

## SHUG-EC Conference Call: Tues. April 14, 2020

Online:

- (I) ORNL: Adam, Crystal, Hans, Jaime, Janell, Ken, Eugene, Jay Jay
- (II) External: Olivier, Adrian, Martin, William, Danielle, Daniel, Geneva, Jarek, Dvora, Ally

Document approval:

- Minutes from March 2020 conference call: approve
- Agenda for April 2020 conference call: approve

### 1. NSD updates

- About 80% of ORNL staff members are currently working from home
- No visitors are currently allowed on the ORNL site
- COVID-19 research is taking place at ORNL, both at the supercomputing facilities and SNS. Neutron scattering experiments at BASIS and EQ-SANS started yesterday, and a MANDI experiment will start when there is enough material. COVID-19 experiments have also been proposed for some other SNS beamlines and these will begin later.
- HFIR will start April 28<sup>th</sup> to run COVID-19 experiments on GP-SANS, BIO-SANS, and IMAGINE.

### 2. User community outreach during pandemic and remote user program experiments

Adam's notes

- NSD could host webinars on neutron scattering topics of common interest, but faculty may not have the bandwidth to participate in them
- NSD could engage in online discussions with users through a Slack channel
- Instrument scientists could reach out to users about their current issues with data reduction, visualization, and analysis
- NSD should communicate new data reduction, visualization, and analysis developments to users (i.e. new data reduction and visualization scripts, new software etc.)
- Getting back to normal will likely be slow and include a phase where only "remote user program experiments" run. Expectations and parameters for these experiments need to be defined. This may need to be done on an instrument-by-instrument basis.

Additional notes from Janell

- From Daniel: Email blast from instrument scientists to users about the existing data reduction and analysis resources, that sums up everything so they can forward to their less experienced students — no need to make new content necessarily
- From Danielle: Since we moved on, I know we discussed that many graduate students are overwhelmed, but I would still think about having webinars geared towards graduate students. A lot of us have down time (I can only write papers for so long) that would be perfect to fill with learning opportunities. Perhaps a poll could be sent out?
- From Ken: there are entire lecture series on Soft Matter and Quantum Materials and Neutron Lifecycle at <https://neutrons.ornl.gov/neutrons-videos>
- From me: Talk to Communications group about tweeting some of our existing content

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Martin's observations:

- It is important to maintain a community around our shared neutron scattering facilities. Faculty and senior students/postdocs are likely fine but junior researchers such as debuting graduate/master/undergraduate students probably require increased attention and support. Work done to create the support structure now may serve us post-pandemic.
- Researchers are getting back at their "90%" analyzed data from N-years ago. Analysis scripts and routines may have changed, possibly causing frustration. In practice, these older projects may not need much to get "jump-started".
- Faculty and instrument scientists are probably swamped with online content production, "telecon surfing", and home duties. This leaves even less training opportunities for younger researchers given that the fabric of research groups is torn by physical distancing rules.
- A large amount of useful lectures, videos and tutorials about neutron scattering, instrumentation, and data analysis techniques exist and can be "dusted-up". Thus, the need to create new content appears limited. Instead, we need to call attention to existing resources.
- Some researchers may not have access to adequate software tools/licenses at their home.

Proposed action items and additional notes from Martin:

- (1) I've created a free Slack workspace for the SHUG-EC and perhaps ultimately for users — [ornl-shug.slack.com](https://ornl-shug.slack.com). I will send invites shortly. Some notes:
  - **Crystal** — please explore the possibility for ORNL to host that workspace. But see below:
  - SLACK allows to transfer ownership of a workspace so the issue of long-term sustainability is somewhat addressed.
  - The free version only allows 10,000 searchable messages, one advantage of ORNL hosting would be to upgrade to the enterprise level.
- (2) Because Slack is really just a convenient real-time chat, William proposed to create a stack-exchange which has the advantage of memory and searchability and as a consequence visibility. **William — please indicate which platform you are thinking about?**
- (3) **Hans/Crystal** — perhaps talk with your instrument scientists about the idea of an email blast to their beam-line users about existing data reduction and analysis resources, location and workings of the latest Mantid scripts, summing up everything in a concise way so that it can be circulated to less experienced users. This could also be a chance to ask feedback from users about their needs with their current/old data and if there are specific webinar needs they have.
- (4) **But, very important** — we need to find a balance between supporting users and not overwhelming ORNL staff.

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- (5) **EC** — using Slack, perhaps we can quickly compile a list of useful existing online resources. **Janell** — This could then be communicated to users in various ways: Twitter, a newsletter email, etc?
- (6) **Hans/Crystal/Janell** — for some young researchers, the resource [analysis.sns.gov](https://analysis.sns.gov) might be the only way to have access to software to analyze ORNL data. What are the conditions of access on analysis, namely does one need to be associated with an IPTS number?
- (7) **All** — think about how “remote experiments” would run in practice? One easy way I can imagine for two ways communication with instrument scientists is to create IPTS-specific Slack channels paired with online log-booking.

### 3. STS project and workshop report

- Three sections required for the workshop report are still missing: Quantum Materials, Soft Matter, and Environmental Science
- There will be future opportunities for external users to propose ideas for new STS instrument concepts

### 4. Next conference call: May 12, 2020, 4 PM