

SURVEY

The Best Conferences

Readers weighed in on 40 scientific meetings.

Find out which conferences are worth your time and money.

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Gone are the days when you could sit on the beach sipping a mojito and count it as business travel. Lately, time and money are both precious commodities, and it's harder than ever to justify trips away from hard-won projects in the lab.

That's where the *Genome Technology* conference survey comes in. To help readers plan a travel calendar for next year, we asked you to tell us which meetings were worth attending. This year, we had 999 respondents to the survey, which covered 40 different conferences. In a community where the majority of people attend no more than two meetings per year, it's no wonder that the recommendation of colleagues who have tried out other conferences is valuable information.

In the pages that follow, you'll find data to help you relate to respondents, such as how much they spend on conference travel as well as their job title and the type of institution they hail from. You'll also get their rankings of meetings within broad categories, plus notes on which conferences fared worse or better than the last time readers rated them in 2007.

The survey also asked readers how they decide which conferences to attend. (For the record, the most popular response was using the agenda and speaker list to make the call. Being invited, whether as a speaker or to give a poster, was also a common reason.) Readers then rated some of the most well-regarded conferences by various factors — including quality of speakers, networking opportunities, bang for the buck, and more — and we rounded that up into a chart of how those particular conferences perform in each category.

Most recommended conferences by category

LARGE BIOMEDICAL/SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

- 1 ASHG: American Society of Human Genetics
- 2 AACR: American Association for Cancer Research
- 3 ASM: American Society for Microbiology
- 4 AAAS Annual Meeting

TECHNOLOGY/INSTRUMENTATION MEETINGS

- 1 ABRF: Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities
- 2 qPCR Symposium
- 3 SBS: Society for Biomolecular Sciences Conference
- 4 LabAutomation

GENERAL GENOMICS MEETINGS

- 1 Biology of Genomes (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory)
- 2 AGBT: Advances in Genome Biology and Technology
- 3 HUGO: Human Genome Meeting
- 4 Beyond Genome/Genomic Tools & Technologies Summit

MODEL ORGANISM/PLANT AND ANIMAL MEETINGS:

- 1 PAG: Plant and Animal Genome Conference
- 2 American Society of Plant Biologists: Plant Biology
- 3 International Mouse Genome Conference

BIOINFORMATICS/IT MEETINGS

- 1 Genome Informatics (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory)
- 2 ISMB: International Conference on Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology
- 3 RECOMB: International Conference on Research in Computational Molecular Biology
- 4 Bio-IT World

SPECIALIZED SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

- 1 Next-Generation Sequencing (CHI)
- 2 ICSB: International Conference on Systems Biology
- 3 MGED: International Meeting of the Microarray Gene Expression Data Society
- 4 HUPO Annual Meeting