

Sustainability and Governance Working Group Charter

1. Background

DataONE was conceived as a 10-year project to enable new science and knowledge creation through universal access to data about life on Earth and the environment that sustains it. In Phase I (2009-2014), more than 300 DataONE participants designed, developed and deployed a robust cyberinfrastructure (CI) with innovative services, and directly engaged and educated a broad stakeholder community. DataONE provides a resilient, scalable infrastructure using Member Nodes (data repositories), Coordinating Nodes, and an Investigator Toolkit to support the data access and data management needs of biological, Earth, and environmental science researchers in the U.S. and across the globe. DataONE also supports research by developing an engaged community of users and repositories via the DataONE Users Group and the Member Node Forum; encouraging working groups (small groups of community experts) to support CI and community engagement activities; educating the workforce by providing online best practices, curricula, and other resources; and collaborating with other CI and community efforts nationally and internationally.

Building on Phase I, DataONE will target goals that enable scientific innovation and discovery while massively increasing the scope, interoperability, and accessibility of data. Community education and outreach efforts will remain central to the DataONE mission. Four working groups will refine and extend the DataONE CI; perform usability testing and assess community needs; engage and educate the community; and develop a responsive governance structure and long-term sustainability model.

2. Working Groups

Working Groups are central to DataONE in conducting research, specifying cyberinfrastructure, and engaging the community. The Working Group Model allows DataONE to conduct targeted research and education activities with a broad group of scientists and users. Working Groups are designed to enable research and education activities to evolve over time. Each Working Group will have two co-leaders who actively work with members to propose and implement solutions to particular research, education, cyberinfrastructure, governance, and sustainability challenges.

3. Purpose, Scope, Mission

The Sustainability & Governance working group will focus on the research, development, and governance implementation of the marketing plans, business plans, and sustainability strategy to establish DataONE as a long-term sustainable network for earth science data. It is recognized that the governance and sustainability strategy will need to evolve during the course of the project.

The scope of the Sustainability & Governance Working Group is defined as the activities necessary to begin transition toward a sustainable network by 2020.

Sustainability charge from the NSF solicitation for DataNet:

“While it is recognized that achieving sustainability will be a process of experimentation, adaptation, and evolution and that only limited models currently exist, proposes should describe an initial strategy, and the organizational structures and processes to be used in pursuing that strategy, by which both economic and technological sustainability could be achieved over the long term. The former - economic sustainability - means an organization that is wholly or largely independent of continued NSF funding for this activity by year 11. The latter - technological sustainability - refers to an organization that can provide for reliable long-term data preservation and access while continuously adapting to new technologies and user expectations.”

4. Duration of Working Group

This Working Group will exist throughout the life of the DataONE Project. Working Group members will conduct yearly updates to the Working Group Charter.

5. Major Objectives

Major objectives of the Sustainability & Governance Working Group are to:

- develop a transparent and responsive governance structure that supports and expands the DataONE community and services;
- establish policies and procedures that support and further the DataONE mission; and
- implement an Integrated Business Model that can sustain and support evolution of DataONE services.

6. Expected Deliverables, Outcomes & Schedule

- Coordinate and support External Advisory Board activities. (throughout the project)
- A Plan to identify, prioritize, and schedule Sustainability & Governance activities tied to relevant PMP performance metrics. (Dec. 2014; to be revised and updated periodically)
- Define the core assumptions and hypotheses regarding DataONE's target market and the customer needs DataONE's product(s) will address as well as systematically test and validate these assumptions and hypotheses with data from real-world potential customers. (Start 10/1/14 and conclude 9/30/19)
 - Milestone: a document that describes how target markets will be formally evaluated is scheduled to be completed by 12/23/14.
- Define the core assumptions and hypotheses regarding the growth drivers appropriate to DataONE's target market(s) and product(s); systematically test and validate these hypotheses with data from real-world potential customers; and revise as needed to propel DataONE's growth toward sustainability. (Start 10/1/14 and conclude 9/30/19)
 - Milestone: a document that describes how growth drivers will be tested with potential customers is scheduled to be completed by 4/5/15.
- Identify product costs; establish revenue targets from all sources, including NSF; and create high-level key performance indicators (KPIs) for DataONE product(s). (Start 10/1/14 and conclude 9/30/19)
- Create and implement an IBM that is focused on presenting in a uniform manner data for all DataONE's markets, products, and projected expenses and revenues over a timeline necessary to achieve sustainability. (Start 10/1/14 and conclude 9/30/19)
 - Milestone: the final version of the Integrated Business Model is expected to be completed by 12/17/17.
- Evaluate and, if necessary, restructure DataONE's organization and governance structures to ensure optimal alignment with product offering(s). (Start 8/15/16 and conclude 9/30/19)
 - Milestone: The proposed governance structure plan is scheduled to be completed on 8/1/17.
- Review existing DataONE policies; identify policy gaps; adapt/adopt policies; develop new policies as necessary; and promote policies to the diverse stakeholders. (Start 4/3/17 and conclude 9/30/19)

7. Potential Risks

Potential risks and mitigation strategies are identified below.

- RISK: Loss of Co-Chair; MITIGATION: Members will suggest a new co-chair to the Leadership Team if needed

- RISK: Responsive and transparent governance structure not established. MITIGATION: Periodically review the governance structure with DataONE Leadership Team, DUG, and External Advisory Board.
- RISK: Insufficient involvement of Working Group members in the WG tasks; MITIGATION: Schedule meetings well in advance, communicate in multiple ways, distribute notes from all meetings and assign actions, review membership every year and replace members as necessary
- RISK: Lack of CI buy-in to Working Group technical sustainability recommendations; MITIGATION: Report regularly to CI working group and to CI working group about findings; develop recommendations in collaboration with CI working group members.
- RISK: Lack of focus; MITIGATION: Organize quarterly working group calls, document tasks, and provide periodic e-mails to participants; update LT on weekly calls; document progress and develop quarterly reports.
- RISK: Lack of sustainability model. MITIGATION: Continue searching, throughout the entire life of the project, for alternative models in all sectors.
- RISK: Lack of appropriate governance model. MITIGATION: Periodically review developed governance model for enhancements, modifications, and improvements.

8. Membership

- Co-Chair: William Michener, University of New Mexico
- Co-Chair: Patricia Cruse, University of California
- TBN
- TBN
- TBN
- TBN

New members will be nominated by the working group co-chairs and vetted by the DataONE Leadership Team. Members will serve at the pleasure of the co-chairs and the leadership team.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Members of this Working Group should be prepared to provide expertise in establishing governance and sustainability plans for DataONE.

Members of this Working Group will bring expertise in:

- Business and Sustainability Models
- Establishing governance for multi-disciplinary, multi-organizational network Science and/or data preservation enterprise.
- Developing and implementing policies and guidelines in a multi-organizational structure.
- Working with an interdisciplinary research team.
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Decisions within the Working Group will be by collective-agreement, giving serious treatment of every group member's considered opinion. Ultimately, the WG will make decisions on at least a majority vote and ideally consensus.

10. Resources Available to Working Groups

The Sustainability and Governance Working Group will use the following resources:

- All Working Group documents will be managed through the DataONE content management system.
- An annual or biannual face-to-face Working Group meeting will be held in support of Working Group activities.

- Quarterly Conference calls/Video Conferences will be held to support Working Group activities. Agendas, documents in development, and other materials will be available in advance of these monthly meetings.
- Financial support including a modest honorarium and travel support will be provided to members that are allowed to and desire to receive such support.

11. Relationship to other Working Groups

The Sustainability & Governance Working Group is a cross-network Working Group, which focuses on ensuring that proper governance and long-term sustainability strategies existing within DataONE. The Working Group also provides advice to inform all DataONE working groups and network operations in the area of sustainability and governance. Consequently, this Working Group reports to the project PI and has significant interaction with the DataONE Leadership Team, and External Advisory Board.

12. Communication Plan and Reporting Requirements

The Sustainability & Governance Working Group will provide monthly and quarterly status reports identifying major activities completed, anticipated deliverables, and any other issues identified to the Principal Investigators and Executive Director. The Working Group will provide periodic feedback on activities and issues as appropriate to other working groups, and the Leadership Team.

13. Modifications to the Charter

Final approval for this Working Group Charter will be provided by the DataONE Principal Investigator and the Executive Director.