ACCESS-NRI Scientific Advisory Committee

Wednesday 6ᵗʰ September 2023 / 5:00 PM - 6:50 PM

Attendance

Chair: Andy Hogg
Rapporteur: Victoria Allen
Attended: Rachel Law, Tilo Ziehn, Claire Vincent, Laurie Menviel, Ben Evans, Adele Morrison, Kelsey Druken, Victoria Allen, Christian Jakob, Paul Spence, Martin Dix
Apologies: Oscar Alves, Charmaine Franklin, Ben Galton-Fenzi

This meeting was informal with no Agenda; instead, the SAC was asked to discuss their responses to a series of questions:

1. How can we improve the ACCESS Community Workshop?

General feedback from the SAC was that the Workshop was a success, much better than last year (in part because it was more structured). If we rolled out the same style workshop next year we wouldn't get too many complaints but there are areas that can be improved for next year.

Breakout Sessions
The SAC discussed the merits, or lack thereof, of the breakout sessions. Some SAC members found the Breakouts ineffective. They needed more structure and topics for the chairs.
However, some groups worked well, Ice sheet and paleo was an example of this. There were 15 members in this group, with a productive discussion.
It was also suggested that online members have their own breakout sessions.

Hybrid Delivery
A discussion occurred on the advantages/disadvantages of Hybrid delivery. In conclusion, it was agreed that we need the Hybrid delivery model to support inclusivity and is a compelling environmental choice. Even though it creates delivery difficulties, overall, the SAC committee supported the Hybrid delivery model.

Frequency of the meeting
The SAC agreed that an annual meeting is the best format, at the same time of year every year. This ensures a regular event, for community member planning purposes.

Timing of the workshop
A discussion occurred on the difficulty of timing the workshop – noting that Canberra-based workshops need to be held outside ANU teaching periods for financial reasons. It was agreed that June was a better time to plan a workshop, however, June is unpleasantly cold in Canberra. Planning another workshop in 9 months' time is not feasible for next year however this will be strongly considered for 2025 and perhaps in a warmer location.

Community attendance
The tight fit in the lecture theatre was a positive sign as it showed we were building the community. In the future ACCESS will find a venue that has the flexibility to cater to a growing community.

Scientific Participation and Engagement
Some SAC members suggested that there be a greater science focus throughout the program. The program was more technical and useful for ACCESS-NRI but more science would be useful for the community. It should be noted that the direction of the workshop/training was determined after many comprehensive discussions with the Program Committee.

Program Committee Participation
ACCESS-NRI to review the Program Committee participation model for next year as there were some meetings when only a few people participated.

ECR Event?
It was proposed that we have an ECR event as part of the workshop. Either integrating training throughout the program or a single-day event, perhaps on a Friday. It was suggested that we build an ACCESS ECR community.

Networking
Some SAC members found the strategic networking helpful. Leaving space in the program to allow for a couple of hours for meetings would be useful for senior members of the community.

Working Group Meetings
The SAC discussed the advantages and disadvantages of including the working group meetings as part of the event. It was suggested that working group meetings could be restricted to 1 day and be a minor meeting rather than a major one.

ACCESS-NRI speed dating
It would be helpful to have sessions that allowed people to go to ACCESS-NRI speed dating sessions to meet and learn about the focus of each ACCESS-NRI team.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI Executive to take on board the SAC feedback when planning for the September 2024 workshop.

2. What can ACCESS-NRI can do better?

Supporting the Working Groups and Chairs
Working Group leads have a lot on their shoulders, and we need to support them. Some of the newer working groups might need more guidance.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI to provide dedicated support to help newer working groups fast-track their effectiveness.

Coding Request
It was requested that the code from the AUS2200 Hackathon, which is in various states of incompletion, could be completed by ACCESS-NRI.

HIVE
The SAC had concerns regarding HIVE. There are issues around finding items. Meeting invites are too complex, do not update automatically, and do not give a pop-up reminder when the meeting is about to start. There is also no way to sort through important issues.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI to review and address the HIVE concerns and report back at the next SAC Meeting.

NCI
We need to formalise NCI and ACCESS-NRI roles and contributions.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI to work with NCI to formalise roles and contributions so that the appropriate credit is received.

3. Prioritising Working Group Requests

The SAC discussed various how to run a process to prioritise working group requests for ACCESS-NRI support. This process might include:
- Each project being considered by ACCESS-NRI has an entry on a job page with a priority level.

- The job page can include who the stakeholders are, how many people benefit etc, to help working groups determine priority levels.
- The job page can be made public on the HIVE so there is visibility for the SAC, the Community, and ACCESS.
- This list can be reviewed by the SAC periodically.
- Would be good to have all of ACCESS-NRI's projects and priorities shared for better visibility.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI to create public-facing pages to provide clarity on current work and their priority levels.

4. NCRIS

NCRIS is structured such that funds are distributed very differently between groups. To align ACCESS-NRI to NCRIS funding criteria, we need to focus on supporting Research.

The SAC identified the following research challenges:
- PhD's struggle to have enough time to learn how to run a model but they are keen to include this as part of their PhD.
- ACCESS-NRI needs feedback from science and technical community members to find out where the gaps are.
- ACCESS-NRI has found it difficult to connect with PhD students.
- We need a technical science lead in every group (as in COSIMA), although it's incredibly difficult to find someone with this background.

ACTION: ACCESS-NRI to consider providing model development scholarships which would be made available to PhD students to either travel to Canberra or work with ACCESS staff within their local area.

Agenda Item for Next SAC Meeting
A discussion on major projects and how we can leverage in-kind support.

The meeting closed 6.50pm