

CAB Meeting Times

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Introduction

The initial proposal to shift meeting times in a rotating fashion was an attempt to be fair to all members, however, in reality there is a growing sense that the idea is not working as successfully as hoped for. In reality, there will be no solution that works for everyone as the spread of time zones is just too diverse. This is obviously an excellent problem to be wrangling, but it is still a significant challenge. A set of proposed options are given below.

I've considered my understanding of standard business hours (8am to 5pm) to be the optimal time range for people, and between the hours of 11pm to 5am to be 'horrible'. Anything between these is 'Outside of Hours', which should still be realistic times for everyone, despite them not being super-convenient.

An important consideration for each option is not only our own preferences, but the availability of Lori as both secretary and member of the Bioconductor Core Team, and the two co-chairs Janani & Stevie.

There are four proposals given below as the probable best options for the current CAB.

1. Placing the 'horrible times' in the empty space between the furthest spread members
2. Fixing the start time at 9am US/Eastern for every meeting
3. Starting based on the Western-most member of each region (mostly)
4. The existing schedule I can see in my calendar

I also note that time-zones may not describe exactly where everyone lives, but these are chosen to match the output of `OlsonNames()` which is how R wrangles time-zones. All projections have been made based on UTC time.

Feel free to play with the code in the accompanying rmarkdown. I kinda had fun...

CAB Description

As it currently stands, the CAB contains 21 members, spread across 14 time-zones, with these broken down and grouped in the following table.

Table 1: Breakdown of all time zones with the current +UTC shift and where that shift will be 6 months into the future. The largest ‘empty space’ time period is between the US West Coast & Melbourne, with no members in the time-zones between the two. Currently this is 5hrs (± 1 day), whilst in 6 months this will be 7 hours. The other large time gaps are between 1: Helsinki & Shanghai, and, 2: Dublin/London and the US East Coast.

TZ	Current UTC	Future UTC	Member	N
US/Pacific	-0800	-0700	Nicole	1
US/Mountain	-0700	-0600	Janani	1
US/Central	-0600	-0500	Zahraa, Jiefei	2
US/Eastern	-0500	-0400	Lori, Enis, Jasmine, Tobi	4
Europe/Dublin	+0000	+0100	Aedin, Maria	2
Europe/London	+0000	+0100	Kevin	1
Africa/Lagos	+0100	+0100	Umar	1
Europe/Rome	+0100	+0200	Johannes	1
Europe/Madrid	+0100	+0200	Lluis, Hedia	2
Europe/Helsinki	+0200	+0300	Leo	1
Asia/Shanghai	+0800	+0800	Luyi	1
Japan	+0900	+0900	Kozo	1
Australia/Adelaide	+1030	+0930	Stevie	1
Australia/Melbourne	+1100	+1000	Xueyi, Mengbo	2

Table 2: Taking the two largest ‘empty-space’ regions, where no participants live, and looking for the time differences. Time-zone differences between the US/Pacific & Melbourne are given as ‘Pacific Diff’, whilst those between Europe/Helsinki and Asia/Shanghai are given as ‘Contintental Diff’.

Date	Month	Pacific Diff	Contintental Diff	Place 2-3am In
2025-02-13	Feb	5	6	Helsinki-Asia
2025-03-13	Mar	6	6	Helsinki-Asia
2025-04-10	Apr	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-05-08	May	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-06-12	Jun	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-07-10	Jul	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-08-14	Aug	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-09-11	Sep	7	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-10-09	Oct	6	5	Pacific Ocean
2025-11-13	Nov	5	6	Helsinki-Asia
2025-12-11	Dec	5	6	Helsinki-Asia

Proposal One: Finding Empty Space

The strategy attempted here is to find the ‘empty’ region on the planet at each given month, where no CAB members are located, which contains the longest duration relative to *everyone’s lived time-zone*. If we place the difficult middle-of-the-night meeting times in these empty regions, the hoped for outcome will be the fewest CAB members having to endure middle-of-the-night meetings. Of course, the CAB contains a mix of ‘morning people’ and ‘night-owls’, making this a a near impossible challenge, however, if we assume somewhere between 2-3am should be placed in the centre of these empty regions, this might be the best starting point.

For April to October, the best region to place the middle-of-the-night times is in the Pacific Ocean. For the other times, the best region to place these is between the most eastern European time-zone (Helsinki) and western Asian time-zone (Shanghai).

Key points:

- No-one has a meeting starting anywhere between 1am and 5am
- Midnight meetings are minimised:
 - Unfortunately Leo would still have 4
 - Mengbo & Xueyi have 1
- People near the edges of the empty-space are disadvantaged
 - Most of Europe/Africa and China/Japan are inconvenient for Feb, March, Nov, Dec
 - US/Pacific, Australia/Melbourne and Japan are inconvenient for Apr to Oct
- Convenient for Lori, Janani and Stevie all year

Table 3: Summary of members with the most problematic meeting times, even after avoiding the 1am to 5am timezone. These members are the most disadvantaged by this proposal

Member	TZ	After 11pm	6am Or Earlier	Combined Problematic
Nicole	US/Pacific	0	7	7
Umar	Africa/Lagos	4	0	4
Johannes	Europe/Rome	4	0	4
Lluis	Europe/Madrid	4	0	4
Hedia	Europe/Madrid	4	0	4
Leo	Europe/Helsinki	4	0	4
Luyi	Asia/Shanghai	0	4	4
Stevie	Australia/Adelaide	1	0	1
Xueyi	Australia/Melbourne	7	0	7
Mengbo	Australia/Melbourne	7	0	7
Total		35	11	46

Nicole	14:00	15:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	14:00	14:00	US (Pacific)
Janani	15:00	16:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	US (Mountain)
Jiefei	16:00	17:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	US (Central)
Zahraa	16:00	17:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	
Tobi	17:00	18:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	US (Eastern)
Jasmine	17:00	18:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	
Enis	17:00	18:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	
Lori	17:00	18:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	
Maria	22:00	22:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	22:00	22:00	Europe (Dublin)
Aedin	22:00	22:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	22:00	22:00	
Kevin	22:00	22:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	22:00	22:00	Europe (London)
Umar	23:00	23:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	23:00	23:00	Africa (Lagos)
Johannes	23:00	23:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	Europe (Rome)
Hedia	23:00	23:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	Europe (Madrid)
Lluis	23:00	23:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	
Leo	00:00	00:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	Europe (Helsinki)
Luyi	06:00	06:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	06:00	06:00	Asia (Shanghai)
Kozo	07:00	07:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	07:00	07:00	Japan
Stevie	08:30	08:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	23:30	08:30	08:30	Australia (Adelaide)
Mengbo	09:00	09:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	00:00	09:00	09:00	Australia (Melbourne)
Xueyi	09:00	09:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	00:00	09:00	09:00	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Status ■ Horrible ■ Outside Hours ■ Business Hours												

Figure 1: Proposed schedule placing the largest time regions without members into the middle of the night

Proposal Two: Fix Times at 9am For US/Eastern

Key Points:

- This is good for the key members Lori, Janani & Stevie
- **Strongly disadvantages Mengbo & Xueyi**
- Possibly workable but also inconvenient for Luyi, Kozo & Nicole

Nicole	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	06:00	US (Pacific)
Janani	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	US (Mountain)
Jiefei	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	US (Central)
Zahraa	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	
Tobi	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	
Jasmine	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	US (Eastern)
Enis	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	
Lori	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	
Maria	14:00	13:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	Europe (Dublin)
Aedin	14:00	13:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	
Kevin	14:00	13:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	Europe (London)
Umar	15:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	15:00	15:00	Africa (Lagos)
Johannes	15:00	14:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	Europe (Rome)
Hedia	15:00	14:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	Europe (Madrid)
Lluis	15:00	14:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	
Leo	16:00	15:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	Europe (Helsinki)
Luyi	22:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	21:00	22:00	22:00	Asia (Shanghai)
Kozo	23:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	23:00	23:00	Japan
Stevie	00:30	23:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	22:30	23:30	00:30	00:30	Australia (Adelaide)
Mengbo	01:00	00:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	00:00	01:00	01:00	
Xueyi	01:00	00:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	00:00	01:00	01:00	Australia (Melbourne)
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<div>Status</div> <div>Horrible</div> <div>Outside Hours</div> <div>Business Hours</div>												

Figure 2: Proposed meeting times holding the start time fixed at 9am for US/Eastern

Table 4: Summary of members with the most problematic meeting times, if holding the start time fixed for US/Eastern. These members are the most disadvantaged by this proposal

Member	TZ	After 11pm	6am Or Earlier	Combined Problematic
Nicole	US/Pacific	0	11	11
Kozo	Japan	3	0	3
Stevie	Australia/Adelaide	2	3	5
Xueyi	Australia/Melbourne	8	3	11
Mengbo	Australia/Melbourne	8	3	11
Total		21	20	41

Proposal Three: Start Times Based On The Western-Most Member

This is a *slightly modified version of the current schedule*, taking the western-most member from each of Asia, Europe & the US as the key member. We then start meeting times *at 7am for that member* ensuring at least two larger regions have workable times.

- 7am starts for Nicole (US). These can be negotiated to 6am if Nicole prefers
- 7am starts for Luyi (Asia). These could also be negotiated to earlier if Luyi prefers
- From experience, most US attendees will struggle to attend after 10pm. For meetings which should be based on the Western-most European member, **these have instead been started at 6am US/Eastern** to try and bring this US/Eastern back into possibility
- Everyone gets at least 4 meetings in standard business hours (8am to 5pm as shown in green), except Luyi
- No-one has more than 4 ‘horrible’ meeting times (11pm to 5am)
- Sept & Oct look the least satisfactory

Nicole	03:00	03:00	03:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	16:00	16:00	15:00	15:00	US (Pacific)
Janani	04:00	04:00	04:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	17:00	17:00	16:00	16:00	US (Mountain)
Jiefei	05:00	05:00	05:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	17:00	US (Central)
Zahraa	05:00	05:00	05:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	17:00	US (Central)
Tobi	06:00	06:00	06:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	19:00	19:00	18:00	18:00	US (Eastern)
Jasmine	06:00	06:00	06:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	19:00	19:00	18:00	18:00	
Enis	06:00	06:00	06:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	19:00	19:00	18:00	18:00	
Lori	06:00	06:00	06:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	19:00	19:00	18:00	18:00	
Maria	11:00	10:00	11:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	23:00	Europe (Dublin)
Aedin	11:00	10:00	11:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	23:00	Europe (London)
Kevin	11:00	10:00	11:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	23:00	Europe (London)
Umar	12:00	11:00	11:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	Africa (Lagos)
Johannes	12:00	11:00	12:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	01:00	01:00	00:00	00:00	Europe (Rome)
Hedia	12:00	11:00	12:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	01:00	01:00	00:00	00:00	Europe (Madrid)
Lluis	12:00	11:00	12:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	01:00	01:00	00:00	00:00	Europe (Madrid)
Leo	13:00	12:00	13:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	02:00	02:00	01:00	01:00	Europe (Helsinki)
Luyi	19:00	18:00	18:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	Asia (Shanghai)
Kozo	20:00	19:00	19:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	Japan
Stevie	21:30	20:30	19:30	23:30	23:30	23:30	23:30	08:30	09:30	09:30	09:30	Australia (Adelaide)
Mengbo	22:00	21:00	20:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	09:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	Australia (Melbourne)
Xueyi	22:00	21:00	20:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	09:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Status ■ Horrible ■ Outside Hours ■ Business Hours												

Figure 3: Modified version of the current meeting schedule, setting the start time at 7am for the western-most member of each region (except Europe). 1) Feb-Apr favour Europe & Asia, 2) May-Aug favour the US & Europe, whilst 3) Sep-Dec favours Asia & the US

Table 5: Summary of members with the most problematic meeting times, if holding the start time fixed for the most western member of each region. These members are the most disadvantaged by this proposal

Member	TZ	After 11pm	6am Or Earlier	Combined Problematic
Nicole	US/Pacific	0	3	3
Janani	US/Mountain	0	3	3
Zahraa	US/Central	0	3	3
Jiefei	US/Central	0	3	3
Lori	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Enis	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Jasmine	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Tobi	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Aedin	Europe/Dublin	4	0	4
Maria	Europe/Dublin	4	0	4
Kevin	Europe/London	4	0	4
Umar	Africa/Lagos	4	0	4
Johannes	Europe/Rome	2	2	4
Lluis	Europe/Madrid	2	2	4
Hedia	Europe/Madrid	2	2	4
Leo	Europe/Helsinki	0	4	4
Kozo	Japan	4	0	4
Stevie	Australia/Adelaide	4	0	4
Xueyi	Australia/Melbourne	4	0	4
Mengbo	Australia/Melbourne	4	0	4
Total		38	34	72

Proposal Four: Current Schedule

Key points:

- March & April meetings will be very difficult for Lori & Janani
- March & April will also cause problems for many in Europe & the US

Nicole	22:00	22:00	23:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	14:00	US (Pacific)
Janani	23:00	23:00	00:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	15:00	US (Mountain)
Jiefei	00:00	00:00	01:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	16:00	US (Central)
Zahraa	00:00	00:00	01:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	16:00	US (Central)
Tobi	01:00	01:00	02:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	US (Eastern)
Jasmine	01:00	01:00	02:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	
Enis	01:00	01:00	02:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	
Lori	01:00	01:00	02:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	18:00	18:00	18:00	17:00	
Maria	06:00	05:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	22:00	Europe (Dublin)
Aedin	06:00	05:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	22:00	Europe (London)
Kevin	06:00	05:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	22:00	Europe (London)
Umar	07:00	06:00	07:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	00:00	23:00	Africa (Lagos)
Johannes	07:00	06:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	Europe (Rome)
Hedia	07:00	06:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	Europe (Madrid)
Lluis	07:00	06:00	08:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	23:00	
Leo	08:00	07:00	09:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	01:00	01:00	01:00	00:00	Europe (Helsinki)
Luyi	14:00	13:00	14:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	22:00	06:00	06:00	07:00	06:00	Asia (Shanghai)
Kozo	15:00	14:00	15:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	23:00	07:00	07:00	08:00	07:00	Japan
Stevie	16:30	15:30	15:30	23:30	23:30	23:30	23:30	07:30	08:30	09:30	08:30	Australia (Adelaide)
Mengbo	17:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	09:00	Australia (Melbourne)
Xueyi	17:00	16:00	16:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	00:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	09:00	
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Status ■ Horrible ■ Outside Hours ■ Business Hours												

Figure 4: The current meeting schedule, shifting by 8hrs every 4 months. Shifts have been estimated based on my own calendar invitations, so hopefully they're accurate

Table 6: Summary of members with the most problematic meeting times if adhering to the current schedule.

Member	TZ	After 11pm	6am Or Earlier	Combined Problematic
Nicole	US/Pacific	1	0	1
Janani	US/Mountain	3	0	3
Zahraa	US/Central	2	1	3
Jiefei	US/Central	2	1	3
Lori	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Enis	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Jasmine	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Tobi	US/Eastern	0	3	3
Aedin	Europe/Dublin	3	2	5
Maria	Europe/Dublin	3	2	5
Kevin	Europe/London	3	2	5
Umar	Africa/Lagos	4	1	5
Johannes	Europe/Rome	4	1	5
Lluis	Europe/Madrid	4	1	5
Hedia	Europe/Madrid	4	1	5
Leo	Europe/Helsinki	1	3	4
Luyi	Asia/Shanghai	0	3	3
Kozo	Japan	4	0	4
Stevie	Australia/Adelaide	4	0	4
Xueyi	Australia/Melbourne	4	0	4
Mengbo	Australia/Melbourne	4	0	4
Total		50	30	80