

LTER Executive Board Meeting Notes

June 13, 2019

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Additional ways of connecting:

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/j/706470284>

The LTER Executive Board meets monthly. Agendas and minutes for current members are available on the [team google drive](#).

See the [Executive Board Committee page](#) for current membership and approved minutes of past meetings.

Attending:

Name	Present	Absent	Minutes approved
Diane McKnight (chair)	x		
Dan Bahauddin (IMC-rep)	x		DB
Annette Brickley(EOC-rep)	x		
Frank Davis (LNO)	x		
Marty Downs (LNO)	x		
Ken Dunton (BLE)	x		
Corinna Gries (EDI)	x		
Nick Haddad (KBS)	x		NH
Jesse Nippert (KNZ)	x		
Oscar Schofield (PAL)	x		
Heidi Sosik (NES)	x		HS
Emily Stanley (NTL)		x	
Katie Suding (NWT)	x		
Jonathan Thompson (HFR)	x		
Jess Zimmerman (LUQ)	x		

Please note any concerns with minutes here or as a comment in the appropriate section:

*Agenda and Notes**

*Agenda items are in plain text. Discussion notes are in italic.

Update: Decadal review - update Executive Board on the process and progress.

- *Following the Science Council Meeting, the decadal review committee completed a detailed plan for each of the 6 topical narratives, drawing on the briefs and discussions. The team distributed examples across sites and biomes.*

- Will also ensure that there is an opportunity in the process for PIs to review and contribute additional examples.
- Deadline for report to go to NSF: October 1.

Update: Timeline for the synthesis proposal call from the LTER Network Office.

- **July Executive Board Meeting.** Briefly review approach and results of current synthesis groups and solicit input from EB on the RFP. For more detailed information review videos produced by current synthesis groups for the All Scientists' Meeting: <https://youtu.be/kX97PLvzI5A>. (each video only 5-8 minutes.)
- **August:** Complete and distribute call for synthesis proposals.
- **October:** Planned RFP deadline.

Initial Discussion: What is the LTER Network's relationship with long term ecological research in general (little-l-ter)? We have established that the official LTER Network is for NSF-funded sites (though most resources are already publicly available, as is the All Scientists Meeting). At the same time, the LTER network and the ecological community generally would benefit from more interaction between official LTER sites/scientists and others doing long term research, including former LTER sites, prospective LTER sites (or sites funded through other mechanisms), LTARs, field stations and marine labs, CZO's, NEON, ILTERs, etc.

How might we facilitate such interaction? A few ideas have sprung up following discussions at the Science Council meeting and there's room for a great deal more creativity here:

[Gordon Research Conferences](#) are small, highly interactive conferences on cutting edge topics, intended to bring communities of researchers together. They are deliberately structured to allow lots of discussion across multiple career stages.

[ESA's long term studies section](#) has not been particularly active, although there are a few friends of LTER currently among the officers. Could LTER-associated members of ESA help jump-start some activities there?

Other ideas?

Discussion Notes:

- One finding of the McKnight report was that graduate students loved the All Scientists Meeting, but it was a one-time event for most of them. There was an expressed need for other opportunities to connect.
- The concept is also relevant in the context of sites that are no longer supported by NSF. Associate sites aren't a practical solution because of 1) need for vetting and 2) limited LNO resources.
- What are other options? At Gordon Conferences, meetings take place every other year, often at New England boarding schools or other pleasant environments -- with lots of interaction built in. The chair and co-chair of the next conference are elected at the previous meeting and they take responsibility to develop resources to reduce costs. This helps build in continuity. Organizers also get lots of support from the Gordon Conference organization.
- A day-long pre-ESA workshop would be another option.
- KBS and Jornada are both LTAR and LTER sites. Archbold is also LTAR. The approaches are very different between the LTER and LTAR. At LTAR, the network comes first. For example,

there's a common experiment across the Network. For LTER, LTAR is akin to a broader impacts forum. There's lots for us to learn from each other, but the context is very different.

- *Individuals applauded the idea of Gordon Conferences and the opportunity for connection that they would afford. Others reminded the group to include LTREB researchers, as well as Macrosystems, CZO and others.*

Continuing Discussion: Science Council meetings - structure and topics going forward.

- Location aside, what about this year's meeting structure worked and what didn't?
- Approach: How can we get maximum scientific return on the investment required to get 60 PI's in one place at the same time? How can we take best advantage of the experience in the room to generate good, new science?
- Topics: We've done the 5 core areas and the decadal review. How will we decide on topics for the coming year(s)? Do we need a pattern or will we just decide each year?

Discussion Notes:

- *Lightning talks are a great way to keep up on other sites in a compact format. Having a focus for the talks and grouping by themes were both positively reviewed.*
- *There has been previous interest in sustaining a relationship to the synthesis working groups by inviting synthesis groups to set the theme and propose a way to use the science council meeting.*
- *Frank Davis noted that the Network Office has tried to use the science council meeting and the All Scientists' Meetings as places to generate ideas for synthesis groups rather than to accomplish synthesis, but we are open to other formulations.*
- *One member noted that they wished they had taken more time to interact with the more junior participants. The time on the bus turned out to be incredibly useful -- allowing for extended conversations with just a few individuals.*
- *Another member has heard from several younger faculty that they had been site reps at previous science council meetings and it was very important to their relationship with the Network and their career path.*
- *Comments overheard: Disappointed that we didn't hear from the synthesis groups. Spome individuals felt less involved in the discussion because they participated in larger breakout groups.*

Do we need a pattern for choosing topics? Some options discussed:

- *Themes from the decadal report. They are a different type of cross-cutting theme.*
- *Possibly focusing on focusing on NSF's Big Ideas? Convergence. Navigating the New Arctic. Harnessing the data revolution. Rules of Life.*
- *INCLUDES initiative. Diversity committee could highlight inclusion activities.*

Initial discussion: New PI support. Several individuals, but especially new PIs, expressed the value of the PI meeting for them. What kinds of activities would be most valuable to share information and experience among PIs? Some options:

- listservs (lpi@lternet.edu or something more specific to new PIs?)
- videoconference? (how often, how big?)
- other options?

Discussion Notes:

We need to continue having a PI discussion at every Science Council meeting. Discussion with other established LTER programs helps build competence and should continue. Leadership can help guide the discussion with targeted areas of interest.

Would a video conference be useful? Every few months would be useful. A subcommittee could identify topics and provide the structure and the schedule for it.

Action Item - *form a small subcommittee of the Executive Board to follow up and make a proposal for next month.*

Topics for the next Executive Board call?

From Corinna: The Environmental Data Initiative just heard that they are recommended for funding. Can we discuss deprecating the LTER-branded data portal?