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Wed, 09/26/2012 - 8:44am — [mobrien](#) ^[1]

Monday 10am MDT

Present:

Chamblee, Boose, Downing, O'Brien Skibbe, Tarrant, Vanderbilt

Topics:

0. EB report (Emery)
1. IMExec organization and business (our roles, recurring tasks, etc)
2. review IMExec
 - 2.1 solicit short proposals for 2013 host of IMC meeting
 - 2.2 Respond to invitation to visit NSF
 - 2.3 Meeting survey
 - 2.4
3. planning activities for the next few months, particularly with regard to NIS workshop proposals and all-IMC VTCs
 - 3.1 Should October VTC be used for workshop proposal discussion (list possibilities here: _____)
 - 3.2 November VTC requested by Deanna Pennington (Vanderbilt)

Notes:

EB report (Emery)

The Exec Board met for a half-day at the ASM. There were 4 main topics of discussion.

1. Bio advisory committee: this included Kay Gross (member). The meeting was generally favorable. However, there is still some concern that LTER is losing its focus. LTER could take this as an opportunity to define its role more concisely.

2. LNO budget: the budget is very complicated due to being supplemented by ARRA funds. It is organized into 2 parts core funding plus ARRA funding. The timeline for the spend down of ARRA funds has been reduced to 4 years, so all spending must be completed by Sept 1 2013. The revised budget has been submitted to spend out the funds this year. LNO may only have a skeleton budget for their years 5 and 6. There is a small possibility of a waiver to extend the ARRA funds deadline. There is also the possibility of across-the-board cuts if congress doesn't agree a budget by YE 2012.

The EB considered some strategies for dealing with this: (1) to fund post doc support for working groups; (2) working groups to use a front-loaded 2 year budget; or (3) we could fund graduate students associated with working groups.

Next ASM: there is a suggestion to possibly move the next ASM to 2016 (not 2015), so that it does not coincide with the LNO re-compete process.

3. LNO Site review: the focus was on infrastructure and information management.

Recommendations:

1. move PASTA into production by the end of this year.
2. coordinate data synthesis with the NIS
3. improve communication regarding role that LNO plays.
4. improve support for core services (web services, im mentoring, advancing tools at sites)
5. metrics for evaluation of LNO
6. improve advisory support (maybe add technical people to advisory board?)

LNO's priorities are #1 and #2.

4. LTER site visits: it's a good idea to have LTER experience on site review teams. Some of the COI stipulations should be relaxed to allow this to take place. The site review should inform but not dictate the renewal proposals. What should be done with site review report?

Last year (2011) there were no verbal report-outs. Sites used these to correct errors or misconceptions before they got in the report. However, reviewers were reluctant to voice negative comments during these sessions, but they were then included in the written report. This was then a surprise to the site.

Site visits are valuable as they provide oversight so that NSF knows there are not problems with waste or fraud. Review teams can give the local institution feedback on how they are running and reinforce what needs to be done to improve the science and other areas.

In future they may drop the verbal report-out again because the reviewers hesitate to speak negative comments. Instead the program officer may issue the report. Recommendations can be a long laundry list of suggestions, which cannot always be acted upon and can even jeopardize renewal plans. Therefore there might need to add an executive summary. There are also misconceptions about the overlap between NEON and LTERs. It should be noted though that the renewal rate for LTER sites is close to 100%. Other programs have renewal rates of less 10%.

Note: in 2012 proposal reviews the IM reviewers were also charged with finding data.

IMexec discussed the NSF/EB meeting:

Site/proposal reviewers: at least one (SEV) was dinged for using the DAS because the reviewer did not want to log in. We still have conflicting use of and guidelines for tracking data use.

Unfortunately, there is a basic contradiction between a reviewer looking for data and a user looking for data. A user needs to be identified, but a reviewer might want to preserve anonymity.

NISAC: will be making a recommendation that EB review data access policy.

The message from NSF (Saran) is that they want to find data via the web, not via our inventories.

Consequently they might not request these again. Reviewers did use IMC guidelines docs (although it does not appear so in the case of SEV). It is not clear what instructions they were given.

ACTION: IMC should clarify the guidelines and find out how NSF uses them.

IM visit to NSF. This is essentially an invitation from Saran. It could provide a showcase opportunity for some new tools (possible issues with why isn't everyone using them?), and to demonstrate why sites sometimes do thing differently.

Some goals might be to:

1. highlight unique elements of the network (from a network level)

2. draw the line between LTER and NEON
3. complexity of ecological data and of historical data that cannot be replaced.
4. highlight unique elements of the network (within)
5. repair some misconceptions
6. describe site-based approach
7. how does site-IM promote site and network science?
8. some cool demos
9. interactions with pasta/DAS

****Process:**

Reach out to PIs and NISAC to get ideas about what we should present to NSF as we are representing them as well as the IMC. We should make this a major topic for IMExec VTC in November, all IMC in December water cooler. There are no dates yet - we want time to plan.

Action: John and Margaret to write to PIs and to NISAC to get this started.

The call for proposals is ready to go out. People will be allowed to comment between the 15th and the 1st. An e-mail address should be included in the proposal so that reviewers can suggest improvements.

November VTC has been requested by Deanna Pennington (Vanderbilt). The session will cover: virtual learning commons, present background material and tools to track dataset provenance.

We will have to develop the new communications strategy. Get direct feedback from WGs rather than relying on IMExec membership. If there is a volunteer to do the VTC in January we should ask them to attend the Dec IMExec VTC. The data package reporting group was suggested as a good candidate for January VTC followed by a PASTA discussion in February.

Planning will begin soon for the IMExec meeting in Spring, along with planning for the IMC 3 day meeting in 2013. Four sites have volunteered to submit draft budgets and highlight any travel issues. We will decide in November where we hope to have the meeting.

Meeting Notes ^[2]

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