

Action Items Report of the Information Managers/LTER Network Office (IMC/LNO) Partnership and Collaborations: As presented at the 2008 IMExec Winter Meeting in Albuquerque and completed by the end of this meeting on 2/14/2008 (By Eda C. Melendez-Colom)

Visit: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/forum> to get the Working Group abstract, the presentation at the Information Managers 2007 Annual Meeting in San Jose, and the report of this working group.

Next steps (Action Items agreed at the San Jose meeting):

- 1) Recognition of IM effort towards network projects**
- 2) Define roles and modes of communications between committees**
- 3) Improve accessibility dotProject (Duane-LNO)**
- 4) Publish calendar, Create IM forum (email archive)**
- 5) Circulate summaries of reports (from meetings and conference calls) - (IM website)**

New task requested by the NISAC chair at the end of this document.

Assessment of the issue and/or solutions:

1) Recognition of IM effort towards network projects:

- **Future venues:**
 - **The cyberinfrastructure implementation will provide a venue for this**
- **Some existing venues:**
 - IM Review criteria – directly states that the participation of the site information manager in network activities is encouraged.
 - URL to the online version of the “Review Criteria for LTER Information Management” document. See section B.5 : “Information Management System support for site, network, and community science”:
http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/im_requirements/im_review_criteria/support
 - The IM Web site News section – a media for the information manager to expose their achievements, results, and products related to their involvement with Network projects
 - URL: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/news>
 - Network Newsletter – a great venue for information manager’s and LNO’s articles and short pieces on network and international collaborations
 - URL to the last version: <http://www.lternet.edu/news/>
 - “INFORMATICS BITS AND BYTES”
 - DataBits (already seen and read by PI’s and NSF staff, including the Executive Boards (EB) members) – the venue

where information managers report their site's news, events and achievements is also a media to report about their network collaboration projects results or products.

- A link to all issues can be found on the IM website:
<http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/news/IMPubs/databits>
- Direct links:
- URL to the last version:
<http://intranet.lternet.edu/archives/documents/Newsletters/DataBits/07fall/>
- Previous versions:
<http://intranet.lternet.edu/modules.php?name=UpDownload&req=viewsdownload&sid=48>

○ Non-conventional method to be considered:

- Actual communication from the LNO to a site's IP – James Brunt will be willing to send a site's principal investigator a message of recognition for the site's information manager achievement on her/his request.

2) Define roles and modes of communications between committees

○ *Which committees?:*

- LNO and IMC
- LNO and IMExec
- LNO and NISAC?
- LNO facilitating the communication between committees in which IMC members are involved. E.g.,
 - IMExec and NISAC
 - IMC and IMExec

○ **Who are the persons in charge to maintain communication between the LNO and the IM?**

- IMEXEC and Subcommittees chairs
- A list of LNO services associated with contact information - a catalog will be made available at the LNO web site which will contain
 - a list of the different services that the LNO offers associated with
 - the LNO staff members that will be offering that service.

○ **Modes of Communication:** Modes are manners (way of doing something or the way in which a thing is done or happens), ways or methods of doing or acting. A communication mode for the LNO and IMs will then be the way, manner or method both entities use to communicate.

▪ Existing modes:

- The IM Web site, the LTER Newsletter and Databits described above as venues **for recognitions of IM effort towards network projects, provide existing methods of communications**

- There are several online ways in which an individual site's information manager can communicate directly with the LNO staff to request support:
 - Links can be found on the IM website: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/news/lno>
 - Direct links:
 - Send an online message using the form located at: <http://www.lternet.edu/contact/>
 - Send an email to: tech_support@lternet.edu
 - The LNO will provide two new venues when their 2008 proposal gets into effect:
 - A Data Base Manager at the LNO help that will serve as a liaison between the site and the LNO and will thus communicate the site's needs to the LNO
 - The 16 annual visits of the LNO staff to sites will provide a channel of communication between the LNO and the sites
- 3) **Improve accessibility dotProject (Duane-LNO):**
- Links and login informations to the dotProject may be found on the IM website: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/news/lno/nis>
 - URL: <http://fire.lternet.edu/dotproject/>
 - Supplemental Information to the dotProject : LTER CVS Repository
 - <http://cvs.lternet.edu/cgi-bin/viewcvs.cgi/>
- 4) **Circulate summaries of reports (from meetings and conference calls) - (IM website)**
- Upload meeting reports into then IM Website: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/news>
 - Send the community an email message containing the URL of the report in the IM Website.
- 5) **Publish calendar, Create IM forum (email archive)**
- Calendar's URL: <http://intranet.lternet.edu/im/event>
 - Each workgroup leader should request the LNO the archival of their group's email message if they want to have a history of their email messages in place.

At the 2008 IMExec Winter Meeting in Albuquerque, we receive a communication from Wade Sheldon, NISAC's current chair expressing this committee's need that this group comes up with solutions to the following issues in order to facilitate NISAC current task to develop a framework for the Network Information System (NIS).

The main issues are:

1. Barriers to collaboration between IMs and LNO on development
2. Lack of understanding of respective priorities/needs

3. Insufficient time for IM to participate on network-level projects

We believe that by answering to the 5 actions items above, we have implicitly proposed a starting point to resolve these issues.

More explicit answer to each of these issues follow:

1 and 2. We believe that barriers for collaboration and the lack of understanding of respective priorities/needs exist mainly due to a lack of communication venues for both parties to express their needs. By identifying modes of communication and assigning liaisons roles to specific people, we can start breaking these barriers by opening channels of communication between the IM and the LNO thus facilitating the collaboration between both groups. *See assessment for action item 2, 4 and 5 above.*

In addition, access to the LNO' projects status provided online by the dotProject facilitates information managers' better understanding of the LNO's staff needs. These tool provides a permanent record of the status of LNO's project where major obstacles to complete the projects can be reported by the LNO. Information Managers involved in a project with the LNO developers and programmers can periodically check the status of their project and remind themselves or the LNO to complete a specific task to move the project to the next task or stage of completion. *See assessment for action item 3 above*

3. We believe that the insufficient time for information managers to participate on network-level projects occur mainly due to a lack of the site's management allocation of the information manager's time to do network-related projects. Hence, all efforts made to make the site's management recognize the importance of these network activities will help resolve this issue. *See assessment for action item 1 above.*