iSGTW Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday November 14, 2012, from **08:30** to **10:00** (US); 16:30 to **18:00** (Central European Time); 23:30 to 01:00 (Taipei)

## Present

*Chair:* Catherine Gater (CG)

*Present:* Ruth Pordes (RP), Paul Avery (PA), Steven Newhouse (SN), Vicky Huang (VH), Kevin Munday (KM) – joined 9:00-9:20

*Editors:* Andrew Purcell (AG), Amber Harmon (AH) – joined at 9.15

*Apologies:* Bob Jones (BJ), Katie Yurkewicz (KY), Daphne Siefert-Herron (DSH)

*Minutes:* Steven Newhouse/ Catherine Gater

## Proceedings

*Convenor: Catherine Gater*

#### Opening of the meeting and formalities

##### Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.  
Katie Yurkewicz has resigned as a member of the Advisory Board.  
The board members thank Katie for her contribution.

##### Approval of previous minutes

The minutes from 4 June 2012 were approved.

##### Announcement of AOB items

No further AOB items were announced.

## Review of actions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ACTION** | **RESPONSIBLE** | **STATUS** |
| 20111004:1 Pursue the volunteer/desktop grid organizations to promote iSGTW | Adrian Giordani | CLOSED – ongoing collaboration. Francois Grey contacted by CG about Cyberlab project |
| 20111004:4 Work with XSEDE & PRACE and others to get their level of engagement up to a level that the board is happy with. | Catherine Gater/Steven Newhouse/Ruth Pordes | OPEN – CG met with Maria Ramalha at PRACE on 2 occasions. CG attended XSEDE’12 for iSGTW |
| 20111114:3 Pursue people with large numbers of followers on Twitter. | Adrian Giordani | CLOSED – part of ongoing social media strategy. Twitter followers now at 1340 |
| 20120202:4 Prioritizing the list of tasks for Xenomedia over the next 2 months. | Catherine Gater/ Miriam Boon | OPEN – update from Xenomedia and Andrew on outstanding tasks still remaining |
| 20120604: 1 Investigate costs of installing the auto-remove module with Xenomedia | Miriam Boon | OPEN – not yet costed or installed. |
| 20120604:2 Pursue approval for funding the costs of website maintenance from the e-ScienceTalk budget from the EC | Catherine Gater | OPEN – included in 1st DoW amendment. No invoice received from Xeno. Investigating CMS support at QMUL |
| 20120604:3 Confirm the publishing schedule for June and July | Miriam Boon/ Adrian Giordani | CLOSED |

* 20111004:1 Pursue the volunteer/desktop grid organizations to promote iSGTW
  + Ongoing. Some contact with Gonzalo Lambrano reported by Andrew.
  + CLOSE ACTION.
* 20111004:4 Work with XSEDE & PRACE to increase their level of engagement.
  + New editor is based at Indiana which provides a strong link with XSEDE.
  + Suggest next Advisory Board meeting is held at EGICF 2013 in Manchester, with XSEDE.
  + Ongoing collaboration with PRACE will be picked up at the end of the year when new CEO is in place
  + Action modified. REMAINS OPEN.
* 20111114:3 Pursue people with large numbers of followers on Twitter.
  + ISGTW followers at 1342, Klout score is 54. This is as good as the science desks of broadsheet papers (e.g. Guardian) and better than the research groups we write about.
  + Should we market our social media more to the community and publicise our announcement capability? This should not clash with Cordis News, the EC’s own communications channel.
  + CLOSE ACTION

ACTION: CG to explore issuing an announcement to EC projects about this capability from eScienceTalk, in collaboration with DG-CONNECT.

* 20120202:4 Prioritizing the list of tasks for Xenomedia
  + To be discussed under agenda point 3.
  + REMAINS OPEN.
* 20120604: 1 Investigate costs of installing the auto-remove module with Xenomedia.
  + Removal not automatic and editors have been unsubscribing bounced addresses manually.
  + To be discussed under agenda point 3.
  + REMAINS OPEN
* 20120604:2 Funding the costs of website maintenance from the e-ScienceTalk budget.
  + Budget approval from EC in previous amendment to the Description of Work.
  + Have not received an invoice from XenoMedia to date.
  + Investigating long term CMS support at Queen Mary University.
* 20120604:3 Confirm the publishing schedule for June and July
  + Completed. CLOSED

#### Status report

*Convenor: Andrew Purcell (slides attached to agenda)*

* Andrew Purcell joined CERN as Editor-in-Chief in August 2012.
* Amber Harmon joined Indiana University as US Desk Editor on 8 November 2012.
* iSGTW received good feedback from the EC review at the 2nd Periodic Review in Brussels on 15 October.
* Newsletter subscribers rate of increase has been flat for the past 12 months. New subscribers are coming in but also addresses are being removed manually as they are identified as duplicates or spam. Churn rate is approximately 10 a month.
* People are accessing the content on the iSGTW site in a different way. More traffic is now coming from social media ie 50 a month growth in twitter followers.
* Web stats show an increase in unique visitors, page views and new visits; a decrease in bounce rate and a very high amount of time spent per page, orders of magnitude higher than comparable publications.
* These stats show a highly engaged readership.
* Readership survey received a larger response than last year, and showed an Increased female readership but fewer young people.
* Success in reaching out to female readers has been due to elements such as a dedicated section on women in science, and content focused on women in science e.g. Ada Lovelace day, developing countries., as well as using social media channels with a higher percentage of women users eg Pinterest.
* The survey showed that more than half of the readership has read more than half of the issue.
* iSGTW has increasing profile in the community through media partnerships eg XSEDE’12, ISC Cloud’12 and eScience’12, with a media partnership being discussed with ISC’13 in June 2013, which welcomes 2000 delegates.
* Andrew is working on shared documents such as the Style Guide, Guide for Contributors and Guide to Social Media documents.

**DISCUSSION – Documents**

Once the public facing documents have been internally developed they will be made public, including the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board.

Internal documents such as the flat plan and time plan used by the editors for issue planning will remain internally available only.

**ACTION**: AP to publish the public facing documents on the iSGTW website once finalised.

**DISCUSSION – Expansion in readership**

RP asks whether the expansion in topics covered beyond grids has led to an expansion in readership or a change in profile. The top articles list reported each month should give some idea of interest in particular topics, as well as the feedback from the readership survey.

Plans to reach out to younger readers could include going through university departments and other areas in computational science. A joint EGI and iSGTW essay competition was launched at the EGI Technical Forum in Prague with the aim of increasing readership, sourcing content on grids and raising awareness with science writers. Articles on volunteer grids and citizen science are also likely to appeal to this audience.

**ACTION**: AP/AH to include information on regional breakdown of readership in the monthly reports for feeding back to NSF funders, plus YouTube figures for GridCast.

**ACTION**: AH to explore a media partnership with SC13 organisers.

#### Development and hosting of the site

*Convenor: Catherine Gater*

* Kevin Munday and the Xenomedia team have been responding to issues as they arrive eg setting up RSS feeds, typically using from a few up to 10 hours a month.
* Adding the autoremove element for spam addresses will need to be addressed in collaboration with Alex at QMUL, who administers the server.
* Alex at QMUL has full admin rights to the CMS.
* V7 Drupul is the newest version but V6 is still actively developed, patched and supported. There is no clear upgrade path from V6 to V7 and V8 but the new functionality in V7 is being back ported to V6. V6 has strong support and adoption in the community and will be OK for the near future.
* Maximum effort is 10 hours per month. More development effort would need more funding. Need to see how the funded effort in e-ScienceTalk until July 2013 can be used for development (8K Euros).
* Need to resolve how activity can be supported after e-ScienceTalk closes and after FermiLab can no longer support work through XenoMedia.
* One interim solution is to split off upgrading and patching to QMUL and leave functional development work at XenoMedia. This would need good communication and synchronization between the two teams.
* Collaboration between Alex at QMUL and XenoMedia seems to be working well.
* Kevin Munday is eager to get instructions on what to do next.

**DISCUSSION**

RP notes that she is pleased that the QMUL server move has been successful.

Board recommends to try and move as much support as possible to QMUL for sustainability.

**ACTION:** KM to circulate an updated list of items to be worked on for the CMS so priorities can be identified by the board.

**ACTION**: KM and CG to liaise with QMUL on working out the division of activity between QMUL and Xenomedia.

#### Sustainability for iSGTW

* The e-ScienceTalk project should be extended an additional 2 months until July 2013 although there will be no additional funds from the EC – the extension will be covered from existing project funds.
* The extension will mean that the iSGTW media partnership with ISC’13 will be supported within the project ie for travel to the event.
* First new funding call under Horizon 2020 from the EC will be in early 2014.
* CERN editor role will continue at 75% beyond the end of July 2013, until July 2014, reporting to Bob Jones at CERN.

**DISCUSSION – EU/US Collaboration**

A reduction in the editor role at CERN to 75% should not impact publication unduly, a weekly publication rate should still be possible as the US Desk Editor is now funded at 100%. It will need to be understood how the 25% commitment to CERN IT reporting will be covered.

**ACTION**: Add the EC/NSF collaboration as an agenda item at an iSGTW board meeting at EGICF2013.

**DISCUSSION – Other regional collaborations**

Input from the Asia Pacific regions comes through the ISGC meeting in March, plus ASGC is providing input while they seek a replacement for Vivian Chang.

The editors are working with the ‘Newsletter of the Ubuntu Net Alliance: Networks, Collaboration Education’ to republish some articles from Africa.

ISGTW has less visibility in Latin America, but Andrew has some private contacts that could be pursued, as REUNA is very unreponsive. EGI is having some discussions about infrastructure MoUs with Latin American and this can include discussions about communication.

#### iSGTW name

* EC reviewers for e-ScienceTalk expressed concern at the review about the impact of a change of name towards the end of the project, but respected the Board’s decision on this.
* Suggestion is to keep things going with the current name for now, and bring XSEDE on board with name discussions once the new editorial team is established.
* Can iSGTW be used as a communication vehicle for activities either side of the Atlantic. XSEDE would link to NSF computing and iSGTW also links to OSG through the Council Chair.
* The current name remains a barrier due to the inclusion of ‘grids’ , ‘this week’ and the difficulty for readers in remembering it.

**DECISION**

The Board has no urge to change the name before July 2013. The Board and editors should reflect on name changes in preparation for EC proposals that will be funded in 2014.

#### AOB

CG welcomed Amber Harmon to the iSGTW editorial team

AP: The holiday issue will be out at Christmas and remain online for 2 weeks due to lab closures. Andrew suggests to make this a special issue with more detailed/expanded and speculative stories. AP will send a list of suggested articles to the board for review.

**Date of next meeting:** Doodle poll to be launched for April 2013 for the EGI Community Forum 2013 (8-12 April 2013)

## Summary of actions

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
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| 20121114:1 Explore issuing an announcement to EC projects about this capability from eScienceTalk, in collaboration with DG-CONNECT | Catherine Gater | OPEN | Next Board meeting |
| 20121114:2 Publish the public facing documents on the iSGTW website | Andrew Purcell | OPEN | By 31 December 2012 |
| 20121114:3 Include information on regional breakdown of readership in the monthly reports plus YouTube figures | Andrew Purcell / Amber Harmon | OPEN | Starting from the December 2012 report |
| 20121114:4 Explore a media partnership with SC13 organisers | Amber Harmon | OPEN | Next Board meeting |
| 20121114:5 Updated list of items to be worked on for the CMS | Kevin Munday | OPEN | Next Board meeting |
| 20121114:6 Liaise with QMUL on working out the division of activity between QMUL and Xenomedia | Kevin Munday / Catherine Gater | OPEN | Next Board meeting |
| 20121114:7 Add the EC/NSF collaboration as an agenda item at an iSGTW board meeting at EGICF2013. | Catherine Gater | OPEN | Next Board meeting |