

September 24, 2020 Partners Working Group Call

Attendees: Kira Sullivan-Wiley, Jody Peters, Cliff Duke, Mike SanClements, Harry Watkins, Diana Dalbotten, Melissa Kenney

Agenda and Notes

1. Discuss option to merge Social Science and Partners Calls
 - a. If we merge both groups from the Doodle the best times to meet are during our scheduled Partners calls on October 22, November 19, December 17 at noon eastern time.
 - i. If people have concerns, are excited about this, or have other thoughts share them with Kira before the call and she will share during the call
 - b. The Partners group focuses on the relationship among EFI members and how EFI can connect with the broader community
 - c. Motivation - there is overlap in the interests of the members between the Social Sciences and Partners groups
 - d. Kira spoke with Chris and Jaime (co-chairs for this group and Social Science group) - don't want to bring work plans and mission plans together and merge them. But would like to think about having both groups meet together monthly.
 - e. Melissa has participated in both groups from the beginning and likes the idea of keeping the groups work plans and missions separate
 - i. Helpful to meet together to talk about usable information and how to effectively co-produce. Continue to think about how to do user engaged science
 - f. Diana likes the idea of meeting jointly every third time for group discussion.
 - g. What kind of things would we talk about jointly?
 - h. Cliff - likes the idea of using the combined meetings to discuss what people think about actional science or usable science. Consortium of Public Outcomes (Arizona State University) has some good resources on this. A federal advisory committee that Cliff sat on for Dept of Interior developed how to guides for actionable science.
 - i. Mike's experience - has experience participating in working groups that meet separately and then come together once in a while to meet jointly for quarterly joint calls. Keep a list of joint ideas to add to the agenda of the joint all and that populates the agenda for the joint call.
 - j. Need for cross-fertilization between the groups, but each group has enough work to do to move along on their own.
 - k. Would be nice to have a document for the cross-fertilization.
 - l. The Social Science group will meet next week and discuss then there will be a follow-up email and a way to more formally decide how to move forward.

2. [Work Plan](#) - even if you can't make the call, look at the Work Plan and make comments and put your name by the items you are most interested in to help us prioritize near term/long term goals
- a. We want to get a sense of who wants to work on certain projects/tasks to guide priorities.
 - b. There may also be tasks that everyone thinks are important, but do not want to work on it,
 - c. Core Function 1:
 - i. There was a question from the group about who are potential partners
 1. We are trying to cast a broad net for who is a partner. Want EFI to be a community (not EFI members are academics and partners are not).
 - ii. Relationships are fluid and the role of an individual/organization may vary through time.
 - iii. Partners is a broad term. There is a spreadsheet of members who signed up to be members, and there are additional individuals that the steering committee have connections with. This spreadsheet will not be made publicly available.
 - iv. NEON engagement team is working on compiling a list of collaborators as well
 1. NEON is working on exploring software for keeping track of partners
 2. Mike will keep the group posted on what software NEON finds
 - v. Another way to think about this. Often people create dashboards or lists of experts and these databases quickly go obsolete and take a lot of work and upkeep to be relevant
 1. When people engage they do so with other people rather than with a platform.
 2. As the Partners and Knowledge Transfer group we want to have all the spreadsheet and list of collaborators in the background, but want to play the role of matchmaking. There are people/organizations that are interested in forecasting but they don't know how to create the forecasts. Or we have individuals who create the forecasts who want to engage with partners but they don't know how to make the connections.
 3. The decision support processes are as important to the integration of science in decision making more than the decision support tools.
 4. Want longer engagement and partnerships
 - vi. Piece missing from Core Function 1 is the "how to" foster the collaborative community. The "how to" is by matchmaking and making those matches
 1. NEON compiled list of ongoing macrosystems proposals and went through those using NEON data and mention NEON. Then NEON

- employees reached out to those individuals asking if they need help or if there was . It has led to a number of collaborations
- vii. Our EFI annual meetings have been great for getting more people involved in EFI. But how do we let people know that we are available to do the matchmaking?
 - viii. Melissa doesn't think that the matchmaking will be overwhelming or that there will be an overwhelming set of requests. But thinks that the matchmaking will be more successful if we can do individual email connections rather than setting up a tool and leaving people to do their own matchmaking
 - ix. What are the requests coming in for use inspired collaboration? This is the opportunity to figure out what the demand is before assuming the demand and supply
 - 1. On a previous call Kathy Gerst also brought up that we don't want to assume what the demand might be and what it might look like and what the volume would be.
 - d. Concern about the Work Plan is that it is a lot Spreadsheets and don't see where we are fostering the community
 - e. How do we implement the matchmaking?
 - i. Harry's experience: If someone with a land management background or someone who doesn't create forecasts themselves, then they will have a specific question and will want to find someone with that expertise. (Harry's example - what is the forecast for cockroach spread at St. Andrews Botanical Garden or what kind of plants will become invasive)
 - ii. Opportunity, regardless of funding source, is the knowledge transfer. How are we developing research questions based on users needs? What questions do we have as ecoforecasters that have broad utility for users that they may not be aware of? Can you build it and then if you can build it is it useful?
 - iii. People in the forecasting community have come to Melissa saying "I have this problem who in the community is open to questions like this" or has had someone in the forecasting community who has a forecast and wonders who is would be interested in the forecast
 - iv. Going back to Harry's cockroach example - this could be a great biodiversity forecast that would make a good project for a student. Could create a partnership to think about climate, weather, pest spread, etc
 - v. How complicated does the matchmaking need to be? If coming with an applied question - don't want a complex option. Would want a sense of themes the community has (organization process), then breakout people working in that field
 - vi. Would be good to know what the horizons are. What are the big questions for the community to try to answer? Where are the big tools? This could be helpful for the people with the applied questions.

1. Don't want to make the process of engagement too complex, but want to have ways to authentically build bridges and relationships for groups to connect
 - vii. Next steps continue to focus on this Core function and developing concrete ways to foster the collaborative community and matchmaking between people/groups with applied questions and people/groups with the forecasting expertise
 - viii. For the next call, everyone should again read through the Work Plan and think more about the goals and tasks. Do we have tasks that are appropriate for the Core functions? Where do we need to refine/expand?
 - ix. Research to Operations. Forecasting Standards are distinct from this part the Research to Operations and want to think about guidance for the
 1. Melissa and Cliff are both strongly interested in this
 2. Good meeting for the Standards group to engage with this group/subset of this group. Could join forces to see where.
 3. Want to provide resources to highlight important things to consider in coproduction
 4. In the Research to Operations pipeline there is a big hurdle going from the scientific development/research and then moving to engage with the user communities. Funding sources skip this key process of relationship building and development. Instead, the funding focuses on the research piece and the operations piece, but the relationship-building is an important component
 5. There is no other EFI group working on Research to Operations. Chris had [his blog posts](#) about the NOAA experience. But this would be good to work on moving forward.
3. Updates about form for list of forecasting partners and decision makers using institutional knowledge and highly connected nodes. Kira was going to draft up a Google sheet for this information after the August call
 - a. Kira will continue to work on this
 4. Update from Kira about reaching out to EFISA group about compiling data sources
 - a. We didn't get to this on this call