

ESCOP Science & Technology: <http://escop.info/committee/scitech/>

**Call Minutes: 4/22/2019**

**4 pm ET, via Zoom** (<https://msu.zoom.us/j/577962114> or phone 1 408 638 0968 or +1 646 876 9923; Meeting ID: 577 962 114)

**Committee Members:**

<p><b>Chair:</b> Laura Lavine (WAAESD)</p> <p><b>Past Chair:</b> Marikis Alvarez (ARD)</p> <p><b>Delegates:</b></p> <p>Gene Kelly (WAAESD)</p> <p>Chris Davies (WAAESD)</p> <p>Joe Colletti (NCRA)</p> <p>Deb Hamernik (NCRA)</p> <p>John Kirby (NERA)</p> <p>Adel Shirmohammadi (NERA)</p> <p>Nathan McKinney (SAAESD)</p> <p>Susan Duncan (SAAESD)</p> <p>John Yang (ARD)</p> <p>Alton Thompson (ARD)</p> <p><b>Executive Vice-Chair</b></p> <p>Jeff Jacobsen (NCRA ED)</p> <p>Chris Hamilton (NCRA AD; Recorder)</p>	<p><b>Liaisons:</b></p> <p>Terry Nelsen (ERS)</p> <p>TBD (OSTP)</p> <p>Robert Matteri (ARS)</p> <p>Ann Hazelrigg (NIPMCC)</p> <p>Edwin Price (ICOP)</p> <p>Kristina Hains (SSSC)</p> <p>Parag Chitnis (NIFA)</p>
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**Participants:**

Jeff Jacobsen, Bret Hess, Rick Rhodes, Deb Hamernik, Adel Shirmohammadi, Kristina Hains, Chris Davies, Susan Duncan, Marikis Alvarez, Gene Kelly, Bob Matteri, Nathan McKinney, Laura Lavine, Chris Hamilton (recorder)

**Call Notes:**

1. Welcome and roll call – Chris, Jeff: See Participants list above.
2. Jeff introduced Bret Hess and let the committee know that Bret will be taking over S&T leadership starting July 1.
3. Approval of meeting notes from 1/28/2019 – Jeff for Laura: Approved.
4. Liaison Updates, as needed
  - a. ARS, Bob Matteri:
    - i. Bob was in in Madison for the UW hosted UIC University Industry Consortium recently. Conversations were focused quite a bit around genomics, animal production, big data, biofuels and related efforts.
    - ii. ARS budget update (see also <https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/Appropriations+for+Fisca>

[l+Year+2019](#) and President's budget request for Ag here: <https://www.obpa.usda.gov/budsum/fy2020budsum.pdfConsolidated>). \$100M increase to ARS, with most going towards the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Manhattan, Kansas. The Plum Island facility will close and transfer to the new Kansas site in several years.

- iii. President's budget proposes a \$41M decrease relative to the CR, with a redirection of internal funding to NBAF. This \$82M total offset would mean location closures of outside nutrition centers, with only about 12 ARS staff affected. Other program terminations would need to occur, mostly with cooperator partners, so there would be a minimal impact to ARS staff. Annual pay increases would have to come out of program funds as in the past, which ARS is familiar with. About \$50M was also set aside for facilities.
  - b. NIPMCC – Quarterly calls are occurring now regarding planning the committee fall meeting in DC.
  - c. ICOP - No report given, liaison not on call.
  - d. SSSC – Jeff, Kristina: Meeting coming up in May, will have more to report in June.
  - e. NIFA – No report given, not on call.
5. Report discussions:
- a. The TEconomy Report supporting the USDA Capacity model: <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-capacity-funding-review-teconomy-final-report>
    - i. Reflections/Observations from the Committee:
      - 1. It is good to see the additional leveraging of Capacity funds in the report, about 1.86:1
      - 2. However, it's a bit unclear how these data were collected, what metrics were used exactly, since capacity and competitive funds (from a variety of sources) are clearly confounded. Committee members discussed this issue and had questions on how what methods were used to calculate ROI in the report.
      - 3. The report also clearly showed Capacity Funds equal with grant funding in terms of impact, but wondered if state funding also counted as leveraged funds?
      - 4. Capacity is the foundation of competitive funding, but they are also distinct and we shouldn't use this report to support one over the other. Ideally, both should be increased for maximum impact on LGU ag research.
      - 5. Not many people are aware of the report it seems. NIFA probably has used it internally for justification of Capacity lines. How can we use this in the Strategic Realignment efforts? What key facets would be the most useful to focus on?
      - 6. Can the report be used to describe gap in research or how we use Capacity funds? Could we use the report to show what Capacity funds could do with more resources? Perhaps focus on local foods, data science, etc. We could show that new monies should be added to grow those programs. In general, it shows that Capacity funds can help LGUs be more immediately responsive when issues arise – these funds are more readily available than competitive ones.

7. Can and how should we encourage our partners use this study to better advocate for our system? The Committee agreed that this would be a good use of the report.
  8. The Executive Summary is a great place to start when sharing the report, as it illustrates many critical points that could be used to benefit our system. Capacity funds are a distinct and enviable feature of our LGU system.
  9. Use of capacity funds seemed to be focused on applied research with a long-term focus, generated more refereed articles and can be used to quickly address issues in the field, since experts were readily available.
  10. Overall summary, the committee felt that we should reacquaint ESS with this report and ensure wider distribution, especially when talking about investments and ROI of ag research programs at LGUs. Deb/Jeff will include pieces of the report during DC visits, as appropriate, and will also encourage Doug/APLU to do the same.
- b. National Academy Sciences Science Breakthroughs 2030: A Strategy for Food and Agricultural Research <http://nas-sites.org/dels/studies/agricultural-science-breakthroughs/> - Not discussed due to time constraints. Will save this report for discussion during the next call.
6. Other business, as needed – Deb Hamernik, ESCOP Chair update
    - a. Deb, Jeff, and ECOP leadership (Rick Klemme, Ed Jones) visited with APLU, NCFAR, NIFA leadership, several science societies and FFAR, Sally Rockey's team. The conversations were great, productive and useful for building stronger relationships. Deb stressed that the Grand Challenge Roadmap briefs were very well received and NIFA appreciates seeing our priorities. The focus of these visits has been how best to speak with one voice, advocate for funding, and build partnerships.
    - b. Next round of visits will be May 6-9 with federal agencies and others that were missed in February due to weather issues. These should include American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the new NIFA communications director, new PARS director, USDA ARS members and others.
    - c. NIFA (via Meryl Broussard) also committed to fund a 1994 rep to serve as a liaison on ESCOP for several years. Deb/Jeff plan to meet with AHEC in May to help identify this person.
    - d. Deb also noted that they had excellent conversations with House and Senate staffers in February.
    - e. Adel asked if there has been action on a Matching Waiver. Currently, the ESCOP Executive committee is voting on motion language and the plan is to put a patch in next budget cycle.

Call Adjourned 5:02 pm ET.