



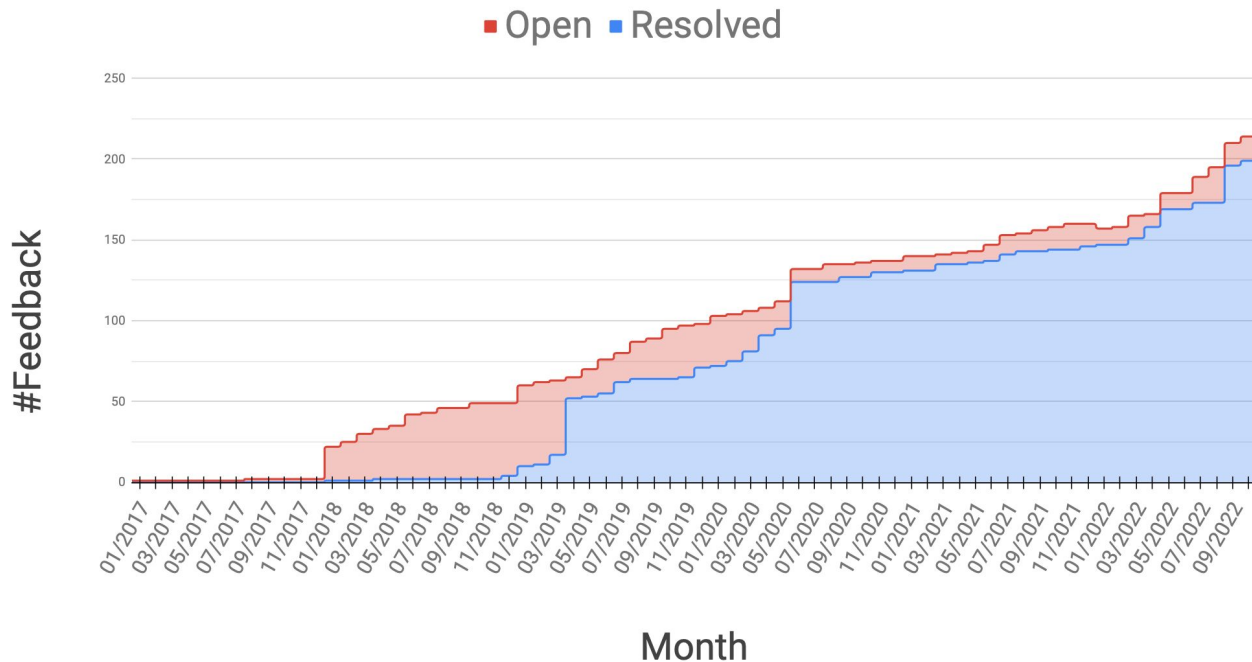
Quality of Life Sub-Committee

28 October, 2022
Richard Cavanaugh

QoL Feedback Overview

UEC Feedback

**4 new issues received during last month.
3 issues closed during last month.**



(*) Includes items we don't publish

Open

(*) Excludes items we don't publish

COUNT of Category	Responsible	
	QoL	Total
QoL	14	14
Grand Total	14	14

4 New Issues Since Last Month

New issues: 2018 Incident of Sexual Harassment – Feedback #1

- Regarding the recent news outlined here (see right) -- there was a report to Fermilab in 2018. This was before the Fermilab Concerns system and before progressive enforcement, and when these articles have been brought up in various forums, leadership keep pointing to the new systems. However, no one seems to have a clear answer about who investigates the reports and whether they have changed along with these new systems. How can we say that this report would have a different outcome if it was reported now if the same people are investigating? Why is this aspect of the reporting system never discussed? The original Fermilab Works announcement when Fermilab Concerns went live stated that there would be "subject matter experts" who investigate reports, but if you open up the reporting system itself it only indicates that general counsel, deputy general counsel, and a legal operations manager will see and investigate the report. So are lawyers who represent Fermilab and not Users the only "subject matter experts" regarding things like sexual assault? Or are we expecting victims of sexual assault to report without knowing who exactly will get to see the private details of their assaults? Frankly, both of these options are unacceptable.

Support the Guardian
Available for everyone, funded by readers
Contribute → Subscribe →

Sign in The Guardian
News website of the year

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

UCL (University College London)

Former UCL academic to pay damages after harassing colleague for months

Christopher Backhouse falsely portrayed Erica Smith as a sex worker and signed her up for far-right groups and fetish websites



University College London. Photograph: peterspiro/Getty Images/iStockphoto

New issues: 2018 Incident of Sexual Harassment – Feedback #2

- As a user I've been extremely disappointed by the Fermilab's lack of public accountability in the Chris Backhouse case, especially given the publicity it's garnered. I'm especially angry about the lack of a statement addressing why "no finding of fact" was made concerning the original sexual assault allegations. The fact that the lab appears to be just hoping the issue will blow over, and not engaging in any kind of self-reflection to identify what investigative processes failed and how they need to be improved makes it extremely hard for me to sell Fermilab as a safe place to send my future students and postdocs. Since the case became public I've heard substantial conversation among junior scientists that suggest that Fermilab continues to be a place where they need to "watch their backs"---they could be assaulted or harassed by another member of a collaboration they're part of, and despite credible evidence, there could be no repercussions. This is a disaster and I think without owning the situation publicly, it will reflect on Fermilab's reputation over the long haul. At minimum, I expected a public statement (a) condemning the behavior; (b) acknowledging that an investigation was made after the original allegations and a summary statement as to why no finding of fact was made; (c) explaining the process by which the lab intends to do better, with a rough timeline.

Support the Guardian
Available for everyone, funded by readers
Contribute → Subscribe →

Sign in The Guardian
News website of the year

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

UCL (University College London)

Former UCL academic to pay damages after harassing colleague for months

Christopher Backhouse falsely portrayed Erica Smith as a sex worker and signed her up for far-right groups and fetish websites



University College London. Photograph: peterspiro/Getty Images/iStockphoto

New issues: 2018 Incident of Sexual Harassment – Feedback #3

- I am concerned that the fermilab system for reporting harrassment is not fit for purpose. I have recently learned that a case brought against Mr. Backhouse in 2018 was inconclusive. This opened the door for years of ensuing harrassment. The [fermilab compaints system seems like a critical point of failure in this whole story.](#) I understand that the complaints system has since been updated, but [without more transparency about failure points which have been remedied I see no reason for users to feel safe working with / for fermilab](#)

Support the Guardian
Available for everyone, funded by readers
Contribute → Subscribe →

Sign in The Guardian
News website of the year

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

UCL (University College London)

Former UCL academic to pay damages after harassing colleague for months

Christopher Backhouse falsely portrayed Erica Smith as a sex worker and signed her up for far-right groups and fetish websites



University College London. Photograph: peterspiro/Getty Images/iStockphoto

New issues: 2018 Incident of Sexual Harassment – Feedback #4

- It seems like there was at least one complain filed against Chris Backhouse at Fermilab failed to find any wrongdoing. Can we get any transparency around how many complaints were filed? And what steps were taken? To us it directly looks like a failure of the reporting system and subsequent actions that could've prevented such horrible harassment to occur. We have heard multiple times that the reporting system has been updated and we should encourage everyone to use it but how are we to trust that if things were reported now the consequences would be any different? We have also heard no general statement from the lab leadership on this incident.

Support the Guardian
Available for everyone, funded by readers
Contribute → Subscribe →

Sign in The Guardian
News website of the year

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

UCL (University College London)

Former UCL academic to pay damages after harassing colleague for months

Christopher Backhouse falsely portrayed Erica Smith as a sex worker and signed her up for far-right groups and fetish websites



University College London. Photograph: peterspiro/Getty Images/iStockphoto

3 Closed Issues Since Last Month

Closed Issue

- Question about resuming Intensity Frontier Fellowships
- Paraphrased feedback: Is there any plan for opening Intensity Frontier Fellowships application (https://www.fnal.gov/pub/forphysicists/fellowships/intensity_frontier/index.html)?
- Follow up:
 - Reply from Joe Zennamo (Neutrino Physics Center Coordinator)
 - Currently, the funding for these programs and the NPC Fellowship Program is requested through an annual proposal submitted to the DOE. Over the past few years, these proposals have not been funded, which has led to these programs being put on hold. In the coming years, we will continue to submit these proposals with the hope of receiving these programs.
 - The Fermilab UEC could help by encouraging your members to reach out to their program managers and highlighting how critical these programs (and hence the funding for them) are to the Users' community.

Closed Issue

- Question about resuming NPC Fellowships at Fermilab
- Paraphrased feedback: I am eagerly looking forward to reopening of NPC fellowship program at Fermilab and wondering when this will happen?
- <https://npc.fnal.gov/neutrino-visiting-scholar-program/>
- Follow up:
 - Reply from Joe Zennamo (Neutrino Physics Center Coordinator)
 - Currently, the funding for these programs and the NPC Fellowship Program is requested through an annual proposal submitted to the DOE. Over the past few years, these proposals have not been funded, which has led to these programs being put on hold. In the coming years, we will continue to submit these proposals with the hope of receiving these programs.
 - The Fermilab UEC could help by encouraging your members to reach out to their program managers and highlighting how critical these programs (and hence the funding for them) are to the Users' community.

Closed Issue

- Question about US-India Collaboration
- Paraphrased feedback: many students are not able to travel Fermilab on [the] Neutrino Program and it is not clear now when this funding will be available.?
- Follow up:
 - Reply from Jon Paley
 - At the moment I oversee both the Intensity Frontier Fellowships and the International Student Program at Fermilab (which covers the funding for the Indian students to spend time at Fermilab working with Fermilab Scientists). As with the NPC Fellowship Program, these are funded by the DOE via a specific proposal and are not part of the normal Fermilab budget. Even before the pandemic we were struggling to get consistent (year-to-year) funding for all of these programs, and over the past few years these programs were considered too low priority and were not funded at all once the DOE figured out how to distribute the funds they were provided with all of the caveats and strings attached by Congress. A strong push from Fermilab's Users to re-establish these programs would really help.

11 Old Issues that Remain Open

Five Open Issues Related to Lab Access

- Lab access has reached crisis levels for much of Fermilab's User Community
 - [Represents 5 of the old 11 open issues](#)
- There appear to be two broad categories of issues:
 - DOE directives / policies are currently severely and negatively impacting Fermilab's core mission, which is founded on a strong user community
 - Can only be addressed at a high level by the Fermilab Directorate
 - There should be site and access differentiation based on levels of sensitive information – Fermilab has almost no sensitive information related to national security
 - Fermilab's Implementations of those directives / policies have been short-handed:
 - Resulting in confusion & high levels of frustration within broader user & employee communities
 - Recent good experience today, but study (possibly adopt) procedures from other labs.
 - Meeting scheduled next week to address this.
- Both of those issues are detrimental to the future of Fermilab
 - Brought to the attention of the FNAL Director in a monthly UEC Meeting.
- Update:
 - Some of the specific issues raised, related to lab access, are candidates for closing
 - E.g. time required for renewal of onboarding - 6 months (not req'd) vs 1 year (curr. req'd) vs 3 years (possible?)
 - However: recent visitor experience at other Labs (e.g. SLAC) seems to be very different than at FNAL

Five Open Issues Related to Blocking Whatsapp

- Issue with blocking access to Whatsapp
- Paraphrased feedback: Whatsapp should be accessible on Fermilab site. Useful for communicating with colleagues and family in Europe.
- Follow up:
 - Represents 5 of the 11 old open feedback issues. This is one of the primary means for communication for many Fermilab users onsite, especially international users.
 - Contacted Jon Bakken: The WhatsApp blockage came as a directive from Washington, and we were required to make sure the app wasn't on any equipment owned by the government and to block it on all Fermi networks. Security asked our DOE AO (authorizing agent) to allow WhatsApp on the Guest network. This request was denied.
 - The networking team has designed a separate network segment. If approved, the network will only initially be available as a wireless network around housing units (houses, dorms) in the village, require registration for the device and approval of the individual wanting to use the network. If the DOE AO approves this, we plan to ask for approval to deploy the network lab wide.
 - Security will start to communicate the proposal to DOE this week. If it gets approval, we believe it will take 1-2 months to configure the network to accomplish the goal.
- Update: recent experience at other Labs (e.g. SLAC) seems to be very different!

One Open Issue Related to Meeting Room Reservations

- Long standing issue with WH meeting room reservations
- Feedback:
 - From FSPA officers: There is a recurrent problem FSPA has with room reservations. Just this past month, we had 3 occasions in which we had the room reserved for an event and couldn't use it. First there was a DUNE review going on in it, nobody notified us and I had to stay at the door redirecting people to another room we had to book last minute. The second, a week before NP we received an email re-allocating us to Curia II (which doesn't comfortably fit 50 ppl with social distancing) because they said they needed the auditoriums for some DOE review, and that took precedence over room reservations. A few days later they notified us again changing their mind. Lastly, we arrived this morning to start NP at One west and there was a training going on in it! The whole conference schedule is late because of it. It is just too difficult to keep organizing events like this.
- Follow up:
 - This was brought up in a UEC/directorate meeting. Hema mentioned that there is a limited Zoom availability of rooms and the reviews happen to change at the last minute from fully zoom to in person to hybrid and we had to accommodate.
 - Still following this issue:
 - This is a communication problem
 - Would like to see tangible improvements about how changes in room reservations are communicated

Summary

- 4 new issues reported since last UEC Meeting
 - All related to a 2018 incident of sexual harassment
- 3 open issues closed, but remain a discussion topic
 - All related to funding for guests & visitors to neutrino programme
- 11 old issues remain open
 - 5 related to Lab access
 - 5 related to WhatsApp
 - 1 related to conference room scheduling