

Center for Particulate and Surfactant Systems (CPaSS)
Fall I/UCRC IAB Meeting
Columbia University
New York, NY

Meeting Minutes & Action Items
Davis Auditorium, Schapiro Center
August 20th, 2009

Introduction & Welcome

Greg Spontak (Vice Chair, CPaSS Executive Committee) acted as the chair and moderator during the closed door meeting for IAB members

Meeting was called to order at 2:45 P.M.

- Welcome by Greg
- Meeting agenda
- Meeting objectives

I/UCRC General Discussion

Open Comments

- IAB members were asked about their general thoughts on the meeting
 - ✓ Speakers were better prepared with respect to presentations/slides
 - ✓ PIs/researchers should include more content relevant to industry/address industry relevance
 - ✓ IAB members want a focus on project scope and progress rather than a compilation of data analysis and techniques used.

- IAB members were asked about overall scope of the projects in CPaSS:
 - ✓ A common theme is needed amongst the projects, i.e. thematic clusters
 - This might take the form of a roadmap
 - This might take the form of meeting themes (e.g., green surfactants: cosmetic, detergents, mining)
 - ✓ IAB members would like to know who's working on what projects
 - This might take the form of a research tree
 - ACTION ITEM: revisit the structure of PERC's research-focus areas in the future
 - ✓ IAB members would like to see more depth from project, i.e., more about each project's scientific challenge and literature background regarding the state of the art
 - What's known?
 - What's unknown?
 - What are the 'killer issues'?
 - ✓ Inclusion of economics of project/cost-benefits analyses is good
 - ACTION ITEM: this could be a section added to the project justification form

- Some members expressed a high priority for economics as a fundamental aspect of each project
- It was suggested that perhaps industry members should help provide this sort of information and/or up-to-date numbers
- 'Real' economics should be considered but are hard for researchers to properly evaluate.
- IAB members would have to work closely with each PIs/researcher and help 'get them in the mindset'
- ✓ However, some members felt that the economics aspect is more about the practicality of the project
 - Economics alone should not be the driving force
 - PIs/researchers should ask the question, 'What is the value?'
 - But they still need to consider the profitability
 - PIs/researchers know fundamental science is also important and is important to industry. The focus on science should never be lost to economics evaluations.
- A discussion regarding fundamental science vs. application followed:
 - ✓ Fundamental science is found in academic research
 - ✓ Need to find a way to delineate fundamental from application
 - Projects are sometimes stuck in-between and are falling short
 - ✓ Focus should be on *fundamental understanding* that can be *applied*
 - When considering fundamental studies, perhaps concentrating on economics is misguided
 - ACTION ITEM: revisit CPaSS mission statement and perhaps split fundamental from application
 - Differences between ERCs and I/UCRCs get exaggerated
 - ✓ D. Gray: I/UCRCs focus on 'Use-Inspired Fundamental Research'
- Universities are where new thinking and new directions in fundamental research are taking place (which are not available to industry otherwise)
 - ✓ University PIs/researchers have to be creative and think deeply about relevant issues in a different way
 - ✓ Industry is also looking for solutions to real-life problems
 - ✓ Some members noted that it is still not clear what the University of Florida/Columbia University and CPaSS are working towards
 - What are the problems that can be solved in 10-15 years?

Meeting Format

- IAB members were asked about the meeting format this time around
 - ✓ Many felt that the one-day meeting was fine, but short
 - ✓ Members felt that there was very little interaction with researchers and speakers
 - More than half wanted a meeting that is more than one day
 - ✓ Members felt that the talks were too-short
 - Many would prefer longer talks with more interaction

- As an example of additional interaction outside of the meetings, it was noted that Columbia University and Henkel (Pete He) conduct regular (biweekly) phone conferences to discuss their project
- ✓ It was felt that a two-day meeting would be better
 - The round-tables setup at the 2009 Spring IAB Meeting was conducive to discussions and interactions with researchers

L.I.F.E. Forms

Denis Gray (NSF Evaluator, North Carolina State University) led a short discussion regarding the L.I.F.E. forms

Industry Response

- Denis restated that the intent of the L.I.F.E. forms is to determine in what percentage of the projects the industry members take interest
 - ✓ The closed-door meeting is normally used to discuss the projects and their L.I.F.E. forms in detail
 - ✓ Some comments from the presentations from the morning sessions were used as examples of starting-points-for-discussion at future closed-door meetings

Format

- There was some discussion regarding changes or improvements to future L.I.F.E. forms
 - ✓ Recommendations from IAB members of other companies that are related to the project and might be interested
 - ✓ Solicitation for five to ten names of other people in the IAB member's network
 - ✓ Solicitation for names of colleagues in the IAB member's company
 - ✓ Suggestions regarding absentee input

Miscellaneous

- A question was brought up regarding how to avoid 'doubling up' work at a large company?
 - ✓ CPaSS projects need to be evaluated to avoid duplication in industry
 - ✓ They need to either be more fundamental or more innovative
 - ✓ Feedback through IAB closed door meetings or on the side
 - ✓ Suggestions from industry mentors
 - ✓ Additional methods of soliciting from companies
 - Survey companies for materials systems

Additional Items

New Agreement

- The University of Florida has requested that signed documentation is obtained from the industry members at Florida confirming the agreement of the official transition from PERC to CPaSS membership
 - ✓ Maria will send the letter via email and set a deadline for submission of the signed document

Voting

- The voting mechanism was discussed
 - ✓ The possibility of increasing the total number of votes available to each company on a multiple of 10 (i.e., 250 votes for \$25K companies and 50 votes for \$5K companies) was briefly discussed.
 - ✓ The increment in number of votes would allow companies to further distribute (if desired) their votes among projects.
 - ✓ No firm decision was made by the present members about it. General consensus was that the voting structure works as is.

Next Meeting

- Spring 2010 IAB will be held at the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL
 - ✓ Tentative dates: February 17-18, 2010
 - Tentative agenda will include: Project Updates and New Initiatives

Funding Opportunities

- Prime channel is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act should be actively explored.
- A discussion was started regarding how to bring in additional companies
 - ✓ IAB members can help seek out other potential companies
 - Could be companies that the IAB member already know
 - Could be companies suggested by PI/researchers/students to IAB members
 - Should try to get tips on proposals of interest directly from industry
 - ACTION ITEM: would we benefit from forming an IAB committee (other IABs do this) to oversee recruitment of new members?
 - ✓ It was noted that if the PIs/researchers bring in the company, this ensures project funding from the get-go (voting would get bypassed for the first year for that project)
 - ACTION ITEM: would it help if someone from the University of Florida or Columbia University were to look into funding opportunities?
 - ACTION ITEM: would it help if someone from the University of Florida or Columbia University takes all of the IAB members' suggestions and then follow-up?
 - Suggestions would include identified companies that may have done some similar work
 - Suggestions would include identified companies that might be interested in the proposed work
 - We should consider that it may even be another person WITHIN an IAB member's company that we could bring in (different divisions)
 - We should look for network connections within particular sectors
- It was suggested that Prof. Moudgil and Prof. Somasundaran could bring small teams of researchers to present their work and explore interest in other divisions at member companies
 - ✓ It was noted that if an IAB member were to bring in another company, they would like to be acknowledged for doing so

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 P.M.