Executive Summary of XSEDE Advisory Board Meeting

Meeting Date: October 20th, 2017
Meeting Place: Webinar via Skype

Preface: *This Webinar was an extended meeting with several presentations from the team. Included was a broad update from John, a deep dive into evaluation (staff and user surveys, along with metrics), and discussion of planning for PY8. Agenda, meeting notes, and slides are available for XAB members at* https://confluence.xsede.org/display/XT/XAB+2017+Oct+Webinar

Summary of meeting comments and XAB suggestions

By agenda item:

Update from John:

John's update included a debrief from the NSF Cyber Infrastructure (CI) for Large Facilities Workshop, which was held in Alexandria in early September. That workshop brought together CI providers and various stakeholders from the large facilities. This is part of ongoing discussion, with attention to building the return on investment (ROI) for NSF.

Also, John described his recent outreach to [The Institute for Research on Innovation and Science](#) (IRIS) (University of Michigan) to compare notes on ROI and impact measures. While XSEDE currently collects much data relevant to ROI and impact, this outreach is an example of XSEDE leadership maintaining a cycle of improvement. Karin suggested to also compare notes with another U.Mich. program to get a sense of how U.Mich. internalizes the standards.

Lastly in his update, John relayed information from NSF regarding "Towards a Leadership Class Computing Facility" solicitation. There seems to be a tension between this solicitation and XSEDE's current funding, but the internal dynamics of the programs at NSF are not yet well understood. John will be trying to learn more from the NSF program as time progresses.

Evaluation Updates:

Several detailed presentations described where the XSEDE team is standing, and how they remain in a continual cycle to not just improve measures, but also, more broadly, how to improve the set of measures, how to collect them, and how to use them to advance the program.

- Staff Climate Survey
    - Already in its 5th year, this survey has been very valuable to XSEDE leadership.
    - It was noted that surveying a "virtual organization" (with a diaspora of staff in various organizations with various time-commitments) is far more complex than surveying a traditional organization.
- User Survey
    - Overall satisfaction with XSEDE remains high.

- Metrics Review
  - Discussion among the XAB about how to ensure KPIs include important things like "user happiness", not just internal measures, and XSEDE is actively pursuing that goal.

Project year 8 Planning:

This discussion included presentations from CEE, ECSS, XCI, Ops, RAS, and PgO. Notes, as well as the presentations, are available for XAB members from the meeting notes page (link is provided in the Preface above).

While there was some expression by XSEDE staff of concern about lack of clear guidance from NSF, each team is actively planning, and forward looking. XAB comments reflected the appreciation of that "forward-looking" mindset, noting that XSEDE has that mindset across its team, and encouraged more of the same.   Transitions within NSF have left considerable uncertainty, but the XSEDE team is duly managing it.