

STEAC MEETING REPORT

(06/19/2024)

The members of the STEAC met on June 19, 2024, with a quorum of four members attending (Rich Fiorella, Steve Petruzza, Sydne Record, Daniel Rubenstein, and Nico Franz). Seven NEON-Battelle staff attended (Zoe Gentes, Darcy Gora, Steve Jacobs, Paula Mabee, Chris McKay, Tanya Maslak, Kim Nitschke, and Chau Tran).

The meeting was virtual, and the following topics were discussed: I. Approval of the minutes, II. Updates on STEAC recruitment, III. Input on revisions to strategic plan and NEON response to spring in-person meeting report.

- I. **Approval of previous minutes for 05/15/2024 and 6/6/2024:** Minutes approved (Unanimous vote). There was an introduction of Chau Tran who has joined the NEON Leadership Team as Field Science Lead.
- II. **Updates on STEAC recruitment:**
Jennifer Edmonds, John Kochendorfer, Samapriya Roy all accepted and will join in the fall of 2024. Paula asks if the STEAC would consider moving the start date for incoming STEAC members from September 1 to October 1. According to bylaws, the STEAC needs 10 days to consider any changes of this substance, so this potential change will be discussed at the next meeting.
- III. **Input on revisions to strategic plan and NEON response to spring in-person meeting report:**

NEON went through all edits and input from the STEAC in the Google doc version of the draft strategic plan and all 18 pages of the report on the strategic plan from the April 2024 in-person meeting. During a NEON leadership meeting that followed the April in-person STEAC meeting, the NEON staff also broke up the objectives in the plan and re-worked the draft. NEON requested additional feedback on if the context provided was sufficient and to see if there was any language that made the document inaccessible.

The STEAC encouraged NEON to consider who the audience for the strategic plan is and to be clear on the Observatory's scope. Furthermore, to add anything to scope, the community would need to organize a workshop and get buy-in to show NSF the importance of adding any scope to NEON. The STEAC suggested that NEON could make this process public to educate the community. The STEAC also suggested that the strategic plan is a good place to highlight the need for 5-10% of staff time to resource input on evolvability or piloting ideas to optimize the observatory within its existing scope.

Zoe Gentes from NEON shared some additional graphics with the STEAC to get feedback on what to include in the strategic plan. The STEAC thought that the executive summary graphic was nice, but needed some biology represented in it. The STEAC also suggested NEON consider how to emphasize high impact publications from NEON data (e.g., continental scale, comparative papers, etc.).

NEON staff requested clarity on some comments provided by the STEAC about data storage needs. The STEAC Chair planned to follow up to clarify what was intended by the comments to ensure that they were addressed adequately in the draft plan.