

User Issues Task Force

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NSLS-II Town Meeting

December 9, 2016



Background

- A strategic planning retreat was held on July 18-19, 2016 that covered all aspects of the NSLS-II facility, including the user program
- A finding from this workshop was a need to address many issues related to user access, amenities, communications, and outreach at NSLS-II
- To address these issues, John Hill formed a task force on user issues with a committee including:
 - Andi Barbour
 - Gretchen Cisco
 - Eric Dooryhee
 - Martin Fuchs
 - Lisa Miller (chair)
 - Kevin Yager

User Issues Task Force Scope

1. New Access Modes:

- Rapid Access
- Current-cycle access for GU proposals
- Remote access
- Block access for large teams/programs (BAGs)
- Industrial/proprietary users
- Multi-beamline
- Multi-facility
- Other new modes

2. User Experience:

- GIS, badging, key card access, TLDs, etc.
- User accounts and passwords
- User data and data analysis
- Amenities

3. Communications:

- Information for existing users
- Outreach for new users

4. Educational Outreach:

- Running “schools” at BNL or elsewhere
- Courses taught at nearby institutions
- Online materials
- InSynC for high school teachers and students

Deliverables:

- written report to John Hill and Paul Zschack every 6 months
- include assessment of the current status of user issues
- include a prioritized list of possible actions to improve the user experience with estimated cost and resource requirements

Users

- NSLS had more than 2300 users when the facility shut down
- Unique users in FY15: **115**
- Unique users in FY16: **477**
- Goal for FY17 is 1000 users!

But the world is not the same as 30 years ago when synchrotrons first came into operation... we need to look at today's users and what they need and expect from a scientific user facility

Users at DOE Facilities

<u>FY 2014</u>	<u>FY 2015</u>	
		X-ray Light Sources
2,372	-	• National Synchrotron Light Source ***
	110	• National Synchrotron Light Source II
1,556	1,626	• Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource
2,443	2,560	• Advanced Light Source
5,017	5,331	• Advanced Photon Source
612	837	• Linac Coherent Light Source
		Neutron Scattering Facilities
893	845	• Spallation Neutron Source
453	491	• High Flux Isotope Reactor**
187	-	• Manuel Lujan Jr. Neutron Scattering Center
		Nanoscale Science Research Centers
421	575	• Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences
433	677	• Molecular Foundry
465	513	• Center for Integrated Nanotechnologies
451	529	• Center for Nanoscale Materials
473	493	• Center for Functional Nanomaterials

http://science.energy.gov/~media/bes/suf/pdf/BES_Facilities_Number_of_Users.pdf

How do we make NSLS-II “the place to be”?

*World-leading beamlines and talented staff are essential...
but not everything*



Types of users

All users access NSLS-II via peer-reviewed science proposals

- **General users** – majority of users today; individual PI, individual proposal
- **Partner users** – a tremendous resource we must
- **Remote and/or mail-in users** – not all users need to come to BNL, especially for short and/or routine experiments
 - X Our network infrastructure is not ready for this yet
 - X Too many training requirements for these groups?
- **Science “teams”** – large collaborative groups, often with a funded grant proposal, needing guaranteed beam time, multi-beamlines
 - X Growth here, but we don’t have a good mechanism for these user teams yet
- **Industrial /proprietary users** – typically 6-7% of user community across DOE complex; Why not more?

Proposal process

- Types of proposals:
 - General user proposals – vast majority (>90%) of proposals
 - Science commissioning proposals – early in life of technique
 - Block Allocation Groups (BAGs) – initiated in summer 2016
 - Proprietary user proposals – initiated in fall 2016
 - Multi-facility (NSLS-II/ORNL SAXS/SANS) proposals – initiated in fall 2016
 - Rapid access proposals – initiated in January 2017
- ✓ Peer-review and allocation process is transparent
- ✗ Online proposal system (PASS) is greatly improved but still needs considerable development
- These are existing modes of user access, but are there others, e.g. mail-in, remote access, multi-beamline, multi-facility?

User access

Process must be seamless and not a barrier

- Guest registration
 - ✗ GIS system is not easy for users to navigate
 - Other facilities (e.g. ALS) are much more user friendly
- Training
 - ✓ User training on par with other facilities
 - ✓ GERT is transferable between DOE synchrotrons
- Badging, TLD, key card access
 - ✗ Not “one stop shopping”, i.e. users need to go to GUV center, User Admin, then beamline
- Computer access
 - ✗ Users need 3 logins: PASS, BNL domain, NSLS-II network

User Amenities

What we have now:

- Dormitories onsite, offsite hotels
- Cafeteria: Monday thru Friday, 7:30 am – 2:30 pm; only vending machines off hours and weekends



National Context

- All other DOE synchrotron facilities have guest houses
- Food: SLAC & LBNL open M-F, breakfast / lunch; ANL 401 Grill open daily, lunch / dinner



Communications & User Feedback

- Users Executive Committee
- Website: <https://www.bnl.gov/ps/>
- Online User Guide: <https://www.bnl.gov/ps/userguide/>
- End of Run Survey: https://pass.nsls.bnl.gov/end_of_run/
- PASS System Feedback form:
<https://surveys.external.bnl.gov/n/NSLSIIPassFeedback.aspx>
- User Administration Office:



Gretchen Cisco



Nancye Wright



Mercy Baez



Gladys McKenzie

Summary

*World-leading beamlines and talented staff are essential...
but not everything*

- Creative modes of user access should be considered
- Access by industrial users needs special consideration
- Continued development of PASS is needed
- User access can be improved with user-friendly GIS system and more streamline badging, TLD, and computer access processes
- User amenities are sub-par and need to be brought to modern standard



Take Home Messages

We need your input and feedback! What works? What doesn't? What's missing?

- We want to hear your good (and bad) experiences elsewhere!
- Ways to provide feedback:
 - Talk to any task force member
 - Come to a taskforce meeting
 - PASS: fill out the feedback form
 - End of Run: encourage users to fill them out
- We will communicate our recommendations via web, emails, Town Meetings, Users Meeting, others?

