

Executive Summary of XSEDE Advisory Board Meeting, October 25, 2019

Meeting Date: October 25, 2019

Meeting Place: Teleconference via Skype

Preface: The main topic of this call was an update by XSEDE

Summary of Project Update

Project update and overview by John. Things continue to go well, there have been several opportunities for John to talk with NSF, and no indication of NSF plans for a next step/post-XSEDE. The reviews and self-assessments have been positive.

Spending is authorized through the end of the current project year, with the expectation of an authorization to spend through the end of the project at the next review.

Considerable thought into and requests for feedback for what to do for transition options. Significant concern about being disruptive to the science and research community which have come to use and rely on XSEDE resources and expertise. Suggestions were made to continue to document anything of value in the project.

Campus Champions is one of the exceptional community benefits sponsored from XSEDE, and is forming its own leadership team in order to become a standalone organization. Perhaps Campus Champions needs to merge with other organizations like CARC to get synergy from complementary activities.

Staff Climate Study

Lorna Rivera from Georgia Tech gave an overview of the results from the annual staff climate evaluation. All measures, other than “wiki & website”, are up.

Recommendations:

- Recommend to improve awareness of available training especially related to evaluations, project management tools, management;

- Recommend offering more opportunities for staff to engage with XSEDE colleagues—especially those in technical positions.

Significant feedback from non-management staff related to a desire for management training; this is not an area for the XSEDE project.

Feedback of feelings of isolation, as there could be only one person at a site working on some aspect of XSEDE. The idea of having local community is not an option for them, and looking for a way to have this through XSEDE. Champions Fellows program allows for some kind of interaction with peers.

Although the measure for the wiki & website were down slightly, overall they were still positive. Problem seems to stem from a lack of awareness on training for how to use confluence & Jira. People seem to combine Confluence & Jira into one.

Questions about promoting and using the results from the evaluations. John does include the results in the annual review by NSF, and summary reports are provided. John suggests that the board make an effort to mention the outstanding results when an opportunity arises. Earlier in XSEDE history, the results were used to make improvements; since then, the improvements have resulted in XSEDE outperforming other projects.

Topic Updates

Program Office Update Including: Project Office, External Relations, Project Mgmt Team, Business Ops, Strategic Planning & Evaluation: KPIs presented for both project level KPIs and Program Office KPIs, overall doing well on most, and a couple that are working towards improvements.

RAS Update: User satisfaction with allocations process continues to be high, and continuing to work to improve success rate due to more requests. Ramping up three new clients: PRACE/RIST/XSEDE collaboration, TACC for Frontera, and NCSA to support.

XCI Update: Project wide satisfaction KPI's mean of 4.5/5.0 is excellent, they have spent a lot of work on KPIs to make sure they reflect what is actually done. There is still work to do, but overall XCI is a well-tuned machine. In regards to the staff climate study, there is work to do to improve perceptions of wiki & website - wiki did not change, but have had some staff changes, so new staff may not understand how to use it.

ECSS Update: Question about whether ECSS stories are published/captured. Referenced work around NIST– will be valuable community resource if it results in some kind of document. Do try to capture final reports for all projects, consultants are responsible for writing up a final report in collaboration with the team they work with. Final report has a PI statement. Results/outcomes are included in that report. ECSS wiki page has information documented as well. Trying to encourage staff to capture info in technical report series as well. Info that might not fit into a regular publication (how a workflow is constructed or how software is optimized). These stories sometimes evolve into XSEDE science highlights stories that are included in reports and published on website.

CEE Update: Climate study results continue to improve annually. Continuing to provide workforce development as well as broadening participation programs through training and education activities in conjunction with ECSS and ESTEO. Steady usage by women and underrepresented minorities using HPC resources.

Operations Update: Functioning very well. Most significant changes are in staffing: 2 new Cybersecurity managers ; 1 new XOC manager. Overall went smoothly but there are always challenges with bringing on new leaders. Change in staffing for SysOps as well. A KPI 4.5 target for XOC is a hard target to meet but they continue to meet it, even with change in leadership.

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