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University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California, Santa Cruz
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Montana Tech of the University of Montana
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University of Nevada, Reno
New Mexico Inst. of Mining & Technology
New Mexico State University
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The University of Oklahoma
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Oregon State University
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University of Pittsburgh
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Princeton University
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San Jose State University
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University of Texas at Dallas
University of Texas at El Paso
Texas Tech University
University of Tulsa
University of Utah
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
University of Washington
Washington University, St. Louis
West Virginia University
University of Wisconsin, Madison
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh
Western Washington University
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Wright State University
University of Wyoming
Yale University



IRIS President Update – Spring 2015

Dear Colleagues,

As I approach the end of my first year at IRIS, and with the cherry blossoms in Washington getting ready to bloom, this seems like a good time to update Consortium Members and Affiliates on IRIS activities. Please feel free to share this update with colleagues at your institution.

We have seen several important personnel changes at IRIS since I wrote you last Fall. Kent Anderson, long-time GSN program manager, is now managing the IRIS Portable Instrumentation program. In that position Kent will also be responsible for IRIS' Polar programs. Justin Sweet, a recent PhD from the University of Washington, has been hired as a Research Associate to assist Kent in managing the PASSCAL and Polar programs. Justin is working out of the PASSCAL Instrument Center in Socorro. Katrin Hafner, who has served as the USArray Transportable Array Operations Manager since 2007, replaced Kent as full-time manager of the GSN program in January. We had been rather understaffed over the past year or so within the Instrumentation Services group at IRIS so it's good to have this great team fully in place. Unfortunately, Jessica Lodewyk, the data quality specialist in the OBSIP Management Office, left IRIS at the end of March, so we still have one more position to fill.

The beginning of a new year also marks changes in membership of IRIS governance committees. We have welcomed two new members to the IRIS Board of Directors: Miaki Ishii (Harvard) and Andy Nyblade (Penn State), and new chairs of the PASSCAL SC (Lara Wagner, DTM), Instrumentation Services SC (Doug Wiens, Wash U), Data Services SC (Jim Gaherty, LDEO), OBSIP Oversight Committee (Richard Allen, Berkeley) and International Development Seismology SC (Jay Pulliam, Baylor). Thanks to all of these individuals, and the other new committee members, for your service to the IRIS community. A table showing the membership of IRIS governance committees is available on the IRIS website at http://www.iris.edu/hq/about_iris/governance/.

As I mentioned in my letter last Fall, job number one for me is successfully executing SAGE and the other awards we are currently managing. NSF guidance to us is that the SAGE Year 3 budget (for the year beginning October 1, 2015) will be at the same level as SAGE Years 1 and 2. This is ~17% (\$5.3M) below what IRIS originally proposed for the third year of SAGE. In 2014, IRIS governance committees developed rescoping plans assuming a flat budget and described the impacts of these reduced budgets on their programs. IRIS management and the Standing Committees are working hard to mitigate these impacts, but with reductions of this magnitude there will be significant impacts on IRIS staffing levels and the services and operations IRIS can support. There is, however, some room for optimism. The President's FY2016 NSF budget request includes a 3% increase for SAGE and a one-time increase of \$4.9M in the USGS budget for installation of a new generation of ultra-

broadband borehole sensors for the GSN. While it will probably be many months before the FY16 appropriations are finalized, it's good to see these proposed increases.

We have had several reviews of IRIS programs since the beginning of the year including a close-out review by NSF of the USArray award, a review by NSF's Ocean Science Division of the IRIS OBSIP Management Office, and a 1-day site visit by NSF to review the first year of our SAGE Cooperative Agreement. These reviews went very well and provided constructive feedback on how we can improve our programs and services. An international review team, headed by Dr. Art Lerner-Lam of Columbia University, is reviewing the GSN program next week. Their findings and recommendations will be delivered to the IRIS Board for discussion in May.

With the end of both our SAGE Cooperative Agreement and EarthScope in September 2018, we have been spending a good deal of time preparing for the recompetition of the management of the SAGE facilities and thinking about where we'd like IRIS to be in 2020 (and beyond). In February, at its winter meeting, the Board met with IRIS Senior Managers, Project Leads, and Standing Committee chairs, for a 1½ day strategic planning meeting to discuss these issues. The results of this meeting will be a first-ever IRIS Strategic Plan which will be publically available on the IRIS website, probably in June.

On May 3-6, 2015 an NSF-funded workshop on "*Future Seismic and Geodetic Facility Needs in the Geosciences*" will be held in Leesburg, VA. The purpose of this workshop is to gather input from the geosciences community on the most important scientific questions that the community will be pursuing in 2018 and beyond, and the seismic and geodetic facility capabilities that will be required to support this research and associated education, outreach, training and workforce development. The report from this workshop will be used by NSF to help develop solicitations for the SAGE and GAGE recompetition, so it is an extremely important meeting.

Because attendance at the workshop will be very limited, 1-2 page "whitepapers" are being solicited from the geosciences community describing important scientific questions or problems that individuals will be working on in the next decade and the seismic and/or geodetic facilities capabilities needed to support that science. These whitepapers will be available to breakout groups at the workshop and incorporated into the final workshop report. Everyone is encouraged to submit whitepapers, regardless of whether you plan to attend the workshop or not. A web form to submit whitepapers is available on the workshop website under the "Whitepaper" tab:

http://www.iris.edu/hq/workshops/2015/05/future_seismic_and_geodetic_facility_needs_in_the_geosciences

The deadline for whitepaper submissions is April 15, 2015. This is your opportunity to provide input to NSF on the future facility needs of the seismological community. Don't miss this chance!

Hope to see you at either the "Futures" workshop in May or at the EarthScope National Meeting in Stowe, VT in June!

Regards,

Bob Detrick, IRIS President