

SHUG-EC Conference Call: Tues. Nov. 19, 2019

Present at ORNL:

Crystal, Eugene, Adam, Mathieu, Ken, Hans

Online:

Olivier, Martin, Stephen, Jarek, Ally, Sudipta

Document approval:

- Minutes from Oct. 2019 conference call: approve
- Agenda for Nov. 2019 conference call: approve

1. NSD updates and associated discussion

Currently, SNS and HFIR are both running well. HFIR cycle 484 will end on Sunday and cycle 485 will start on Dec. 17. The user office will send out awards and regrets for the 2020-A proposal call this week. NSD will present HFIR instrument upgrade information in webinar format before the 2020-B proposal call.

2. Scientific Computing and Software Engineering (SCSE) Group data reduction and analysis update

There is an ongoing effort to roll out a new SANS data reduction platform. The reduction software is complete. Instrument scientists are using it now and they are reporting integration problems to the SCSE Group. The target date for project completion is Dec. 31, 2019. It is important to note that the new data reduction format is compatible with most, if not all, SANS software analysis packages. The SHUG-EC suggested incorporating some outside users as beta testers of the new package.

3. STS workshop discussion

This workshop will take place on Dec. 9 and 10. The SHUG-EC members should advertise this workshop at every opportunity and let people know that they can even participate remotely. Currently, there are 128 people registered for the workshop. Assistance with lodging and travel expenses will be provided by ORNL for SHUG-EC members. This offer does not extend to all general SHUG members, but we may be able to make exceptions in a few cases. We should let Ken Herwig know if any specific names come to mind for receiving this support. We also need to try to increase workshop participation from the University of Tennessee.

4. User Liaison Position discussion

Historically, there has been no independent feedback delivered to NSD management regarding how users feel about different aspects of the user program. NSD would like to create a position to address this issue. When this person is first hired, they will focus on the data reduction needs

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of users, but they will also engage in more general conversations with users and report concerns and current issues back to management. This person will also help guide our outreach efforts and help us revise user surveys to make them as useful as possible. Hans asked the SHUG-EC for their feedback on this position. The comments and questions were as follows:

- Very interesting idea, efforts to reach out to users appreciated
- Do other user facilities have similar positions? Answer: Not generally, but they are not unprecedented.
- Difficult job and it will be hard for this person to capture feedback across the board in a holistic manner
- What are the performance metrics of this position? Answer: Needs more thought.
- This position will be helpful to the user community and should be staffed by someone who is already quite familiar with the neutron scattering user community
- This person should work closely with SHUG-EC
- This person should follow up with users to determine if the problems they raised have been solved. Very important.
- This person should go around to beamlines near the end of experiments and ask for in-person feedback on the user's experience.

Hans also encouraged the SHUG-EC to get back to him with additional feedback at their earliest convenience.

5. Annual meeting for executive committees of user facilities

Olivier and Crystal went to this meeting; they found it to be very informative. Oliver sent SHUG-EC members the slides from a talk given by Gavin Davies, the former chair of the Fermilab User group Executive Committee. Some of the information in this presentation may help us come up with good ideas and inspiration for outreach efforts, in particular for advocacy to Congress. It is useful for executive committees and Congress to engage in these conversations directly rather than only using user facility management as an intermediary.

6. 2019 SHUG-EC report

A draft of the 2019 SHUG-EC report exists, and Olivier has shared it with all EC members. He wants our final feedback by early next week so a final report can be submitted to NSD shortly after Thanksgiving.

7. 2020 SHUG-EC on-site meeting

ORNL staff recommends scheduling the SHUG-EC on-site meeting earlier in the year, shortly after the new executive committee has been established. This change would allow the members to meet each other earlier in their tenures and probably help to make subsequent conference calls more productive. Another option would be to keep the SHUG-EC on-site meeting in the summer months and then to move the yearly election to a different time. The SHUG-EC needs to discuss these possible changes further.

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8. 2020 SHUG-EC election update

Over 300 people have now voted on the three open general positions and the student/postdoc position. Voting has not closed yet, so we are still waiting on the results. We don't have a great mechanism in place to prevent people from voting twice, so we need to revisit this issue in the future.

9. Next conference call: Dec. 17, 2019, 3 PM