STEAC MEETING REPORT
(10/21/2026)

The members of the STEAC met on October 21, 2026, with ten members attending (Kelly Aho, Ben Baiser, Elizabeth Campolongo, Kin Onn Chan, Jennifer Edmonds, John Kochendorfer, Trevor Keenan, Samapriya Roy, Xi Yang and Naupaka Zimmerman). Five NEON-Battelle staff attended (Keli Goodman, Darcy Gora, Tanya Maslak, Hojun Song (ASU), and Kate Thibault).

The meeting was virtual, and the following topics were discussed: I. Call to order, approval of minutes, II. Welcome to new members, III. NSF NEON Mid-Award Review recommendations, IV. Discussion of spring in-person meeting.

I. **Call to order, Approval of minutes for 09/16/2026 monthly meeting**.
The minutes were approved.

II. Welcome new members!
Current and new STEAC members introduced themselves. NEON staff also introduced themselves.

III. NSF NEON Mid-Award Review recommendations

A summary and update of the Mid-Award review was given. The panel was pleased with the site visit and made 25 recommendations. The panel was also pleased with Battelle's stewardship. The STEAC was invited to provide ideas and feedback on the recommendations regarding the following topics:

- Commercial use
    - There are policy and implementation obstacles
    - NEON currently leverages NRSS to explore possibilities for commercial use
    - Commercial use of samples is a particularly challenging topic
    - The National Geophysical Facility is one example of an NSF-supported entity successfully distributing its data commercially
    - There isn't a huge demand for commercial use of NEON data
    - Aside:
        - NSF is asking its research infrastructures to track and report facility uptime goals and research translation activities
        - It isn't clear how "research translation activity" is defined.
- AI use and AI-ready data
    - NSF needs to ensure that AI is a priority and NEON provides a roadmap for implementation, including defining the role of NEON vs the community in accomplishing the roadmap
        - NEON is working with the IAC to refine and implement:
            - Pilot a NEON AI-ready dataset
            - Develop a NEON knowledge graph
            - AI agent skills as a solution
            - NEON added a new milestone to Annual Work Plan to draft a NEON AI roadmap

        - NEON is also supporting multiple proposals for the NSF AIDatasets solicitation
        - Panel recommended engaging staff in small AI experiments and adding a command line interface to NEON software packages:
            - NEON added examples of NEON staff experimenting with AI-enabled workflows
                - Applying a Battelle-developed framework for using LLMs
                - Developed AI-assisted workflows
                - Using LLMs to enhance data visualizations
            - NEON added new milestones to the Annual Work Plan
                - Create a public repository of AI skills
                - Pilot development of a command line interface
- Tracking and reporting on NEON's impact
    - NSF recommended working with the community and STEAC to define beneficial (to science) vs incidental
        - The STEAC did not see the value of this and also saw significant challenges
        - Publication metrics were presented - over 38k citations total

IV. Discussion of spring in-person meeting

Scheduling of the in-person meeting and alternative times for the monthly meeting will be addressed using online polls.