



eRA Project Team Meeting Minutes

Date: Tues., Sept. 10, 2002
Time: 9:00–9:45 a.m.
Location: 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205
Chair: Jim Cain

Next Meeting: Tues., Sept. 24, 9 a.m., 6700 B Rockledge, Room 1205

Action Items

1. (Scarlet Gibb) Prepare notification of Oct. 12, IMPAC II downtime and distribute it to the user community.
2. (Tim Twomey) Send Thor Fjellstedt a list of institutions registered in Commons so he can contact their PIs regarding the capabilities of Commons 2.

Retreat Update

Carla Flora

The eRA retreat will be held at the Airlie Center in Warrenton, Virginia (www.airlie.com) on Thurs.–Fri., October 10–11. The agenda is being finalized. To get an idea of attendance, the group was asked to indicate on a sign-up sheet if they planned to attend and whether they needed accommodations for Thursday night. Patti Rodbell is the contact for logistics and can be reached by phone at 50923 and by email at rodbellp@od.nih.gov.

New Role for Tim Twomey

Jim Cain

Jim Cain announced that Tim Twomey is now the lead analyst, task manager, and single point of contact for the Commons. This occurred, in large part, because of the departure of Jerry Stuck to the National Science Foundation (NSF) and a clear need for someone to take over full responsibility for the eRA Commons site. Tim will have responsibility, along with the authority, to direct development and deployment activities, thus removing any ambiguity in working with Commons developers. Tim will work closely with his counterpart at NGIT to deploy the Commons.

Commons Update

Tim Twomey

Tim reported a revision of the Commons tentative deployment schedule as follows:

Previous Date	Previous Schedule	Stage	Revised Tentative Schedule	Revised Date
Aug. 22	Three external organizations in Staging (Northwestern, UCLA, Dartmouth)	1	Three external organizations in Staging (Northwestern, UCLA, Dartmouth)	Aug. 22
Sept. 6	Three external organizations in Production	2	CWG in Staging	Sept. 12
Sept. 22	CWG in Production	3	CWG in Production	Oct. 14
Oct. 14	185 external organizations in Production	4	185 external organizations in Production	Nov. 14

Tim reported the following Commons' activities:

Date	Activity
Sept. 1	Version 1.8.4 moved to Commons production. This version included most of the changes originally scheduled for Stage 2 deployment.
Sept. 11	Commons stress test conducted using Mercury.
Sept. 12	Replication stress testing conducted.
Sept. 13	Version 1.8.5 scheduled to move to Commons production. This version will include most Stage 3 and user interface fixes that have been identified.
Sept. 18	Demonstration at the Commons Working Group meeting.
Oct. 4	Code freeze for the Nov. 1 deployment.
Nov. 1	Deployment, including eSnap, Financial Status Report (FSR) and Internet Assisted Review (IAR).

Tim noted that Commons version, 1.8.5, will include: user registration, Profile update, Status of applications, Summary Statements (available to registered PIs only), notice of grant award, and organizational hierarchy updates. There is a "new organization" feature but it will be turned off for this release since there will be no new organizations testing it.

IMPAC II will be shut down on Sat., Oct. 12, so that the Commons can be moved to production. This is a holiday weekend (Columbus Day is on Monday) so the shutdown should cause a minimum of disruption.

Eileen Bradley suggested that those possibly affected by the shutdown, Review in particular, be notified immediately so that they can be prepared for it.

Action: (Scarlet Gibb) Prepare notification of Oct. 12, IMPAC II downtime and distribute it to the user community.

Tim said that there are 2,000 PIs registered in Commons 1, and, of those, about 200–300 use Commons often. All registered PIs will be notified about the release, features and functionality of Commons 2. Thor said that PIs should be notified that Summary Statements would be available in Commons. Tim agreed to send Thor a list of registered institutions so that he could contact some of their PIs.

Action: (Tim Twomey) Send Thor Fjellstedt a list of institutions registered in Commons so he can contact their PIs regarding the capabilities of Commons 2.

Business Plan Discussion

Donna Frahm/Stefanie Geaney

Feedback from last year’s process for preparing business plans indicated that more time was required to prepare a comprehensive and accurate business plan. Consequently, the schedule for preparing business plans will begin in October. Stefanie Geaney said that input is still welcome regarding how to improve the process.

Last year, advocates, working with analysts, developers and user groups, generated business plans using a “bottom-up” approach. Because so many of the initiatives overlap and affect more than one business area, a suggestion is on the table for a more “top-down” approach this year. The environment is different than it was a year ago, and when an integrated functional architecture is in place to identify overlaps and dependencies, a “top down” approach is more feasible. However, adoption of this type of approach would require that business areas relinquish some of their autonomy.

Marcia Hahn remarked that this approach would certainly solve some of the issues of overlap where new innovations affect more than one business area. It also may mitigate dependencies that in the past have shown up too late in the process.

Stefanie said that the business plans have been very useful, particularly when responding to requests from the OMB for planning information. Because of the 2002 business planning process, our responses to OMB have been well received, and other agencies have contacted us for best practices.

Stefanie asked that all input regarding the business plan preparation process be sent to her by Friday (geaneys@od.nih.gov).

Attendees

Austin, Patti (OD/OER)	Cox, Michael (OER)	Hahn, Marcia (OER/OPERA)
Bradley, Eileen (CSR)	Fjellstedt, Thor (OD/OER)	Hall, Dan (Z-Tech)
Cain, Jim (OER)	Flora, Carla (OER)	Hausman, Steve (NIAMS)
Christian, Vonetta (LTS)	Frahm, Donna (OER)	Hughes, Steve (NCI)
Collie, Krishna (RN Solutions)	Geaney, Stefanie (SOZA)	Miller, Maeve (LTS)
Copeland Sewell, Zoe-Ann (OD/OER)	Ghassemzadeh, Ali (OER)	Moore, Bob (OD/OER)
	Gibb, Scarlett (OER)	Morton, Larry (OD/OER)

Panniers, Richard (CSR)
Patel, Kalpesh (Ekagra)
Pearson, Johnnie (Z-Tech)
Rodbell, Patti (LTS)
Seppala, Sandy (LTS)
Seto, Belinda (OER)

Silver, Sara (Z-Tech)
Soto, Tracy (OD/DEIS)
Spitzberg, Bobbi (OER)
Stuck, Jerry (OER/OD)
Tucker, Jim (OER)
Twomey, Tim (OD)

Van Brunt, Virginia (LTS)
Vess, Nancy (NIGMS)
Wallace, Patrick (LTS)
Zucker, Sherry (OD/DEIS)