

2020-06-23 VIVO Leadership Group Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 23 at 11:00 EDT

LG members:

Paul Albert, Ann Beynon, Robert Cartolano, Mike Conlon, Tom Cramer, Anna Guillaumet, Doug Hahn, Christian Hauschke, Anthony Helm, Dong Joon (DJ) Lee, hannah sommers, Julia Trimmer, Alex Viggio, ★ Terrie Wheeler

LYRASIS:

Laurie Gemmill Arp, Robert Miller, Michele Mennielli

Regrets:

Virginia (Ginny) Pannabecker

Federico Ferrario

★ = Secretary

Connection Information

Zoom connection information is available in the Outlook invitation.

Preparation

- Please review the [Interest Groups and Task Forces Updates](#) for this meeting. The VIVO conference was phenomenal!
- Please see the LG Google Drive, Budgets and MOUs folder, for the signed MOU for 2020 - 2021.
- The [VIVO Development Priorities for 2020](#) have been endorsed by the Leadership Group and are now open for comment in the community.

Agenda

1. LG year-end business: (Julia, 5 minutes)
 - a. Members stepping off: DJ Lee, Ginny Pannabecker, Hannah Sommers, Julia Trimmer, Alex Viggio
 - b. [LG officers nominations](#) are open until June 29; elections from July 6 to July 12
 - c. Orientation of new LG members and officers: third week in July 20 - 24
 - d. First meeting: July 28
2. Assessment of opportunities (Julia and everyone, 20 minutes)
 - a. Proposing a market analysis for strategic planning to identify and assess the opportunities for VIVO
 - b. Do LG members consider this a priority?
 - c. If so, what are options for conducting this study? Hire a consulting firm, conduct within the LG, or ask for help from LYRASIS?
3. Revisiting the Steering Group (Julia and everyone, 10 minutes)
 - a. SG meetings -- continue, disband or decide later?
4. MOU for 2020-2021 (Julia and Laurie, 10 minutes)
5. Membership update: University of Florida will not renew (Julia, 5 minutes)

Meeting Minutes

1. LG year-end business:
 - Julia: There are several pieces of year end business or announcements.
 - Members stepping off: DJ Lee, Ginny Pannabecker, Hannah Sommers, Julia Trimmer, Alex Viggio. All of these folks have been part of the LG for years and have made the VIVO community what it is today. A heartfelt thanks so much for everything you've done for the VIVO Community!
 - Please be aware that LG officers' nominations remain open until June 29; elections from July 6 to July 12. To nominate someone for an office, please use this [form](#).
 - Orientation of new LG members and officers is planned for the third week in July 20 - 24
 - First meeting of the new VIVO LG will be held on July 28 – invitation coming

Robert: As part of recognizing transitions, please be aware that Carol Minton Morris is moving on from the Lyrasis team. We will miss her energy and enthusiasm, and will try to find a suitable replacement.

2. Assessment of Opportunities

Julia: We've talked a lot about sustainability in this past year. With a large budget contraction as a result of three known membership cancellations, this will become important to address for the next LG, when they start in July. How can VIVO mitigate this risk? To that end, I'd like to hear from everyone regarding their opinion regarding an assessment that asks:

- What are VIVO's opportunities to grow, and which of these are quickest/easiest for us to focus on?
- Who are our potential customers, what do they want, and what could they pay for?
- Proposing a market analysis for strategic planning to identify and assess the opportunities for VIVO

I would like to hear from everyone regarding whether this is a good way to generate data for a VIVO strategy? If yes, what is the best way to accomplish? Conduct within LG? Hire consultant? Ask for help from Lyrasis?

Finally, would you like to bring your ideas to this investigation?

Paul – In favor of a new direction in terms of the product. Have frequent cases where we say we need to do an analysis. How many times do we need to do this, as we know the product well.

Julia - We think we know, or some of us think we know, but how do we know which are the most compelling ideas.

Paul - This group does not have the ability to force developers to work. Only the people who are willing to do additional development are those who support free-market template with self-edit. I am still of the opinion that we need to produce a compelling software as a service product.

Ann – Agree with Paul that we keep going in circles, and we need to move forward, doing something different. If it takes a consultant, then we should do this. We need someone to move us out of the bottleneck of development. If we don't do something different, we will keep going in the same circle. Look at the conference, and see what that tells us about what is needed?

Rob – What does this mean for Columbia vs. what this means for VIVO as a whole? Would love to be able to go to someone and pay so that we can turn on these services. What he would like is to pay the community or a hosting vendor to do what Paul's tool does to harvest data from PubMed and Scopus, such a tool developed for the community would be outstanding.

Tom – What would make this different than when we've done this before? External market has shifted dramatically to see what parts of VIVO resonate today, with products and services. Characterizing the market should be relatively easy to do. Consultant may take too long to get what we need. Tom would be willing to participate in a planning meeting.

Mike – not in favor of a consultant. This is the leadership. Community is strong. Ideas are vibrant. Got more than a dozen offers to help the project from the conference. We are in great shape as a community, and as an open source community.

Secretary note: In the chat many said that we need to translate the enthusiasm at the conference into memberships. This seems to be a chronic weakness of the VIVO Project. Project funding can buy developers, but developers without a strategic direction do not necessarily add strategic value to the product that the market demands. Generally funding was prioritized over developers.

Anna – We don't need an external consultant, the idea I recommend is to create a task force to investigate opportunities and what the market might bear. Give results of this study to the leadership.

Doug – Agree with what Paul said, that we seem like we are doing this over and over. Consultant means we have to pay someone. We are the leadership group and we should be able to figure this out.

Christian – does not expect big new knowledge from market assessment. We don't have any exchange between the leadership group and the developers. We need higher diversity in this group. One seat per institution.

Anthony – Naturally I don't have the history that you all do, but have already asked about whether a SWOT analysis has been done. Probably don't have funding for the consultancy. I don't know how many conference members represent member institutions. How do we grow the official membership of the project to maintain its sustainability? Important to grow the amount of funded memberships. Also finding that there is inconsistencies at Brown regarding how the product is used, and how they can better understand how their users. How do we get the really brilliant work back into the main branch of the development?

DJ - Think we are doing well, but have too many different directions – some working on UI, some working elsewhere. We don't have sufficient resources compared to other companies. We already have spent a lot of time with assessment. We are diverse (many ideas and different directions). We may want to look at these directions and see what the market does NOT have so that we can define ourselves.

Hannah – This is my last meeting, and I really appreciate this group for welcoming me these past few years. Paul crystallized the challenge. We can identify strategic opportunities, but without translating that into a disciplined development program, we cannot move forward. If we engage consultants, we would have to be very creative, because we have not budgeted for this. Comment specifically on the budget for FY21: Historically VIVO has been good at bringing in revenue through camps and conference events. This year we didn't have anything planned that could be projected as revenue in the budget that passed, but that doesn't mean it couldn't be done to raise a small amount of revenue and generate community. This is something important to keep in mind.

Alex – With all of the uncertainty that faces us as individuals and our institutions over the coming year, I believe that we should focus on building our community as opposed to investing concerted resources on market analysis etc. As noted by Mike and Christian, our community is vibrant and growing. How do we help those new folks that have hopped over the fence (and those still on the fence evaluating or experimenting) and want to join the community, to fully join the community and are embraced for their contributions and diversity?

Terrie – We need money to be sustainable. I like the idea of someone external to the project to help us see past our own myopia, however we cannot afford a consultant. What other ways are there to gather more information to learn what the market wants, and not what we think the market wants? No one has mentioned Lyrasis, and they are extremely experienced with a variety of libraries, and understand what libraries are seeking, and what they would be willing to pay for. Can we do an assessment of their users to learn what VIVO already does, or conceivably could offer, that they would value, and hence pay for? Can we offer software as a service to the hundreds of Lyrasis libraries to help resource the VIVO Project? Terrie would be willing to help with the next steps to the assessment.

Robert – Many years ago I worked with a start-up that focused on 10% rather than the 90% that the market is looking for. The startup failed, largely due to its limited focus. I've listened to much of the conversation over the past year, and I've wondered If we are focusing on the 10% or the 90%? To grow, we need to focus on the 90%. We are at a crossroads. Do we want to go forward? Do we want to grow? IF VIVO didn't exist as of Jan 1 2021, what would not happen? How broad is the value that VIVO offers and is that value big enough to support a community that will support VIVO? What alternatives does the community have? It feels like the group is stuck. What is the lightning bolt (or action) that will create unity or agreement or action? It feels expensive, requires resources to use, resources to support. It doesn't feel balanced in terms of the cost to use vs the value it provides. I am struggling if it is "needed".

Paul - Sustained funding is critical. I am concerned that there are an insufficient number of institutions who would be willing to contribute to the project monetarily. That is why I suggest taking one or more applications and packaging them as a software service, a service which we will turn off if we're not paid. As an example, Dspace has a product called Dspace Direct, which is sold as a software service.

Laurie – alternate view. VIVO submitted a proposal to the Catalyst Fund. Look at this and see if there is a there-there for hosting.

3. Revisiting the Steering Group

Julia reminded us that the Steering Group was paused last year, as the It Takes a Village (ITAV) recommended LG officers. These officers have essentially replaced the Steering Group, and will continue next year. The Steering Group will no longer be needed.

4. MOU for 2020 - 2021 - Julia asked everyone to be mindful of this MOU as this is her last meeting as Chair. Many gave Julia fond notes of gratitude in the chat for her outstanding service as Chair throughout the last two years. Robert reminded Julia to read the well wishes being shared.

5. Membership Update

Julia - With the pandemic creating huge economic losses, the VIVO Project has learned that three members will not be renewing. They are: Virginia Tech (announced last month - platinum member), University of Florida (bronze member) and La Trobe University (copper member). This is a revenue loss of \$23,500 to the project in FY21.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.