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IM Exec VTC 2012-08-08

Fri, 08/03/2012 - 4:11pm — mobrien [1]

0. EB Report (Emery) -- no info to report

1. Nominations
Don will have sent out the nomination letter on Tuesday

2. IM member interviews
share our summary and discussion of issues raised
no names, please.

3. ASM - IM one day meeting
finish agenda!
finalize names for inventory-breakout leaders, and times.

Organize the afternoon inventory exercise:
intro option 1. Yang Xia gives a short summary of the similarities of inventories contributed by the 11 sites who put them in their 2012 proposals.
intro option 2: a few volunteer sites contribute one slide each to show what they use for inventories. an example from SBC/MCR (inventory schema for DB): http://mcr.lternet.edu/external/tmp/inventory_sketchup/pkg_mgmt/index.html [2]

Then pose the question: how do you describe what's in your inventory?

Breakouts will use the sample inventories to compare vocabularies, and add more terms/attributes

3.1 finish these web pages:
agenda: http://im.lternet.edu/meetings/2012/agenda [3] -- Margaret
participant signup: http://im.lternet.edu/meetings/2012/ [4] -- Sven
candidate statements: http://im.lternet.edu/meetings/2012/ [4] -- Jason

3.2 logistics
a. first night mixer ?? where?
someone (local) with a car to go shopping for food?

b. meeting room, etc.
James: do we have
1. an adequate room for the afternoon, with
2. breakout rooms (4) that are not too far away?

4. ASM - main meeting

NOTES

8 August 2012, IM Exec VTC

In Attendance: Don Henshaw (IMC Co-Chair), Margaret O'Brien (IMC Co-Chair), Jason Downing, John
Chamblee, Sven Bohm, Emery Boose (EB Rep.), Yang Xia (LNO IM)

The next IM Exec meeting will be at 10 am on 9/5.

EB Report
There has been no EB report since the last meeting.

Nominations for Leadership Positions and Leadership Continuity

IM Exec determined that the call for Nominations to IM Exec would go out as soon as possible. After that, we had a lengthy discussion of how to handle our upcoming challenges with leadership succession for the IMC, specifically the fact that so many were rotating off at once. IM Exec agreed, in particular, that we ask the IMC to consider mechanisms to extend the term of one current IMC Co-chair (Margaret O'Brien) for a single year, to ensure continuity.
IM Exec also noted that, because of the current language in the terms of Reference, none of the people who will be remaining on IM Exec next year could ascend to a Co-Chair position because they have not yet filled a full term. This fact has two implications: 1) Being an IMC Co-chair would then imply a minimum overall IM Exec term of service of five years and 2) in the immediate future, we would have to turn to other members of the IMC who had previously held IM Exec position to be a Co-Chair.

All members of IM Exec agreed that this was not a good strategic position for the overall IMC. It was agreed that this situation would be limiting because of IM Exec's efforts to increase opportunities for leadership among people who have not had prior service and experience and that, because of the relatively small size of the IMC, it left us with too small a pool of "qualified" people, at least as the term qualified is currently defined by the Terms of Reference.

In light of these discussions, IM Exec determined that modifying the Terms of Reference to allow greater flexibility was the best solution. We did note that we do not to make modifying the Terms of Reference a regular activity, but, because the Terms are relatively new, asking the IMC to consider modifications would be appropriate at this time. IM Exec agreed to develop language for amendments and amendments to be sent out to the membership. The IM Exec goal is an electronic vote before the ASM, so that this matter could be resolved beforehand, allowing elections to go forward at the start of the IMC Meeting first thing in the morning.

IM Exec also noted that there were several versions of the governance documents in various places on the website. IM Exec asked John Chamblee to work with other govenance committee members to consolidate them.

(Author's note: the language for the IM Exec request for IMC action was developed the next day and is included below. The annotated Terms of Reference are attached to this page as a resource.)

Dear IMC Site Representatives,
In our last four meetings, the IM Exec has been grappling with the fact that a large number of IM-

Exec members will be rotating off of the committee this year and the fact that we are still in a learning period with regard to how the Terms of Reference guide us as we work to serve the IMC. We have been struggling specifically with how to balance the seemingly opposing goals of providing long-term continuity of leadership, while at the same time giving leadership opportunities to as many members as possible.

As noted in the last set of IM Exec minutes (http://im.lternet.edu/node/1032 [5]), at least two members of IM Exec rotate off this year, as well as both of our co-chairs. While this does accomplish our goal of providing many leadership opportunities, it does not serve us well in terms of continuity of leadership. Given the number of changes and challenges the IMC is currently facing, such continuity is crucial. In order to provide such continuity and ensure that the circumstances in which we currently find ourselves do not occur in the future, we are proposing two potential amendments to the Terms of Reference. As a committee we must discuss these changes, adjust the language and then determine how we can best accomplish a vote on the amendments. IM Exec is asking the committee to consider three votes, all of which are explained below. We would like to conduct both the discussion and the votes via email, so that we can move forward with elections at the very beginning of the IMC meeting at ASM.

IM-Exec's reasoning behind each proposal is listed below. In addition, we have attached a full, annotated copy of the Terms of Reference so that members can see the proposed amendments in context. This copy includes the ToR's original language, each proposed change (highlighted using track changes), and comments that briefly explain the function of the changes. Below the explanation for each amendment, we also provide a proposal for opening the discussion via mutual consent and a preliminary outline and schedule for the voting process. Since the current Terms of Reference provide the necessary framework for holding elections whether these amendments pass or fail, the nomination process that IM-Exec is currently initiating will proceed in parallel. Please read on for explanation of the proposed amendments and a preliminary outline of the requested voting procedure. Though the Governance Committee is not currently active, we would be grateful to hear from committee members not currently serving on IM-Exec. Thank you in advance for carefully considering these questions and we look forward to receiving your insights.
Sincerely,
LTER IMC IM-Exec

DISCUSSION AND VOTING SCHEDULE
At this point, IM-Exec would ask that the committee consider this email as notification that discussions have begun. Anyone objecting to this proposal should do so by replying to this email. Otherwise, discussion can commence. We would like to close discussion on August 24. On August 27, IM-Exec would like to send out a final proposal for voting. We would then like to close voting by August 31. Please note that early voting will be announced before August 27th for those unavailable in this last week of August, but understand that IMC discussion may lead to revision of the specific ToR amendment language.

AMENDMENTS
Amendment 1
IM-Exec proposes to amend Section 4 (IMC Co-chairs) so that IM-Exec Co-Chair terms of service are staggered in order to provide continuity of leadership within the IM Exec and IMC. There are two potential approaches for this amendment. In Option 1, the ToR leaves the total number of Co Chairs (1 or 2) open to IMC discretion, but requires that, if there are two co-chairs, their terms of service be staggered. It also notes that staggering of terms may require adjustment of term length. In Option 2, the ToR specifies that the IMC must always have two Co-chairs. The language concerning staggering terms is similar to option 1 and the language concerning

adjustment of Term Length is identical.

Amendment 2
IM Exec proposes to amend Section 9 (Elections) of the Terms of Reference in order to increase leadership opportunities for the membership of IMC. Section 9 currently states that IMC Co-chairs and EB reps must serve a full term on IM Exec before being eligible for office. The proposed amendment would eliminate reference to a "full term" and require IM Exec service only, for example, only a partial term of service, without specifying a time limit for eligibility.

VOTING
We propose three votes, to take place simultaneously. IM-Exec will set up an anonymous poll for voting via the LTER Intranet site and will tally and report votes by September 5th. All votes require a 2/3 majority to succeed. Note that the exact wording for these calls for a vote and the amendment language may change based on discussions and feedback from the IMC and the final call for votes will be distributed to the Site Reps on August 24.

VOTE 1:
Will the IMC consider an amendment to Section 4 of the Terms of Reference allowing for continuity of leadership within the IMC by staggering the terms of IMC Co-chairs? This is a simple Yes or No Vote.

VOTE 2:
If vote 1 is accepted by the membership, which option (1, 2, or other options to be established during discussion) will the membership select?

VOTE 3:
Will the IMC alter Section 9 of the Terms of Reference to extend eligibility for IMC Co-chair and EB Representative candidates to IM-Exec service of an unspecified length? This is a simple Yes or No Vote.

IMC Site Rep interviews
IM Exec then turned to a summary discussion of the individual interviews IM Exec members conducted with members of the IMC. IM Exec members presented summaries of information gathered from all assigned interviewees and no names were mentioned. Following the presentation there was a general discussion of the issues raised. Three topics dominated the summary information presented:

1. While the IM Exec was doing a good job overall in their attempts to provide transparency and clarity with regard to how decisions are being made, there still seems to be a bottleneck with regard to information being passed from other sources (e.g. the LNO, the EB, and the NSF) and the IMC. Specific issues that raised concerns regarding effective communication related to LNO's "data stars" initiative in the Metacat Interface, the reporting of data from the IMC Metrics Working Group to the EB, and the differences in funding outcomes for IM supplements. In response to these problems, IMC would like to see IM Exec put more thought into improving communications between the IMC and other entities whose decisions have impacts on the IMC's workload and priorities.

2. Nearly all (if not all) members of the IMC agree that there has been a "sea change" (to use one members term) with regard to IM expectations coming from NSF. Some members see this as a sudden event while others see it as the outcome of a longer string of ongoing events dating back many years. There is variation in the degree to which members feel comfortable attempting to understand and explain this change, its origins, and its consequences, but all members see that

it exists and see an urgent need to respond. Again more communication from IM Exec and other entities may help clarify these issues.

3. There is a need to establish or, where they exist, improve some of the guidelines and expectations for overall IM practice across the network. This includes not only prominent topics such as EML standards and reporting, but also standards for IM interactions with other local site actors, such as LPIs, scientists, graduate students, etc. In the same vein, many people expressed concern about the need to develop common timelines and frameworks for addressing the concerns raised by the NSF and the EB.

Again, in this area, the issue of communication arose, with members expressing a desire to establish a common timeline and very clear lines of communications as to what kinds of changes were being proposed, when, if accepted, such changes would take place, and how sites could work together toward meeting common challenges with common solutions.

Finally there a few comments about the need for improved communication from LNO and concern abou the relationship between LTER and other data centers – specifically how LTER funds related to the development of data centers that contributed LTER data, but were not specifically related to LTER.

IM Exec discussions about these results centered largely on the issues of communication and the potential impacts of communication faults in areas where there may be potential site impacts. IM Exec agreed that although reading notes and emails is the responsibility of site representatives, it may be time to consider alternative and more rapid-fire approaches to communication in areas where site-critical information is concerned. IM Exec also agreed that the need to focus upon and seriously discuss standards and coordinate approaches to meeting site challenges should be at the top of the agenda (after elections) for the morning meeting at ASM.

ASM Agenda and Logistics

Discussions concerning the IMC Member interview feedback were extensive and time consuming, so we ended up devoting less time that we would have liked to the agenda. IM Exec agreed to cover elections first thing and then devote the remainder of the morning discussion to the topics developing common standards and approaches, the data availability requirements of the NSF, and the common frameworks the IMC will need to adopt to meet these requirements.

A centerpiece to this discussion will be the Metrics Working Group reports. These reports are a good starting point because there have been communications controversies around them, they are site-critical and impactful to sites, and both the EB and the NSF are extremely interested in such reports. One goal of this discussion will be for the IMC to establish whether or not the IMC should adopt such reporting and if they should, when it should occur. Such a decision would require a vote of the IMC and IM Exec will put forth a request for such a vote at the meeting. An additional discussion (and probable vote) will focus on the future of the existing working groups. IM Exec members suspect that the current concerns of the NSF and the EB may require more focused short-term efforts by the IMC as a whole. This may require that some working groups be temporarily inactivated and that new working groups be formed. IM Exec working group liasons are asked to go to each active working group and ask for a short summary, detailed below, in action items, of recent; current; and planned, near-term future activities. These short summaries will be compiled by IM Exec and included as an introduction to the discussion.

IM Exec is planning an afternoon session on package management. The topics, note also in the last meeting's notes, are

How might inventories be included in a proposal?
How are they best presented on-line?
How can inventories be used in package management?
What are the elements of a data inventory?
How are inventories to be integrated into site catalogs, network catalogs, and workflows?

IM Exec believes that there are several members who can facilitate the breakout sessions and Jason Downing will check with LNO to make sure that break out rooms are closely clustered, to facilitate an on-time meeting.

We will be having a mixer on Saturday night. Jason Downing has agreed to coordinate the provisioning of the mixer and LNO will provide a large cabin venue. More on that soon.

IM Exec Adjourned at 12:15 MDT.

ACTION ITEMS Organized by member (deadlines in parenthesis for each task)

Sven Bohm
-Deploy sign up for 2012 IMC Meeting at ASM (8/17)

Emery Boose
-Resubmit request of IMC Co-chair compensation to the Executive Board. (next EB meeting)

John Chamblee
-Develop an explanatory framework and plan of action for IM Exec review concerning the proposed amendments to the IMC Terms of Reference. (8/9)
-Coordinate with the governance committee to consolidate and better organize material related to the Terms of Reference on the IMC website. (before ASM)

Jason Downing
-Send out request for Site Bytes (8/17)
-Post candidate statements as nominations are received for IM Exec positions (before ASM)
-Coordinate shopping for ASM IMC Saturday night social and obtain helpers (before ASM)

Don Henshaw
-Send out request to consider amendments to the Terms of Reference to stagger IMC Co-chair terms and reduce the necessary time served on IM Exec to considered eligible for IMC Co-Chair or EB Rep. (8/9)
-Send out call for nominations to fill leadership slots opening up in the IM Exec and among the IMC Co-chairs. (8/14)

Margaret O'Brien
-Finalize agenda and send out reminders to the IMC providing links to the developing agenda for the IMC Meeting and noting the activities to be undertaken.

Working Group Liasons
Request a single powerpoint slide summary of this year's activities to supplement the morning's discussions on working group status. The slide should address the following:
- What recent activities has the Working Group undertaken?
- What activities from last year remain to be completed?
- What are the group's long-term plans?
Have the paragraphs sent back to each liason.
The paragraphs will be used to supplement a discussion on how to re-prioritize IMC-wide efforts

to meet NSF directives. (We need all slides back by 9/5 to collate them).

Meeting Notes [6]

Source URL: http://im.lternet.edu/%20IM_Exec_VTC_2012_08_08

Links:
[1] http://im.lternet.edu/user/27
[2] http://mcr.lternet.edu/external/tmp/inventory_sketchup/pkg_mgmt/index.html
[3] http://im.lternet.edu/meetings/2012/agenda
[4] http://im.lternet.edu/meetings/2012/
[5] http://im.lternet.edu/node/1032
[6] http://im.lternet.edu/taxonomy/term/3