

# XAB 2018 February Call

## Executive Summary of Meeting

Wed, 2/7 – 12-1PM ET | 11am-12pm CT | 10-11am MT | 9-10am PT

Attendees:

NAME	PRESENT  
<b>XAB Members</b>	
Karin Remington (Chair)	
Randy Bryant	
Thomas Cheatham	
Toni Collis	
Rama Govindaraju	
Cliff Jacobs	
Albert Lazzarini	
Phil Maechling	
Shaowen Wang	
Theresa Windus	
<b>Service Provider Forum</b>	
J. Ray Scott	
Shawn Strande	
<b>User Advisory Committee</b>	
Emre Brookes	
<b>XSEDE Staff</b>	
John Towns	
Nancy Wilkins-Diehr	
Kelly Gaither	
David Lifka	
David Hart	
Sergiu Sanielevici	
Gregory Peterson	
Ron Payne	
Jennifer Houchins	
Laura T. Herriott	
Lizanne DeStefano	
Lorna Rivera	
Adam Slagell	

## Agenda

Time	Item	Lead	Notes
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10 min	Acceptance of previous meeting summaries	John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and thank you for joining</li> <li>• Summaries from prior meetings</li> <li>• Phil did not want to approve until review and did respond to Karin</li> <li>• A series of minutes have not been circulated</li> </ul>
30 min	Update and discussion about the NSF mid-year review	John	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcome was a very positive response from the Panel</li> <li>• XSEDE was given clear guidance for the scope of the review</li> <li>• The panel review strayed beyond that in a variety of ways</li> <li>• There were panelists who had not reviewed XSEDE before and were not briefed ahead of time</li> <li>• XSEDE was asked questions not prepared to answer</li> <li>• John was unable to be present due to the flu and unable to speak or travel; participated by listening and watching</li> <li>• Received 17 written and 2 verbal questions we responded to</li> <li>• Panel expected draft answer followed by final responses the next week which was different than in the past</li> <li>• XSEDE is currently also preparing written responses to the Panel Report</li> <li>• John, Nancy, and Kelly submitted a letter to Bob to provide feedback on the review process</li> <li>• XSEDE encourages other NSF Program Officers to observe. However, XSEDE was caught off guard by other NSF program officers engaging in conversation without being directly asked, "Why are you spending any resources on digital humanities which is out of scope for NSF"</li> <li>• Sergiu - everyone who has funding for this has gone through the allocation process</li> <li>• Happy to provide report, questions and answers, and the XSEDE response to the panel report</li> <li>• XSEDE and whether or not it should be innovative, we reviewed the XAB notes. Is it the view of the XAB that XSEDE should be innovative?</li> <li>• Strategic goal: be innovative. Should we remove that goal?</li> <li>• XSEDE is fine technically, it is the softer issues we are battling at the moment</li> </ul> <p>XAB Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albert - 20 years worth of reviews. Questions are always given the evening before and due the next morning. Have been asked to provide written responses for recommendations given.</li> <li>• Cliff - when I was at NSF, you want to capture the panel and get their responses. For them to go away and read homework later, you no longer have their attention. Not a good strategy. You're being surprised by questions. I think you need to emphasize with Bob that managing the review process is very important for Bob and for XSEDE to look good.</li> <li>• Cliff - ideally get ownership of program with a broad spectrum of engagement from other program officers. Hostile questions could be due to the amount of funding you are receiving. Best thing is to answer them the best he can. Bob should be working behind the scenes to inform others. Hopefully Bob is following up to confirm a satisfactory answer was provided; and if not provide one.</li> <li>• Cliff - the logic is not a good approach. Because the science board approved it and it is part of your strategic plan and overall objectives—should be able to state the rationale for why you spend resources on this and how it supports the project. You should be able to respond to why we are doing anything. This is within the scope of the project, and we are open to feedback.</li> <li>• Cliff - XSEDE is all about innovation. NSF has given guidance to apply resources to that innovation. The innovation doesn't necessarily have to come from the staff but from the virtual community. Side step the resource thing and say we are all about innovation and opportunities to promote that innovation. Look for opportunities where innovation is happening and how XSEDE facilitated, nurtured, shared across the community, etc. If you take away the KPI, you lose the drive. You have done innovative work through the virtual community and the way people interact. Step back and have more KPIs about innovation</li> <li>• Phil - if NSF has considered innovation outside of XSEDE's scope...XSEDE is innovative. However, innovation is a general term, let them use their own definition. It isn't a useful battleground to argue over whether or not you are innovative.</li> <li>• Randy - in a downward spiral if you have to claim you are not innovative. You are providing services to a large community. Who wants to work for an organization that doesn't innovate? Don't want to be perceived as bureaucrats with heads down</li> <li>• Albert - pitfalls of one perceived as tooting their own horn...have the community declare XSEDE innovative. If NSF wants the right answer, they should invite the community to provide feedback</li> <li>• Cliff - define clearly what you have in mind. Innovation is a new idea, method, or device—XSEDE is a whole new idea for approaching cyberinfrastructure. You have introduced services to the scientific community. This is what we've done in those areas. Take control of the definition. Not having the definition makes you reactive rather proactive. Clearly state what you mean by that term.</li> <li>• John - we have engaged in some software development opportunities. Most notable: redeveloped the software around the allocation process. XSEDE's cross-section</li> <li>• Cliff - why would you suggest software—it is part of a suite of activities XSEDE engages in to increase functionality for the community and support of that community. Software increases effectiveness and efficiency toward helping the community. Focusing only on software allows the people who are asking the question to understand how software development is one piece of the larger objective. Investments can make the work for staff or the community effective and efficient.</li> <li>• Albert - was the review written into the agreement or ex-post facto? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John - cooperative agreement states regular reports and reviews or others as deemed necessary. NSF has forward-funded the project and wanted to have supporting evidence. NSF authorization to spend has been complicated with shut-down</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Emre - ECSS could not exist without innovation</li> </ul>
	Close Meeting	Karin	

## Presentation Materials

- N/A

## Action items

