



## **SFCC Effectiveness Survey Report**

### ***Introduction***

The Southern Fuel Cell Coalition is constantly striving to improve our service to existing members and to identify new members. In June of 2008, we conducted an effectiveness survey of current members to identify our strengths as well as our weaknesses. The information obtained will be used to enhance SFCC programs and services and increase the value of membership in SFCC.

In order to make the survey as convenient as possible and get the maximum number of responses, SFCC conducted it online using direct emails to members to encourage participation. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to SFCC's 34 members with 10 members responding, a 30% response rate.

### ***General Effectiveness***

SFCC Members were first asked to determine the SFCC attributes and programs that are most important to the membership. The most important reasons for becoming an SFCC member were the opportunity to participate on SFCC proposals and projects and automatic membership in SFCC by joining CTE. Ninety percent of members believe that awareness of funding opportunities and networking opportunities are very important or somewhat important. Member services and access to industry information are considered to be important, whereas participation in SFCC conferences and exhibits ranked as somewhat important. No SFCC attributes or programs were considered to be unimportant.

Respondents that provided comments indicated that the southern location and membership requirements to participate in projects were important factors in their decision to join SFCC. Responses are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Importance of SFCC programs and services

Answer Options	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Opportunity to participate on SFCC proposals and projects	80%	20%	0%
Automatic membership in SFCC by joining CTE	70%	30%	0%
Awareness of funding opportunities	70%	20%	10%
Opportunity to network with other SFCC members	60%	30%	10%
Access to the latest industry news and information	40%	50%	10%
Members Services such as newsletters, the website, and design and production services	40%	50%	10%
Opportunity to participate in SFCC conferences and exhibits	20%	60%	20%

In recognition of limited resources, SFCC members were asked about the allocation of resources to various SFCC programs. The majority of members believe that allocation of resources toward industry conferences, presentations and exhibits; communications and newsletters; and growth of membership is on target. However, respondents believe that proposal development, seed projects, and promotion of SFCC and its' members are areas that may require more resources. Responses are provided in Table 2.

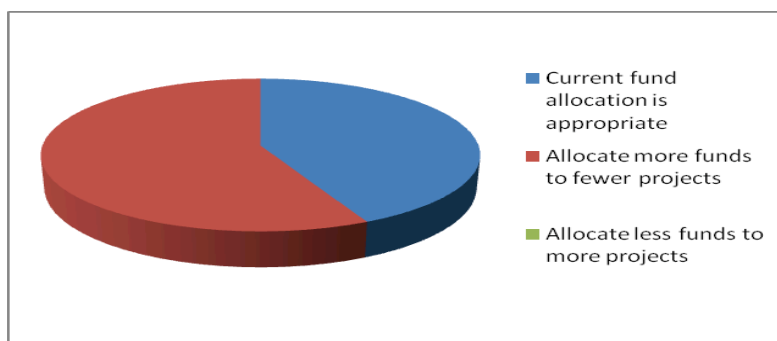
Table 2: Allocation of SFCC Resources

Answer Options	Too Much	About Right	Too Little
Participation in industry conferences, presentations and exhibits	0%	100%	0%
Communications and Newsletters	0%	86%	14%
Growth of Membership	0%	57%	43%
Proposal development	0%	50%	50%
SFCC seed projects	0%	40%	60%
Promotion of SFCC and its' members	0%	40%	60%

### ***SFCC Proposals & Projects***

One of the primary goals of the SFCC is to seek out and respond to requests for proposals and to include the participation of SFCC members in those proposals. Ninety percent (90%) of respondents were aware that SFCC generates project proposals that include participation from members. Ninety percent of those members that were aware of SFCC proposal generation capability have previously participated in an SFCC proposal. Of those who participated in an SFCC proposal, 75% indicated that they were satisfied with their experience.

To date, SFCC has allocated over \$225,000 to five seed projects to demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell technologies. Of those funds, \$125,000 was made available to members for their participation in those projects (\$25,000 for each project). Members were asked if they felt this funding was adequate. A majority of respondents would like to see more funds allocated to fewer projects so that each individual project would be worth more money.



## ***Member Services***

A variety of services are offered to increase the value of membership in SFCC. Survey respondents were asked to rate these services and the value of them to their organization.

Funding opportunities are issued periodically when SFCC becomes aware of fuel cell related Request for Proposals and solicitations that may be beneficial to our members. Ninety percent (90%) of respondents were aware that SFCC issues notices about funding opportunities to members. Of those that were aware of funding opportunities, 67% of respondents have responded to an opportunity issued by SFCC. All respondents who responded to an SFCC funding opportunity were satisfied with SFCC's communication of funding opportunities.

SFCC currently issues funding opportunities to its members via e-mail, which is the distribution method preferred by 80% of SFCC members.

SFCC regularly participates in industry conferences and exhibitions to promote the SFCC and its membership. SFCC also presents information about SFCC demonstration projects to industry professionals at a variety of exhibitions and conferences. Survey respondents were asked to assess the value of SFCC's level of participation at these events. The majority of SFCC respondents considered all levels of conference participation to be valuable or extremely valuable. An SFCC hosted event, like the Generation FC conference in 2006 was considered to be the most valuable by survey respondents. Responses are provided in Table 3.

*Table 3: Value of SFCC's level of participation in industry conferences*

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Extremely Valuable</b>	<b>Valuable</b>	<b>Less Valuable</b>	<b>Not Valuable</b>
SFCC hosted event	22%	63%	8%	8%
Presentations at conferences	22%	50%	15%	8%
SFCC sponsorship of a national event	11%	50%	23%	8%
Exhibitions at conferences	11%	50%	23%	8%

Sixty percent (60%) of survey respondents attended SFCC’s Generation FC conference in December, 2006. Of those who attended, all agreed that the conference provided an excellent networking opportunity and 83% felt the information presented at the conference was beneficial to them. Eighty-three percent (83%) indicated they would attend another SFCC hosted event again.

SFCC publishes an electronic newsletter with information about SFCC projects. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents indicated were aware of SFCC’s newsletter. Of those who were aware of the newsletter, 84% indicated that they were satisfied with it. When asked what types of information should be provided in the newsletter, a majority of respondents indicated they would like to see current regional industry news, more information on member activities within SFCC, current funding opportunity updates, and more information on member activities outside of SFCC incorporated into the newsletter. Responses are provided in Table 4.

*Table 4: Newsletter information preferences*

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Current regional industry news	80.0%
More information on member activities within SFCC	80.0%
Current funding opportunity updates	70.0%
More information on member activities outside of SFCC	50.0%
I prefer not to receive a newsletter from SFCC	10.0%

Members were asked about the responsiveness of SFCC staff. Ninety percent (90%) of respondents indicated they were satisfied with timeliness of response by SFCC staff. The remaining 10% indicated they were not sure.

As a member benefit, SFCC offers graphic design and production services at a reduced rate. One-half of all respondents were aware of this service for SFCC members, but no respondents had actually used it. However, 50% of all respondents would consider using this service in the future.

Seventy percent (70%) of respondents were aware of the annual meeting conducted by the Center for Transportation and the Environment, SFCC’s parent organization. Of those that were aware of these meetings, 71% had previously attended CTE’s annual meeting. These meetings are open to all members of CTE and SFCC. All respondents who had attended a meeting came away satisfied with their experience and 90% of the respondents who attended would consider attending a meeting again in the future.

SFCC maintains a website for use by its’ members and the general public. Eighty percent (80%) of members who responded were aware of the website. Of those that were aware of the website, 50% indicated that they are satisfied with the SFCC website, while the remaining 50% were not sure. When asked what features they would like to see on the SFCC website, the majority responded that they would like to see SFCC reports and whitepapers, a calendar of industry-wide hydrogen and fuel cell events, timely news updates, public education about hydrogen and fuel cell technologies, and updates on member activities outside of SFCC.

Table 5: Desired SFCC website features

Answer Options	Response Percent
SFCC reports and white papers	80.0%
Calendar of industry-wide hydrogen and fuel cell events	70.0%
News feeds with timely and relevant updates about the hydrogen and fuel cell industry	60.0%
Public education about hydrogen and fuel cell technologies	60.0%
Updates on member activities outside of SFCC?	50.0%
Member Spotlight	30.0%
Members only section with a discussion forum	10.0%

## ***Conclusions***

Overall, SFCC members appear to be satisfied with the organization. Members indicated that the ability to provide participation in SFCC projects and proposals, as well as awareness of funding opportunities, is critical to their membership. With limited funding, SFCC made a strategic decision to “share the wealth” by providing some funding to several projects. However, members would like to see more funding available for demonstration projects. By increasing the funding level across fewer projects, we risk alienating some of our membership because there would be fewer opportunities to participate in an SFCC project.

In general, members believe that SFCC is providing a valuable service, with a high level of satisfaction, given the level of available funding. SFCC participation in industry conferences and events provides a valued promotional opportunity for the members. Members also indicated a number of enhancements for the newsletter and the website, which indicates their interest in keeping these tools available to the membership.