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the
GIEC *Minutes*

JANUARY 2006

Wednesday, Jan 4, 2006, 2:30-3:30 pm, KS 410W

In attendance: Andrea, Carolyn, Bidushi, Seppo, Dave, Ranga, Gerard, Russ, Kartik, Alberto

1. We decided that though ambitious we will attempt to represent all of the staff of the Greater IPAC community. This will mean that we will represent 20-22 people each. Because of the make-up of the committee, there will be overlap between people from different divisions in the community (e.g., scientists, admin staff, ISG, downlink etc.)

** TODO Item** Kartik + some other folks will help draw the constituencies by Jan 18.

[[Constituencies were drawn - each rep should have contacted their constituents.](#)]

2. There was a brainstorming session outlining the main issues that have been mentioned in the "Life at IPAC report" and by friends, colleagues, individuals. This is only a starting point for us to decide the areas where we can improve things. I will list these at the bottom of this email.

** TODO item** After the constituencies are decided each person is tasked with talking to their constituencies to get an idea of the most pressing concerns. We will coalesce these into an ordered priority list for the Feb meeting.

[[All hands meetings have or will soon address two pressing issues: Future of IPAC, Travel / Forecasting.](#)
[[And future topics are noted in the GEIC newsletter](#)]

3. We decided that we will undertake three different items that will be done by the next meeting:

** TODOs **

1. Carolyn + Andrea will work w. Mary Wittman to get a list of postdocs together. They will also investigate if there is a postdoc exploder and identify why the postdocs are not receiving the emails that go to the rest of the community. Improving communication with postdocs is something we can do immediately.

[[Done - if you are a postdoc not on this list, please contact Carolyn or Andrea](#)]

2. Russ + someone will help identify those staff people classified as non-science staff but who may have advanced degrees or general interest in working more closely with scientists. These folks will be introduced at the next all hands meeting.

3. EVERYBODY -- We debated whether Travel or Job Security should be addressed as the most pressing issue for the staff and decided to focus to TRAVEL+FORECASTING because it affects all science staff, admin staff and many non-science staff as well. The rules need to be clarified. We need to figure out a way to

- a) Identify past and present problems with Travel
- b) Identify solutions or explanations for policies that seem unfair, or unjust
- c) Suggest new proactive solutions for travel.

The goal of this group will be to make sure that we understand travel as well as we can and we will try and communicate this info to our constituents.

4. Oversight Committee Report -- Kartik will check to see if we can get a copy of it.

5. Several other good suggestions were mentioned for improving environment:

- a. A reward system for superior performance -- could be monetary or even recognition by community. Could be based on metrics like "most first author papers published etc."
- b. Can we use Enhanced Science funds for a "rainy day" travel fund at Caltech that can be tapped when JPL travel becomes onerous or to get around travel restrictions imposed by JPL?
- c. Younger scientists should be given encouragement for professional advancement, and PROMOTED by senior scientists. This was mentioned by several people -- we need to be more like a academic dept. where senior faculty nominate scientists for awards (AAS or otherwise), review committees NSF, NASA committess etc.!

6. No New Business. Next meeting scheduled for *Wednesday, Feb 1, 2:30pm*

----- Below is a free-form listing of my notes on concerns expressed in our brainstorming session ***

- Where is my grant money? Info still unclear.
- Is all travel through JPL
- What happens to unused funds?
- What is "equipment" vs. "materials and supplies?"

- Overall promotion process / tracking / slotting
- Evaluations and their connection to promotion
- Underpaid / Better retirement benefits
- Postdoc hiring could be made easier
- Sabbaticals / Project vs. science time
- ISG should be more amenable to a science environment and not run this place like an office building. The requirements are different for the two groups.

- Upper management is gone a lot - they need to interact more with the scientists
- Clarify the policy on telecommuting
- Give people the power to vote on issues (what issues can they vote on?)
- Access to Keck
- Postdocs don't feel involved at all - the lumping of postdocs with non-science staff in the "Life at IPAC" report typifies the problem!
- Postdocs want more information - they want to be on email lists
- Postdocs should be allowed to have more than one international conf and one domestic conf -- in fact, everyone would like this!

- No direct concerns from admin staff -- they would like to know how they can be even more helpful
- Travel unfairness -- do scientists write down all their leave days esp. when travelling?

- There should be a reward system for superior performance - annual recognition, awards, monetary or otherwise - tie it with GISS?

- There should be more use of the synergy between developers or others in the building with advanced degrees and science staff. There may be ways to benefit both sets of people to advance the science.

- Salaries should be made public - should not be made public

- Younger scientists should be given encouragement for professional advancement, and PROMOTED by senior scientists. This was mentioned by several people -- we need to be more like a academic dept. where senior faculty nominate scientists for awards (AAS or otherwise), review committees NSF, NASA committess etc.!

- Why not use the enhanced science money for travel where there are JPL restrictions?