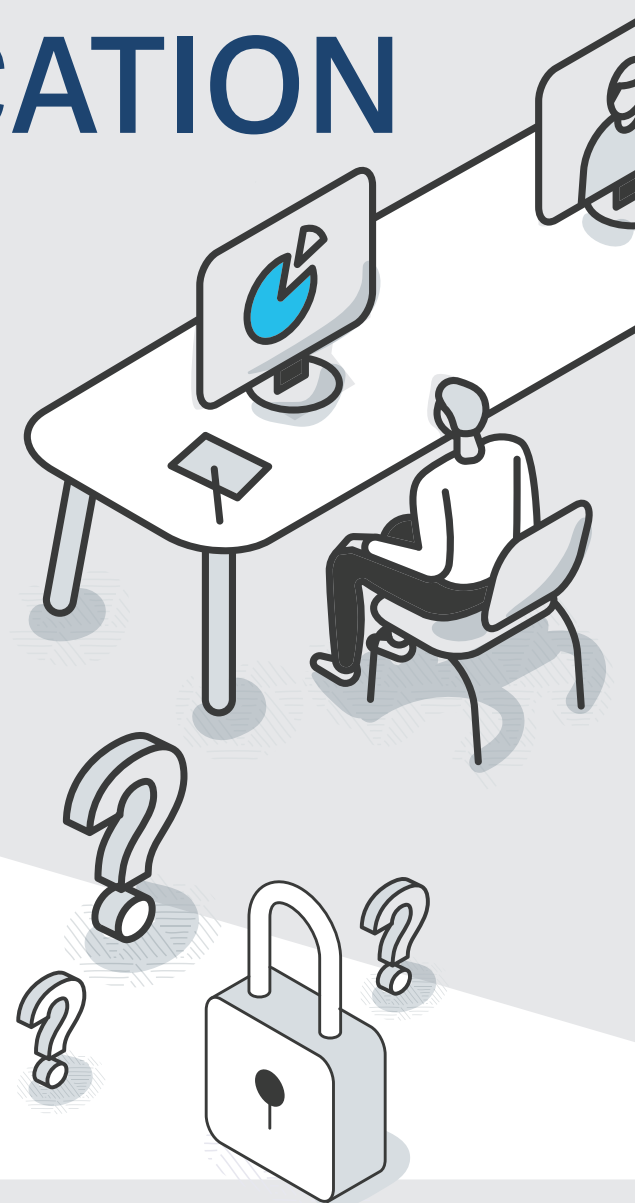
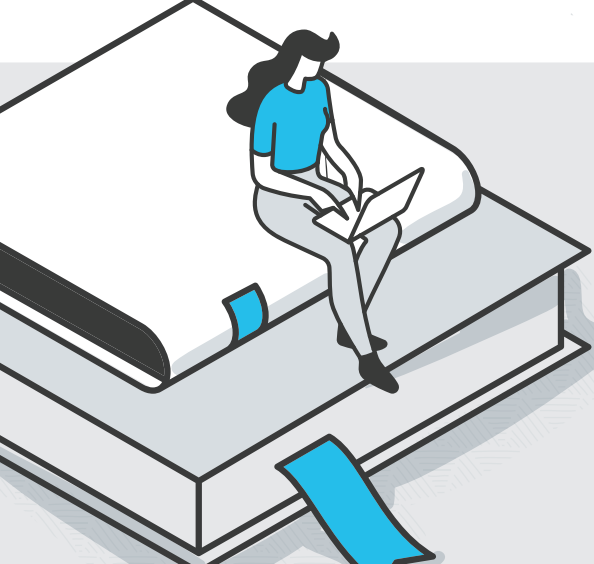


# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

New UB survey explores how the pandemic shifted research priorities for many institutions, and highlights the importance of data security and funding



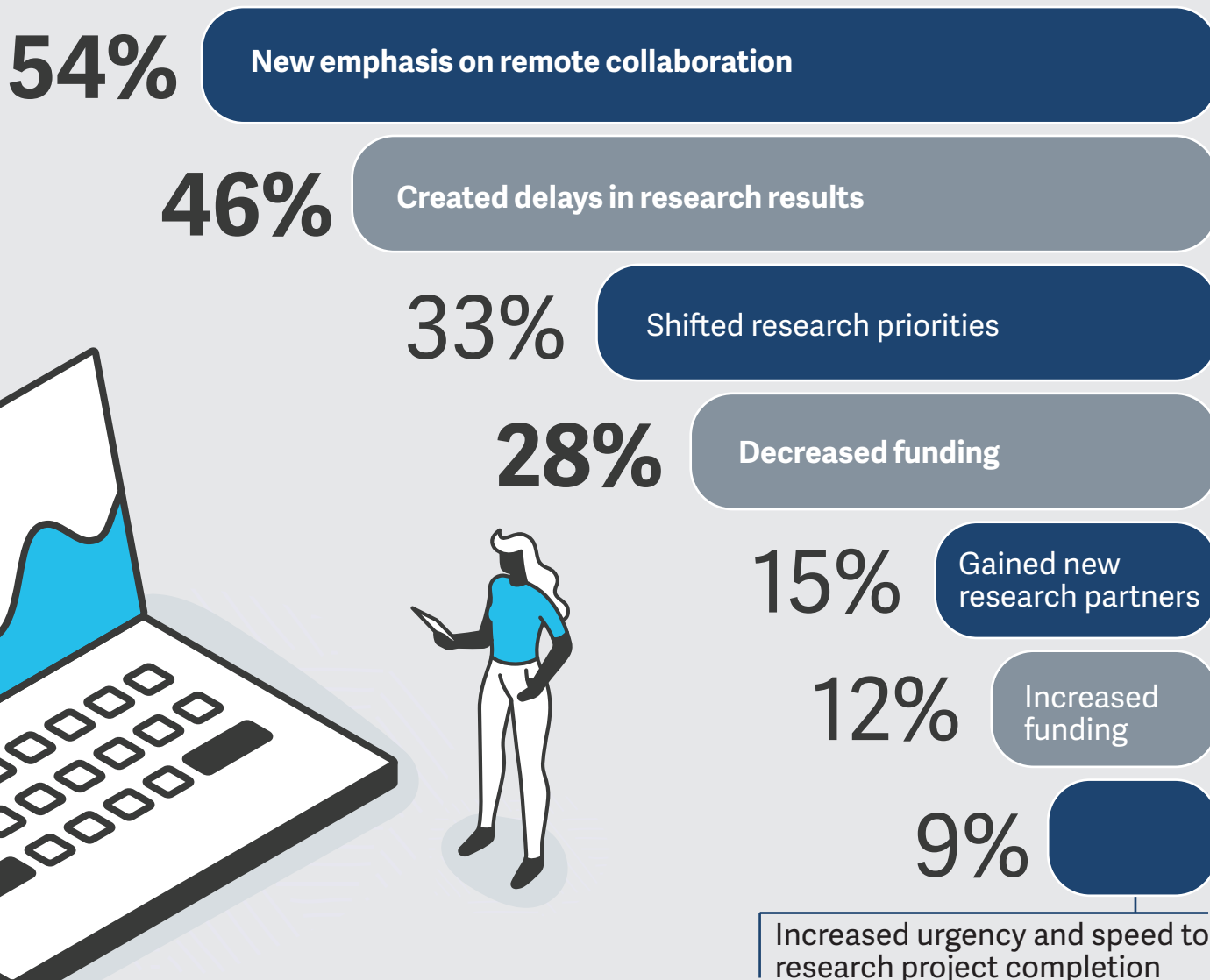
**What impact did the COVID-19 pandemic have on research efforts at colleges and universities?** To find out, *University Business* developed and conducted a survey of its subscribers in partnership with Cisco in February 2021. Some 533 higher ed leaders responded from a variety of sizes and types of institutions around the country.



All respondents were asked to describe how the pandemic has changed research at their institutions overall. **The leading answers were "New emphasis on remote collaboration," selected by 54%, while nearly half of respondents (46%) said that the pandemic had "Created delays in research results."** Another 33% said the pandemic had "Shifted research priorities" at their institution and 28% said it had decreased research funding.

Just 15% said that they had "Gained new research partners," 12% said that it had increased research funding and 9% selected "Increased urgency and speed to research project completion."

## How has COVID-19 changed research at your institution?



## ACCESSING RESEARCH DATA NETWORKS

Respondents were asked to describe the impact of the pandemic on their ability to access their research data network. **By far, the top answer was "Research continued, primarily remotely," selected by 74% of respondents.** Another 26% said "Research was deemed essential and continued as normal."

However, about 35% of respondents indicated that there were challenges in this area. 19% selected the answer "There were limitations or challenges accessing research data networks, because of security risks" while 18% said "Researchers and students couldn't continue research projects, due to network access or bandwidth challenges."

Just 5% of respondents said that they received additional funding to access or improve access to their research data network.



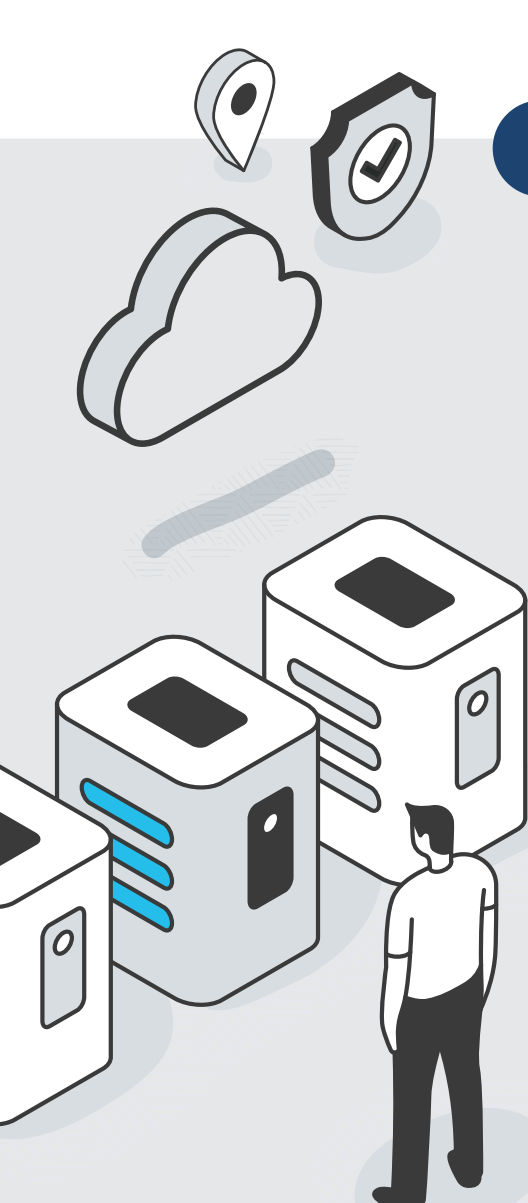
While **82%** of respondents said that data security was a top priority, **65%** said that they were only "somewhat confident" in the security of their data networks.

## DATA SECURITY A TOP PRIORITY

Respondents were also presented with a list of research data network features and asked to choose which were most important. **The top answer by far was "Security," selected by 82%.** This was followed by "Affordability" at 70%, "Simplicity/Ease of use" (62%), "Fast processing time" (47%) and "Scalability and flexibility" (37%). Just 9% of respondents selected "Automation."

As a follow up, the next question asked respondents how confident they were that their research data network and communications were fully secure. A significant majority (65%) said that they were only "Somewhat confident" in their network's data security. Another 11% had either "Very little" confidence or said they had no confidence. 24% said they were "Very confident" in their network's security.

Finally, respondents were asked what they foresee being the biggest challenges to research in the future. **By far, the top answer was "Funding," selected by 88%.** This was followed by "Access to qualified students, staff and/or researchers" (48%), "Access to necessary technologies" (31%), "Data security between partner institutions" (31%), "Data security within institutions" (28%) and "Access to research data networks" (16%).



## When it comes to using an internet network to share research data and collaborate with partner institutions, which features are most important?



"As the survey found, the pandemic heightened the attention of the research community and illustrated the need for an expanded and more democratized approach to research across universities," says Michael Shepherd, Business Development Manager with Cisco. "Central to this expansion of research is the need for secure and frictionless access to cloud computing, while data security is central to attracting and retaining new research funding. Cisco provides the technology that can help higher education researchers to connect, share data and collaborate seamlessly and securely."



To learn more, go to [www.cisco.com/go/fuelresearch](http://www.cisco.com/go/fuelresearch)

