



# Applying Graduate Student Motivations, Attitudes, and Decision-Making Priorities to Outreach

*A Deep-Dive into RNL's 2023 Graduate Student Recruitment Report*

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# Introductions

Scott Jeffe



Phil Cavalier



Nate Mouttet



## Survey Overview:

- ✓ 1,502 respondents
- ✓ Administered in March 2022
- ✓ Three Student Perspectives:
  - ✓ Current Students, Future Students, and Recent Past

## 25 Findings Across 8 Areas:

1. Motivations and Enrollment Factors
2. Selecting an Institution/Program
3. Program Preferences
4. Search Practices and Patterns
5. Inquiry and Contact Processes
6. Personalized Response
7. Paying for Graduate Study
8. Personas



## 2023 Graduate Student Recruitment Report

25 key insights for enrollment leaders based on a survey of 1,500 prospective graduate students

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# Our New Report



Complimentary Consultation

## RNL's 2023 Graduate Student Recruitment Report

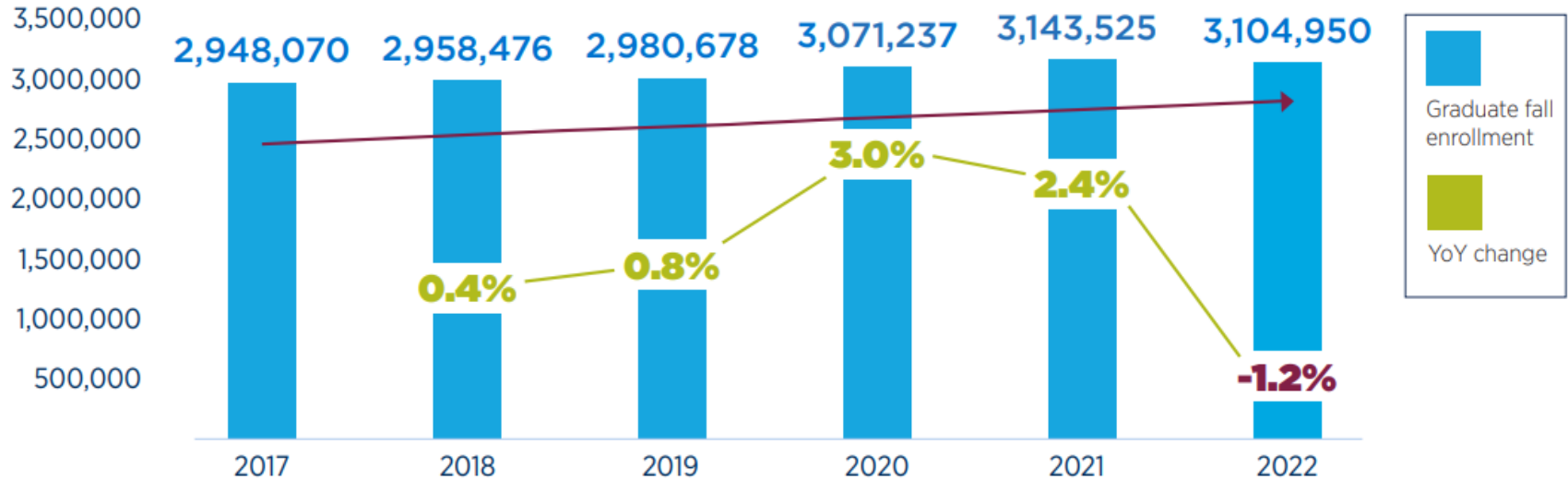




# 1 • Graduate Education in 2023

# Graduate enrollment is normalizing.

Figure A: Graduate fall enrollment trends 2017-2022



Source: National Student Clearinghouse, CTEE, Fall 2022



# 2. Graduate Student • Motivations and Enrollment Priorities

# Cost, future employment, and flexible course options drive enrollment decisions.

IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS IN ENROLLMENT DECISIONS	IMPORTANT (IMPORTANT AND VERY IMPORTANT)	
	NOT YET ENROLLED	ENROLLED
Cost	77%	72%
Future employment opportunities	70%	70%
Flexible course options (online, evening, weekend, etc.)	72%	63%
Financial aid/scholarship opportunities	69%	68%
Academic reputation	66%	69%
Campus location (close to work/home)	54%	53%
Personalized attention prior to enrollment	39%	41%
Recommendations from family/friends/employer	33%	36%
Size of institution	22%	28%

## 2021-2023

### Comparison:

In a similar question in 2021, graduate students indicated that “match of program content to my interests” was most important, flexible formats was second, and low tuition was third.



# Graduate students will enroll in more expensive programs, most frequently when they are flexible.

## Balancing cost and other factors



The most affordable institution I considered



A program that cost more than some, but was the most flexible/convenient



A program that cost more than some, but from a prestigious institution



A program that cost more than some, but was of the highest quality



A program that cost more than some, but content best matched by interests

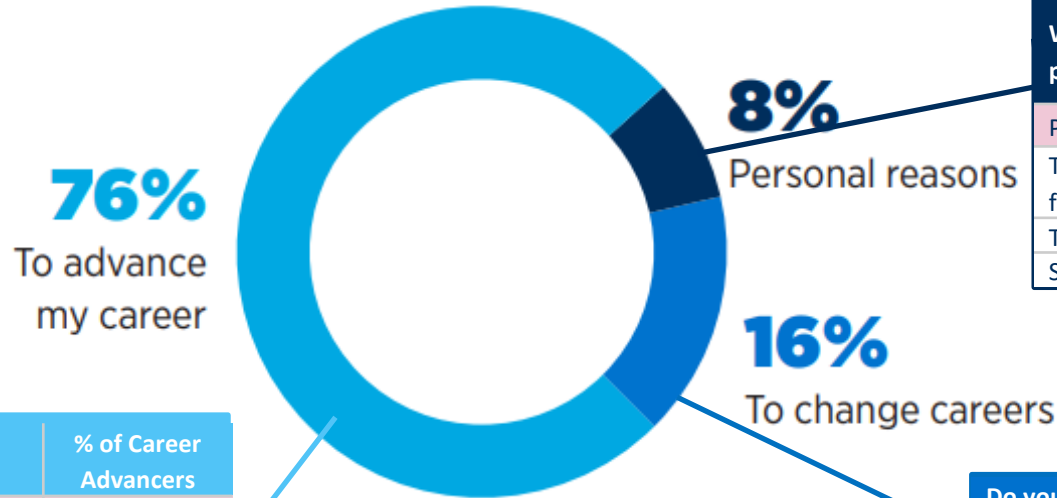


Cost of tuition was not a high priority in my decision



# Graduate students enroll in order to advance their careers – and make more money.

## Primary Motivation for Enrolling in Graduate Study



Which is closest to your personal reason?	% of Personal Reasons
Personal fulfillment	50%
To set an example for family member(s)	14%
To make more money	27%
Something else	9%

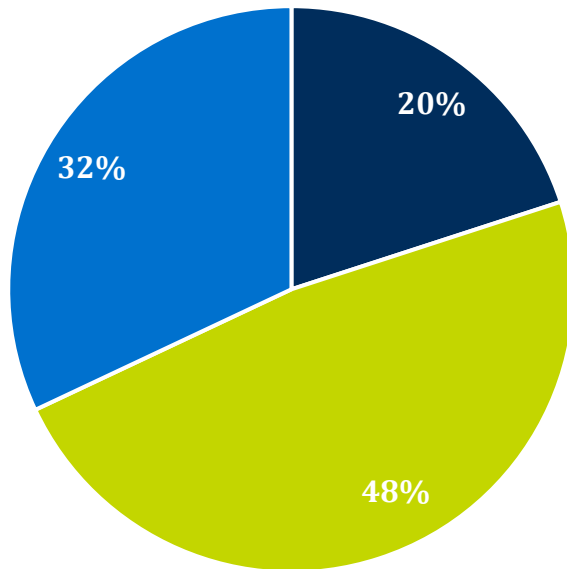
Which is most important to you in your advancement?	% of Career Advancers
To make more money	66%
To have a better title	14%
To have more responsibility	12%
Something else	8%

Do you plan to change industries/sectors when you change careers?	% of Career Changers
Yes	89%
No	11%

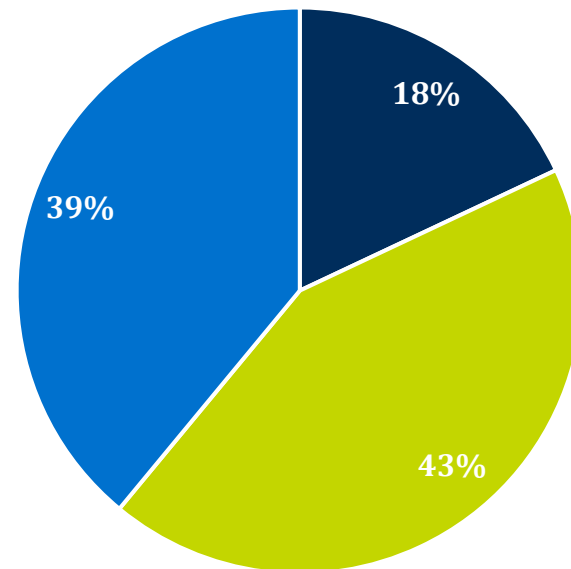
# Online continues to grow, and classroom continues to shrink

*“Do you plan to enroll in a classroom, hybrid, or online graduate program?”*

Instructional Format: 2021



Instructional Format: 2023

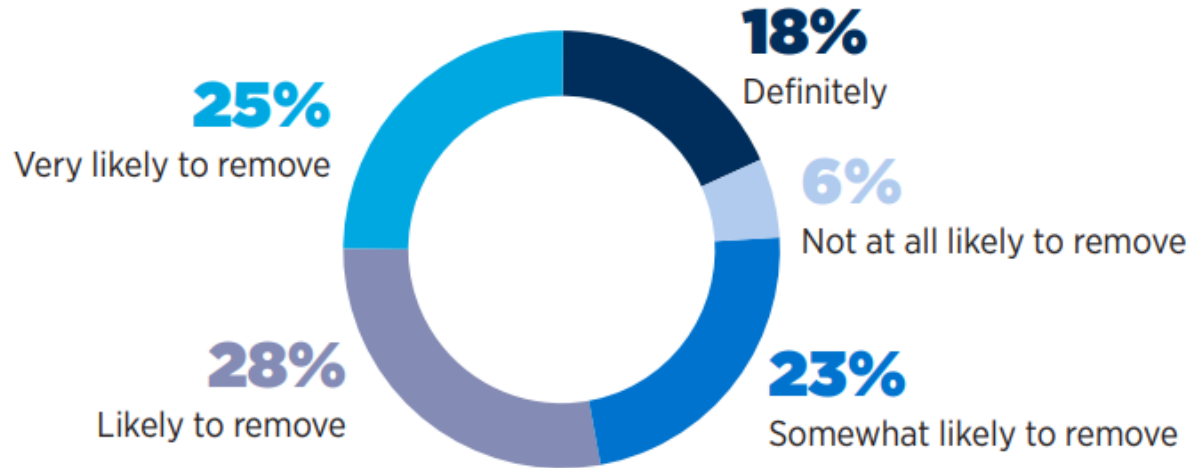


■ Classroom ■ Hybrid ■ Online

■ Classroom ■ Hybrid ■ Online

# Eliminating Programs Deemed too Expensive

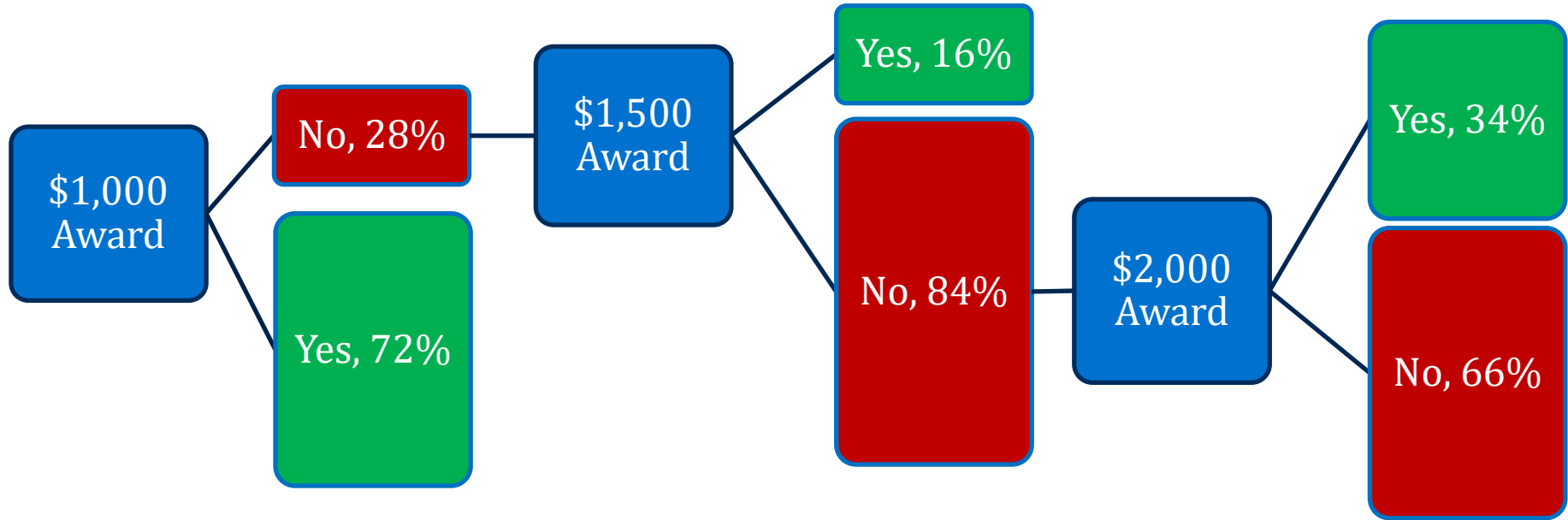
How likely would you be to remove a graduate program from your search if the posted tuition costs were higher than you thought you could afford?



**70 percent** are likely to remove a program if deemed too expensive!!!

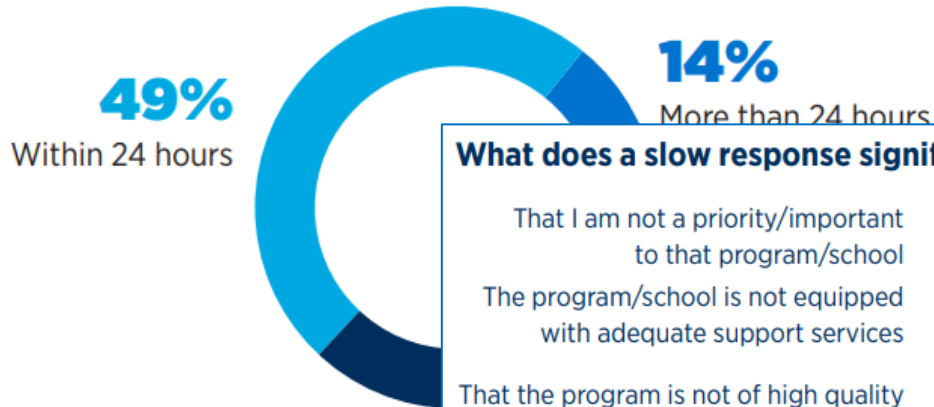
# A small award can have a substantial impact

*“Would a one-time award of \$\_\_\_\_ make you enroll in one program over another?”*

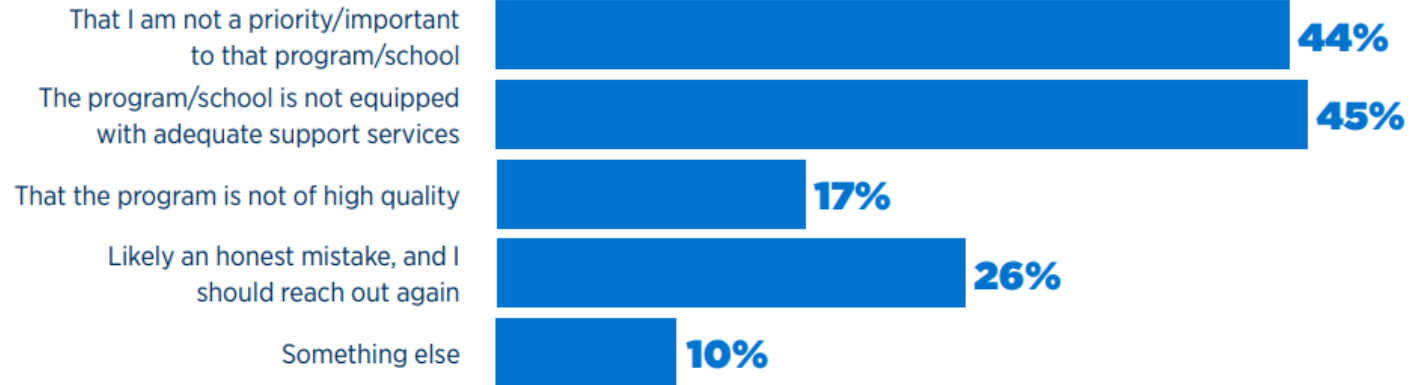


# Graduate students expect a response within hours but not more than a day *(they are more forgiving than online students)*.

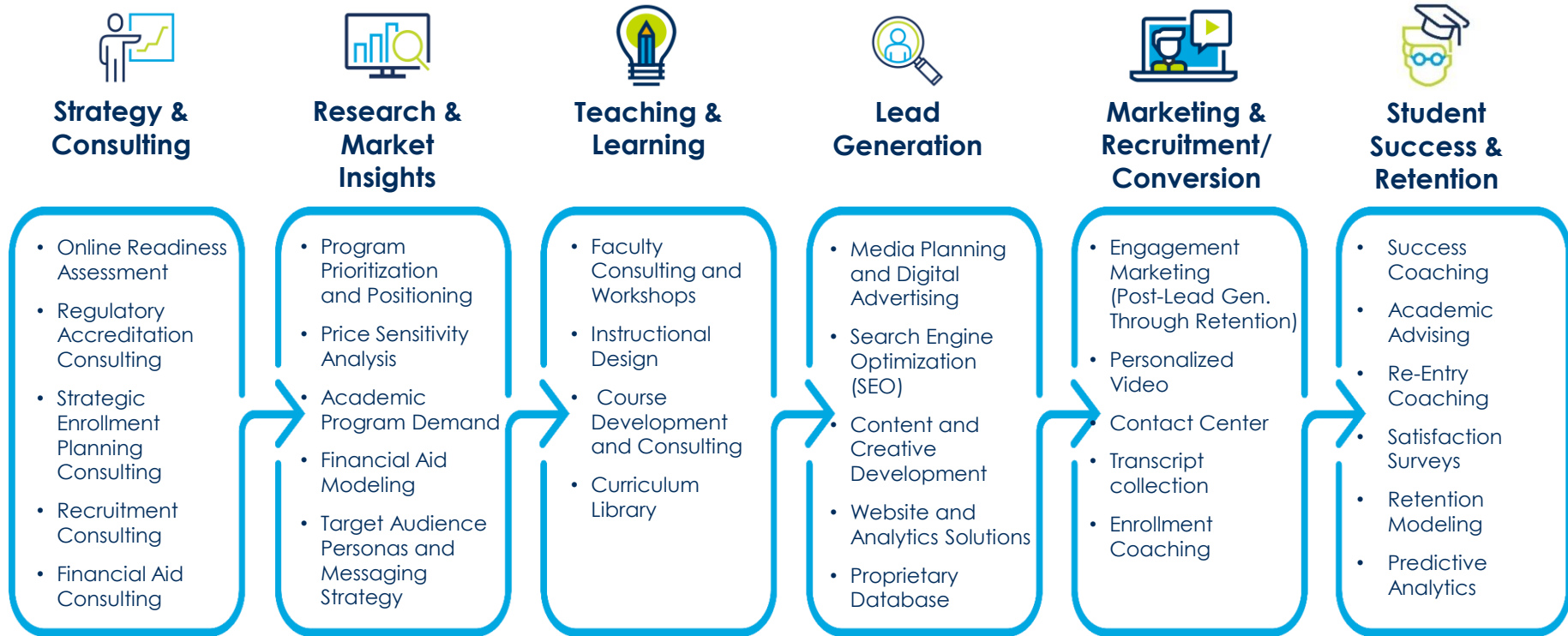
After how long do you expect a response to an inquiry or question in the preferred channel you cited above?



## What does a slow response signify to you?



# RNL Enable: Transforming Enrollment Success



**RNL Envision:** Higher education's leading enrollment growth platform

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# Thank you

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