

Report for Executive Committee Meeting on June 28, 2013

Introduction

The LSSF Research Portal Committee has been actively pursuing the market needs and segments, functionality, design and business considerations.

New Findings

Susan Webster, Jenesis Ramirez and Chris Mootoo lead a survey initiative that was most successful and informative. The results appear in Exhibit A.

The highlights are summarized below:

- Accessing expensive scientific instruments is important to the end users
- High performance computing resources are highly valued
- Uniform legal agreements are important
- Research capabilities and services (e.g. animal models) are highly valued
- Access to the portal by all members of the life sciences community is important

Project Plan

1. Freeze design of web based portal
2. Each “member” enters instruments, research tools/services and high performance computing and develops an updating process (this activity has been problematic and seems to be our rate limiting step on the critical path)
3. Entries can include restrictions for time or dates or comments in the new comment field
4. Develop business plan including costs, administrative costs, labor costs, membership fee structures for different types of members, user fee structures for non-LSSF members and market adoption forecasts
5. Explore possibilities for calendaring capabilities
6. Explore funding sources for LSSF with an emphasis upon State funding
7. Explore funds through advertising by Florida economic development organizations (e.g. Workforce 1, Beacon Council, etc.).

Revised Web Content

Since so much was learned through the survey process the content required revision. The new draft appears below.

Life Science South Florida - Shared Instrument, Computer, Service, Research Portal

Welcome to the Research Portal. This site contains a listing in database format of scientific instruments, high performance computing and research services/tools from the charter member institutions shown below. Each LSSF charter member institution web site is linked to the names below.

Florida International University	Palm Beach State College	University of Miami
Florida Gulf Coast University	Indian River State College	Miami Dade College
Nova Southeastern University	Max Planck Florida Institute	Broward College
Florida Atlantic University	Scripps Research Institute	
LSSF Research Portal Charter Member Institutions		

The overall goals of this initiative are to continue building a South Florida life science cluster, foster collaboration, enhance education opportunities, and increase access to and utilization of advanced instruments, computers and research services/tools.

Today the database includes a searchable list of scientific instruments (manufacturer, model, and specifications), high performance computing, research services/tools, institution and point of contact (e-mail and telephone). You may search by instrument (e.g. confocal microscope), computing, service or institution (e.g. Miami Dade College). If you are interested in gaining access to any of the listings in the database, the place to start is the point of contact. In the future the site will include a uniform terms of use agreement and confirmed availability. A uniform calendar feature is also in development.

We welcome your comments on functionality and improvements.

[COMMENTS](#)

Click here to enter the database:

[DATABASE](#)

Disclaimer: Please note that LSSF and its members do not warrant merchantability or usability of this database or the instruments listed in the database. LSSF and its members are not responsible or liable for the arrangements made between the parties for use of scientific instruments.

EXHIBIT A – SURVEY RESULTS

For Discussion Purposes Only

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Email and Phone Number:

The following questions are to obtain your opinion regarding use of the LSSF Research Resources Portal

- 1) **What do you think are the most important outcomes from the Research Resources Portal? Please number the choices according to importance and impact where (1) is the most important and (3) is least important.**
 - a) **Stimulating collaborations: 2 - #1, 4-#2, 1-#3**
 - b) **Accessing expensive scientific instruments: 4 - #1, 2 - #2, 1- #3**
 - c) **Attracting and growing small businesses: 1 - #1, 1 - #2, 5 - #3**

- 2) **Do you think that it is important to include High Performance Computing (HPC) as one of the available resources provided by the portal?**
 - a) **Very important - 1 (14%)**
 - b) **Important – 3 (43%)**
 - c) **Not important - 0**
 - d) **Not sure- 3 (43%)**

- 3) **How important is a uniform legal agreement for “contracting” to use scientific instruments?**
 - a) **Very important – 2 (29%)**
 - b) **Important – 3 (43%)**
 - c) **Not important – 0**
 - d) **Not sure – 2 (29%)**

- 4) **Should the portal contain special research capabilities (e.g. special tests, animal models)?**
 - a) **Yes – 4 (57%)**
 - b) **Yes, but in the future – 2 (29%)**
 - c) **No – 1 (14%)**
 - d) **Not sure – 0**

- 5) **What are your thoughts on how the portal should be managed long-term (e.g. providing feature updates needed, managing problems with the system, or changes in the system)? What are you thought on how that should be financed?**

For instance, the Dresden Concept Technology Platform (a model for the development of this initiative) database is coordinated through an alliance where universities and research institutions provide resources and funding support.

Florida Atlantic University (Dr. Anderson)

Once created I do not believe the IT costs for the web site will be a burden once it is set up and created, but there may be some costs associated with this. I would be fine with charging a small annual fee for each LSSF educational and commercial entities to cover this cost. However, I believe it will require a time commitment to keep this up to date within each institution and someone should be designated for this task within each institution.

I also believe it would be helpful to have a LSSF funded "Equipment Czar" that receives a % of his salary from LSSF. This Equipment Czar individual would not maintain equipment, nor would they run training sessions, rather I believe it would be helpful for them to function as a referral source for LSSF faculty and graduate students and companies. They would receive email inquiries and match needs to available equipment. For example, to identify a specific individual, I believe Neal Ricks from FIU does a terrific job for AMERI and if he has time I think it would be wonderful if he could be a central coordinator for LSSF in this role and receive compensation for this work, see <http://ameri.fiu.edu/people.html#studentDisplay>

Florida Atlantic University (Dr. O'Flannery Anderson)

Management of the portal – could one of the universities administer for the alliance? That might be a good option for people to consider.

Broward College

1. A member institution would take "ownership" of the project.
2. Establish an annual user fee for those institutions wishing to participate in this program. Establishing & maintaining a database should not be too expensive.

OR

3. LSSF should cover the cost.

Miami Dade College

I think I would lean toward membership based on institution or individual research funding/investment \$\$\$.

Palm Beach State College

MTAs (material transfer agreements) will prevent sharing of contracted animals and reagents.

What is the cost to participate? Will there be lower fees for small businesses & individuals?

Who will have access? Who will NOT have access? Who will determine access control?

How will demands on staff time be controlled?

What are the consequences for abuse of the system-such as breaking equipment, contamination, monopolizing staff time, failure to share?

University of Miami

We should approach the state of Florida for support, as they are interested in something of this nature but would need to include the whole state.

Florida International University (Dr. Webster)

After an initial development phase, the portal should be further developed and managed by a designated individual or entity through an LSSF consortium with paid membership or fees (if needed). It should not be managed by one university. Similar to the Dresden model, the consortium can hire or contract out management, or fund an institutional member of the consortium to manage it on behalf of LSSF.

Florida International University (Dr. Becerra-Fernandez)

Like the Dresden Model, university and research institutions should pay a membership fee to support the maintenance of the system.

6) Who will be permitted to use the portal?

- a) Members of LSSF – 2 (29%)
- b) Any university - 0
- c) Any research institution – 0
- d) Companies – 0
- e) Individual Scientists – 0
- f) All the Above – 4 (57%)
- g) A-D only – 1 (14%)

6a) If companies, what size companies? Should they have specific credentials or demographics (e.g. could very small companies--less than 5 employees access the portal)? Anyone but must be a member

Florida Atlantic University (Dr. Anderson)

My suggestion would be to keep it open to all companies, but I would suggest charging each company and each educational institution a small yearly fee to cover the cost of the web site and to fund a part time Equipment Czar. This individual could answer emailed questions about equipment and could steer people toward particular pieces of equipment across the region.

Florida Atlantic University (Dr. O'Flannery Anderson)

I think we should ask if the portal is a benefit of membership in this organization/affiliation. And I think we need to determine what is an appropriate fee.

Broward College

Any company that becomes a member of LSSF could participate.

Miami Dade College

Open access with membership fee concept.

Palm Beach State College

Anyone seeking access to instruments (or whatever resources are available in the portal) should be able to have access. It's about collaborative efforts to help grow research and industry. No restrictions except safety and control for infectious material.

University of Miami

I don't see why we could not make this available to all.

Florida International University (Dr. Webster)

Any size company is fine. The main issue with company use is that they have the appropriate credentials, licenses, certifications, insurance, etc. (if warranted by the LSSF/University contract to use the equipment or based upon the type of equipment or service) if they plan to use the equipment/services.

Florida International University (Dr. Becerra-Fernandez)

Any company – small, medium, or large.

7) *In terms of services, what is the preference for providing a particular service?*

- a) Training someone to use the equipment to run the analyses requested and providing simple instructions (not just those provided by the manufacturer) on the LSSF equipment portal. This would include cleaning of equipment and cautions to limit damage during use. 2 – (29%)
- b) Running analyses for the individual requesting use of equipment/services. 1 – (14%)
- c) Both A & B – 3 (43%)
- d) Neither A or B – 1 (14%)

Additional Comments:

Florida Atlantic University

NONE

Broward College

This may have to be negotiated by each individual institution, depending on the complexity of the equipment.

Miami Dade College

NONE

Palm Beach State College

NONE

University of Miami

NONE

Florida International University (Dr. Webster)

NONE

Florida International University (Dr. Becerra-Fernandez)

NONE

8) *What would you suggest in terms of pricing and how use of equipment or provision of services should be charged?* Individual owner of equipment should set the price per equipment

Please write your answer below:

Florida Atlantic University

Set prices for academic and company use could be determined, much as AMERI does, see <http://ameri.fiu.edu/pdf/Service%20Rates.pdf> . However, these prices should be set by the individual institutions and those institutions should receive and administer these funds....they should not flow into a common LSSF account. That would be too difficult to administer.

Broward College

The costs of consumables should be borne by the user, not the owner, of the equipment. The costs of personnel would depend on the scale and complexity of each project and the time involved. Each use may need to be negotiated individually. However, the owner of the equipment should not profit from the arrangement and should be negotiated on a collegial basis.

Miami Dade College

Palm Beach State College

That should be determined by the party who has the instruments/resources....they can create a contract with the customer on an individual basis.

University of Miami

Federally funded researchers should get a better price than non-funded research and companies.

Florida International University (Dr. Webster)

It would depend upon the equipment. If a consortium model is used, the consortium could set pricing.

Florida International University (Dr. Becerra-Fernandez)

The equipment owners can decide this.

- 5) Should individual lab managers update their changes on equipment etc., or should that be managed by a designated person at the university/research institution?
- a) Individual lab managers – 1 (14%)
 - b) Designated persons – 6 (87%)

Additional Comments:

Florida Atlantic University

There is value to having a simple scheduling calendar for each piece of equipment. See example from UCF at

<http://www.nanoscience.ucf.edu/equipment/schedule.php>_____

There is value to having a picture of each piece of equipment, see <http://www.nanoscience.ucf.edu/equipment/>. Sometimes it is hard to find this equipment in a crowded laboratory._____

There is value to having simple instructions (not just that provided by the OEM) for each piece of equipment so that it is not damaged during the use and that it is clean and recalibrated correctly for the next user. See example at _____

<http://www.nanoscience.ucf.edu/include/files/instructions/instructions-nanolog.pdf>
from <http://www.nanoscience.ucf.edu/equipment/> .

Broward College

NONE

Palm Beach State College

NONE

University of Miami

NONE

Florida International University (Dr. Becerra-Fernandez)

NONE

Florida International University (Dr. Webster)

NONE

Institutions responding to the survey:

Broward College

Florida Atlantic University (1 full survey; 1 comment on survey)

Florida International University (2)

Miami Dade College

Palm Beach State College

University of Miami

Jenesis Ramirez debrief with Dr. Becerra-Fernandez (Post survey results):

1. Allow individuals who own the equipment to input their own data about the services and equipment.
2. In order to facilitate the item mentioned above, Chris should create instructions on how to input and update data/information to the website and we can provide users with those instructions.
3. Dr. Webster and Chris should calculate the average maintenance cost per year and Dr. Becerra should inform LSSF Executive Committee members of this estimated cost at the next executive meeting June 28 and suggested that the cost be divided among the participated institutions.
4. Dr. Becerra will pass on these proposed items to the current points of contact for the portal and ask that they reach out to service providers/equipment owners at the respective institutions with this information. Points of Contact will inform service providers/equipment at their respective institutions about the portal and the benefits of using the portal, as well as will instructions on how to input data and update data (instruction sheet by Chris).