

# Access vs. Importance

A global study assessing the importance of and ease of access  
to professional and academic information

Phase I Results

This global study extends a UK study by Mark Ware Consulting Ltd for the PRC. Fieldwork, technical support and analysis was provided by Elsevier's research team for the PRC.

**October 2010**

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## Access vs. Importance of Information - Contents

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## Access vs. Importance of Information - Background

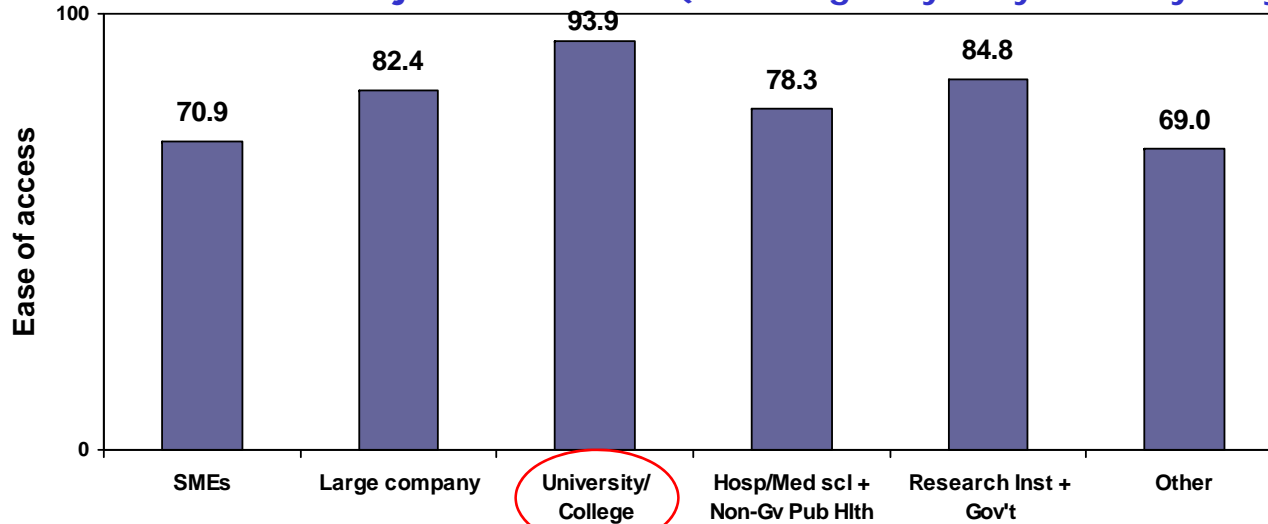
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- In August 2009 the Publishing Research Consortium (PRC), in association with Mark Ware Consulting Ltd, published a study on access to professional and academic information in the UK. Although that study focussed on users in small and medium sized enterprises, the survey also covered users in other sectors, including academic, governmental and medical organisations. The UK survey sample was drawn from several lists, including UK researchers who had published in at least one of over 18,000 journals as well as non-publishing researchers/readers. Summary results from the UK study are shown on p. 3 of this report; see also: <http://www.publishingresearch.net/documents/SMEAccessCompanionReport.pdf>
- The current study extended globally the survey approach developed for the UK study. In this the first phase of the global study, fielded Jan 2010, the sample was drawn randomly from researchers who had published in at least one of over 18,000 journals.
- The study identified the importance and ease of access to a variety of professional and academic information types.
- Phase I of this study addressed the most important core users, i.e. those researchers who also publish their research in peer reviewed journals. The PRC plan to extend this study to address those users/researchers who may use research information but do not themselves publish research papers in phase II of the study. In practice this may need to be done regionally and the PRC will seek and are keen to work with other partners to achieve this.

# Overview of UK Results

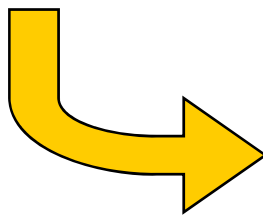
# PRC UK study\*

Ease of access to journal articles (% rating Very Easy or Fairly Easy)

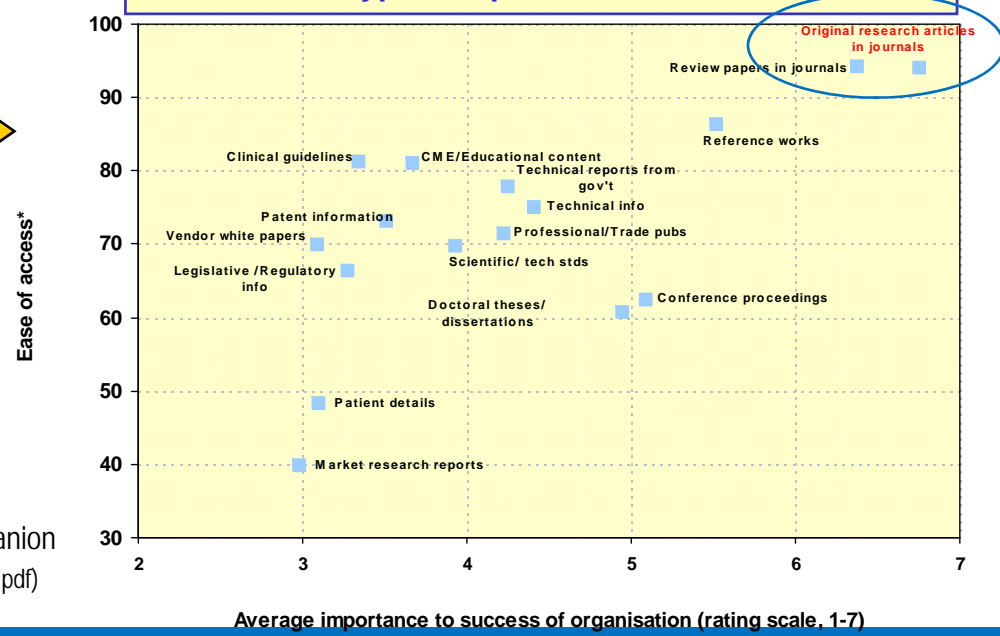


Ease of Access to Journal articles high across all sectors, particularly research intensive organisations in the UK

Access to journal articles of high importance but also easiest of all information needs



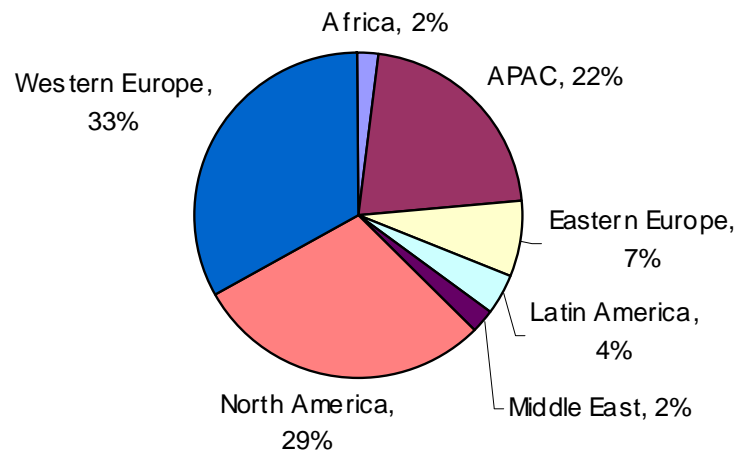
Information types: Importance vs. Ease of access



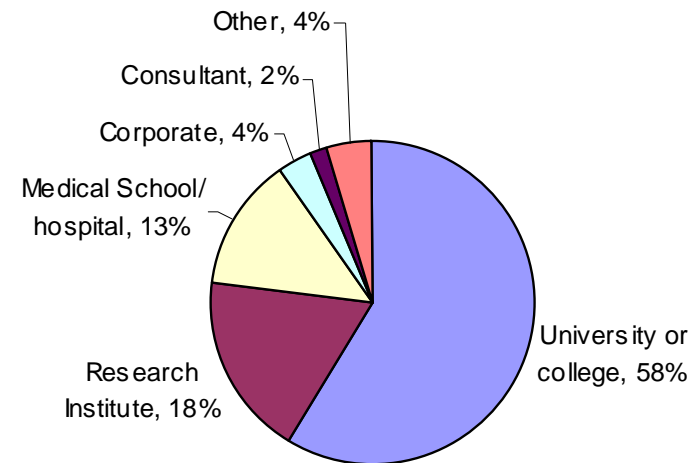
\*PRC study( with Mark Ware Consulting Ltd): Survey of access to professional and academic information in the UK, August 2007 – companion report (<http://www.publishingresearch.net/documents/SMEAccessCompanionReport.pdf>)

### Overview of Phase I of the Global Study

- This study is based on an online survey fielded Jan 2010\*
- The study covered core users (those researchers who have published journal articles)
- The survey was sent by email to 51,000 researchers, sampled randomly from a global list of those who had published in one or more of over 18000 journals
- Non-core users (users who have not published) to be added in phase 2
- Results are based on 3823 respondents (7.5% response rate) globally with the following breakdown



**Region**



**Organisation**

\*The PRC access to information questions were included as a module in a broader global survey of researcher needs and behaviour fielded by Elsevier. See appendix for questionnaire

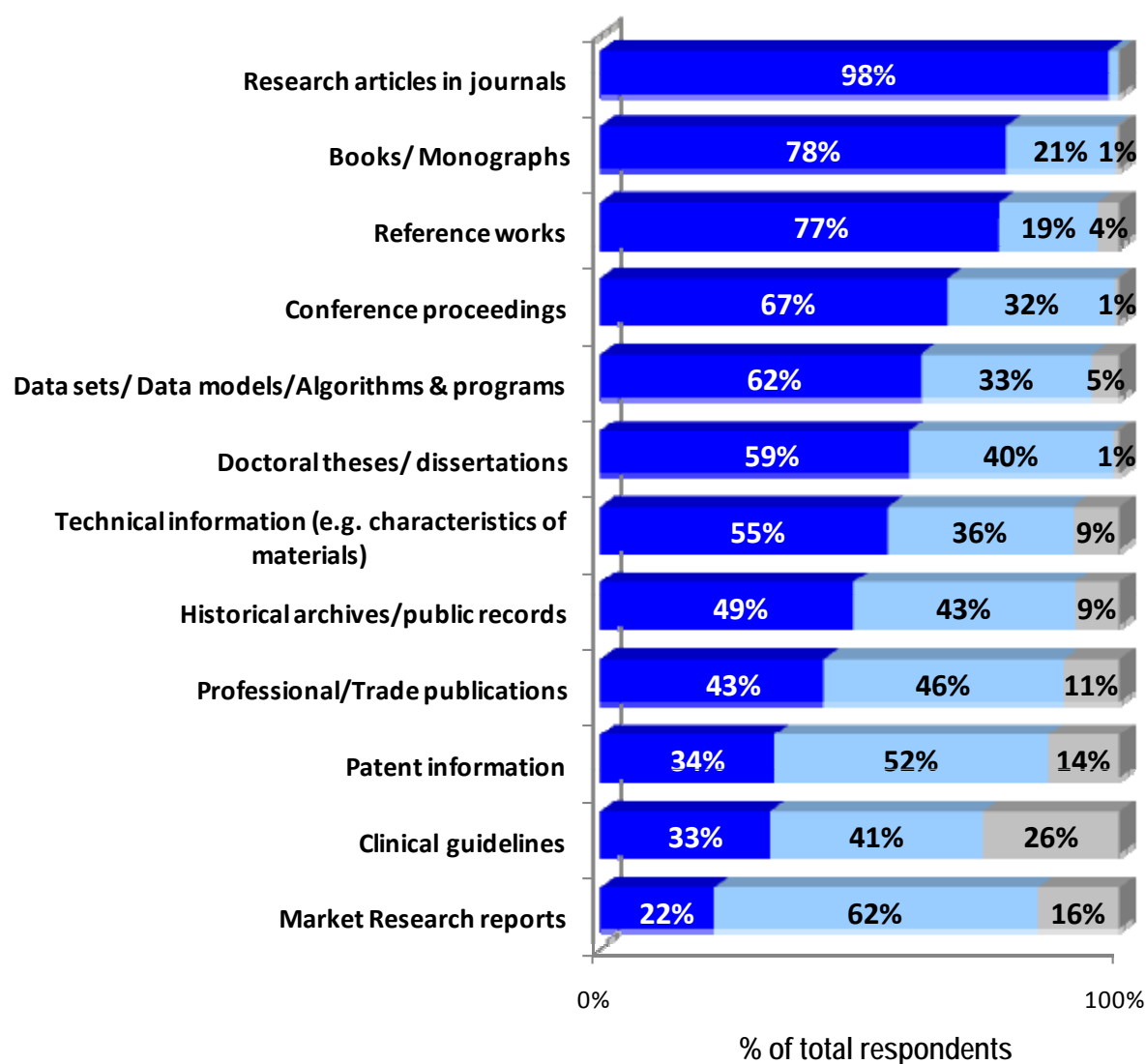
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# Overall Results Summary

# Importance of Access to information

# Global Study - Phase I

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)



Importance of access where  
7 = Very important  
1 = Not at all important

■ 5 to 7

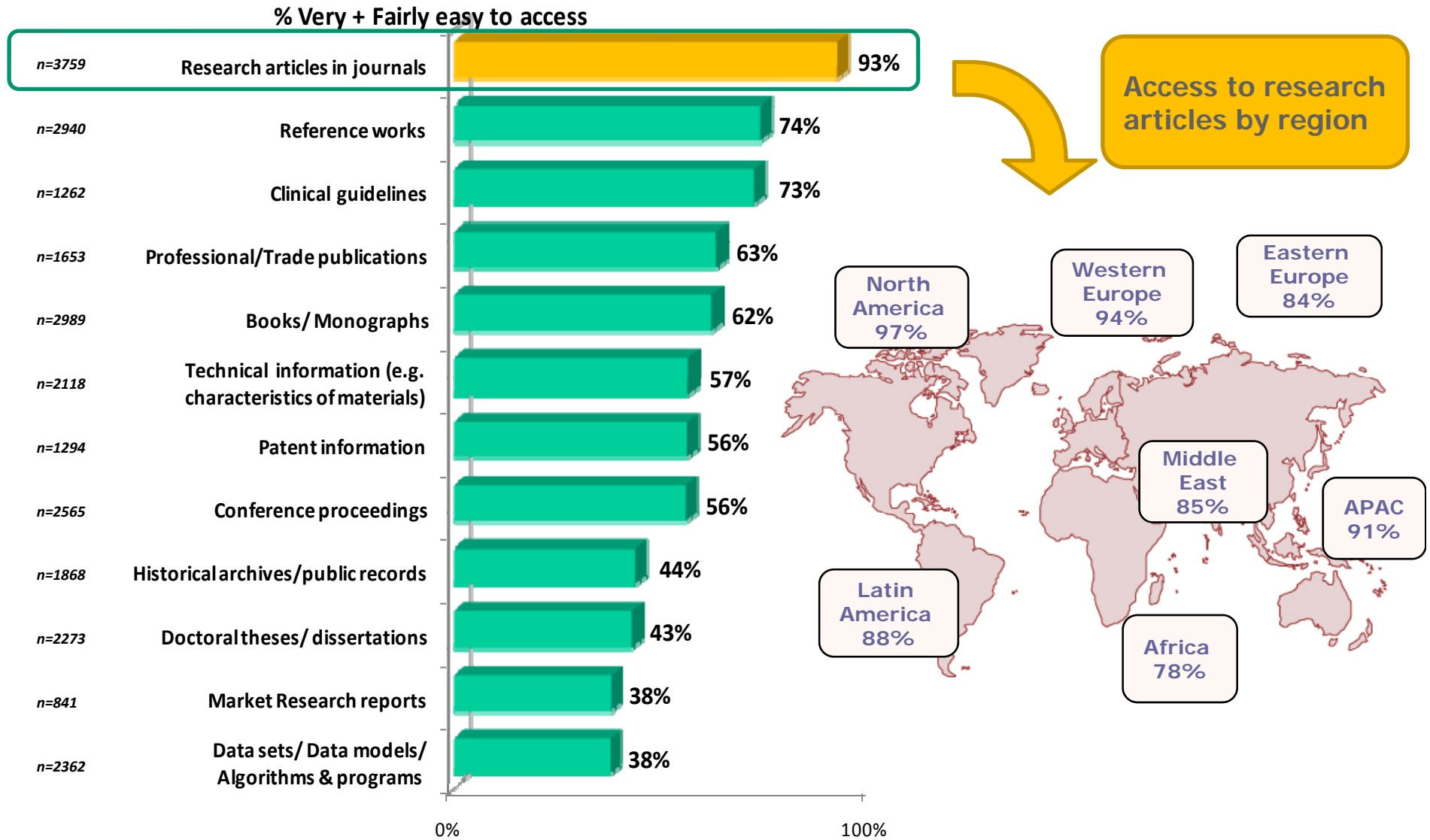
■ 1 to 4

■ Don't know /  
Not applicable

A total of 3823 researchers rated the importance of each of the information types shown here. Those respondents who rated the importance as 5 or more (dark blue) were further asked to rate their level of access to that information type.

# Access to information

# Global Study - Phase I



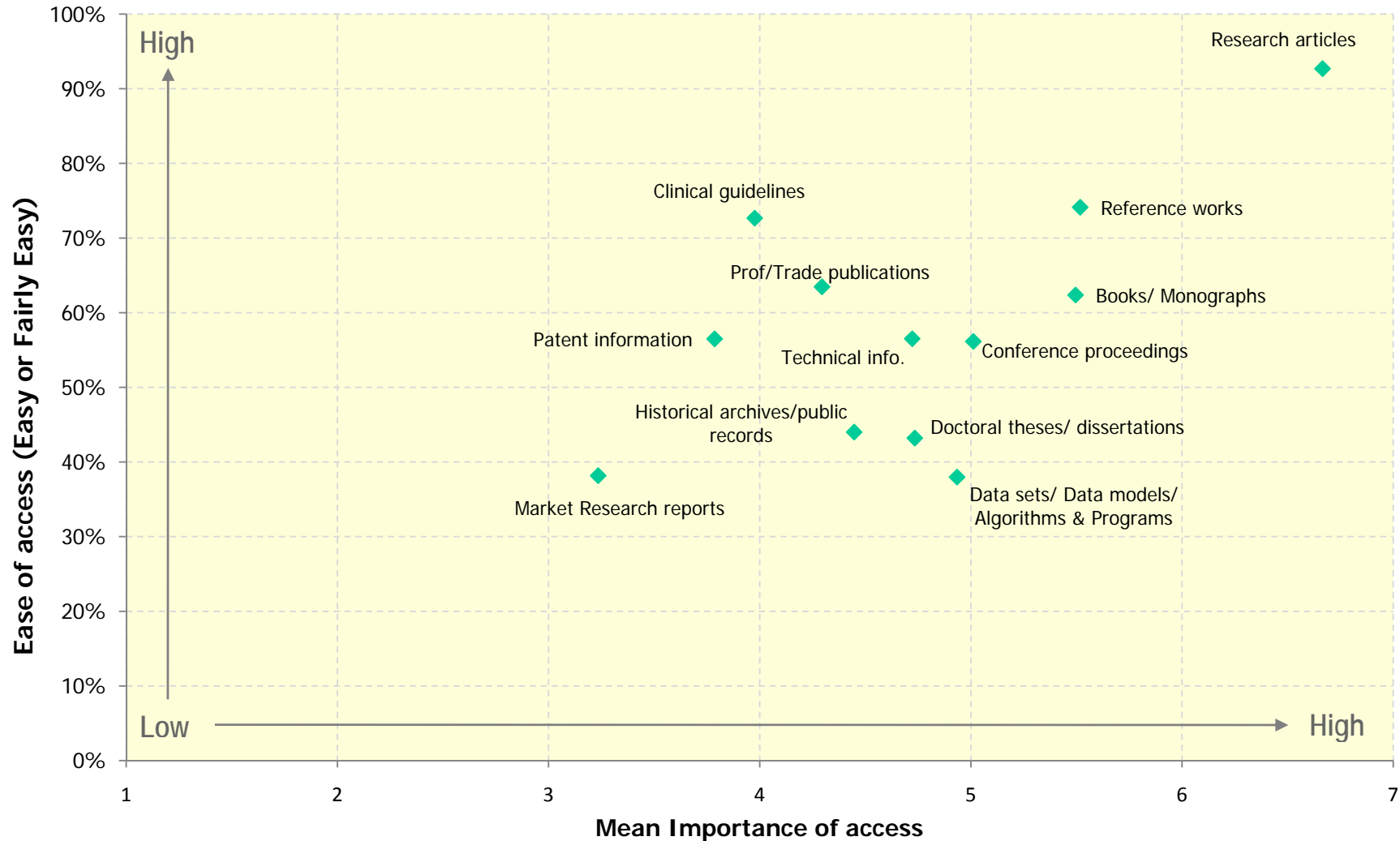
# Access vs. Importance

# Global (3824 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## All Respondents



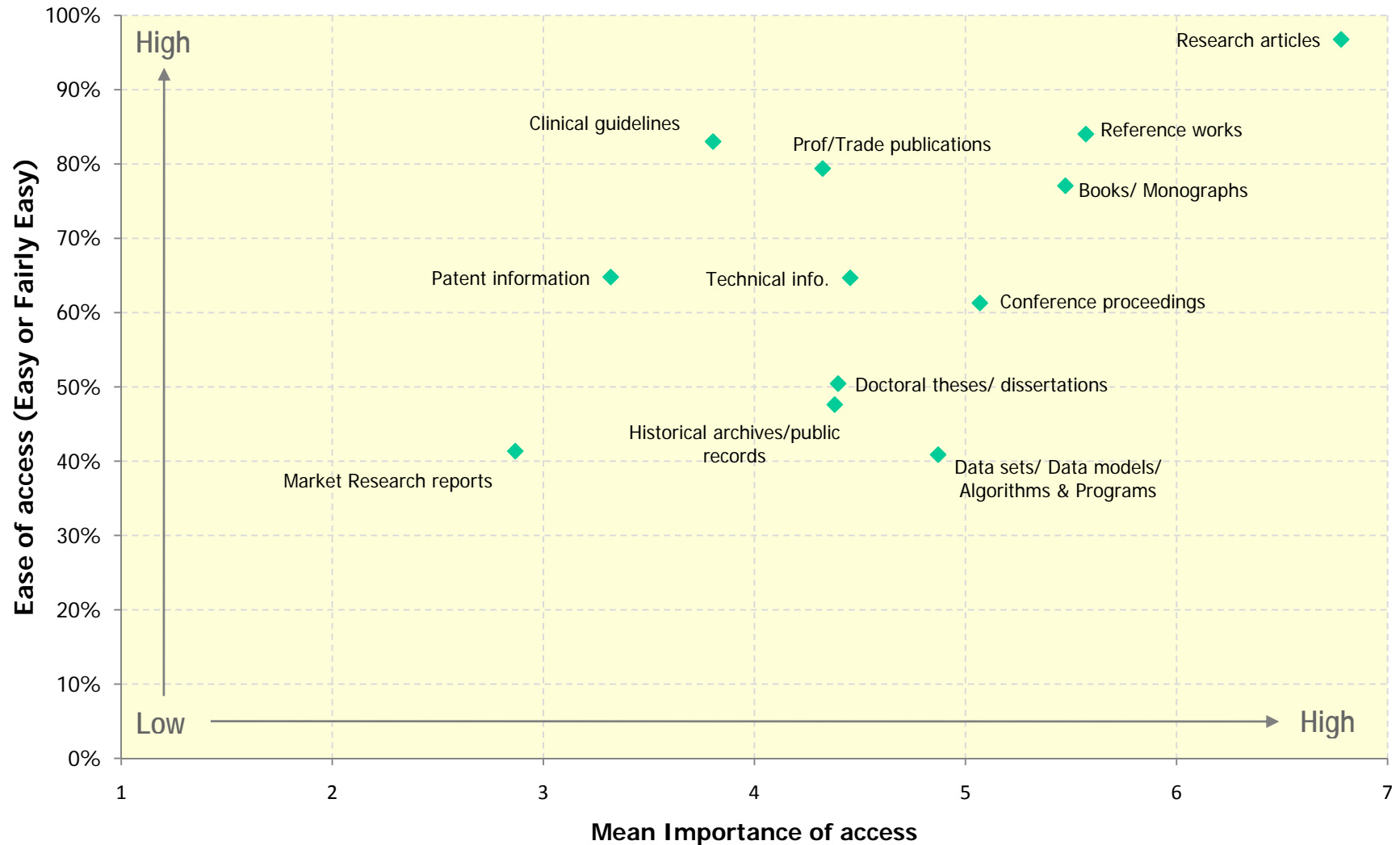
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## **Access vs. Importance Results by Region**

# Access vs. Importance North America (1121 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
 Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## North America



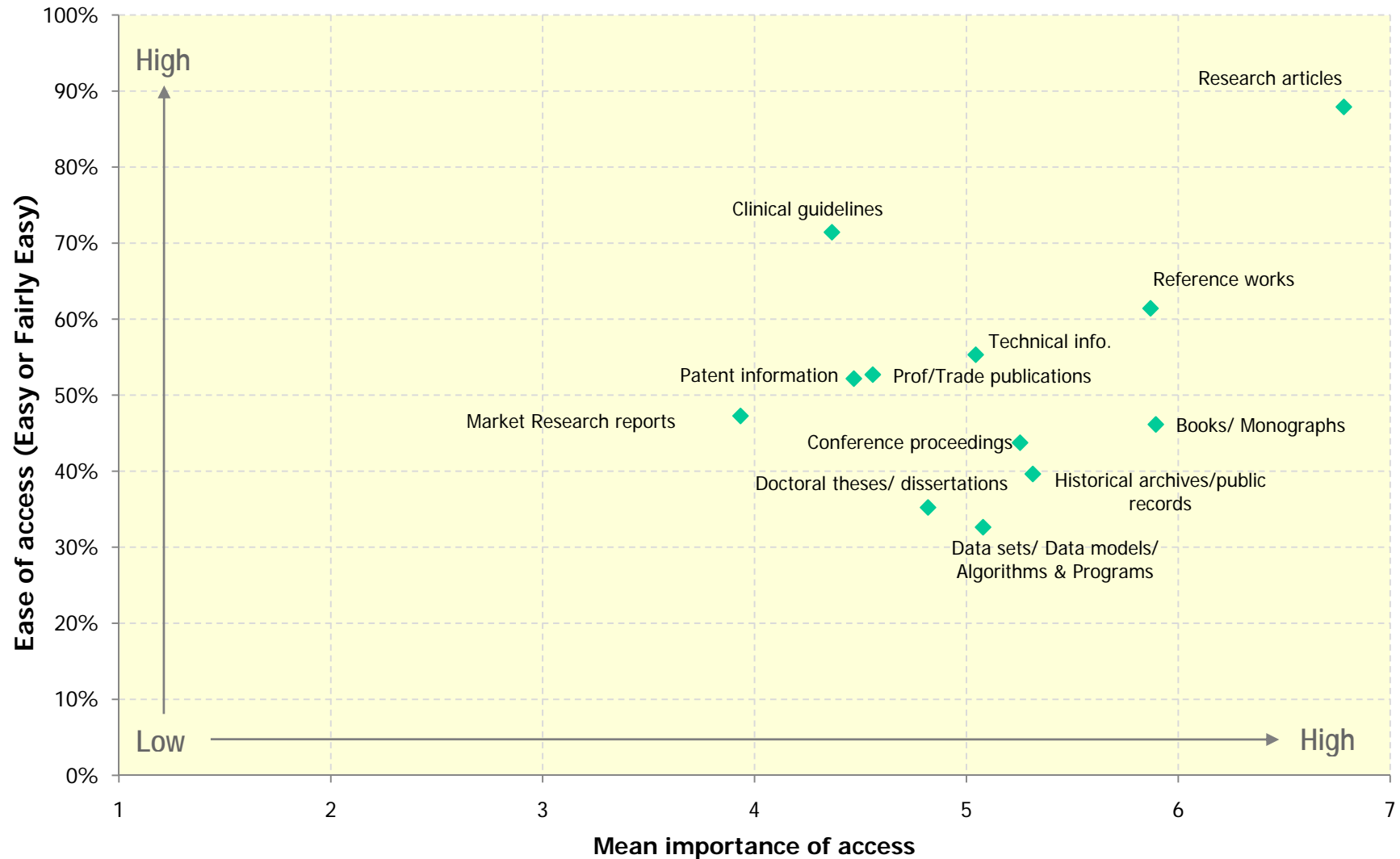
# Access vs. Importance

# Latin America (151 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Latin America



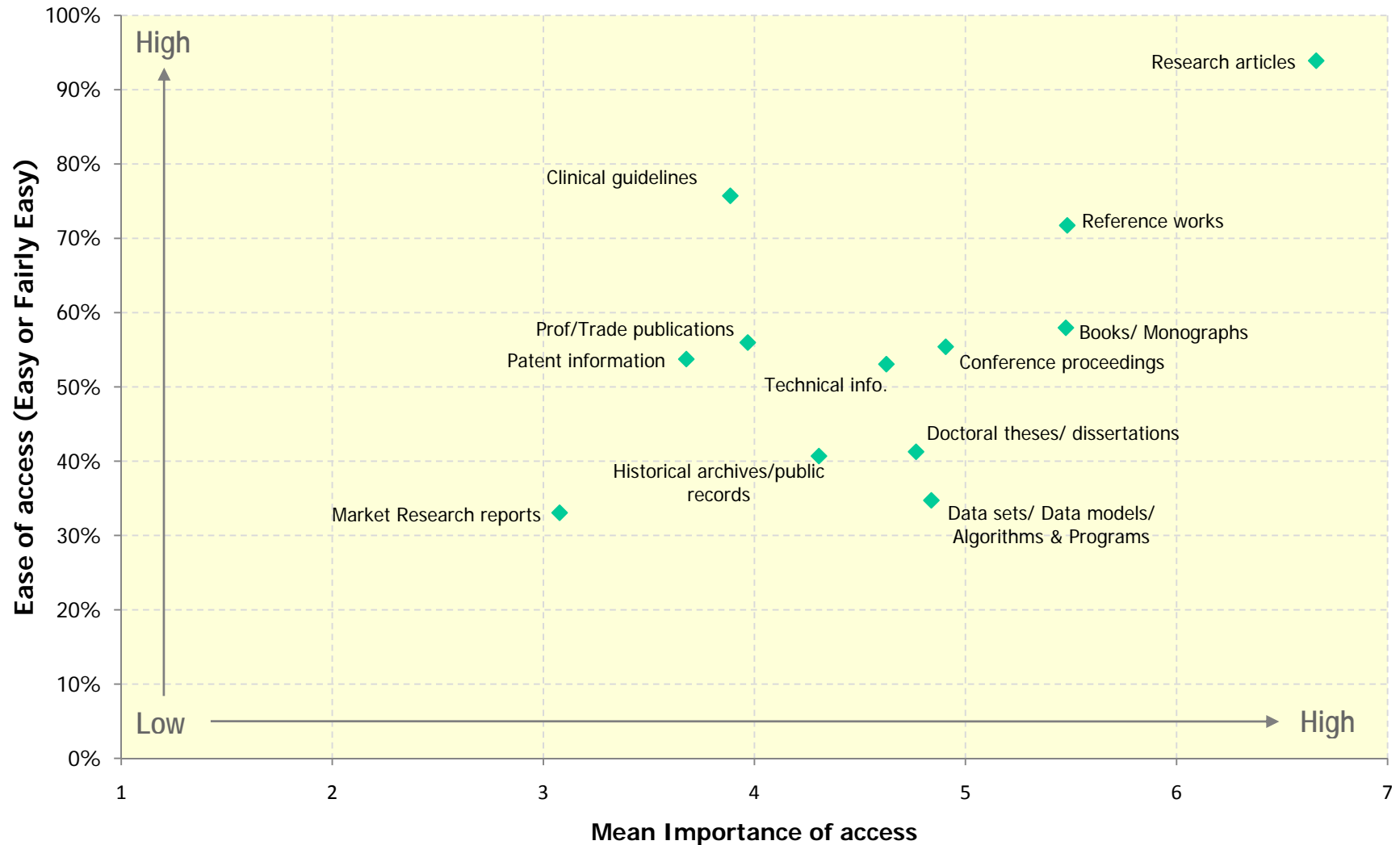
# Access vs. Importance

# Western Europe (1267 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

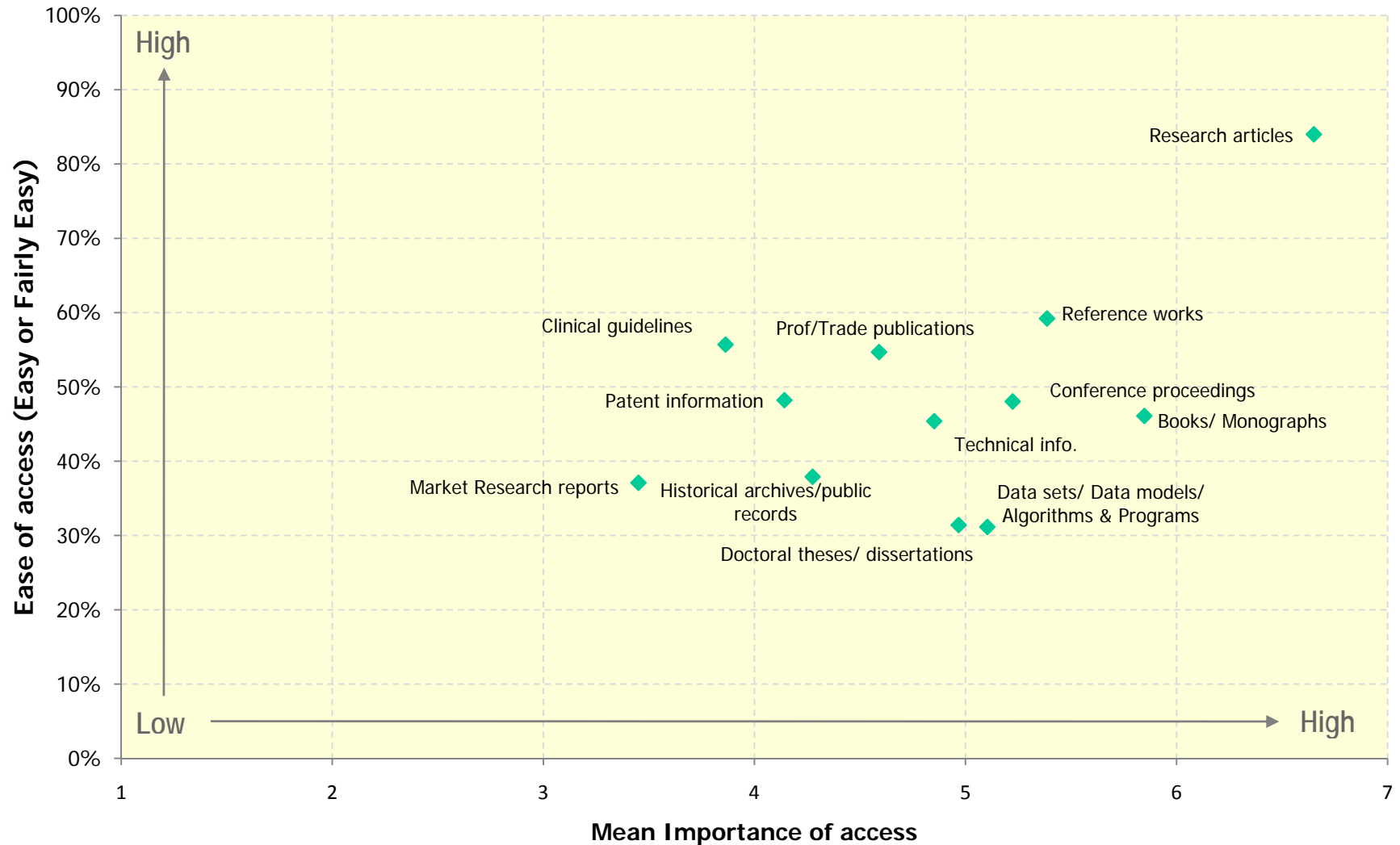
## Western Europe



# Access vs. Importance Eastern Europe (278 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
 Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Eastern Europe

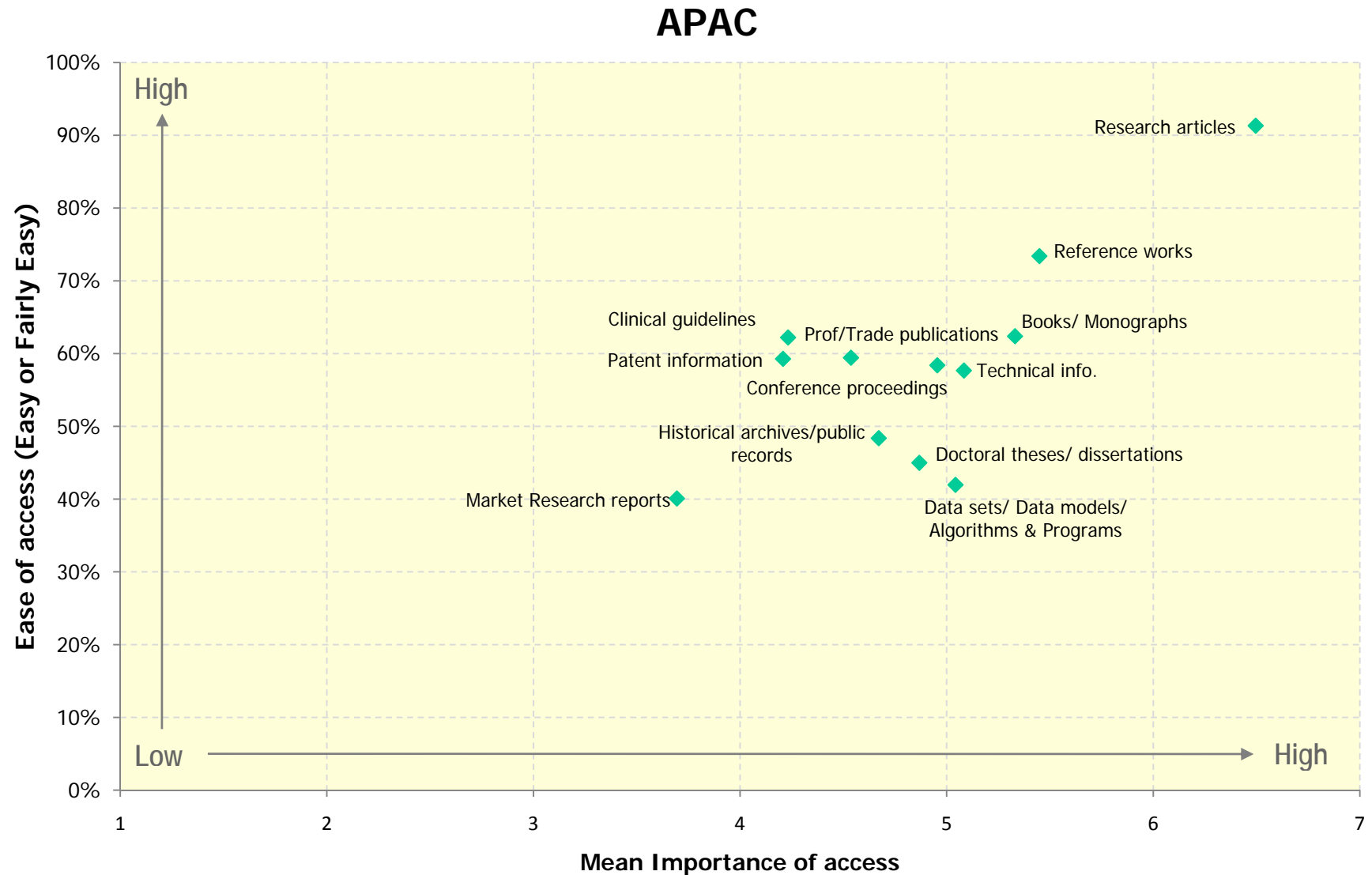


# Access vs. Importance

# Asia Pacific (835 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

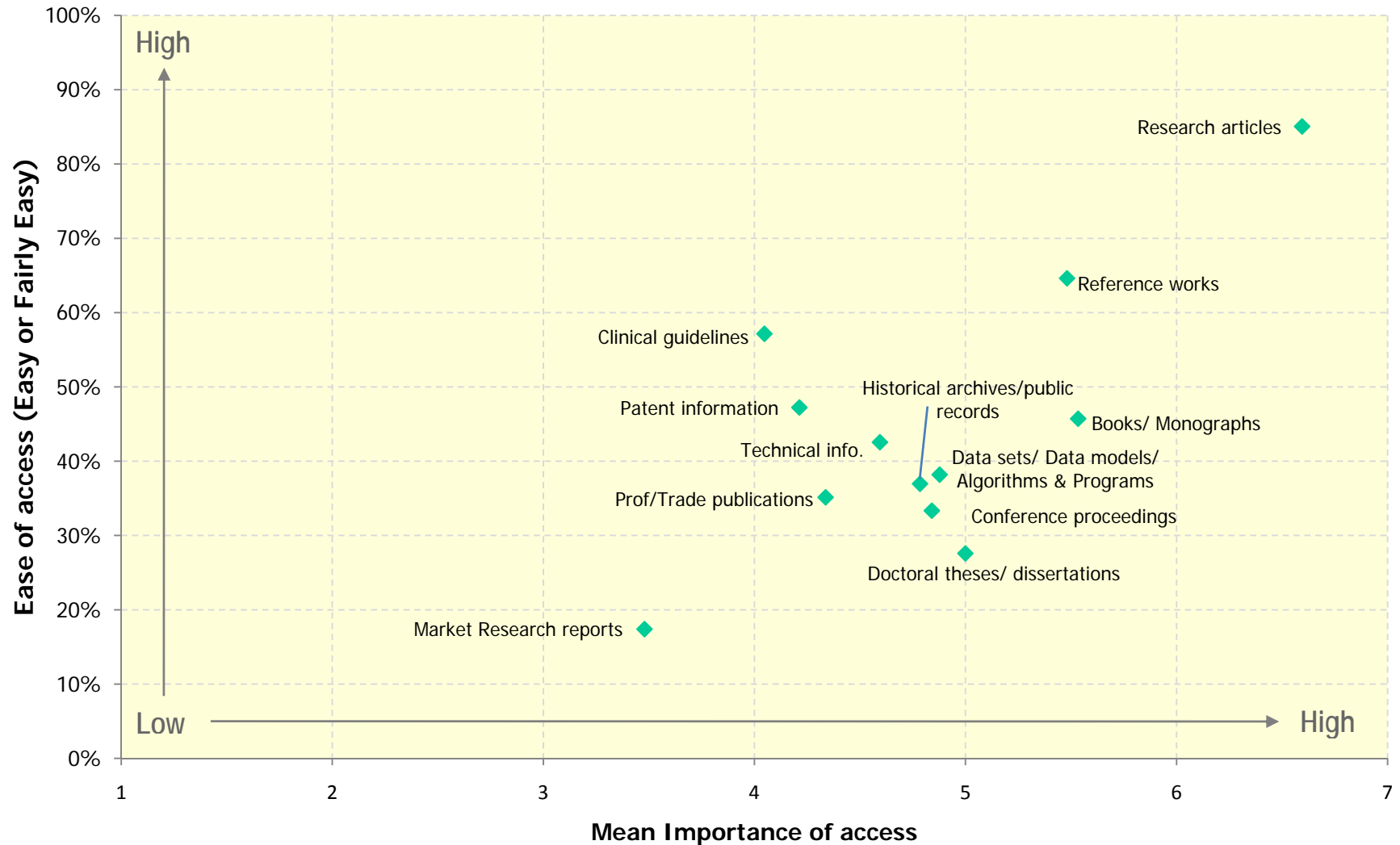


# Access vs. Importance

# Middle East (96 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Middle East



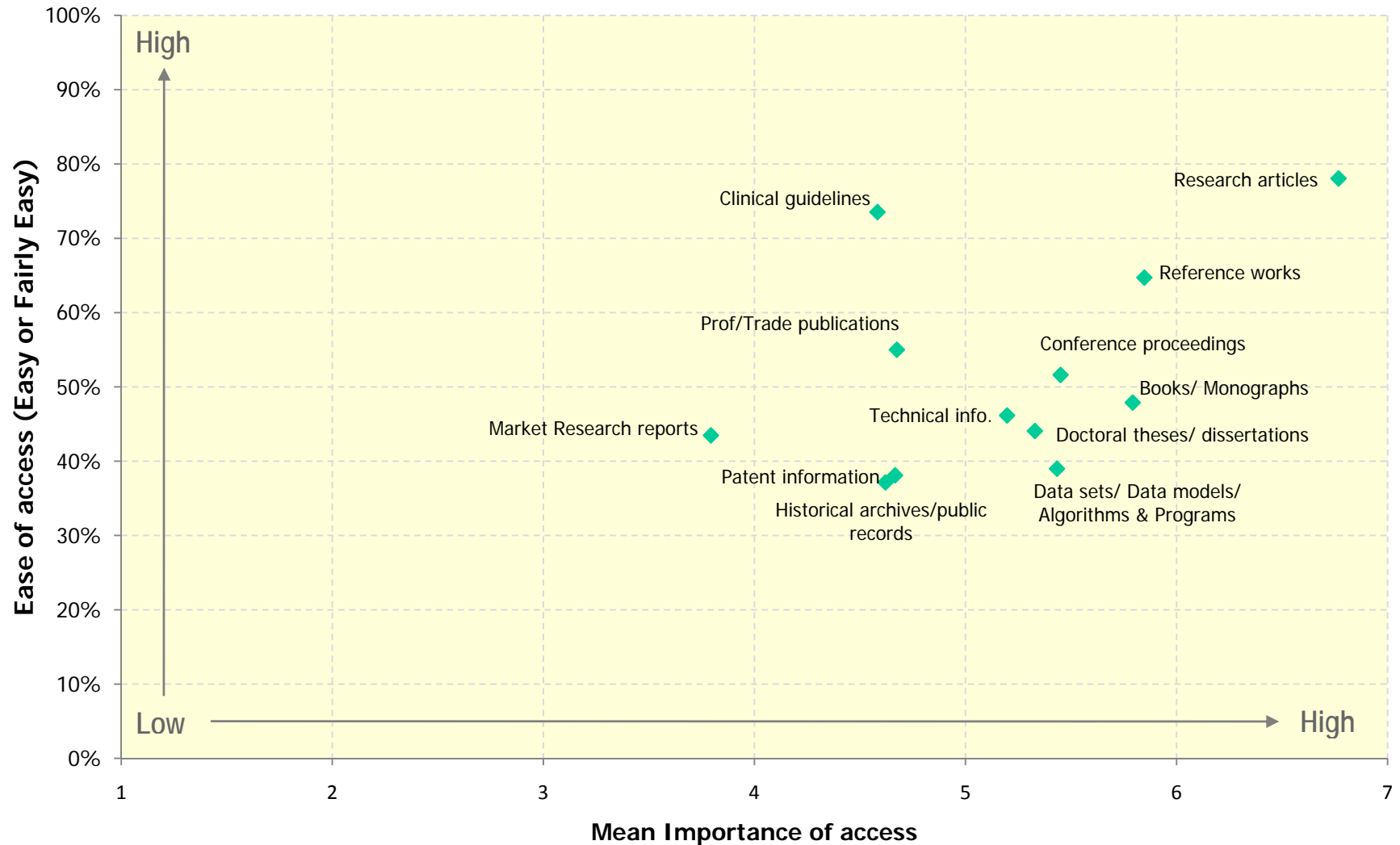
# Access vs. Importance

# Africa (82 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Africa



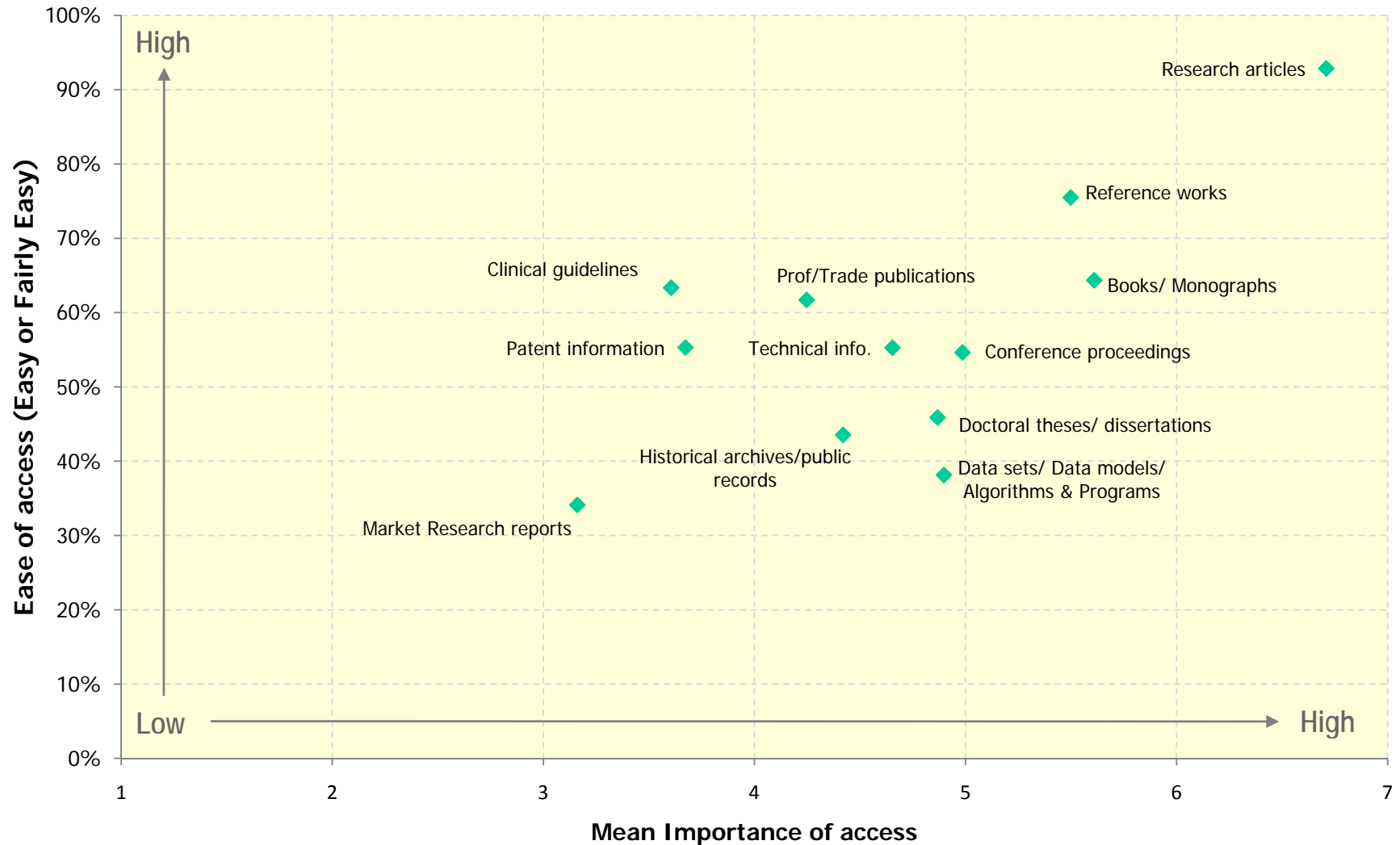
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# **Access vs. Importance Results by Organisation Type**

# Access vs. Importance      Univs & Colleges (2217 respondents)

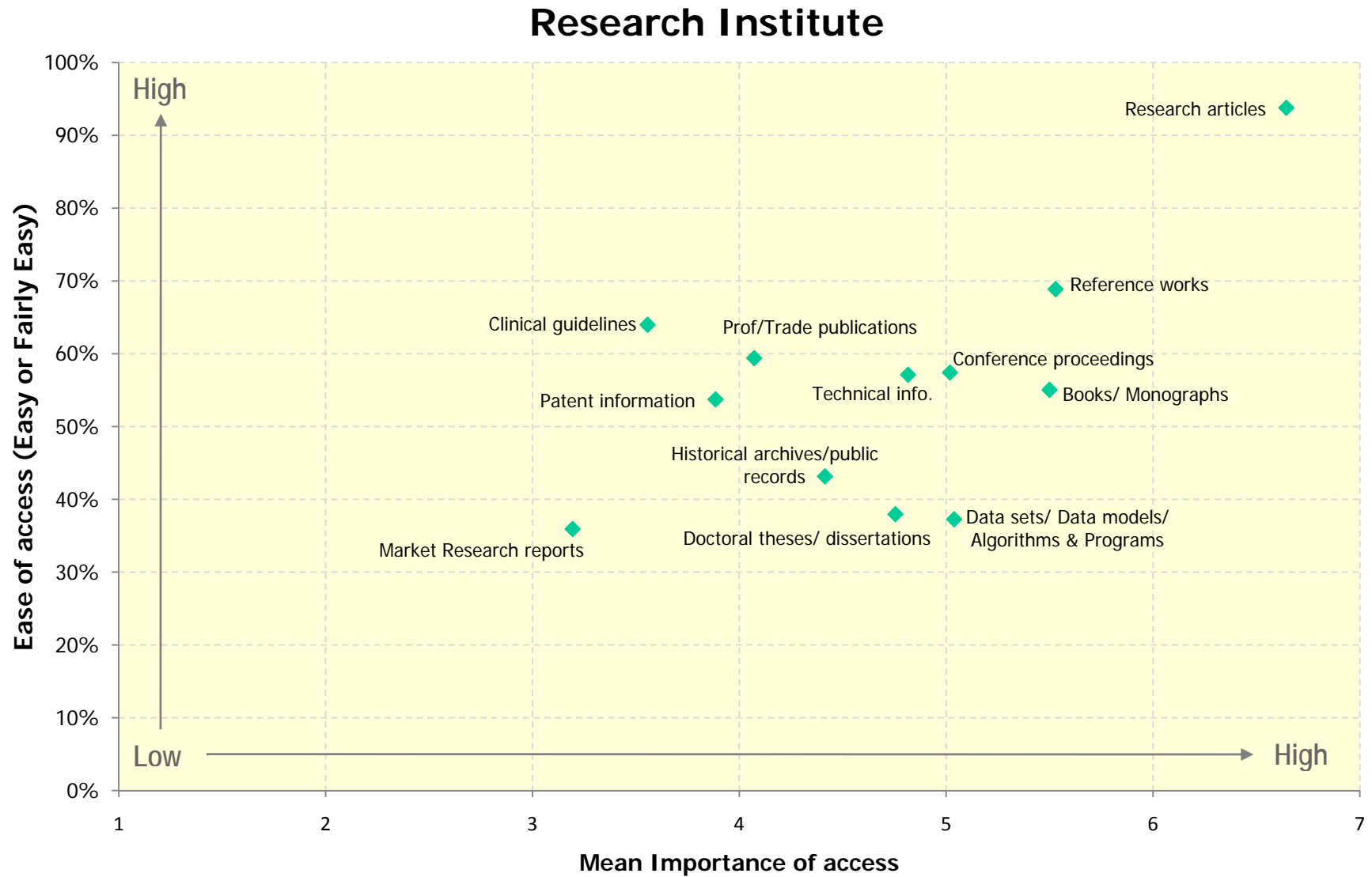
Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
 Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## University or College



# Access vs. Importance Research Institutes (709 respondents)

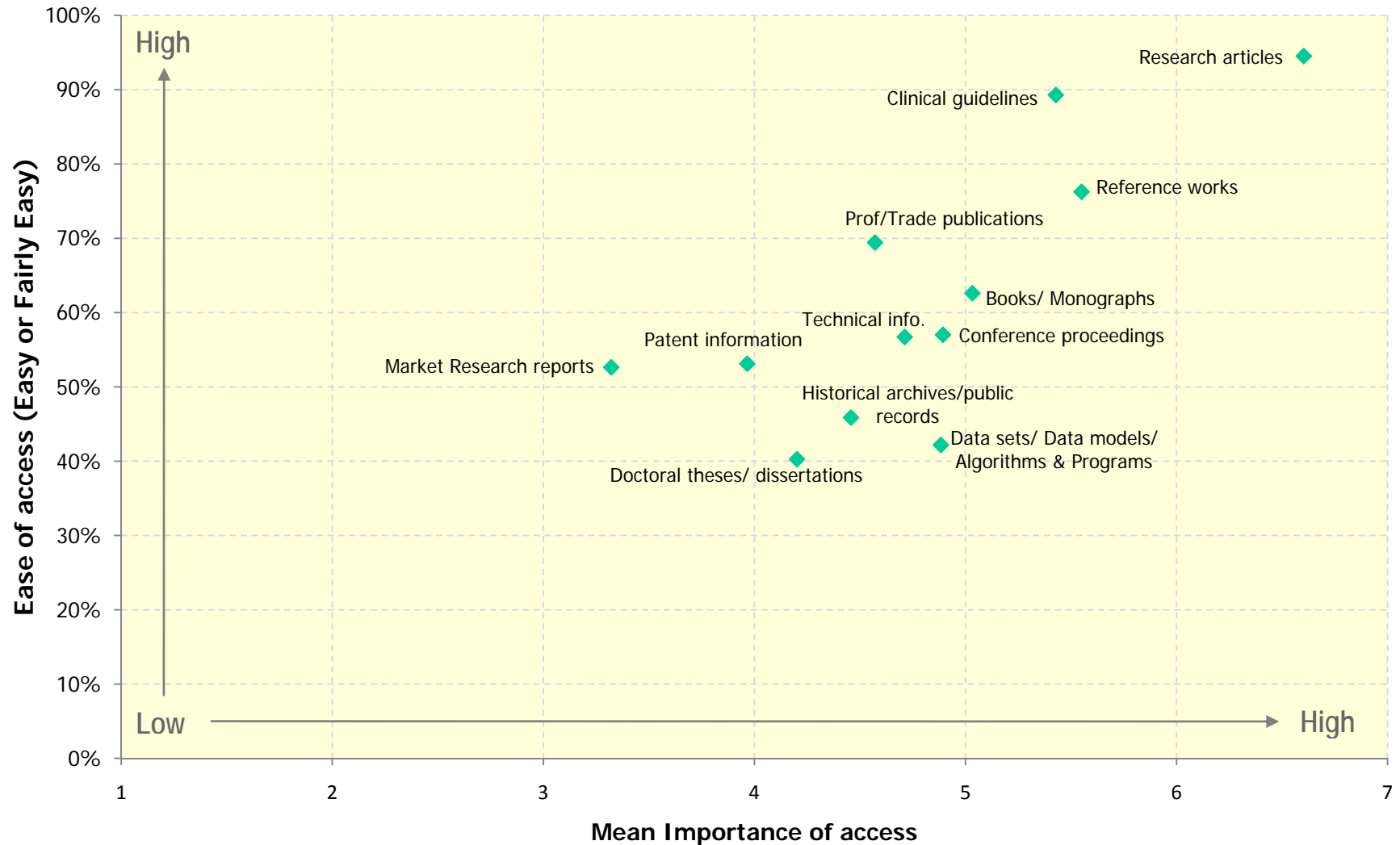
Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
 Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)



# Access vs. Importance Hospitals/Med Schools (521 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

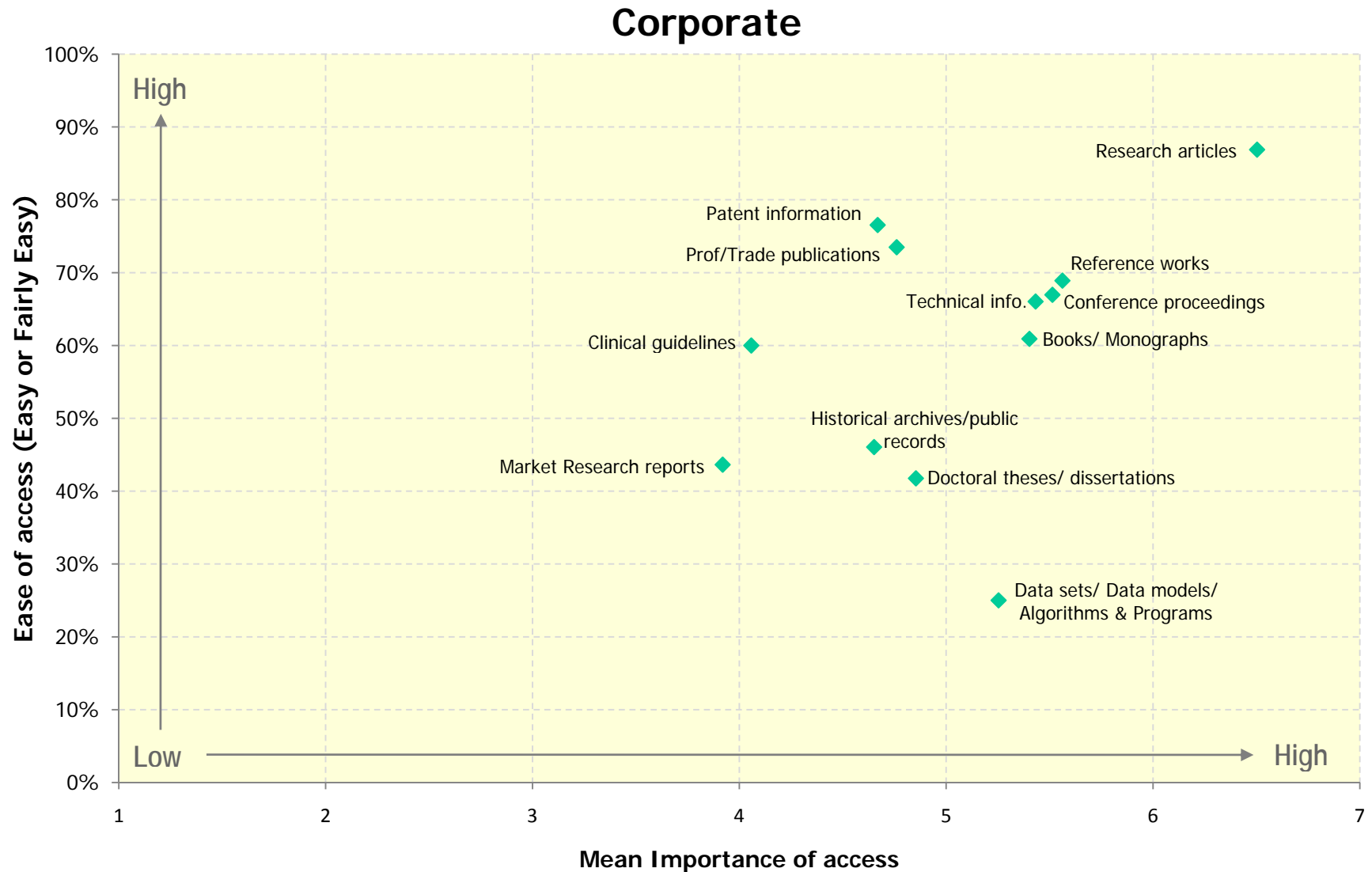
## Medical School/ Hospital



# Access vs. Importance

# Corporates (145 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

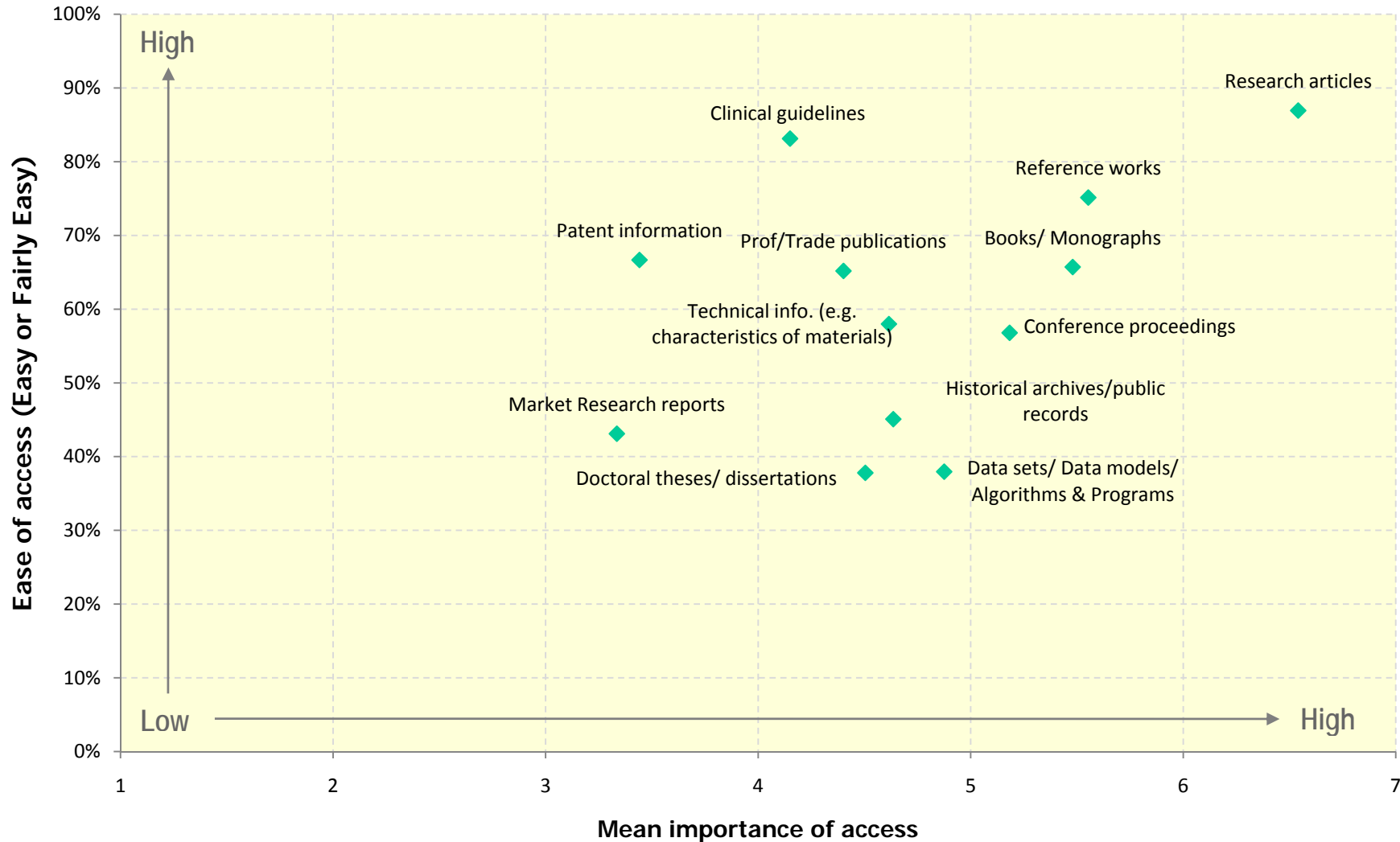


# Access vs. Importance Consultants + Other (231 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Consultants + Other



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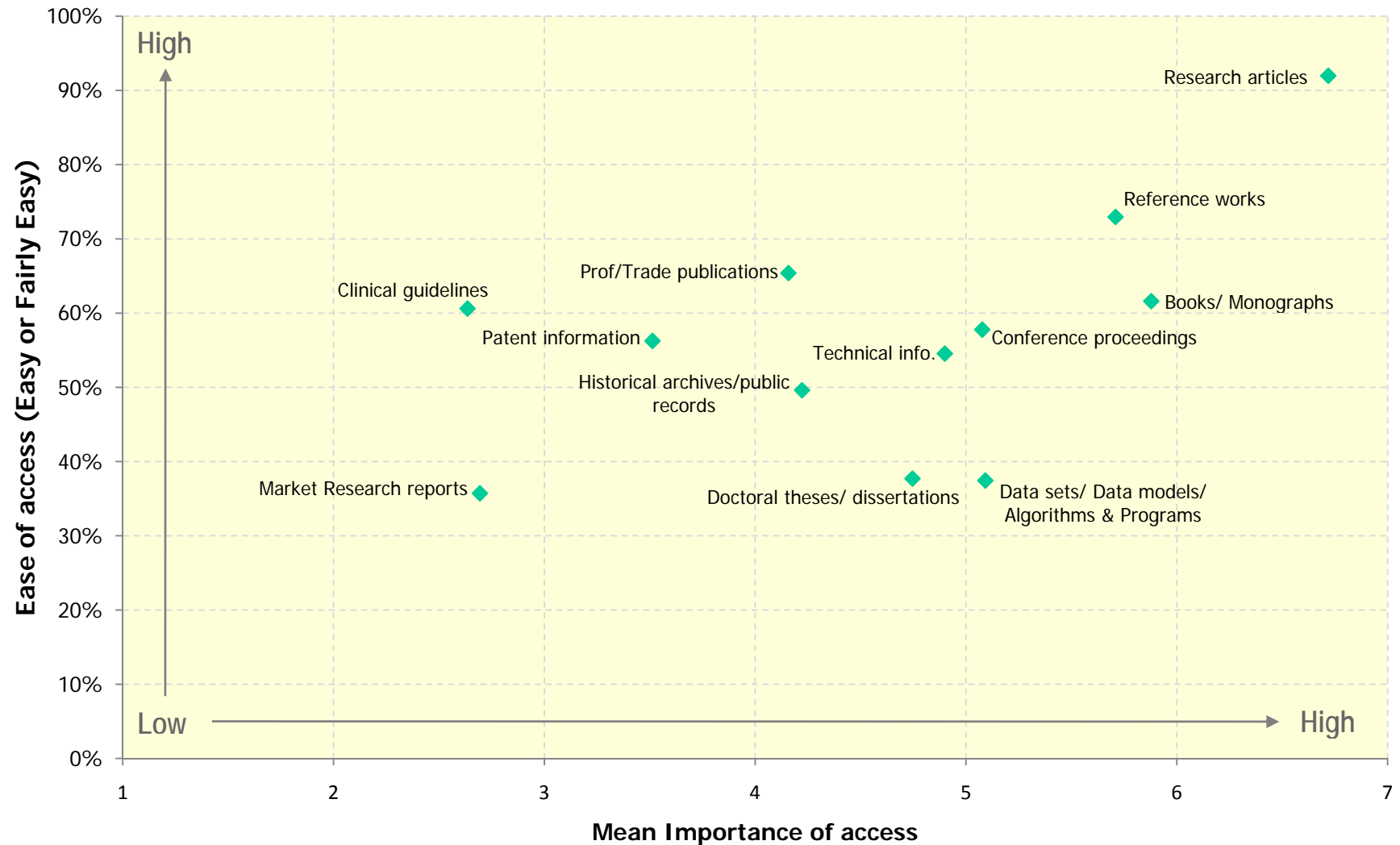
# **Access vs. Importance Results by Subject Area**

# Access vs. Importance Physics & Astronomy (300 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

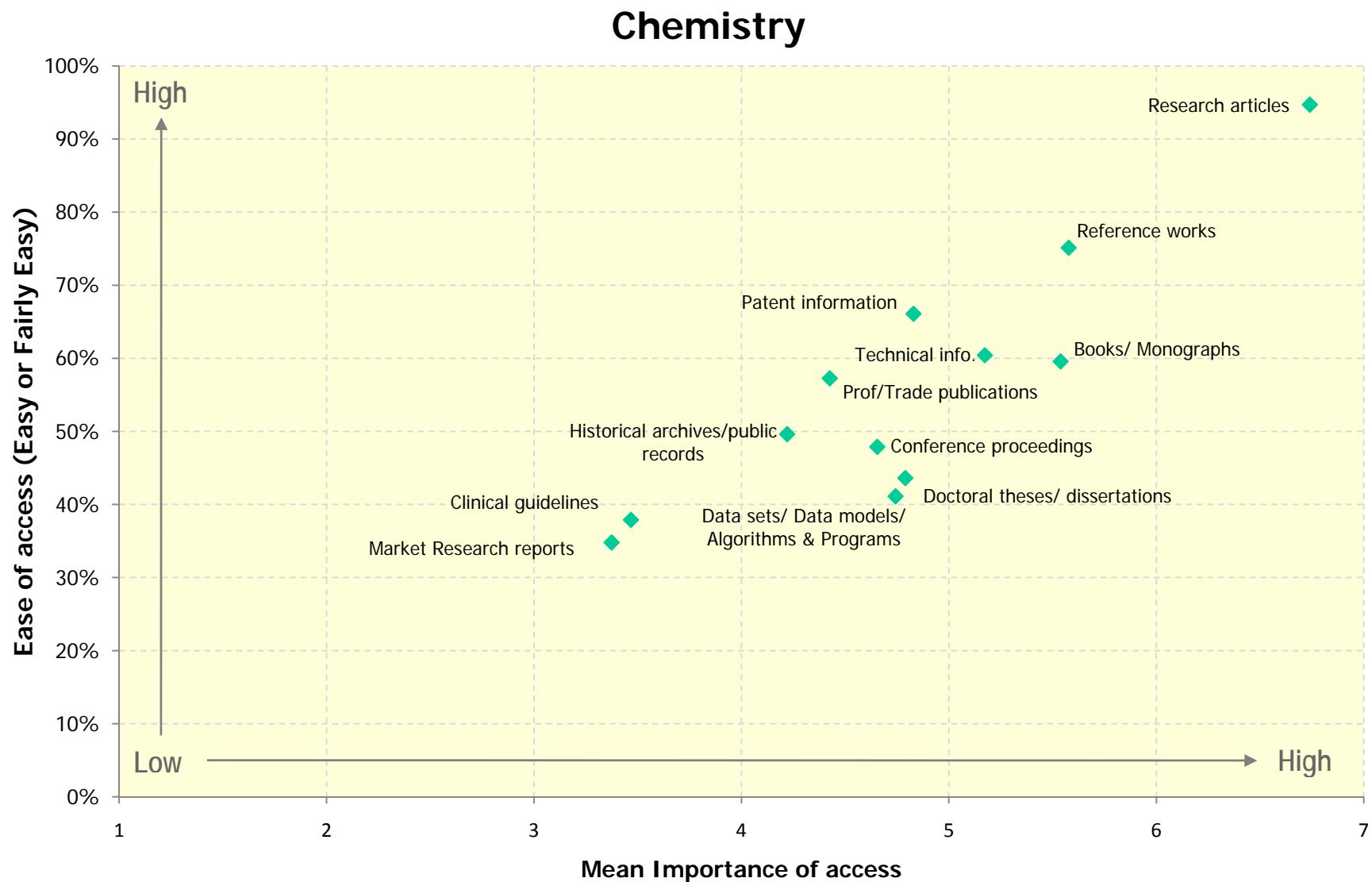
## Physics & Astronomy



# Access vs. Importance

# Chemistry (285 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)



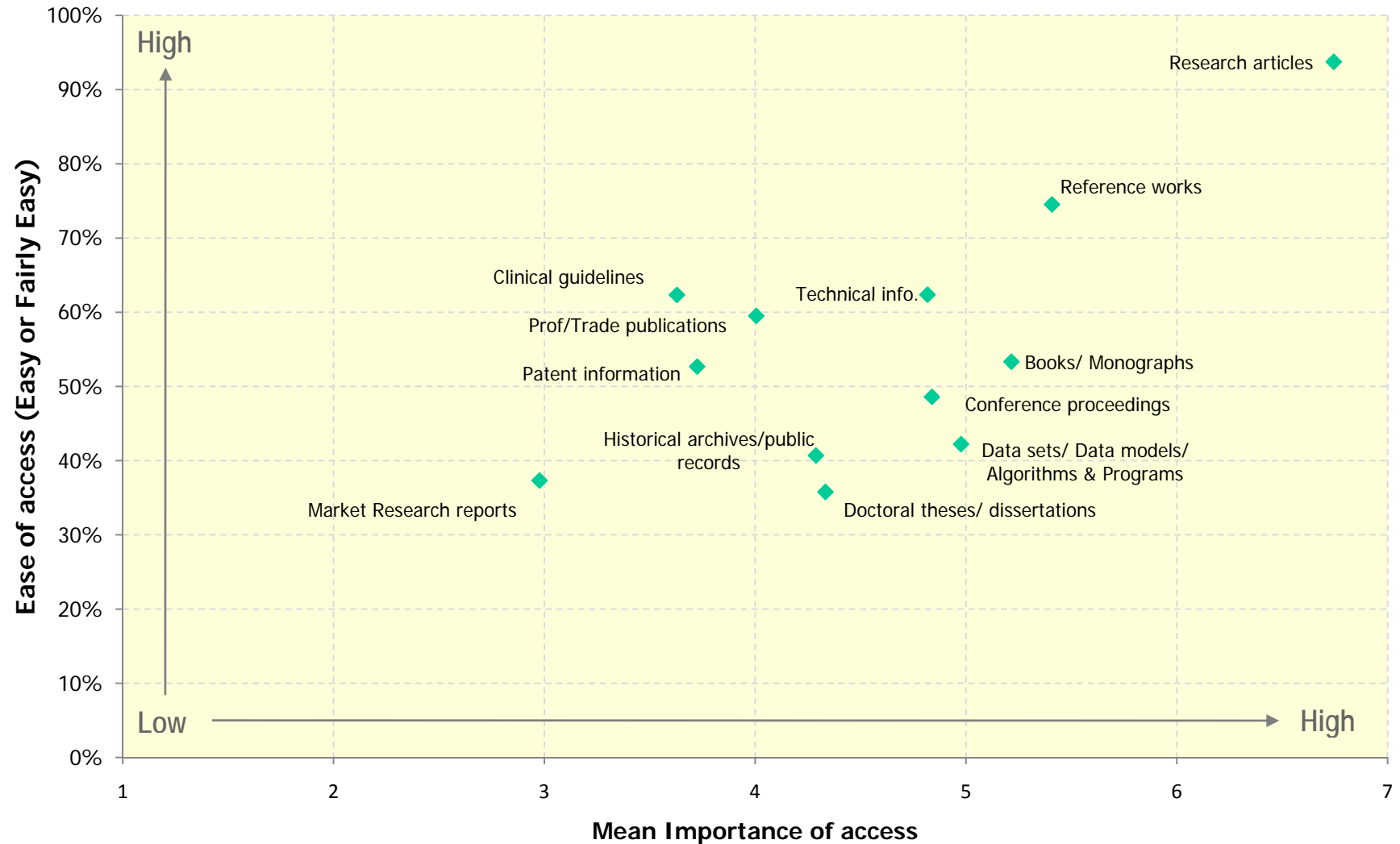
# Access vs. Importance

# Life Sciences (808 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Life Sciences



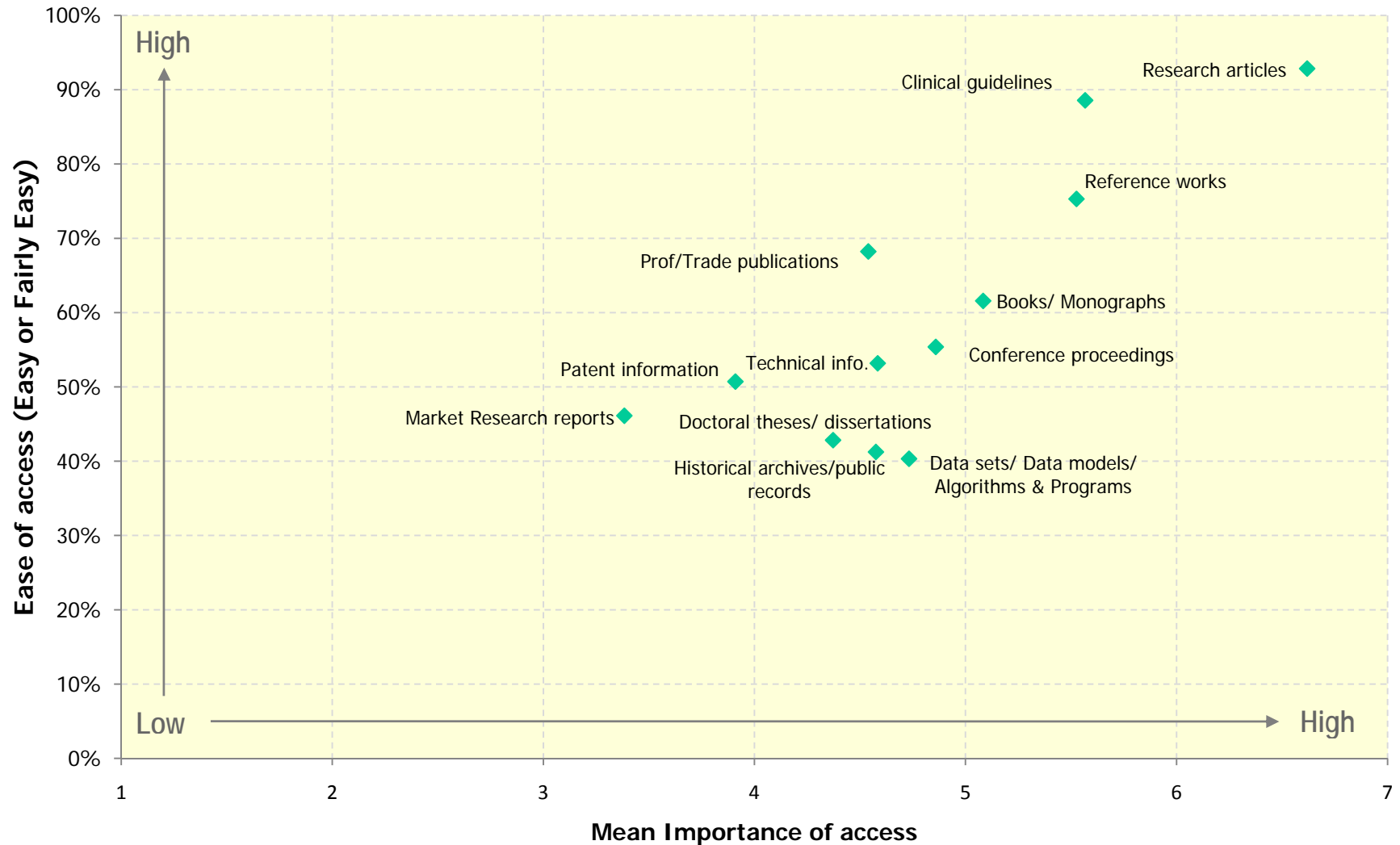
# Access vs. Importance

# Medicine & Health (765 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Medicine & Allied Health



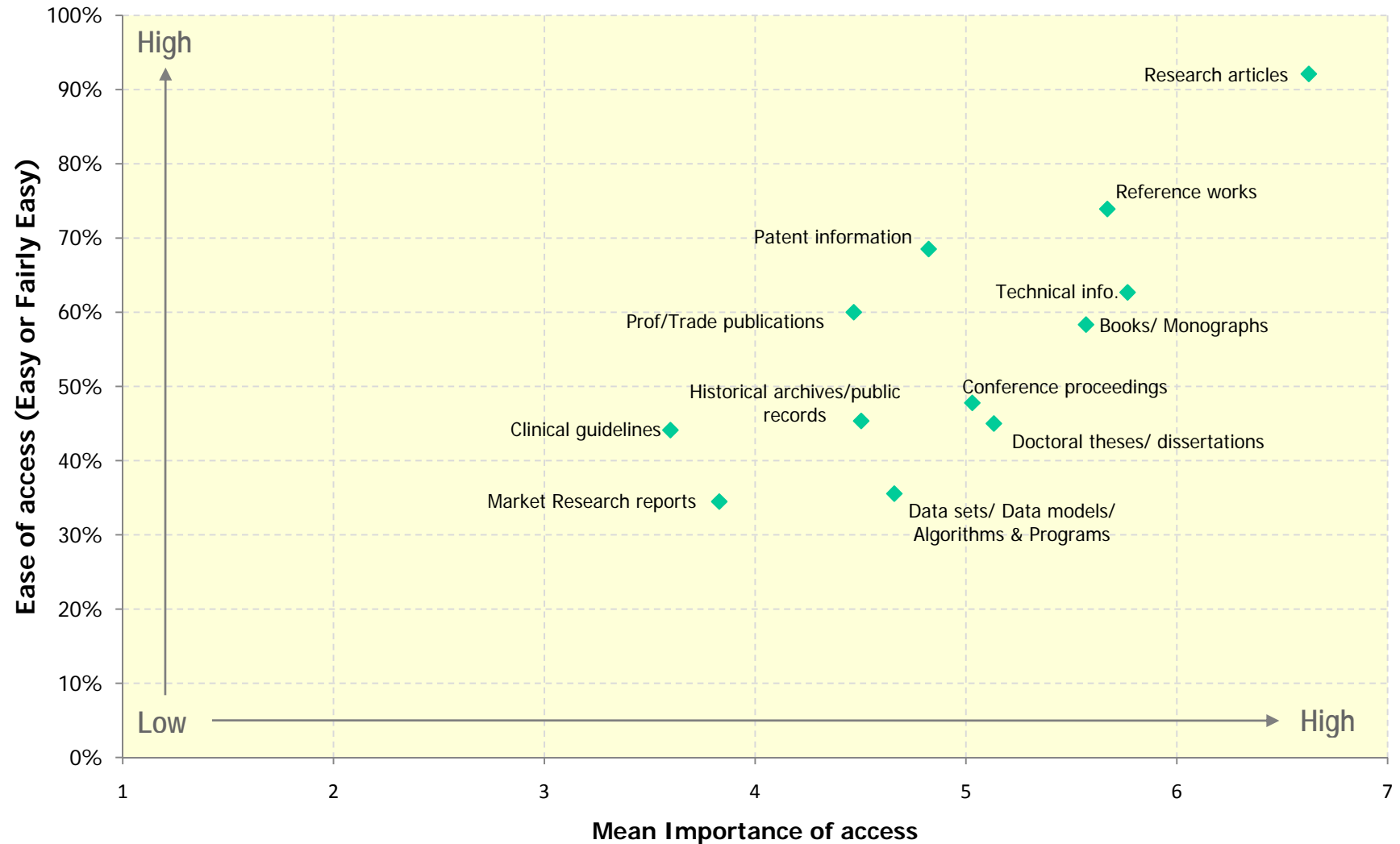
# Access vs. Importance

# Materials Science (166 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

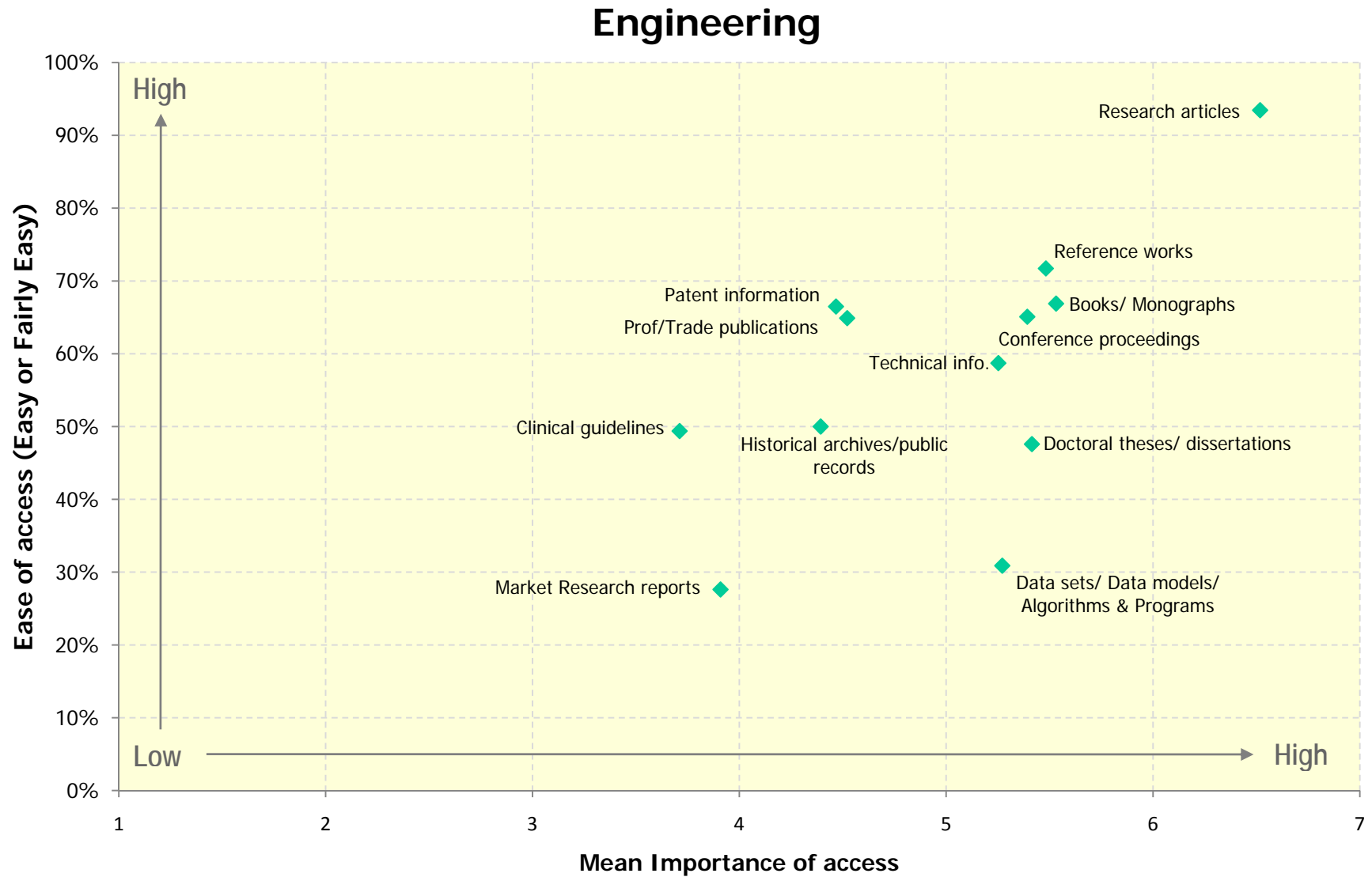
## Materials Science



# Access vs. Importance

# Engineering (380 respondents)

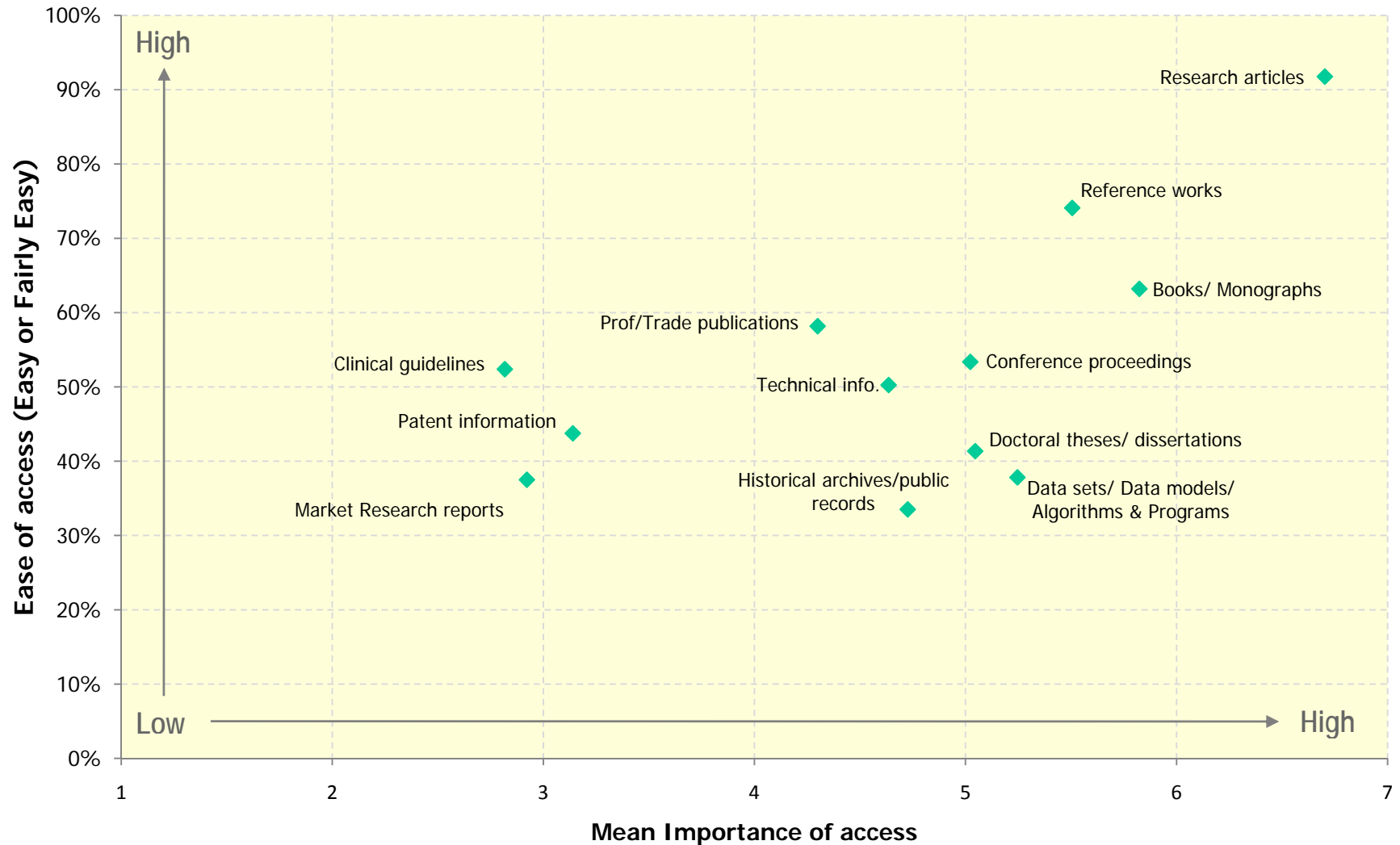
Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)



# Access vs. Importance Earth & Env Sciences (347 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)  
Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Earth & Environmental Sciences



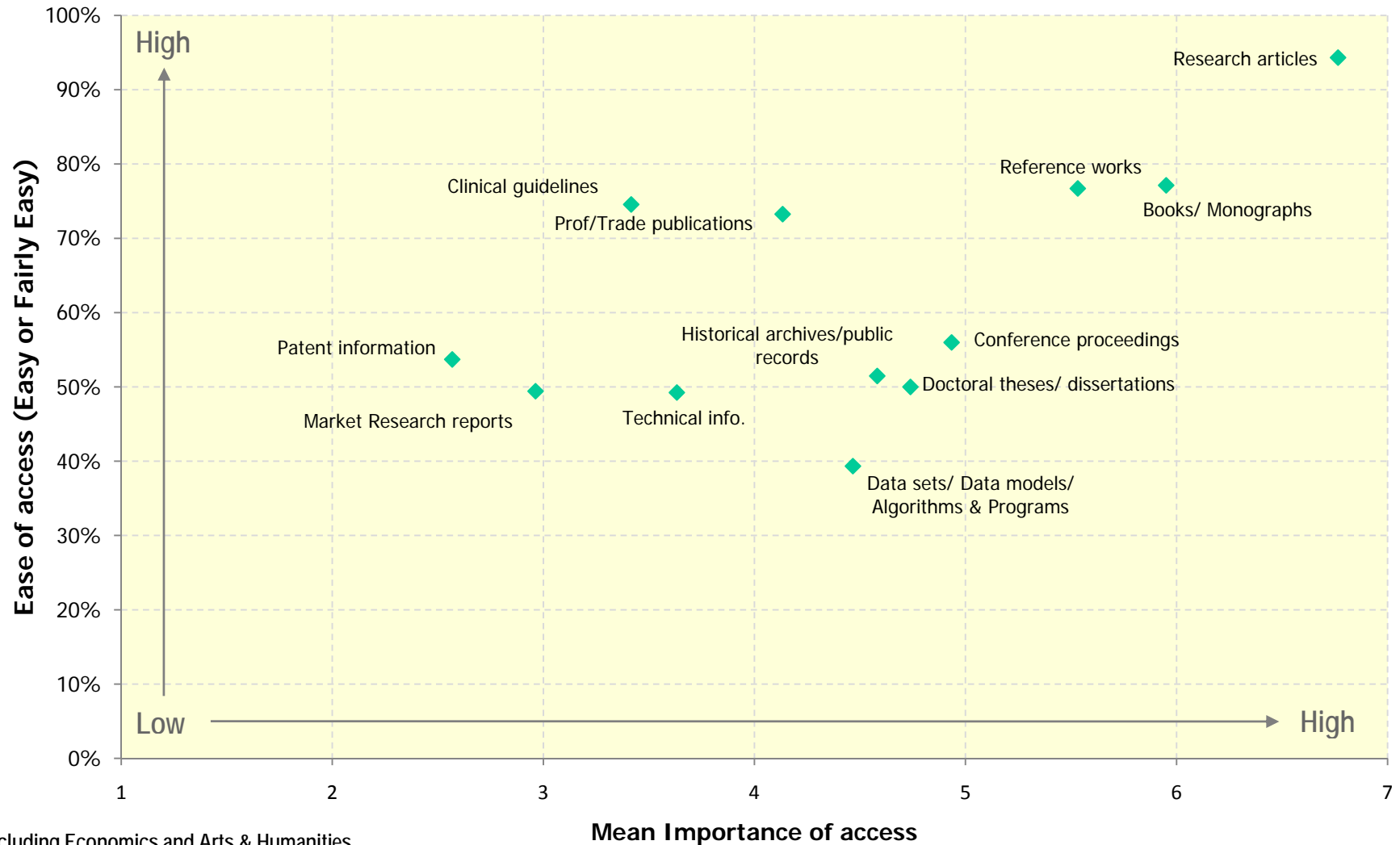
# Access vs. Importance

# Social Sciences\* (433 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Social Sciences



\* Including Economics and Arts & Humanities

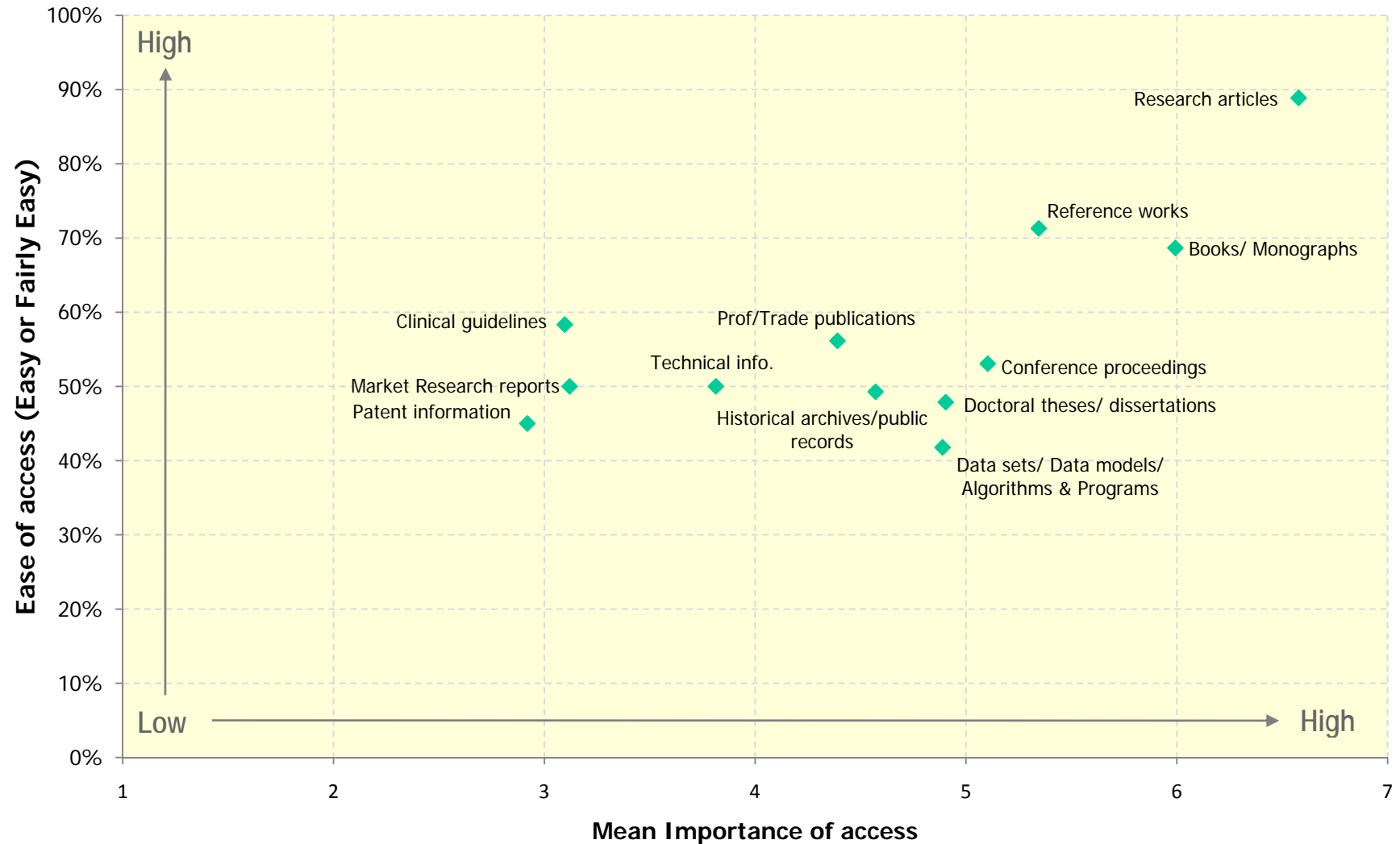
# Access vs. Importance

# Mathematics (148 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Maths



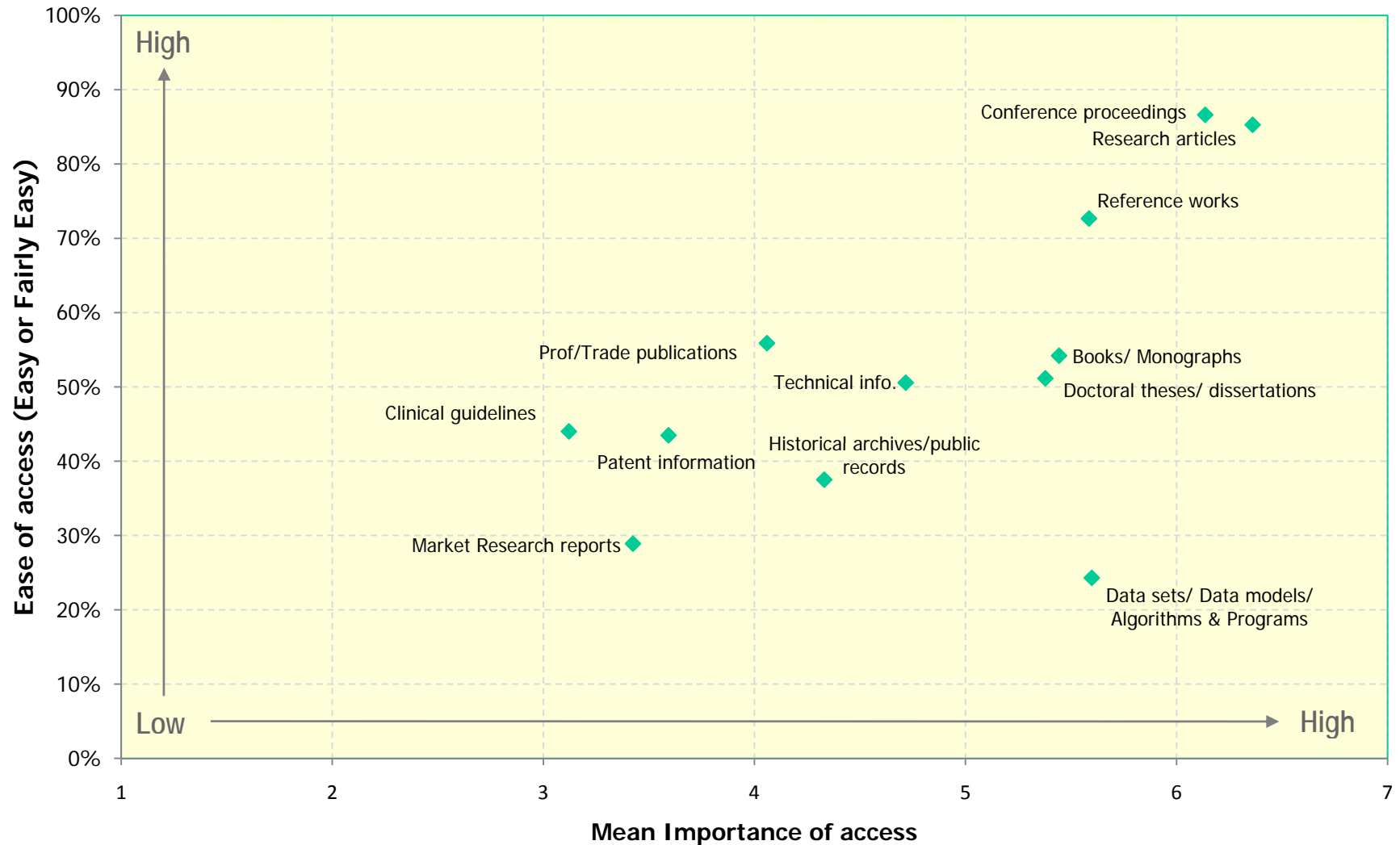
# Access vs. Importance

# Computer Science (169 respondents)

Q. When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below? Scale (1=Not at all, 7=Very)

Q. And of the various types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them? Scale (Very difficult, Fairly difficult, Fairly easy, Very easy)

## Computer Sciences

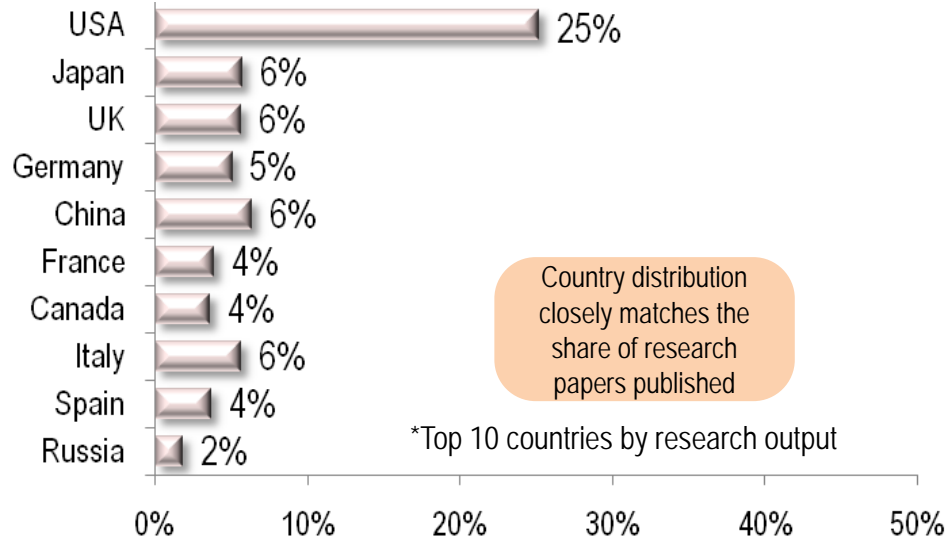


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# Respondent Demographics

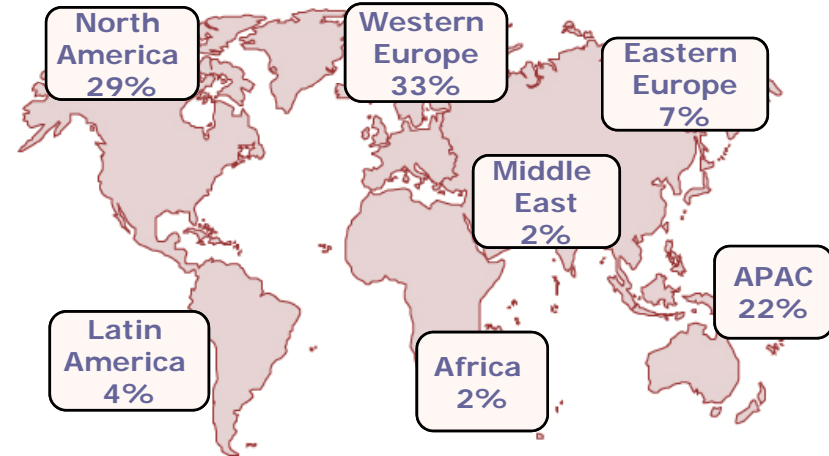
# Demographics within base (3824 respondents)

Proportion of 'top 10' countries\* within base

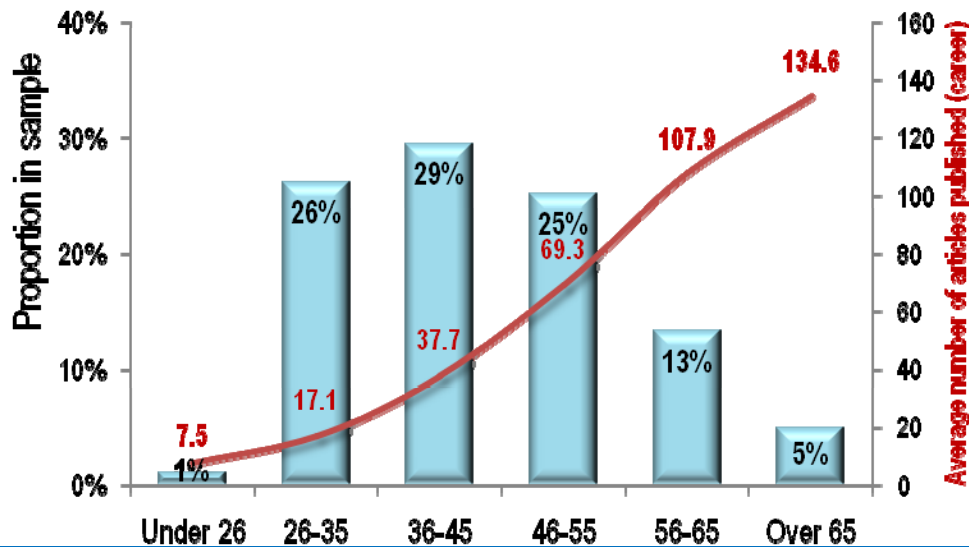


Country distribution closely matches the share of research papers published

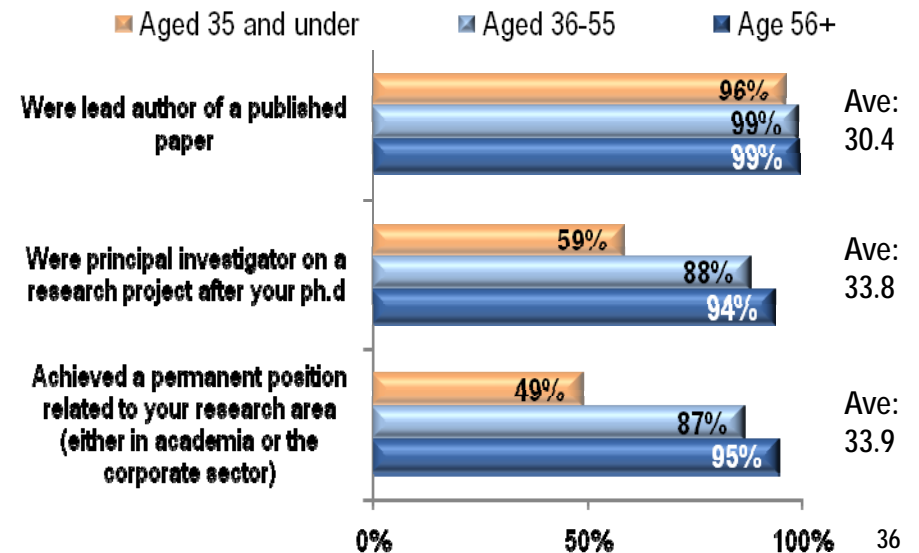
Regions within base



Age & Number of articles published

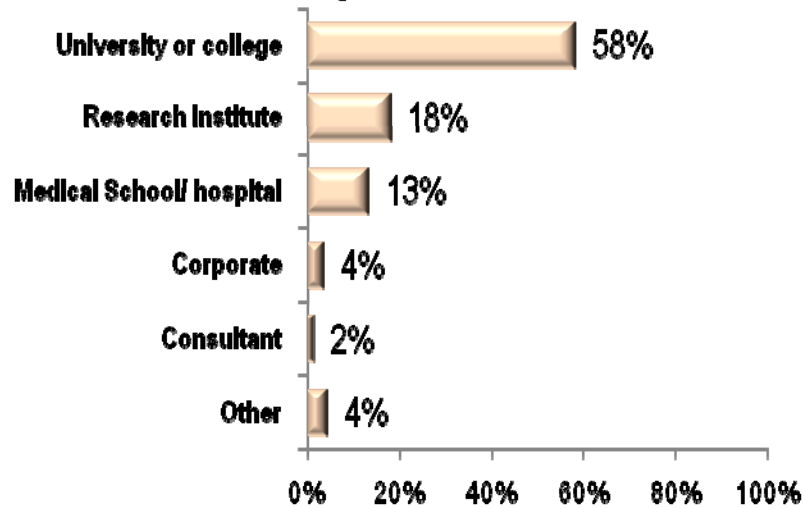


Proportion reaching each stage

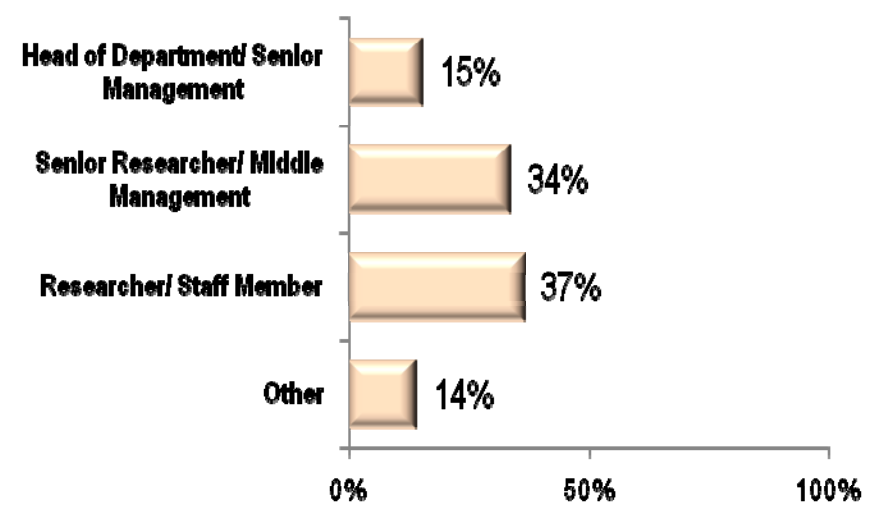


# Job role, position, organisation and gender

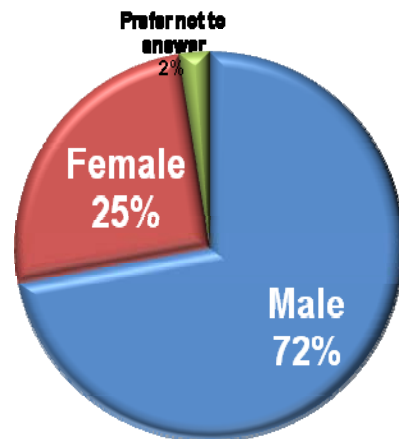
## Organisation



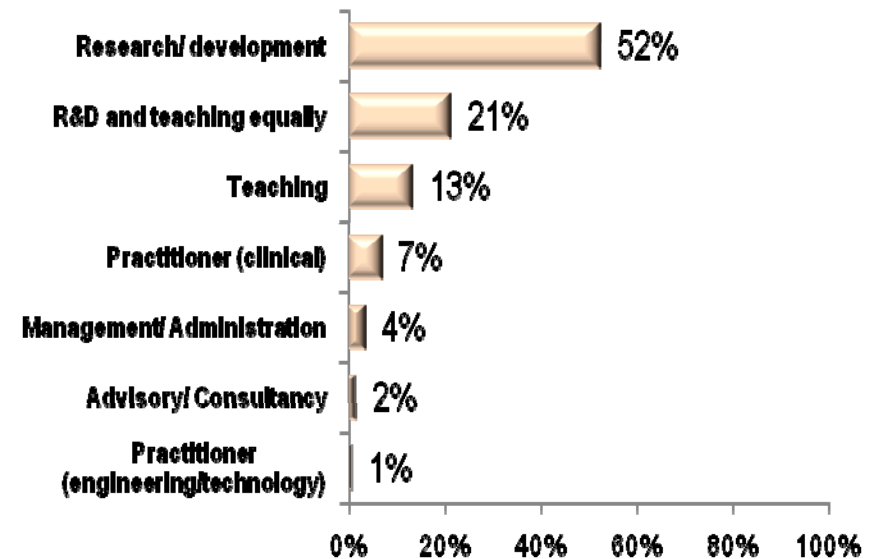
## Position



## Gender



## Role



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# Appendix

## Survey Questions

# Importance and Access questions

## Research and Scholarly Communication

When it comes to information, how important is it that you have access to the types of information listed below?

	Extremely important 7	6	5	4	3	2	Not at all important 1	Don't Know/Not Applicable
Clinical guidelines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reference works	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doctoral theses/ dissertations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical archives/public records	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data sets/ Data models/ Algorithms & programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Market Research reports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional/Trade publications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Books/ Monographs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technical information (e.g. characteristics of materials)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patent information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conference proceedings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research articles in journals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

List of answer options on second page restricted to only those rated as important (5, 6 or 7)

## Research and Scholarly Communication

And of the various information types which you consider important, how would you describe your level of access to them?

	Very easy to access	Fairly easy to access	Fairly difficult to access	Very difficult to access
Clinical guidelines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reference works	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doctoral theses/ dissertations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical archives/public records	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data set/ Data models/ Technical Info/ Algorithms and programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Market Research reports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional/Trade publications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Books/ Monographs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technical information (e.g. characteristics of materials)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patent information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conference proceedings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research articles in journals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Demographic questions

## Subject

[Alphabetic answerlist]

What subject discipline do you specialize in?

- Physics (1)
- Astronomy (2)
- Chemistry (3)
- Life Sciences (4)
- Medicine & Allied Health (5)
- Materials Science (6)
- Engineering (7)
- Earth & Environmental Sciences (8)
- Social Sciences (9)
- Arts & Humanities (10)
- Economics (11)
- Maths (12)
- Computer Science (13)
- Other (please specify) (98)\_\_\_\_\_

## Medicine / allied health (sub-disciplines for those selecting Medicine & Allied Health above)

[Alphabetic answerlist]

Which one of the following fields of medicine / allied health are you mainly involved in?

- Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (1)
- Anesthesiology & Pain Management (2)
- Cardiology (3)
- Critical Care (4)
- Dentistry (5)
- Dermatology (6)
- Emergency Medicine (7)
- Endocrinology & Metabolism (8)
- General / Family Medicine (9)
- Gastroenterology (10)
- Geriatric Medicine (11)
- Hematology (12)
- Imaging technology (13)
- Infectious Disease (14)
- Internal Medicine (15)
- Laser Vision Surgery (16)
- Medical Genetics (17)
- Nephrology (18)
- Neurology (19)
- Neurosurgery (20)
- Obstetrics & Gynecology (21)
- Occupational & Environmental Medicine (22)
- Oncology (23)
- Ophthalmology (24)
- Orthopedic Surgery (25)
- Otorhinolaryngology (26)
- Osteopathy (27)
- Pathology (28)
- Pediatrics (29)
- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (30)
- Physical Therapy (31)
- Plastic Surgery (32)
- Preventive Medicine (33)
- Proctology (34)
- Psychiatry (35)
- Pulmonary Medicine (36)
- Radiology (including Radiology Technicians) (37)
- Rheumatology (38)
- Sports Medicine (39)
- Surgery, General (40)
- Thoracic Surgery (41)
- Urology (42)
- Veterinary Medicine (43)
- Other Specialties (98) [*Keep position*]

# Demographic questions

## **Country**

Full drop down list of 237 countries provided to choose from

## **Gender**

Which gender are you?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Prefer not to say (99)

## **Age**

Please indicate your age group:

- under 26 (1)
- 26-35 (2)
- 36-45 (3)
- 46-55 (4)
- 56-65 (5)
- over 65 (6)

## **No of articles published**

Approximately how many articles have you published so far in your career?

- 1 (1)
- 2-5 (2)
- 6-25 (3)
- 26-50 (4)
- 51-75 (5)
- 76-100 (6)
- 101-200 (7)
- Over 200 (8)

## **Organisation**

[Alphabetic answerlist]

What kind of organization do you work for?

- University or college (1)
- Research Institute (2)
- Medical School/ hospital (3)
- Corporate (4)
- Consultant (5)
- Other (PLEASE SPECIFY) (98)\_\_\_\_\_ [Keep position  
♦ Other]

## **Position**

What is your position within your organisation?

- Head of Department/ Senior Management (1)
- Senior Researcher/ Middle Management (2)
- Researcher/ Staff Member (3)
- Other (please specify) (98)\_\_\_\_\_ [Keep position ♦  
Other]

## **Role**

What is your MAIN role within your organisation?

- Research and/or development (1)
- Teaching (2)
- R&D and teaching equally (3)
- Management/Administration (4)
- Practitioner (clinical) (5)
- Practitioner (engineering/technology) (6)
- Advisory/Consultancy (7)