Implementation Plan for XSEDE 2017 Allocation Policy Recommendations

The following document outlines a high-level plan for putting in place the recommendations approved from the policy revision process. The plan includes an initial assessment of the order of implementation and amount of effort required. The order is based on the ease of completion, modified if necessary by any dependencies.

These recommendations will be accompanied with a revision to the formal policies document. An update to the allocations documentation is already in process.

Implementation Order / Degree of Complexity / Controversy

Recommendations will likely be implemented in this order, to deploy as many as possible as quickly as possible.

Recommendations requiring only/primarily Allocations documentation and/or Policy Document update

Note that the policy document update and approval will require some time/effort.

Recommendations 1: Policies okay for allocating diverse resource portfolio.
EASY. No action. However, practical and documentation issue related to diversity of Service Unit types. Service Units traditionally translated to "modified core-hours." Such resources are becoming a minority.

Recommendation 2: No cap on maximum request size for Research requests.
EASY. No action. The policies should not impose a cap or upper limit on the maximum size of allocation requests.

Recommendation 3: Handling of very large facility (or large scale consortium) requests.
EASY. The primary action here is updates to the policy documents to clarify if/when it might be appropriate to approach XSEDE with such a request prior to preparing an XRAC request.

Recommendation 8: When PI or PI's groups can have more than one Research project.
EASY/MEDIUM. Hardest part is clarifying documentation, training reviewers. For the anticipated few cases where a split is approved or merge recommended, a procedural/administrative step will need to be put in place to track allowable splits, required merges (spreadsheet).

HARD: Long-term implementation may be to design and implement a "whitelist" capability for exceptions in the XRAS rules engine (for the "1 Research per PI" rule and other rules).

Recommendation 10 (a): Training and handling of diverse resource requests.
EASY. Submission documentation updates. No need for development effort.

Reviewer-related

Recommendation 10 (b): Training and handling of diverse resource requests.
MEDIUM: Need to plan for reviewer training. No need for development effort.

Recommendation 12: "Rubric" for XRAC reviewers.
EASY. Initial version already created. Main effort is to fully integrate into XRAC training and process.

Recommendation 13: Ensure science review for requests without supporting grants.
EASY/MEDIUM. Several recommended ways to enforce this, including getting users to enter supporting grant info (done), harder hit in reconciliation process, use rubric to remind reviewers to assess science. To do: define cap for such requests, notify reviewers of requests lacking supporting grants. Also, training for reviewers.

Recommendation 14: Continue to keep an eye on XRAC workload.
MEDIUM. Ongoing, E.g., recently started a third parallel session to ensure adequate time to focus on requests. Eliminate more requests (besides Adaptives) from in-person discussion.

Other recommendations (approximate order of complexity)

Recommendation 9: Collect "Final Reports."
EASY. Already part of policy. XRAS configuration issue only. Need to define format, desired content from, planned use of Final Reports, and notification process. Use for collecting of science stories??

Recommendation 11: Provide document templates for Research requests.
MEDIUM. Need to create and get XRAC (and other stamps of approval). Iterations will take time.

Recommendation 7: Renewal of Startups.
EASY/MEDIUM. Main task is to clarify and communicate under what conditions a Startup can be renewed. Definition is the hardest piece. May require minor updates to XRAS.

Recommendation 6: Capping size of requests with no supporting grants.

MEDIUM/HARD. Some information gathering required -- how many such requests, and their size distribution. Hardest part is defining the size limit in a way that is easy to communicate, calculate and enforce. Some clarification of how to provide users with clear message of this policy during submissions. Development effort may involve database changes to store resource limits and Rules Engine changes to enforce limits.

Recommendation 5: Allocations longer than a year.
MEDIUM/HARD. Most effort will need to go into discussion and approval of acceptable approach. Development tasks for RAS are modest. Need to be able to edit the end date for allocations when posting awards (feature already available for NCAR), and need to differentiate or highlight such requests (so submitters can ask, reviewers can see, and admins can identify them). Changes required would be to the submission UI and database to request and store an end date. Review & admin UIs would need to display the requested end date.

Recommendation 4: Consider adding reviewer ratings into post-meeting reconciliation process.
MEDIUM/HARD. Formula in spreadsheet needs to be updated. Need to compare and evaluate current and rating-added results for past several meetings then discuss again. Will also require additional training for reviewers, rubric finalization as well, before it can be fully implemented.

Recommendation 15: Smooth out per-meeting variability in reconciliation.
MEDIUM/HARD. Some mathematical analyses and evaluations required.

Recommendation 16: Define baseline SP integration documentation and ground rules for policy changes.
MEDIUM. Document current RAS baseline architecture. Define "ground rules" and expectations for what changes SPs can make to policies and for what SPs can expect from XSEDE.