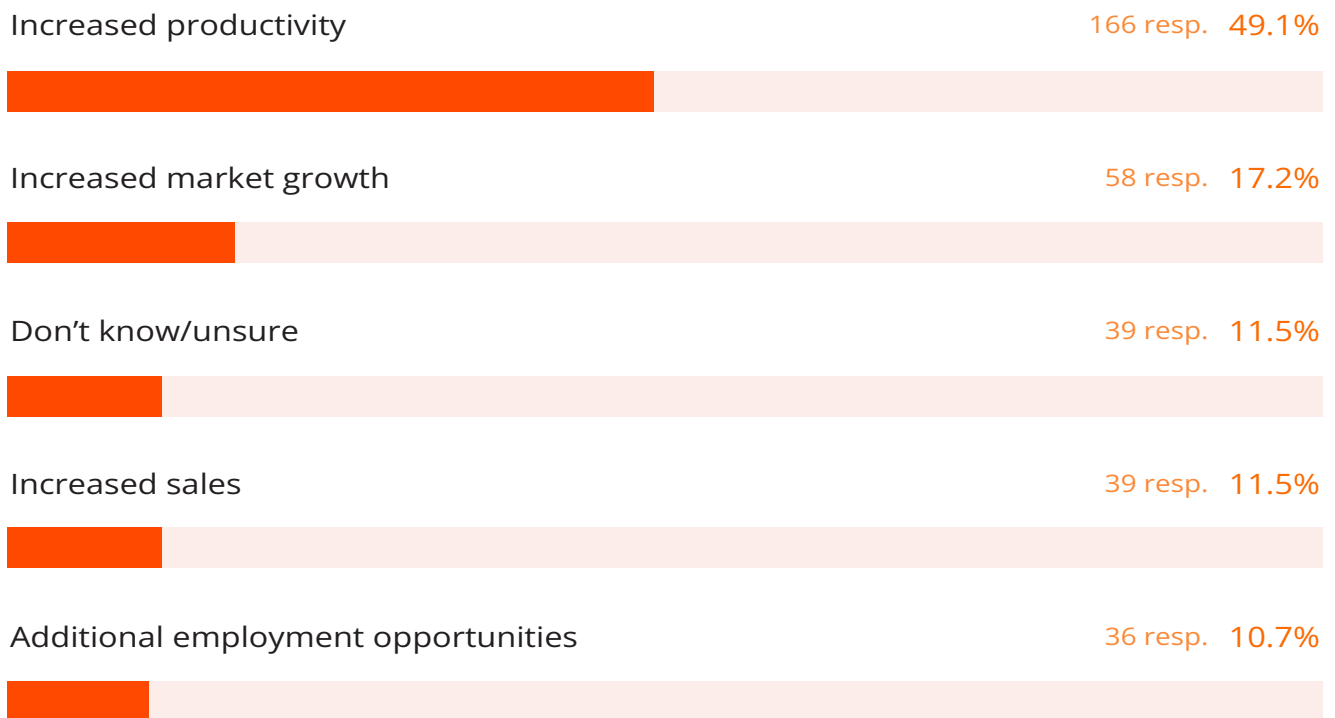
## Q22: Do you think the deployment of AI will have positive or negative consequences for your business?

339 out of 340 answered



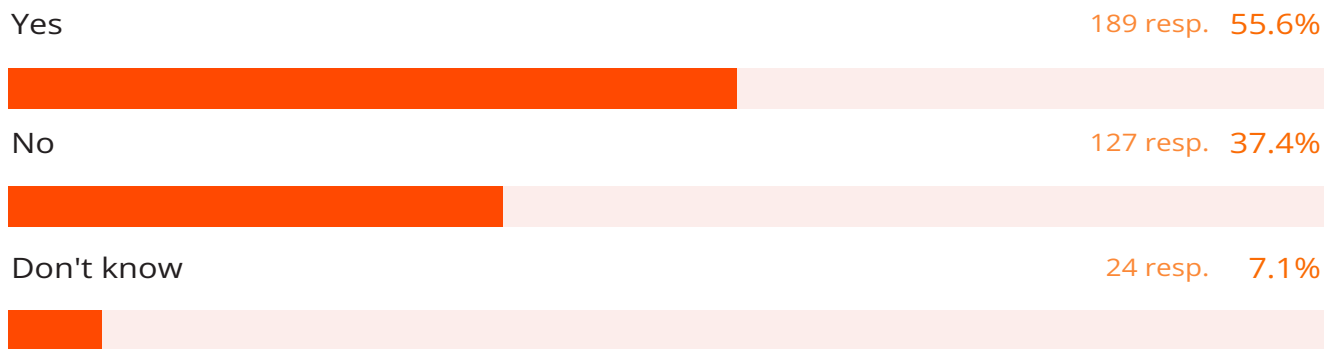
## Q23: In what way will the deployment of AI have a positive impact on Irish businesses?

338 out of 340 answered



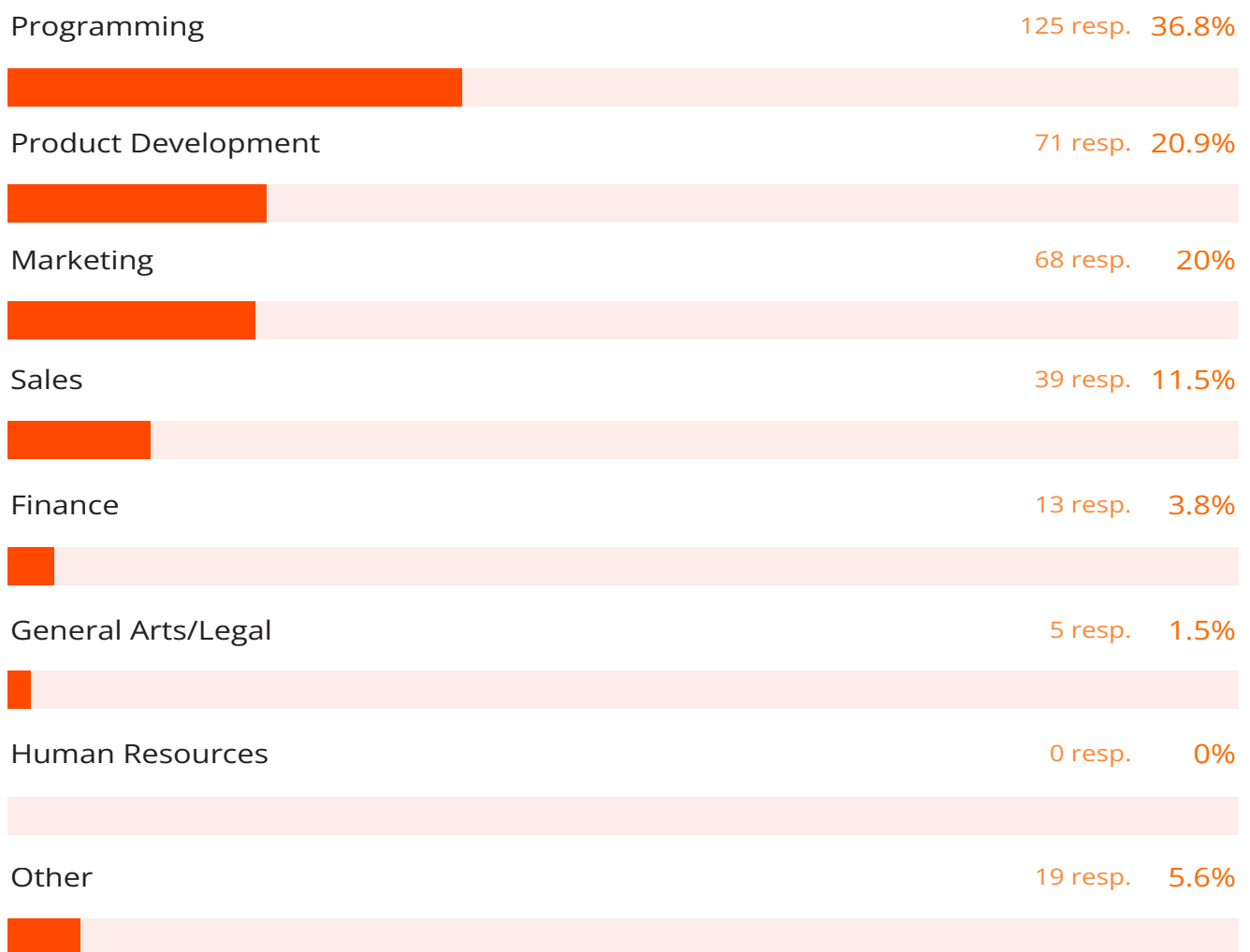
## Q24: Do you engage or have access to students or graduates for internship or graduate programmes?

340 out of 340 answered



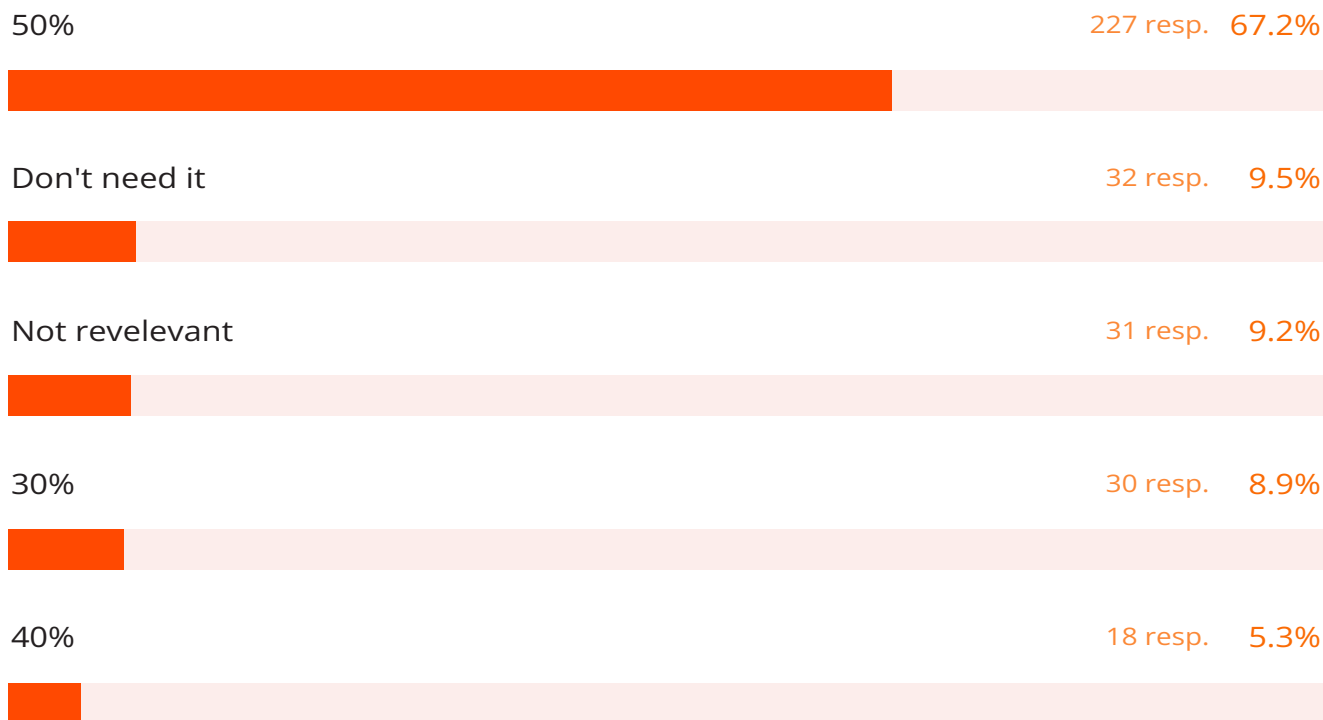
## Q25: Which disciplines/educational backgrounds would be most suitable/valuable to a founder in relation to a student or graduate taking an internship in a start-up / scaling company?

340 out of 340 answered



## Q26: What level of stipend support would encourage you to take on a student intern?

338 out of 340 answered



*For answers with percentages, the general rule is to round to one decimal place in line with standard statistical practice*

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