Online:

  ORNL: Hans Christen, Jamie Fernandez-Baca, Lisa Debeer-Schmitt, Janell Thomson, Travis Williams, Mark Lumsden

  External: Geneva Laurita, Adrian Brugger, Rana Ashkar, Daniel Shomaker, Yun Liu, Jaroslaw Majewski, Martin Mourigal, Olivier Delaire, William Ratcliff, Danielle Yahne

Document approval:

  Minutes from November 2020 conference call: approve

  Agenda for January 2021 conference call: approve

1. Welcome new members and introductions (Daniel)
2. Elections info and recurring meeting schedule (Daniel)
   a. Yun is running unopposed for vice chair
   b. Hoping to keep meeting time same for next year – will send doodle poll later
      1. **ACTION**: respond to poll when sent
   c. If no volunteer for secretary will be appointed at next meeting
3. Update from Mark Lumsden on the Remote Experiment Task Force
   a. Summary on preparing for remote experiment: definition, task force compilation, timeline, pilot program
   b. Goal is to enable remote user-controlled experiments on all instruments by end of 2021, starting with select SNS and HFIR instruments by February (ARCS, CNCS, POWGEN, and BioSANS)
   c. Highlights on modifications in data acquisition, protype user access system (currently undergoing testing), and other areas of note
      1. Proposal system modifications, training videos, slack, container loading documents
      2. Q: Does this mean that this will be a viable mode of operation in the future?
         a. Varies by instrument and community, but envision having a set number of days for remote vs onsite, and have the option to choose in proposal system
         b. Discussed some considerations of specific experiments (triple axis, single crystal alignment, etc.)
      4. Q: Can you find a technician for these things, or do you really want users in once vaccinated?
         a. Advantage to users on site (particularly in regards to sample prep or similar)
      5. Q: is this local at ORNL or in coordination with other national labs?
         a. Communication and engagement with other labs, but unique situation at ORNL so is principally an ORNL initiative
      6. Q: will there be the ability to have a hybrid team between remote and onsite users?
         a. Yes, this is a good solution and may make things easier I the future
         b. On one team you can have both remote and onsite users to work with a larger team
      7. Q: For physical beamlines, concern about operator fatigue, working alone, monitoring sample, etc. How are these hazards being handled?
         a. The nature of the types of experiments at the beamline is being considered, and instrument scientists have been asked what they are and aren't comfortable with
         b. Goal is to have every instrument have this capability, but may not be used as much on some; recognize it is not a one size fits all matter
         c. Discussed how this could impact users of certain communities/instruments
      8. Noted success of webcams and remote computer access at NIST
         a. Currently have integration into current software, but is being considered

9. Q: What is the current thinking about enabling current experiments with automated sample changers and environment?
   a. Doesn't work on every instrument but efforts underway to get this on instruments where feasible
10. Q: What is thinking behind modifications in proposal structure/system?
   a. Instrument team would make an assessment about remote vs in person and would block off based on instrument (pre-BAC meeting)
11. Q: Good to have collective feedback to see what types of experiment on a specific instrument might be more amenable to remote
12. Q: feedback strategy and communication?
   a. Still in progress; will still do traditional user survey, but should do another targeted survey to recent remote users
13. Q: can we have a remote preferred option, but could get beamtime if they can come on site?
   a. Yes
   b. Decouple feasibility from scientific; maybe SRC should not see preferred mode to avoid comments on this

3. Planning the CNMS/SHUG Joint Users Meeting in Summer 2021 (old schedule https://conference.sns.gov/event/81/) (Daniel, Martin, Janell?)
   a. Virtual meeting
   b. Looking for overarching themes on workshops/talks on what the user community might be interested in
   c. Need to finalize dates
      i. cannot have entire days blocked out, but don't have to worry about that from a booking perspective
      ii. **ACTION:** Daniel will work with Janell and will solicit from EC any overlap
         1. Neutron school in July
         2. Not clear if NCNR this summer
         3. Check with CNMS
      iii. Target date in July
   d. Note it is joint meeting with CNMS, so need to coordinate
   e. Need to keep in mind constraints without travel (associated industry day)
   f. **ACTION**: Both ORNL and EC members please consider priorities for the following:
   g. Plenary Speakers
      i. What topics do we really want to focus on here? DOE or NSF topics of interest?
         1. Martin: What other meetings are occurring that we can avoid date and topic overlap with?
            a. Yun discussed some ideas of NCNR school (in Feb, so no overlap with this)
   h. Tutorials and Focus Sessions
      i. Mixers via zoom (could use random breakout rooms to mingle); need to make sure a mix of levels
      ii. Panels of interest?
   i. Invited Speakers
   j. Engagement
      i. Particularly junior scientists
      ii. Poster sessions to get more students involved; use slack to have a thread for each poster for more real-time engagement
      iii. Could have separate zoom link for each poster

          iv. Live interaction between poster presenter and live audience crucial. A complete session can be in one zoom link, but each poster can be its own breakout room; gather app can also be used (may have some accessibility issues to be aware of)

    k. Awards

    l. New channel on Slack for brainstorming

4. Surveys/metrics on the user experience for external users and internal staff (ORNL, All)
   a. Skipped for now
   b. Q: What is the extent of knowledge for the outcome of prior experiments?
   c. Q: What information is valuable to collect and how can it lead to improved science and impact?
   d. Q: What are the ongoing initiatives at the lab or SHUG level to enrich the science done by users?

5. Q: What is the plan for supporting users before/during the Be reflector outage in 2023, and outages in general? (ORNL, All)
   a. Discussed overlaps of outage with NIST; hoping to not have complete overlap so there is some instrument availability
   b. Could check with Chalk River to see how they handled outages before
   c. Do no have exact dates for this
       i. Can we coordinate between NIST and ORNL to avoid overlap?
       ii. Be outage is timed based on number of cycles; slowing down cycles is the only degree of freedom; this is what will be used to make final decision of shutdown time
           1. Number of cycles run per year is approved by DOE
   d. How do we make sure users know this is coming up (at both ORNL and NIST), particularly for early career users?
       i. Long term operations website? Communication/announcements at meetings
       ii. Communicate with users the general window to prepare for, even if we don't know exact dates right now; ok to communicate uncertainty
   e. **ACTION**: Over next few days we will develop the language to communicate this with the user community

6. Virtual SHUG-EC on-site visit. Q: Specific requests from ORNL or the EC about what you want to include? (2019 Report and response attached here and posted to Slack) (Daniel)
   a. To be discussed later

7. Message to user community from 2021 SHUG? (Our next user newsletter goes out early-mid February)
   a. Will follow up via slack

8. Other
   a. Discussed update on STS; STS has been approved and search for instrument scientists underway; Discussed process of Be use and replacement

9. Next conference call: Tuesday February 9th, 4pm