# UAC Issue #1: The User Experience

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- We strongly support efforts to organize uniform data transfer and urge that this be a priority.

- We support the idea of hiring or training staff with cross cutting capabilities.

- We support efforts to integrate simulation, computation, and experimentation.

- We support releasing data to the public after an appropriate period and with credit given to the research group(s) that participated in data acquisition. <u>But</u> there are caveats that should be addressed before implementing such a policy.

- We recommend that efforts be increased to provide an appropriate level of user training (including prior to arrival) and support after departure.

- We recommend that PNNL hold a workshop (capability based) in the summer of 2010. Selection of capability should be made by EMSL staff. Efforts should be made to leverage funding so that more than one can be held per year.

- Hiring of senior leaders is applauded, but it should not be at the expense of staff who work directly with users.

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# UAC Issue #1: The User Experience cont

- **RECOMMENDATIONS continued:**

  - EMSL has responded well to our previous recommendations concerning staff work overloads and mentoring, but we are concerned that this may be at the cost of high quality user access. We urge EMSL to make every effort to find additional resources to support staff.

  - The user survey appears to be going well and few changes are recommended. We agree with the decision to remove EMSL staff from the survey pool. We suggest that long term users (e.g.; computational) answer annual surveys while short term users be surveyed upon exit.

  - Rapid feedback needs to be provided to PIs with declined proposals.

  - EMSL should provide public information on time required for, and feasibility of, training in each capability area.

  - In addition to a photo of the UAC and email links with request for direct input as part of EMSL web site, we recommend adding a simple response form to site. The UAC needs a big obvious button on EMSL home page.

  - How can we help with increasing the amount of staff hours available for EMSL funded proposals?

  - Provide an executive briefing for UAC members during off cycle visits.

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# UAC Issue #2: Engagement in Planning

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Overlapping SAC and UAC meetings
- Designated members of UAC participating (and reporting back) on EMSL planning committees.
  - *UAC wants input to STAP process including resource allocation decision.*
  - *Engagement, integration, and resources to users.*
  - *How is this going to work from the users perspective.*
  - *How do we provide input to re-investment and new technology directions?*
  - *Mix of Upgrade versus new versus development?*
- There should be increased staffing to provide adequate support for new and existing equipment and capabilities.

**COMMENTS:**

- The committee will consider for the next meeting the issue of how we might help EMSL in planning for the next stage of growth. It is suggested that the UAC be provided brief quarterly updates on planning activities.
- There appears to be too much happening between our annual meetings. The UAC suggested that a sub-committee of the UAC meet with EMSL stewards and administrators mid year.

# UAC Issue #3: Proposal Review Issues

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The quality of science should be the first criterion for funding proposals.

- External peer review should be the hallmark of the proposal selection process.

- The new three step process is promising. However, the reduction in funded proposals was not well coordinated with the capability stewards and users who were cultivated have lost access. Also, the user community needs to know well in advance of changing proposal and funding expectations.

- At least one, preferably two, external member should be on all level two committees.

- Proposers should be required to report their most recent EMSL support and publications acknowledging EMSL as part of the proposal being considered.

- "Capability of Proposers" needs to be added specifically as an explicit criterion.

- Funding of borderline proposals (± 5%) should be based on the judgment of EMSL staff.

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■ **RECOMMENDATIONS continued:**

- ◆ We support the new policy of assigning the right amount of time for fully supported proposals.

- ◆ We need clarification on the weighting of internal and external reviews. It is important that both points 1 & 2 of the external review receive significant weights.

- ◆ The response process for partner proposals needs to be corrected.

- ◆ We support giving the director discretion to change ranking of up to 5% of proposals.

- ◆ Continuation proposals in the 1st renewal should be handled separately from new proposals but capability stewards should play a role in the 1st extension decision  The second extension should be handled more competitively.

- ◆ External phase 2 referees should have access to proposals well before the date of the review meeting.

- ◆ Panels handling large numbers of proposals may need to be expanded.

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# UAC Issue #3: Proposal Review Issues <sub>cont</sub>

- **QUESTIONS and CONCERNS:**

  - What is a reasonable target for success rate?  Latest was 71% (Moving towards 50%).  How does this target rate relate to capacity?

  - We need a strong mechanism to allow experienced users (no or little staff needed) to access equipment during down periods.

  - The science theme funding graph is misleading (e.g.; CIR).  May we please have updated and corrected data?

# UAC Issue #4: The Charter

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- We agree that the charter needs revision, that suggestions made last year should be incorporated, and that the committee must review the proposed changes.

For more information about the
EMSL User Advisory Committee (members and charter),
see http://www.emsl.pnl.gov/about/advisory.jsp

www.emsl.pnl.gov