

APSUO Executive Session Minutes
Friday, January 21, 2011
Building, 401, Room A5000

The group briefly revisited the topic of the impression that there is a bias against local users during proposal reviews and whether a remote access system for reviewers would offer any benefit. Recent management reviews of the APS-operated beamlines have revealed that there is a “pervasive perception” of bias against APS beamlines by the PRPs. Perhaps because APS researchers get 20% of beam time, the PRPs think that they are “greedy” in asking for more? Would remote participation provide an opportunity to diversify the PRP panelists a bit more? Alec Sandy noted that in his experience as a PRP reviewer, in proposals where there is a local scientist on the proposal and the science is a little bit on the edge, the proposal is perceived to be benefited by having a knowledgeable local staff person on hand. Other factors could be causing unfavorable reviews: a negative impact on scores can be the result of repeated proposal submissions w/o evidence of growth in scientific spectrum.

The group agreed that having remote access for PRP reviewers would be terrific. “Web-X” (Cisco) remote conferencing received high praise. “Go-to Meeting” was also mentioned but it was noted it was a bit buggy at the outset. Three meetings a year can be intimidating—the ability to do remote would possibly entice more people to consent to be in the pool for being on the panel.

Are beamline scientists being discriminated against because of policy? Are we asking the right questions about what is frustrating scientists? Language used on the reviews needs to be on point and not inflammatory. The Users Office screens the reviews coming out of the panels and reviews language to edit for grammar/spelling as well as language and tone.

Action Item: Ensure that Denny reviews the actual framework of how local researchers access beam time with the panel so that there is not any misconception about the reality.

Suggestion: if a reviewer could have three years of proposal submission history, scores and time allotted as well as number of publications, it could facilitate effective and accurate proposal reviews. It would be critical to be able to ensure that the data provided to reviewers is accurate and timely or else someone could get the wrong impression of someone’s accomplishments. (As an aside: Making users responsible for checking the APS database is also beneficial to make sure their data is correct.)

There have been several attempts to link the Pubs database with the general user system—however, they do not synchronize well.

Action Item: Would it be valuable to have an article in User News or in the call for proposals that would give tips on how to prepare a good proposal?

Action Item: User Office to work with Denny to broaden pool of reviewers. Continue to implement the plan for succession of reviewers. Denny to remind panel that the reviews are to be based on good science. APSUO get back to APS with recommendations for how to handle—discuss at closeout.

Routine Business: Minutes from the October 29, 2010 APSUO Steering Committee Meeting were approved with no additions/changes.

Planning for User Week 2011

Reviewed the draft schedule. The current version of schedule is the “dream list.” An alternate for Kirk could possibly be Judy Biggert. Norm Peterson will work on getting someone from the Hill. Cherry Murray (who was just on the Gulf oil spill panel). Peter asked group for possible speaker suggestions.

Compton Award committee: The award committee consists of the Chair and Vice Chair of APSUO plus chairs of PUC and SAC. **Action items:** The next issue of User News will have a reminder about submitting nominations. The APSUO steering committee needs to go out to beat bushes to seek work that has been done here.

Keynote speaker recommendations: Peter asked group for more names. A suggestion was made that it would be nice to have an energy angle for one of the keynotes. Potential speakers suggested include Matthew Terrell (materials science, UCSB), Jim Williams (materials science, just achieved emeritus at Ohio State), Tom Russell (Amherst), and Michael Rossman (Purdue). Could also “shop” names from workshops for potential speakers. Idea: what happened to the first Franklin award winner Alexis S. Templeton (geomicrobiology, Boulder, CO)?

Peter Eng volunteered to be Chair of the judging for the student poster prizes.

APSUO Committee Elections: Moved to nominate chair(s) of the APSUO Election Nominating Committee. Alec Sandy, Eric Dufresne, and Alfonso Mondragon will co-chair the 2011 nomination/election process. Briefly discussed basic procedure for procuring nominations and what each nominee will need to provide. **Action items:** User News will announce call for nominations in the February issue. Connie will set up a submissions e-mail alias for the three people on the nominating committee (Alec Sandy, Eric Dufresne, Alfonso Mondragon). Election results will be disseminated to winners in advance of the lunchtime meeting.

Draft list of speakers: **Action item:** On Wednesday, May 4, adjust times and add 7th speaker, 3:30-3:50 pm coffee, 3:50-4:00 pm student awards, 4:00-5:00 pm for town meeting with refreshments.

Workshops: Group reviewed the available space locations: (Lecture Hall, A5000, E1100-1200, A1100, Guest House, plus TCS spaces.

Discussion of the proposals for APS facility-specific workshops resulted in the selection of four full-day workshops and two-half day workshops. The specifics are below:

Approved Workshops:

WK1 (Full Day):

"Soft X-ray Crystallography"

Organizers: Bi-Cheng Wang, John Rose, Gerold Rosenbaum and John Chrzas

WK2 (Full Day):

"Beyond Decade 3: Synchrotron-based SAS in the Era of Complex Energy-Related Materials"

Organizers: B. Freelon, J. Ilavsky, P. Jemian, R. Winans, P. J. Vicarro

WK3 (Full Day):

"Opportunities in magnetic, atomic, and molecular dynamics with a short pulse soft x-ray source"

Organizers: David Keavney, Eric Dufresne, Yuelin Li

WK4 (Full Day):

"Intermediate-Energy X-rays: A Window Into Collective Behavior in Interacting Electron Systems"

Organizers: Peter Abbamonte, Juan-Carlos Campuzano, Jessica McChesney

WK5 (Half Day):

"Advances in Resonant Inelastic X-ray Scattering (RIXS)"

Organizers: Diego Casa, Mary Upton, Jung Ho Kim, Thomas Gog

WK6 (Half Day):

"Inelastic X-Ray Scattering at APS-U New ideas of application and methodology within the APS Upgrade"

Ercan Alp, Ayman Said, Ahmet Alatas, Jiyong Zhao, Bogdan Leu

Proposals not awarded a workshop slot:

"Synchrotron Research in Cultural Heritage Science"

Organizers: Francesca Casadio Katherine Faber Dean Heaffner, Volker Rose

Comments: Possibly invite someone from this proposed workshop as a keynote speaker for the APS Monday afternoon session.

"Terahertz Science at X-ray Light Source"

Organizers: Haidan Wen

Comments: Would be great to have Wen speak at a monthly meeting.

"Sample Alignment and X-ray Beam Diagnostics Techniques"

Organizers: Kazimierz Gofron

"Electrochemical Energy Storage"

Organizers: Olaf Borkiewicz, Damien Dambournet, Peter Chupas

Comments: Possibly invite someone from this proposed workshop as a keynote speaker for the APS Monday afternoon session.

Close Out: Peter Eng, Dennis Brown, Susan Strasser, Brian Stephenson, Dennis Mills

Peter reviewed User Meeting plans, including the requests to Eric Isaacs to invite a DOE speaker, as well as Cherry Murray to give a scientific keynote talk.

Dennis indicated that plans for the NUFO exhibition had been discussed with the Steering Committee. Suggestions for users to attend the APS poster at the exhibition will be sent to Susan Strasser. The Committee suggested that users located on the east coast should be considered first. Rafael Jaramillo, last year's Rosalind Franklin winner might be a good choice.