**ESCOP Science & Technology  
Call Notes: June 22, 2015 @ 4 pm ET  
215-446-3656, ACCESS CODE: 1442561**

**Committee Members:**

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Chair:** John Russin (SAAESD) | | | |  |  |  | | **Delegates:** |  |  | | Larry Curtis (WAAESD) | | | | David Thompson (WAAESD) | | | | Joe Colletti (NCRA) | | | | Deb Hamernik (NCRA) | | | | Cameron Faustman (NERA) | | | | Adel Shirmohammadi (NERA) | | | | Nathan McKinney (SAAESD) | | | | Harald Scherm (SAAESD) | | | | Teferi Tsegaye (ARD) | | | | Marikis Alvarez (ARD)\* | | | |  |  |  | | **Executive Vice-Chair** | | | | Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA) | | | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Liaisons:** | | | | | Terry Nelsen (ERS) | | | | | Cliff Gabriel (OSTP) Adrianna Hewings (ARS) | | | | | Frank Zalom (Pest Mgmt Subcom) | | | | | Edwin Price (ICOP) | | | | | Scott Loveridge (Social Sci Subcom) | | | | | Parag Chitnis (NIFA) | | | | | Denise Eblen (NIFA) | | | | |  | | | | |  |  |  |  | |  | | | | |  | | | | |  | | | |   **\*Chair elect** |

**Action Items**

1. The June 1, 2015 call notes were approved and Chris Hamilton uploaded them to the ESCOP website.
2. Please mark your calendars for our next call: Monday, August 24, at 4 pm ET (same numbers as above).
3. Jeff/Chris will look over today’s call notes and synthesize a focused agenda for August 24.
4. Plan to attend our October 1, 2015 face-to-face meeting from 8 am to 12 noon at the Ballantyne Hotel, Charlotte, NC.

**Call Notes**

1. Roll Call: Larry Curtis, David Thompson, Joe Coletti, Deb Hamernik, Adel Shirmohammadi, Harald Scherm, Marikis Alvarez, Parag Chitnis, Denise Eblen, Jeff Jacobsen, Chris Hamilton (recorder)
2. Review Minutes and Approve (6/1/2015 Call): Approved
3. Open Access Data Introductory Discussion:

Parag Chitnis of NIFA gave a brief introduction into the open access to federally funded data and scholarly publications resulting from the OSTP and OMB mandates, indicating that NSF and NIH have had the practice in place for a number of years, requiring two-page data management plans be submitted with all grant applications. USDA-NIFA’s will mirror NSF and NIH with the two-page data management plan (DMP) requirement. NIFA has already instituted this policy through a pilot program with select competitive 2015 RFAs as a way to elicit stakeholder feedback. FY2016 RFAs will all include the two-page data management plan requirement for all competitive RFAs. The direct cost of publications and data management can be included into the grant budget. Specific standards of data management will be left up to the policies or best practices of the given research communities/professional societies, since definitions of ‘raw data’ through data needed to replicate the research are dependent on the given field.

Below is a summary of the S&T Committee’s comments, questions, and call discussion:

Q: Will NIFA increase allowable requests on grants to cover the costs of data management above the stated grant maximum amounts? A: It will depend upon the authorizations and appropriations of the budget in question. Some programs are more flexible than others; however, no new money has been allocated for this new requirement.

Concurrently, there has been a proliferation of open access journals, resulting in page charges being reinstituted to researchers desiring to publish in these types of journals. This is a change from the past practices, whereby library subscription fees and faculty memberships to professional societies, in general, used to cover publication costs. Often, these charges result after the grant has already ended. Are there best practices for dealing with this? Perhaps include an item in the budget for publication costs?

Preliminary Data management options:

* Should NIFA create and fund its own, centralized data repository? It’s an issue of cost. Funding for this would come out of existing research funds; NIFA does not currently have the funds to cover such a program. NIFA has discussed the option of creating competitive grant programs to explore open access alternatives with publications and data. NIFA and ESCOP would need to work together to encourage Congress to increase funding for such a program.
* Can (should) local university libraries or research offices take on this task? Possibly, although perhaps different locations would have different specialties. University libraries are well-equipped to handle publications, but can they handle the much more complex facet of open access with data?
* Discussion ensued on alternative models with a single university or consortium of institutions securing funds to host digital data. Regional centers might be an alternative to every institution having to do their own across disciplines and funding agencies. Some discussion reflected upon the issue across all 1862s and 1890s. Again, ESCOP and NIFA would need to work together to petition Congress for new funding to support such a program.
* Other?

How do we address the long-term, post-grant, costs of data management? How can we build these costs into grants? Are there other ways universities are funding these? What is the cost of implementing this across all institutions?

Ultimately, we need more money to meet the requirements of this unfunded mandate. Where would these funds come from? Petition Congress to increase NIFA funding? Request increases to Capacity funds? Should we be looking elsewhere besides federal grants to fund data management?

How do we address researchers who conduct their research with a variety of funding sources, including federal, state, commodity, foundation, etc.? At what threshold of funding are the data and publications considered applicable to this mandate through us of federally funded research? Currently, there is no formal NIFA policy on this.

Should the S&T committee reach out to our research communities/societies and collect information and feedback on their current and future activities associated with open access to publications and data? The tri-societies (SSSA/CSSA/ASA) and entomology groups are already involved; this is also an opportunity to reach out to animal science groups. Yes, perhaps this can be a role of this group. We may need this information or some representative samples from these sources to be able to estimate the actual costs of publications and data management and the human, physical and financial resources needed.

NIFA is happy to receive feedback at any time on this data policy. They consider this a gradual approach (and have published a three-year implementation plan) and would like to incorporate stakeholder feedback to ensure that this is not an unnecessary burden without benefit.

Path forward from this call: Jeff and Chris will discuss the call notes and work to synthesize a focused agenda for our next call. This discussion will likely carry forward over a few calls and the October 1 meeting. This Committee would then make a formal policy recommendation to ESCOP, which would then be directed to NIFA, hopefully by this fall/early winter. Parag indicated NIFA is happy to receive feedback at any time and that a timeframe of this fall would great.

Call adjourned at 4:59 pm ET.