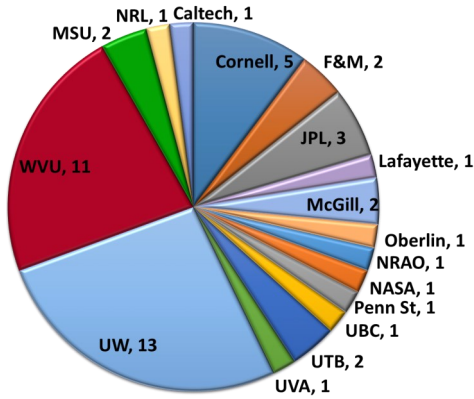


This newsletter presents findings from Quarter 2, 2014 evaluations of the usefulness and impact of the Fall Science Meeting, Science Seminar Series, and Research Abroad Experience.

### 2014 NANOGrav-PIRE Fall Science Meeting

Forty-nine attendees participated in the NANOGrav-PIRE Fall Science meeting held October 20-22 at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



- Participants were *extremely satisfied* with more than half of the meeting logistics.
- Breakout session on “Timing” was given the highest ratings of all.
- Suggestions included new topics and planning.

### PROJECT GOALS

- Goal 1: Knowledge
- Goal 2: Education
- Goal 3: Partnerships
- Goal 4: Institutional Capacity
- Goal 5: Workforce Development

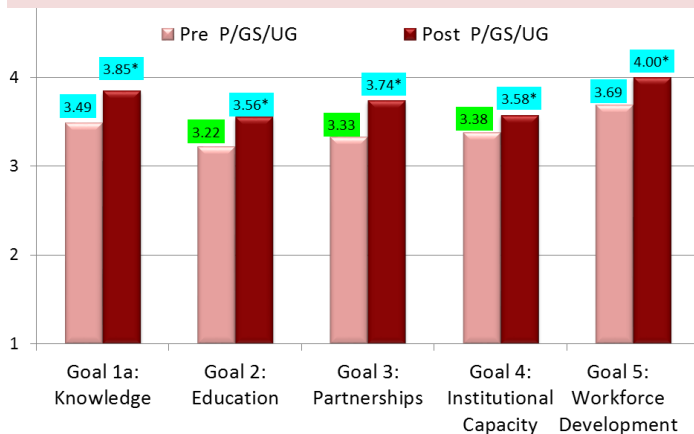
### Organizational Capacity

The following ten domains of the McKinsey and Company Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool were rated by fall meeting participants to assess NANOGrav’s current level of organizational capacity. **Green** = rated highest, **blue** = average, **red** = rated lowest.



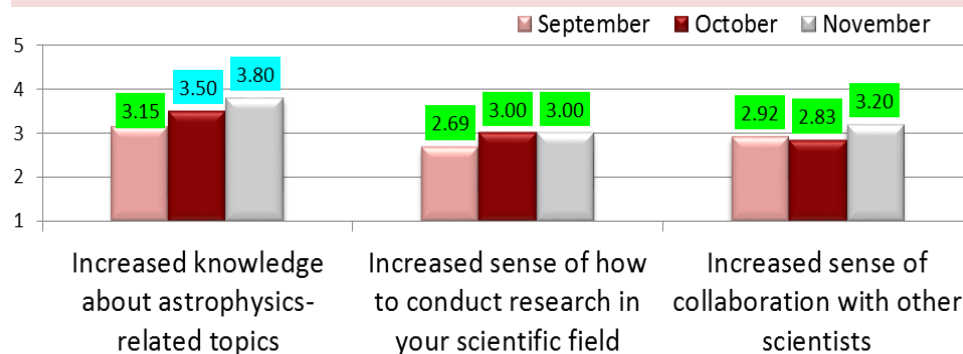
### Achievement of Project Goals

Postdocs and graduate and undergraduate students made considerable and significant gains in all goal areas.



### Science Seminar Series (Sep-Nov 2014)

Three science seminars occurred during Fall 2014. Participants rated item one, “knowledge of astrophysics-related topics,” the highest across the three months. On average, the November seminar was rated highest in two of the three areas.



### TOPICS

- September: Radio Pulsars
- October: Mapping GW Backgrounds
- November: Compact Binaries

A lot	4.21 – 5.00
A good amount	3.41 – 4.20
Somewhat	2.61 – 3.40
A little	1.81 – 2.60
None	1.00 – 1.80

## 2014 Research Abroad Experience

During the summer and fall of 2014, 11 undergraduate and 2 graduate students completed research abroad experiences, spending from 1 to 4.5 months abroad. Students had positive experiences and felt their work made a useful contribution.

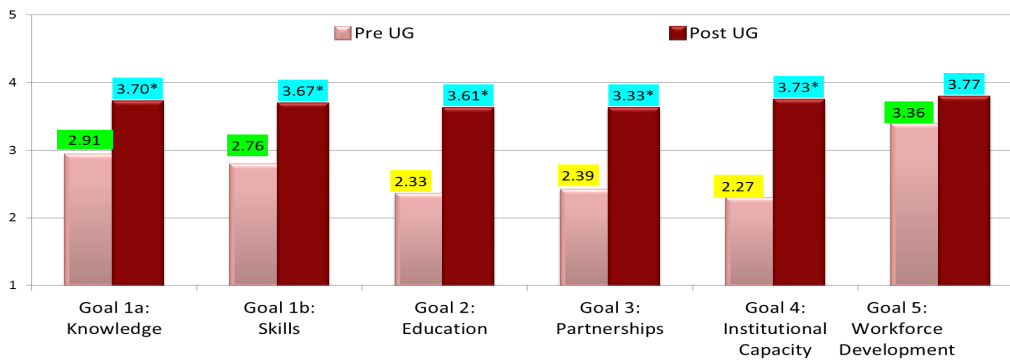
### Research Abroad Locations

Institution	Location
Australia Telescope National Facility	Australia
Commonwealth Science and Industrial Research Organization	Australia
Swinburne University of Technology	Australia
Bielefeld University	Germany
Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy	Germany
Cagliari Observatory	Italy
Leiden University	Netherlands
Cardiff University	Wales
Jodrell Bank Center for Astrophysics	England
McGill University	Canada

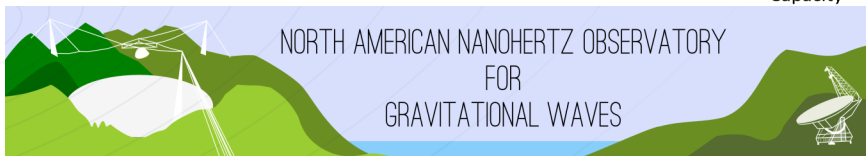


### Research Abroad Goal Achievement

Undergraduate students had significant gains in five of the six goal areas and approached statistical significance for Goal 5.



Extensive	4.21 – 5.00
Good	3.41 – 4.20
Moderate	2.61 – 3.40
Fair	1.81 – 2.60
Minimal	1.00 – 1.80



### Evaluator's Recommendations



#### NANOGrav Fall Science Meeting



- Strategically plan how each PIRE activity will be funded after the PIRE grant ends.
- Ensure more undergraduates register for meetings.
- Limit redundancy in workshop topics and consider inviting presenters from a slightly broader scientific community.

#### Science Seminar Series

- Integrate a brainstorming session on future research to increase participants' sense of collaboration with other scientists.
- Consider topics & presenters proposed by respondents for future seminars.

#### Research Abroad Experience

- Encourage students to meet regularly with home advisor & abroad mentor.
- Match students' skill levels with mentors' research needs.
- Host a Q&A meeting for new RAE and previous students to help prepare the students going abroad.

### Research Abroad Participant Comments

*The PIRE project gave me opportunities that I could never have imagined getting any other way or from any other place.*

*It was an amazing experience that I am very grateful to have experienced. I would not have been able to do this without PIRE grants and I am extremely appreciative of the funds that I received.*

### Upcoming Evaluation Activities

- Evaluate spring Science Seminar Series.
- Attend and evaluate Spring NANOGrav Meeting in Puerto Rico.
- Attend advisory board meeting in Puerto Rico.
- Administer pre-IDI to new research abroad students.



**SMARTSTART**  
EVALUATION AND RESEARCH