

PERFORMANCE MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION: WHAT'S THE POINT OF GIVING THE NCE ALL THIS DATA ANYWAY?

Report Back From Audience – Notes Taken Onscreen

Contents

Purpose of the exercise	1
Next Steps	1
Notes taken during the exercise	2
Handout provided by Eleni Stroulia	5

PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE

- 1) To raise awareness amongst new networks on challenges, key elements/resources and lessons learned
- 2) To allow a dialogue and exchange of best practices/knowledge amongst networks
- 3) To allow a dialogue between networks and the NCE Secretariat

NEXT STEPS

- Networks are encouraged to continue sharing, adopting and implementing best practices and tools
- Networks are encouraged to continue sharing feedback with the NCE Secretariat
- The NCE Secretariat will continue to look for areas in the reporting process that can be strategically improved based on feedback from networks, and within the directives of the respective program [performance measurement framework](#)

NOTES TAKEN DURING THE EXERCISE

<p>1) <i>What are your network tracking needs (what, when and for whom)? E.g. internal monitoring and evaluation based on network goals and objectives, NCE annual reporting, NCE program indicators; annual, biannual, quarterly, monthly, etc.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data capture that is easy for researchers to use • To be used for easy and quick decision making • Tracking tool(s) for selection of investment, reviewing decision making process and for NCE reporting • [Suggested by Network] one central online platform for all networks/centres • Track attribution • [Example of a product that already exists] Research Fish, https://www.researchfish.com/ system that tracks research grants from a funder perspective. Also researchers can track specific grants and report to respective funder.
<p>2) <i>What is the network's current tracking and reporting approach/system/platform? How is it tracking impact (change, outcomes)? Does it serve the needs of the network, the BOD/subcommittees?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on five NCE program criteria • With performance metrics • Identifies/follows project funding and which projects have HQP, partners, etc. • Tracks progress of projects • [Example of a system used by Network] GRAND forum,
<p>3) <i>What is the current human and budget resource allocation for tracking and reporting?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything! However, resources allocations are often stage- or cycle-specific • The process requires a large allocation of resources at head office as well as with the communications team • We work with PIs to develop and write impact stories. This includes interviews with PIs, students and partners • Writing impact stories is important to us because it results in greater impact (cascade effect) • The HQP involved in the projects and in the task forces are trained to manage everything, which includes tracking and reporting processes • Our annual reports feed into regular newsletters, blogs and success stories

4) *Who is involved in tracking and reporting? E.g. admin, “reportees”, reviewers, BOD, BOD subcommittees*

- The network manager leads the data collection and tracking, and works closely with those involved and those that make decisions based on the analysis of the data and tracking
- A lead, coordinator and HQP are assigned a “work package” at the project level
- Committee chairs all involved in tracking
- Project reviewers are involved in monitoring and tracking

5) *How often does each user access/input/analyze/output from the system/platform?*

- There is a high burden
- We use a hybrid: we use data and network analytics for annual reports (to show impact) and data is also collected for operational purposes (e.g. # of new partners, enrolment, etc.)
- We collect data at the end of reporting year and throughout the year
- Challenge: there is pushback from researchers at the input stage because of time constraints (incentives: hold back on funding until reports are received)

6) *What are the main strengths and weakness of the current system?*

- Weaknesses:
 - Short term focus of annual metrics collected by NCE Secretariat
 - What’s the long term impact at the network level? Is there an end of cycle report on impacts?
 - Not easy to interpret
 - Not easy to change later in the cycle
 - Metrics are not always uniform across networks
 - Difficult to measure impact of networking and partnerships
- Strength:
 - Evaluation of NCE Secretariat metrics are very useful for BOD decisions
- NCE program is very unique and measuring the impact of the strengths and uniqueness of the program is important
- Some networks put in place incentives for internal reporting
- Reporting on impacts and success stories help with understanding the need for/usefulness of reporting

7) *Is there an opportunity to improve the system in order to make better use of the time and resources allocated for tracking and evaluating?*

- There is a need for a system that captures all of the data (centralized system)
- Inherent challenge: all networks are managing network interdisciplinary systems, therefore, there needs to be flexibility to suit the unique networks
- Need for/based on best practices
- Different system approaches: e.g. GRAND, BioFuelNet
- Already available software, e.g. Research Fish
- Determine what information is required on an annual basis, plus data requirements unique to the network

*2015 NCE Annual Best Practices Sessions
Networks of Centres of Excellence
Day2 - Tuesday, 31 March 2015 at 8 AM
Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa*



HANDOUT PROVIDED BY DR. ELENI STROULIA

The GRAND Forum: A Platform for Managing Networked Interdisciplinary Research

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For Researchers

1. Easy reporting
2. Communication and Collaboration (mailing lists, wikis)
3. Interactive profile (to be served to external web sites)
4. CCV maintenance
5. Expertise finding

For Project and Theme Leaders

1. High-quality data from the people in the best position to give it; information is entered once and flows “upwards”
2. Text entries cross-referenced (with embedded links) with individuals, projects and products
3. Collaborative report development by Leads and researchers

For Evaluators (RMC and ISAC)

1. Access to detailed online documentation
2. Scoring (and ordering)
3. Online discussion
4. Effective and efficient reviewing and assessment
5. Feedback management

For the Scientific Director and Network Manager

1. Analyses and Visualizations
 - a. Research output relative to people
 - b. Research output relative to funding
 - c. Connectivity and cohesion across projects and geography
2. Polls and Surveys
3. Archived mailing lists for internal and external communities
4. “Nuggets” for media stories

For the NCE Secretariat

1. High-quality NCE tables “good” data – sanity checks (incl. duplicate detection) identify problems
2. Always available and up to date

Researcher Profiles

The profile data is always up to date. The appearance is the same for logged in and anonymous visitors BUT logged in members have access to more data (based on their credentials).

Managing Products

(Overview)

Data in standard formats can be ingested Bibtex, DOI, CCV

Through this overview, HQP and Researchers

1. inspect all their products,
2. associate them with the right projects,
3. examine the names of the listed coauthors,
4. click-through to edit the details

Relative Indicators

Drilling down through Provinces, Universities, Researchers to explore productivity and funding allocation

Connections

Collaborative links across projects, disciplines, institutions

NCE Conceptual Organization

The network thematic organization