



2019 LARGE FACILITIES WORKSHOP

APRIL 2-4 | TEXAS ADVANCED COMPUTING CENTER

Information Section

Topic:	Bridging the Communications Gap for Key Stakeholders
Speaker(s) Name, Title:	Amanda Greenwell, Adrian Apodaca, John Taber, Ranpal Gill, Shari Lifson, Jennifer Plozai, Cheryl Ann Blain, Claire Rafferty
Session Description:	Facilities share insights, challenges, and success stories on the topics of branding and social media
Session Time Slot:	Tuesday, April 2, 1:05 p.m.
Purpose and Desired Outcome:	Communicators will discuss the impact of the 2018 NSF branding guidelines and their implementation. NSF and various organizations will share social media tips and best practices.

Notetaking Section

Scribe Name	
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Disclaimer: *These are raw notes that were captured by the assigned scribe during this session at the 2019 Large Facilities Workshop. This is one individual's interpretation of what took place during the session, and its content does not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the National Science Foundation.*

Notes and Key Points:

BRANDING

- NSF OLPA (Office of Legislative and Public Affairs) has worked to distill a clear & concise message to communicate
- Branding is the marketing practice of creating a name symbol or design that differentiates your organization from others
- Challenges exist in transitioning to new NSF branding guidelines, especially when a name change is also happening (e.g., IRIS)
- EPO groups are particularly invested in branding for an organization because their audience needs to find them
- How to deal with existing resources that don't follow guidelines?
- Renaming leads to potential loss of brand recognition, needs significant resources to be successful
- NCOA = New NSF nighttime astronomy center that will combine several facilities into one organization
- Names have power, should be thoughtful when choosing a name
- NSF is taking a new approach regarding metrics and social media engagement to assess public knowledge of NSF brand

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Expect to spend 25% of a knowledgeable person's time on social media
- NSF is doing a big campaign next year for their 70th birthday
- Twitter is popular mainly in the science community, not with the general public
- YouTube is now the leading social media platform
- Some platforms (e.g., snapchat) require more content than we have

- Certain posts take fewer resources than others (links/reposts vs. original posts or discussion posts)

Best Practices:

BRANDING

- Use recently released NSF logos found at nsf.gov/logo
- Follow NSF branding guidelines
- Reinforce message that the government, and therefore the public, plays a critical role in cutting-edge science
- Update highest traffic websites with new NSF logo
- For existing resources that are hard to change (e.g., slides and educational materials), concentrate on updating NSF branding when revising these.
- If renaming, consider co-branding (continuing to use old name with new one, especially if new name might be temporary)
- For naming, test on target audiences to make sure it's unique, sounds ok in other languages, is meaningful, not too long, appropriately descriptive
- Consider putting logos at the top of banners and conference materials so they don't get covered by furniture
- Consider a naming contest when renaming, but make sure to implement guidelines so you have control over the outcome
- NSF is close to having their naming protocol finalized
- "NSF Street" or "NSF Pavilion" model could be used to group NSF facilities at conferences or other events
- Put up "FREE!" signs if there is confusion about whether NSF booths are providing a service or selling something

SOCIAL MEDIA

- An aggressive social media campaign can leverage low level of social media resources
- Posts involving a person are very popular
- Encourage PIs to use social media
- A codified social media strategy can help get PIs at different facilities to feel comfortable posting on behalf of a centralized organization
- Use #NSFFunded or #NSFStories
- Two-way engagement is most effective
- Reach out to OLPA to coordinate press releases, request a quote, amplify a major discovery, share an idea for a story
- OLPA can help initiate and coordinate media visits to your facilities
- Strategy and research and thoughtfulness determine success in social media
- Look at Pew research on social media to determine best strategy
- Social media is a good way to feature people who don't normally get attention
- Each post should have purpose: e.g., building awareness, education, advertising, call to action

Actionable Recommendations (Action Owner Name & Organization):

- Need clarification from NSF about whether funds are available for facilities to update their materials with new NSF logos
- NSF requests that facilities make sure PIs know they should only tag NSF in science-related posts (not personal posts)

- Facilities would like advance notice of NSF campaigns so they have time to plan participation
- Suggestion to set up a Slack channel to talk about coordinated social media campaigns
- If these topics are discussed next year, in-person participation from OLPA representatives is requested

Decisions:

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Session Summary

Communicators at various facilities shared their experiences and the challenges faced in implementing the 2018 NSF brand guidelines while maintaining their own brand integrity. Several facilities who have changed names, or who are considering name changes, discussed the challenges and opportunities inherent in that process.