



Users Executive Committee Chairperson Report

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Boston University

Friday September 15, 2017

Notes

SSURF-sponsored Teleconference With User Representatives

July 14, 2017

Known Participants: Jason Benedict (moderator), Blaine Mooers, Jen Bohon, David Gilbert, Susan White-De Pace, Paul Runci, Don Dimarzo, Crystal Schrof, David Martin, Alie Courtis, Jeff Benson, Ed Kearns, Eric Fromo, Larry Berg, Heather Crawford, David Bushnell, Jen Bohon, Grace Webster, Cathy Knotts, Monti Blume, Kelly Guiffreda, Kenneth Janson, Jodi Muckelbauer, John Smedley, Stephen Streiffer. Records indicate that 29 people attended this teleconference; apologies for the missing names.

- Paul Runci provided an introduction to SSURF, its history and mission, and planned upcoming activities, including a user science exposition on Capitol Hill, SSURF-sponsored Congressional staff visits to facilities, and a pilot program for training reciprocity across facilities. He asked UEC chairs to encourage their facilities to join SSURF, if they have not already done so. No user meeting this year.
- SSURF should create a table of current organizational members and website for easy reference.
- What are some effective ways the UEC chairs can mobilize the community users quickly for outreach to Congress, when necessary? Some participants thought that a SSURF listserv could be a valuable platform for this purpose. It would also be helpful to have a common text/script available to help UEC members and users with outreach to elected officials. SSURF can provide the platform for UEC chair coordination and could help with development of scripts of this nature, provided they stop short of lobbying (i.e., making specific funding or policy requests).

Fermilab is already a member. I don't know who is the contact person.



<http://www.ssurf.org>

Was NUFO ... National User Facility Organization

- 1997 first formal meeting of user administrators
- 2003 user organization representatives included in meeting
- 2006 user community elects NUFO steering committee
- 2010 USA Science & Engineering Festival
- 2011-2014 annual Capitol Hill User Science Expo
- 2016 SSURF incorporation

Why SSURF?

- Education and outreach on behalf of the community as a whole.
- Third-party validation of user science.
- Coordination among facilities for benchmarking, best practices, and operational improvement.
- Coordination with/among academic and industrial users.

Mission

“Purpose. (...)advancing the science performed at user research facilities by (1) supporting their professional communities and research networks through the sharing of best practices and facilitation of professional development, and (2) promoting public awareness about the benefits and significance of the facilities and their research.”

- SSRL has just gone through the process of contacting all of its users, which was a tedious process. The existence of standing SSSURF listservs would be a tremendous time saver. NUFO maintained listservs of this nature and they still exist, but need to be updated. The challenge is maintaining the listservs to keep them current. Could UECs work with SSURF to keep the listservs up to date?
- Other proposed roles that SSURF might play to assist the UECs and user communities:
 - Work with DOE on rewriting of Order on Foreign Visits; advise Sec. Perry on immigration;
 - Coordinate activities of other scientific societies (ACS, APS, MRS, etc.) as they relate to user science interests;
 - Post common calendar of events that facilities might refer to in scheduling meetings, allowing them to avoid scheduling conflicts; list workshops, UEC annual meetings, annual meetings, scientific society meetings, conferences, etc.
- How can UECs better coordinate to enable themselves to operate more effectively?
- Participants proposed a dedicated UEC Chair session at the SSURF annual meeting.

- Future SSURF-UEC teleconferences should be scheduled quarterly or no more than bi-monthly; create schedule to synchronize with key federal budget dates (e.g., passback, release of President's Request, Congressional appropriations cycle) to allow UECs to engage effectively. (Paul R. will send chart illustrating 2-yr federal budget process).
- Subgroup teleconferences for NSF UEC Chairs would be valuable and would allow these individuals to coordinate meetings with NSF program managers, etc.
- Blaine Mooers briefed the group on the transition of SSRL to "warm standby" status in early 2018, as proposed in the President's FY18 Budget Request. SSRL's UEC mobilized users to contact their members of Congress.
- Someone suggested that the NSLS UEC could share its experience in facilitating the transition of users to other facilities in the event of the shutdown of a facility. They went through this experience with the transition from NSLSI to NSLSII.
- How well-coordinated are UECs with the government affairs activities of their facilities and national laboratories? There may be a need to coordinate/share information and messaging.
- SSURF could play a role in information coordination by linking UECs, labs, and universities, for example via coordination with university groups like Association of American Universities (AAU) and Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU).
- Since SSURF has applied for 501(c)(3) non-profit status, it cannot engage in lobbying activities.
- One participant raised the issue of the importance of data centralization to make it more publicly available to the scientific community. This topic might be a good candidate for a session at the FY18 SSURF annual meeting.
- It might be useful to dedicate an upcoming UEC Chair call to the question of listservs. There may be some hurdles to overcome to enable SSURF to create listservs, since it may be necessary to avoid use of .gov, and some .edu email addresses. What mechanisms do people currently use to manage listservs.

Facility Membership Fees

- Annual fee based on facilities' operating budgets
 - <\$30M: \$2500
 - \$30M-\$90M: \$5000
 - \$90M+: \$7500

SSURF membership fees are allowable expenses (FAR 31.205-43)

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Individual Membership Categories:

- Professional: \$30
- Postdocs: \$15
- Students: Membership is free for students utilizing user facilities and students enrolled in graduate and undergraduate programs.

My impressions (ETK):

- (1) My overall impression is of a somewhat diffuse organization without a clear mandate. Maybe smaller facilities than FNAL get value.
- (2) There are some very serious issues like facilities shutting down altogether
- (3) We are way ahead of them on Government Relations.
Maybe we can help them, but I don't see getting them to help us.
- (4) I find the membership drive off-putting, and would not recommend that we forward any kind of individual membership solicitation.
- (5) Minor action item. They want to know when our Users Meeting is.
I have told them.
- (6) Our web page side bar links to NUFO. Replace with SSURF.