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Fri, 01/28/2011 - 11:34am — mobrien [1]

Tuesday, February 8, 2011 -- 10:00-12:00 MST

Participants
Members: Don Henshaw, Margaret O'Brien (co-chairs), Sven Bohm, Emery Boose, Corinna Gries, Suzanne Remillard
Ex officio: James Brunt, Yang Xia
Guests: Nancy Huntly (NSF)

Topics
1. EB Report
2. Winter IM-Exec Meeting
3. EIMC Meeting
4. Terms of Reference
5. Nancy Huntly (NSF)

1. EB Report

See upcoming article: Michener, Porter, Servilla, and Vanderbilt. Long-term ecological research and information management. Ecological Informatics. In press.

Corinna will forward the program for the LTER mini-symposium at NSF in March.

The half-page transformative science pieces are due to John Vande Castle by Feb 15.

New website for lead PIs to help with site reviews. It will contain past proposals, reviews, and site PI history.

NSF is still on a continuing resolution at 80% of last year's budget. General pessimism about new funding. LTER supplements for this year are uncertain. REU and international have best chance of getting funded.

SIP meeting. NSF concerns include: governance and how plan would be executed; research plan is skeletal with no new sites; sites have been slow to adopt new technology; and not enough collaboration with groups outside LTER (do it ourselves attitude). NSF liked IM section. In general it was a lukewarm reception. The SIP is big and a short version (1 page) might help others to digest.

Data prospectus. Phil, Bob, and Scott met with Liz Blood who liked the idea of a pilot project. This project will likely move ahead NSF is looking for a champion (outside hire?) to lead. The Legacy

Data Committee has become the Data Council. The Council may help to prioritize the list of initial sites and datasets for the pilot project.

IMC terms of reference. The EB views our effort as commendable and would like to see the document, but will leave committee governance to us. The EB may suggest or require a similar document from other standing committees.

The EB thinks the upcoming joint meeting of IM-Exec and NISAC is a good idea.

The biannual LNO survey will appear soon, with a few improvements since last time.

NSF now requires a data management plan for all proposals. For us a reference to the LTER data policy should be fine. James is preparing a guide for general use on how to write a data management plan. Since such plans will soon be widely available, it's not clear how reviewers will evaluate them.

2. Winter IM-Exec Meeting

Possible agenda items for joint meeting with NISAC (Mar 29):

Introduction of IM-Exec to NISAC (esp. research scientists). Who we are, what we do, working groups, governance, etc.

Joint VTC with NSF. Nancy, possibly Matt and/or Peter.

Interactions between IM-Exec and NISAC. How to coordinate efforts (e.g. LNO operational plan). How to engage NISAC IM co-chair in IM-Exec meetings.

ClimDB and EcoTrends migration to PASTA. This is a good point of intersection.

IM proposal review process. NISAC was asked to follow up on some proposals this year.

Are there NIS-related tasks that NISAC would like us to take on?

NISAC VTC is scheduled for Friday of this week.

Possible agenda items for 2nd day (Mar 30):

Plan EIMC meeting. Meet with Bob Waide. Follow up on ClimDB and EcoTrends migration.

3. EIMC Meeting

Some of the IMC working groups might present a paper (e.g. unit dictionary).

Still no final agreement with hotel. Hotel is holding rooms for Sep 28-29 but there is a chance that the meeting will need to relocate. No public announcement until this is settled.

Theme for meeting is data integration.

The EML congruency checker would be an ideal topic. Expect results by September (EIMC), possibly by May (SC).

4. Terms of Reference

The EB would like to see the document. Corinna will forward.

The document is in good shape. Some minor editing is needed. Need to clarify process for addressing network-wide issues, responsibilities of IM-Exec, and what is meant by roster of actions. The document keeps changing as new suggestions are received. How to bring to closure?

IM-Exec will compile and return comments (send to Don and Margaret by Feb 15). Another VTC this winter / spring could address final issues. Recommend a formal vote of adoption at the EIMC meeting in September.

5. Nancy Huntly (NSF)

Introduction of IM-Exec members.

Brief reports from working group liaisons: governance (Emery), EML best practices (Dan), EML congruency checker (Margaret), web services / db redesign (Corinna), controlled vocabulary (Don), GIS (Suzanne), units (Sven). Also climDB / hydroDB (Yang) and IM website design (Don).

Controlled keywords would improve Metacat searches and would be greatly appreciated by NSF program officers and reviewers. Key starting point: what data are available? This is essential for generating support for LTER.

All of the working group activities are highly integrated. E.g. use of web services, support of NIS.

What are our greatest needs at present? The LTER supplements last year included up to $30k for IM. This was very helpful since sites often elect not to use the Other category for IM.

Several sites submitted a collaborative proposal last year as a supplement request. This turned out to be difficult for NSF to fund through existing channels. Supplements cannot exceed 20% of the total award to a site.

RAPID and EAGER programs might be alternatives. These are standalone proposals , not linked to LTER.

NSF just got an operating plan (90% of 2010 FY rate) but no budget. Still no money for supplements.

Send a one-page description of our specific needs to Nancy. Such a description could be invaluable if funding becomes available later this year.

IM-Exec provided a similar document to Todd last year outlining our recommendations for supplements. The focus was on making the NIS work properly, mainly through improvements to metadata. This is still a need at many or most sites.

IMs just completed the most recent LTER CI survey. JVC will summarize and distribute results. LTER is a large program and NSF program officers appreciate useful summaries.

Some working groups also write proposals. Most WG tasks are done on a volunteer basis. There is a lot more work that we cannot do because of a lack of resources (e.g. attribute standardization).

NSF needs to be able to verify that core LTER datasets are documented, archived, and available.

EAGER and RAPID grants could be used for specific products. These do not have to be limited to the LNO or the entire network. Contact program officer to discuss ideas (rather than submitting an unsolicited proposal). Single site or collaborative. These grants are available to any NSF program (when money is available).

An EAGER award was used to evaluate the LTER schoolyard program.

Upcoming site reviews. Include IMs from outside of LTER? It is good to get outside input, but outside reviewers sometimes have no knowledge of LTER and/or have unreasonable expectations. An LTER IM reviewer may be especially helpful for new LTER sites. Conflict of interest is a growing problem in LTER with the growth of collaborative science. A reviewer who is too familiar with a site may not see things that others would. Sites differ considerably in details and architectures.

Schedule next VTC with Nancy for winter meeting (Mar 29). IM-Exec will invite Peter to join.

Meeting Notes [2]

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