

8. PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS AND EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS

8.1 PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS

The last question on the 1993 ERIP evaluation questionnaire asked inventors to rate each of six types of ERIP assistance, from not at all helpful to extremely helpful using a 7-point scale. Each type of assistance was rated, based on its helpfulness to the commercialization of their technology. The average rating given to each type of assistance is presented in Table 8.1, where “not at all helpful” is given a rating of 1, and “extremely helpful” is given a rating of 7.

Table 8.1 Participant Perceptions of ERIP Assistance

Benefits to Users or Public	Average Rating by Promising Inventors	Average Rating by Other Inventors	Average^a Rating by All ERIP Inventors
Grant ^b	6.3	6.3	6.3
Technical evaluation by NIST	4.7	5.1	5.0
Assistance with networking and other benefits provided by DOE Invention Coordinators	4.0	4.7	4.5
Commercialization Planning Workshop	4.7	4.2	4.3
Assistance with raising funds due to the credibility associated with participation in ERIP	4.1	3.7	3.8
Assistance with sales or licensing due to the credibility associated with participation in ERIP	3.5	2.8	3.0
Other	5.0 ^c	5.0 ^d	5.0

^aTo calculate each of these weighted averages, the percent of promising inventions was multiplied by 133/557, the percent of other inventions was multiplied by 424/557, and the two products were added.

^bRespondents were asked to skip this question if no DOE grant was received.

^c8 promising inventors rated other types of assistance.

^d17 other inventors rated other types of assistance.

Four of the six types of ERIP assistance listed in the survey (and in Table 8.1) have average ratings that exceed 4.0, the midpoint of the 7-point scale. Assistance with raising funds and with sales or licensing, due to the credibility associated with participation in ERIP, are the two types of assistance that received the lowest ratings. While the average ERIP participant does not appear to benefit substantially from these two types of assistance, we know from testimonials that the credibility