

Approved Meeting Notes - LTER Executive Board

November 7, 2017

Connection information:

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://ucsb.zoom.us/j/706470284>

Or iPhone one-tap (US Toll): +14086380968,,706470284# or +16465588656,,706470284#

Or Telephone:

Dial: +1 408 638 0968 (US Toll) or +1 646 558 8656 (US Toll)

Meeting ID: 706 470 284

International numbers available:

<https://ucsb.zoom.us/join?m=mFWoQM2i5hXg4HU0yTkzOa61gwDvyawC>

Attending:

| Name | Present | Absent |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Peter Groffman (chair) | x | |
| David Foster (HFR) | | x |
| Michael Gooseff (MCM) | | x |
| Sally Holbrook (MCR) | | x |
| Steve Pennings-GCE | x | |
| Dan Reed (SBC) | x | |
| Michelle Mack/Roger Ruess (BNZ) | x | |
| Eric Seabloom/Sarah Hobbie (CDR) | x | |
| Katie Suding (NWT) | x | |
| Jess Zimmerman (LUQ) | x | |
| Kari O'Connell (EOC-rep) | x | |
| Wade Sheldon (IMC-rep) | x | |
| Frank Davis (NCO) | x | |
| Marty Downs (NCO) | x | |
| Corinna Gries (EDI) | x | |

September/October minutes approved.

Current items

Discussion/Approval of LTER IMS Guidelines (Wade Sheldon, 10 minutes)

- o [Documents for review, old version, attached](#)
- o [Documents for review, new version, attached](#)

Given recent changes in the Network structure and the need to provide reviewers with consistent information, NSF Program Officer Peter McCartney suggested that the information managers update the Information Management System (IMS) guidelines. The solicitation for site renewals (due in March) includes reference to the guidelines, so posting an approved update is important and timely.

The policy has three parts:

1. An updated data access policy that was approved at the Science Council meeting in May;
2. new IMS guidelines presented today; and
3. website guidelines are under revision.

The guidelines have been used as review criteria for LTER IMS in the past. This revision rescopes them as community guidelines.

The new guidelines reflect recent changes in the repository landscape, progress in metadata standards, and clarification of NSF policy that repositories other than LTER are acceptable.

Key changes:

- Recommendations for how reviews are conducted have been removed.
- The expectation that IMS personnel attend annual meeting has been softened, given recent changes in funding.
- The explicit requirement to maintain a site data catalog has been removed.

Discussion:

NSF is encouraging sites to provide metrics of data use, but the guidelines don't allow a site to collect information on who is using their data.

- Yes, that's a known issue. Web logs can be used to collect information on number of downloads -- just not who is downloading. Dataset citations should improve the situation over time.

Use of the word offline is confusing. Do we mean that the resource is analog or just not publicly served?

- That section is referring to items that should be available to the public but where there are some logistical challenges in presenting them. The Guidelines working group will clarify the language.

New IMS guidelines are approved, with clarification on "offline resources."

International Network-of-Networks White paper, in response to DCL (Marty Downs, 10 min)

Bill McDowell and Marty Downs are working on a response to a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) seeking information on the potential for international networks to accelerate research in key areas. <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2017/nsf17131/nsf17131.jsp>

The DCL is **not** a call for research proposals. Rather, it is an information-gathering effort to inform OISE of the potential need for a future program or program emphasis. No funding is associated with this call for white papers. The DCL and the webinar emphasize the importance of these international collaborations to accelerating and leveraging US research.

The DCL asks for responses in the form of answers to 3 questions:

- **What current or emerging research areas would benefit from increased cooperation between networks of researchers in the U.S. and networks in one or more countries outside the U.S.? (750 words)**
- **What is the value added of international network-to-network collaboration for the U.S. research community in the research area(s)?(750 words)**
- **What other relevant aspects should NSF consider to strengthen international research networks in the research area(s)?750 (words)**

Bill and Marty have developed a draft that emphasizes the importance of international sites for widening the inference space, developing global models, and comparison to sites where the US Network may only have one or two sites of that type. It emphasizes the importance of an international network in:

- identifying potential collaborators;
- locating comparable sites and sites that extend the inference space; and
- building the culture and capacity to support active collaboration.

Discussion

This is an important effort. One question is if the white paper should be more ILTER focused, emphasizing the role of ILTER in developing it and its status as a powerful platform for global scale research, including, for example: the International Nitrogen Initiative and boreal research. ILTER should be the signature effort in global-scale environmental science. So there is a question of if we should focus on ILTER or on broader issues?

We can do both. Connect the ILTER science to some of the international efforts. Report the science, but also ILTER's role in deploying it.

It is important to make the argument that the reason we work in other countries is to expand our inference space. If we are making that argument, then any site, regardless of its network, is valuable. At the same time, internationally, it's probably true that an ILTER site is also a particularly useful connection (data, etc.).

Deadline is November 30. Please contribute comments and examples by November 13. Marty will incorporate and Peter Groffman, Frank Davis, Bill McDowell, Tiffany Troxler and Marty Downs will finalize. The Network Communications Office will submit.

All Scientists' Meeting update (Marty Downs, 10 minutes)

The Program Committee is proposing a theme: *Next Generation Synthesis: Successes and Strategies* with six plenary speakers -- three on successful synthesis efforts; three on analytical and organizational strategies.

Discussion:

Concept is fine. Committee has suggestions for alternative speakers and will follow up directly with Marty.

Synthesis means different things to different people. It can run the whole range from throwing a whole bunch of data sets together and extracting something interesting out of them to a much more conceptual approach, such as Matt Kirwan's.

As LTER advocates for funding, we do well to reach out to other programs. Perhaps we could invite a panel of representatives from other synthesis centers. Possibilities include Louis Gross, Margaret Palmer, Stephanie Hampton, John Parker.

With the topic of Next Generation Synthesis, we may want to focus on how evolution, genomics, phylogenetics might fit into LTER moving forward, look for intersections with the Dimensions of Biodiversity Program.

LTER-NEON update (Peter Groffman - 10 minutes)

Peter Groffman provided an update on the LTER-NEON relationship. Following on the April 2017 workshop, there is interest in focusing on synergies in conceptual and quantitative modeling. A February NEON/CZO/LTER workshop will focus on quantitative modeling and there will be monthly charrettes leading up to the workshop.

<http://www.neonscience.org/opportunities/events/integration-terrestrial-observational-networks-opportunity-improvement-earth>

As we move toward a new era of Networked science, NSF seems to be interested in articulating how are the networks the same and different, what the strengths are of the different approaches and how they complement each other.

EB Chair nominating committee (Marty Downs - 5 min)

- The NCO has asked the 2014 Nominating Committee (Deb Peters, Alan Knapp, Emma Rosi-Marshall, Mark Ohman) if they would be willing to serve again and if not, requested suggestions for replacements.
- Mark Ohman is willing to serve. Additional suggestions so far include: Niall Hanan (replacement for Deb Peters), Katie Suding, Mike Gooseff, Sarah Hobbie (possible replacements for Emma, since she is working on a renewal). No response from Alan Knapp.
- Including senior people is likely to be helpful as they can be quite persuasive. Will consider Diana Wall and Monica Turner.
- Marty will pursue alternatives.

Environmental Data Initiative update

- Just completed the EDI all-hands meeting in Madison, including a virtual meeting with the new Scientific Advisory Board (Peter Arzberger, Nathan Booth, Aaron Ellison, Ian Foster, Rebecca Koskela, Mary Martin)
- R-code and data sets are rolling in.
- EDI will have a significant presence at the Fall AGU Meeting, including 2 organized sessions: 1 panel discussion and 1 session for investigators wondering “where do I put my data?”
- One individual will be working with data help desk at AGU
- Also planning a big training session on [using R to generate EML](#) at Albuquerque. 17 participants are registered.
- Maintaining a calendar of online training sessions with 15-20 people logging in. Topics include:
 - Transform and visualize data in R
 - Using Checksums to Speed Up Data Package Uploads
 - DEIMS, the Drupal Ecological Information Management System
- EDI has been discussing the possibility of a supplement proposal to bring some participants to the All Scientists’ Meeting next year. Where are the most powerful opportunities that align with EDI’s mission? Suggestions welcome.
- Also developing workshop ideas for ASM. Data and synthesis; data for synthesis; what is EDI doing to help?
- EDI is also working with a couple of Synthesis Working Groups to develop a common model for “type 1” data -- harmonized, but without losing too much information..

Discussion

Is EDI having success at establishing linkages with other groups? They are reaching out and have attended quite a few meetings, but data flow remains slow. The situation is similar to a decade ago with LTER. Data publishing is not yet the standard for many non-LTER projects.

EDI is working closely with the Synthesis Working Group led by Eric Sokol (who is now at NEON) to develop standard data sets describing community composition.

Information Managers update:

In addition to the information Management System guidelines and Website Guidelines described above, the Committee is circulating a Request for Comments (RFC) on making the LTER search keyword vocabulary publicly accessible. They have received requests from several communities, including Wiley, to use the vocabulary. Many people contributed to it, so the committee thought it was appropriate to create an opportunity for comment, but they haven’t yet received any objections.

Education and Outreach Committee (EOC) update:

- The Committee has been incorporating outside speakers into their meeting schedule with a focus on organizations that may offer partnership opportunities. Recent invited speakers include Wendy Gram, the Concord Consortium, WildNote, and the Science Education Resource Center. the goal is to host an external speaker quarterly and to focus on committee projects and site updates in the remaining meetings.
- The committee has been welcoming new members from the new LTER sites.

- The committee's work has resulted in two recent proposals proposals. One is due next week and focuses on Data Jam and building data literacy for students.

Saving for next month:

- Communicating Title IX policies at field sites (tentative, depending on NSF recommendations)
- Synthesis Working group webinars
- Science Council 2018 (5 minutes)
 - Date: May 15-18 at NTL
 - Theme - Land Cover/Land Use Change
 - Recruiting suggestions for program committee
 - Heads-up for more complete discussion next month. We discussed many possible changes to the structure of this meeting at this year's science council. (bringing data , setting up working groups before the meeting, defining who the "second" should be) Are there any that we want to try and implement?