

NCNR User Group (NUG) Executive Committee Minutes from conference call on February 21, 2017

Present from NIST: Dan Neumann, Julie Borchers, Rob Dimeo, Bill Kamitakahara
Present NUG executive committee members: Alan Nakatani, Megan Robertson, Julie Hipp, Amber Larson, Igor Zaliznyak, Mike Crawford, Rafael Verduzco

Topic 1: Welcome to new members

The following new members were welcomed to the committee: Dmitry Reznik, Carlos Lopez-Barron, and Julie Hipp (student member). Megan Robertson, Mike Crawford, Rafael Verduzco, and Igor Zaliznyak are continuing members. The following exiting members were thanked for their service to NUG and the NCNR: Alan Nakatani (exiting chair), Michael Mackay, and Amber Larson.

Megan Robertson will serve as the chair of the committee for 2017-2018. Carlos Lopez-Barron will serve as vice chair for 2017-2018 and chair for 2019-2020.

Action item: We are in need of a volunteer as secretary to take minutes.

Topic 2: NCNR update

The congressional budget is currently under a continuing resolution until April 28th. Securing funding for the increased cost of reactor fuel has been an ongoing issue and a budget for this purpose has been submitted and rejected for the past few years. The laboratory directors at NIST met to discuss this issue, and have agreed to help offset the cost of the reactor fuel for the NCNR, using funds from their own budgets. As an aside, there is currently enough fuel stored through the early 2020s, however, it takes a few years to manufacture the fuel and that is why this is currently an urgent issue.

Action item: The NUG executive committee will send a letter to the NIST laboratory directors thanking them on behalf of the NCNR user community for their support of the laboratory fuel costs.

The next CHRNS review will occur on April 27-28. The NCNR is in year 2 of a 5-yr grant which supports 30m SANS, USANS, backscattering, NSE, and MACS instruments. SANS and USANS instruments will be rotating off CHRNS and VSANS and CANDOR will be rotating on. The review will include a 30-min phone discussion with NUG executive committee members (likely on April 27).

Action item: Mike Crawford and Rafael Verduzco have agreed to attend the phone call on April 27.

The VSANS tank is now finished and shipping next week after a 13-month delay.

There will be an extended shutdown at the end of 2017 (Sept – Dec), during which the shim arms and primary cooling system for the reactor will be replaced.

NIST is in the process of redesigning web pages using a new system. The new format will be standardized across NIST, but will lose some functionality over the current system. The NCNR will convert web pages in which loss of functionality will not be an issue. Approximately 100 NCNR web pages will be redesigned and the NCNR would like the committee to provide input on them before they are rolled out to the general community. The websites will be finalized by the end of 2017.

The NCNR requests that the NUG executive committee assists with developing an exit survey for users (more details below).

Topic 3: Design and execution of new exit survey

The NUG executive committee will work with the NCNR to design a new exit survey for users. The link to this survey will be emailed to users at the end of their experiment. The goal is to identify any problems that users experience so that timely action can be taken to correct them. The survey will likely be conducted through survey monkey. A link will be posted on the NUG website. The NUG executive committee will review the survey responses, and then discuss with NCNR staff critical issues that arise and what steps should be taken to address them. The data collected from the surveys will also be saved for reporting purposes (such as for NSF).

Action item: The NUG executive committee and NCNR will work together to initiate the design of the exit survey. The NCNR will create an initial sketch of the survey, and then the NUG executive committee will provide input based on what would best serve the user community. Once the survey design is complete, the executive committee will execute the survey in survey monkey and post the link on the NUG website.

Topic 4: Updates to NUG website

Action item: The following changes will be made to the NUG website:

- The main page will be updated so that old information is removed.
- A summary of 2016 executive committee activities will be added to the main page.
- The executive committee information will be updated to reflect the new members.
- A webpage containing an archive of minutes of NUG executive committee meetings will be created. A link to this page will be posted on the NUG executive committee page.

Topic 5: Scheduling next phone call

The next phone conference of the NUG executive committee will occur in May.