Information Technology Committee

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Minutes of ITC meeting 3 pm, via Zoom. October 13, 2020.

Meeting chaired by Niko Kaciroti
Attendees-- ITC members: Marisa Conte, Melissa Dyson, Ryan Echlin, Emily Fuentes, Niko Kaciroti, Melvin McInnis, Rick Richter, Rachel Vacek, Vlad Wielbut, Zhixin Liu, Colby Lewis.
Liaison for SACUA on ITC: Allen Liu

Member introduction. Presentation from Allen Liu, liaison for SACUA on ITC. Agenda 1) Discussion related to virtual meetings platforms and accessibility, 2) Investigate alternative software solutions that may be better equipped to handle large interactive meetings.

The consensus among ITC members is that Zoom is an appropriate platform for large virtual meetings. Some of the limitations related to accessibility and voting are specific to touch screen devices, i.e. iphones or ipads, and even within the touch screen devices the constrains can vary depending on the OS or the year of the device. The following are some of the committees' recommendations and suggestions:

1) Zoom should continue to be used for large virtual meetings. It also recommends that Zoom capabilities and futures required in a meeting be tested prior to that meeting.

2) Use the large virtual town hall meetings to evaluate and test Zoom features and get instant feedback.

3) As some of the Zoom features might not work in all devices, it should be clear what is the preferred device to access Zoom. For example, participating through a PC would assure that all zoom features work properly. If other devices are used it must be noted that some of the features in Zoom might not work well.

4) For large virtual meetings the committee suggested that setting up expectations, which can be supported through Zoom will be helpful to avoid unanticipated glitches. For example, clarify how questions will be submitted organized and answered through Zoom QA or chat features. How voting will be done etc.

5) There is a suggestion to evaluate platforms that can efficiently manage Q/A during the meeting and have sufficient people to support Q/A. The NIH uses an online Q/A platform called Sildo (https://www.sli.do). The meeting itself is run through Zoom. Some good feature of Sildo include: one can vote on the comment/question so it rises to the top (becomes the first to be answered). It also allows people to add their names or not have their names attached to a comment/question.

For large meetings it will be helpful to have a person who provide live technical support

- negotiated to be written into the grant.
  - Committee members discussed the challenges of managing data that is generated by graduate students. Carlson offered possible solutions such as creating an exit document to capture where the students have been storing the data, etc. He also recommended developing lab protocols for how the data is managed and stored.