

## SHUG-EC Conference Call: Wednesday, September 13, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST

### Attendees (online):

ORNL: Jon Taylor, Janell Thomson, Travis Williams, Naresh Osti

External: Igor Zaliznyak, Mingda Li, Amy Xu, Ben Frandsen, Peter Gilbert, Yulia Zaikina

### Discussion items:

1. Neutron Sciences Directorate Update (Jon Taylor and Janell Thomson)
  - a. (Jon Taylor): The unique user numbers from SNS and HFIR are not high enough, and BES has implied that funding levels will be reduced if this is not corrected. Users per experiment have decreased from over 2 down to 1.4 on average. This has been a steady decline since 2018, not just due to Covid. (Note: This refers to active, participating users who show up on site or actively participate remotely, as verified by instrument team.) How can we address this? Communicate expectations to the community, make sure they are sending enough users to each experiment, think about requiring at least two users per experiment?
    - i. Igor: Two issues to think about. First, the efficiency (or lack thereof) when not enough users are sent, especially if they are new users, plus the additional load on instrument teams. Second, if an experienced student is sent and the PI is actively engaged as a remote user, this should be a viable solution.
    - ii. Mingda Li: One possible reason—grant funding levels per PI have remained relatively flat, but overhead and other costs continually increase, so travel becomes harder to support.
    - iii. Yulia Zaikina: Can mail-in programs be leveraged to increase this number via remote participation, since travel isn't required anyway? From Jon: Only one user per mail-in can be counted, so this may not help too much.
    - iv. Igor: Include team participation as an aspect of feasibility review. If the proposal doesn't indicate sufficient participation from users, then it could be deemed unfeasible.
    - v. Jon: Perhaps we should consider adding a question to the proposal process asking how many users will be sent.
    - vi. Mingda: Leverage personal relationships between instrument teams and user community to encourage/ask PIs to send more users.
    - vii. Jon: NSD will propose some wording changes and run them by SHUG-EC. Also check to see if some amount of operational funding could be used to provide travel funds for budget-restricted users.
  - b. Outreach Coordinator Update (Janell):
    - i. Janell has sent out the job description for internal review, including from SHUG-EC.
    - ii. Hoping for a candidate with some technical experience in neutrons or science, but also with 5+ years of experience in outreach-related fields.
    - iii. To-do: EC members carefully read the advertisement and send feedback to Janell.

2. Executive Committee election (Mingda Li and Igor Zaliznyak)
  - a. Last year's call for nominations will be tweaked by Ben to be sent out to the community by the end of this week.
  - b. Nominations will be submitted to Mingda. Should include short bios and a photo.
  - c. SHUG email will be sent out today; Janell will send it out beginning of next week, as well.
3. Onsite Visit Report
  - a. Sections have been assigned (see Google Doc)
  - b. Everyone should write their assigned sections by the end of September
  - c. Discussion/editing/polishing takes place in October leading up to our meeting, then we plan to submit the final version sometime in October after our meeting.