

# 2017-12-07 Steering Group Meeting

Thursday December 7, 2017, 1 PM EST

## Attendees

Steering Group Members

[Dean B. Krafft](#), [Julia Trimmer](#), [Andi Ogier](#), [Lauren Gala](#), [Eric Meeks](#), [Alex Viggio](#), [Dong Joon \(DJ\) Lee](#), [Mark Newton](#), [Paul Albert blocked URL](#)

★ = note taker

Ex officio

[Mike Conlon](#), [debra hanken kurtz](#), [Andrew Woods](#)

Regrets

## Location

[Friday WebEx](#)

## Agenda

	Item	Time	Facilitator	Notes
1	Review agenda	2 min	All	
2	Updates	5 min	All	Sharing meeting facilitation duties, and other updates
3	Staff Changes	10	debra/All	Technical Team changes
4	Cornell Hosted Meeting on the future of VIVO	10	Julia/All	Proposed Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving stakeholder engagement - why have some key supporters drifted away, how can we win them back?</li><li>• The relationship with Duraspace – Can it meet the key needs of the VIVO project? If not, what alternatives exist?</li><li>• Current organizational structure – What works and what doesn't? What should it become?</li><li>• Product development: How do we structure the discussions and decisions around priorities and communication collaborations?</li><li>• Funding: What is the present status? How can we achieve our potential?</li><li>• How can we improve communications to stakeholders, the VIVO community, and to the public?</li><li>• Collaborative projects – What could we/should we be doing?</li></ul>
6	VIVO Vision	10	All	Follow up on previous discussion and introduce harvester topic
7	Research Graph	10	Erin/Mike	Progress report
8	VIVO Stories Update	10	Erin	Two done, more scheduled. Determine format and schedule for publishing
9	Your Item Here!			

## Notes

- Alex: my former colleague Nate Prewitt who was an official VIVO committer roughly 2015 to mid-2017 didn't see a lot of technical leadership invested in encouraging community contribution. So the experience (GitHub commit history) of the past few years isn't necessarily proof of a decentralized approach not working (vs centralized). Nate also didn't think the existing technology stack appealed to your typical current day open source developer, and that along with VIVO's complex and monolithic implementation would tend to discourage decentralized (community) contributions.
- Dean: if we're looking at the aging core infrastructure, we're going to need to focus on that. Distributed committer additions is not going to make that happen. Andrew: agreed.
- Eric: yes, I think it's beyond maintenance.
- Rob: even if we revive the VIVO codebase, is that enough?
- Debra: there is a meeting planned in late January / February at Cornell to discuss the future of the project.
- Tom: is there typically face to face meetings? Mike: there's the Conference and there's the Duraspace Summit.
- Rob: it might be helpful to look back at what we wanted to do as part of our historical strategic plan.
- Rob: if VIVO is perceived as plumbing, that becomes a gating factor. We noticed that with Fedora. That's where initiatives like Islandora came from.... One of my concerns is that a vendor solution will lock down our data.
- Julia: I'm concerned that there are people who are participating who aren't members of the Leadership or Steering groups. Rob: I think people who participate should be active contributors (money or code) to the project.
- Rob: the vision and technological architecture should be aligned. Dean: I think we should have a vision meeting.
- Julia: it would be easy to have a meeting here if need be.

- Rob: we could do it in NYC too.
- Julia: I like the idea of submitting ideas ahead of time.
- How should we have a meeting?
  - Julia: I think the composition should be Steering and Leadership.
  - Dean: I think we might want to have some outside expertise.
  - Rob: it was nice, in the case of Fedora, to have technology representation
  - Mark: I like face to face meeting with primary stakeholders.
  - Tom: I think a face to face, intensive meeting is worthwhile. I think it would be most valuable to define and/or confirm VIVO's vision as a product and community. I think it needs to include a frank assessment of the current tech stack. I think it should also look at resourcing and resourcing strategies as well as roles. I think any Leader or Steering reps should be there (perhaps excepting commercial partners), as well as any individual or institution who may be a contributor to an uplift. And yes, we should have technical experts there to have a high level tech discussion (but not actually do engineering or detailed design.)
  - Andi: I don't like face to face meetings.
- Rob: how do we connect back to Curt?
- Rob: I'm confused by who was on the original email.
- Tom: if we're trying to understand what the vision is, I think the vision benefits in having more people participate. The trick is to involve people who are willing to invest or contribute in some form and there are lots of different forms.
- Dean: the basic principle is get input from a wide group as possible and that correlates with who is willing to make contributions.
- Rob: I don't mind reaching out to Curt. Dean: Tell him we think the broader VIVO community needs to be engaged.

## Action Items