

NEWS

A Message from the NUFO Operations Committee

What a challenging and exciting year the NUFO Operations Committee has had. We encountered—and resolved—several unanticipated hurdles in the process of preparing to incorporate NUFO and have now cleared the way for the creation of the new, 501(c)3 corporation. Incorporation will enable the organization to broaden its funding base, expand its service offerings, hire employees and, thus, allow us to better serve the user community. The need for a consolidated voice for user science has never been greater and we look forward to continuing to work with you all in our “community of communities”—user representatives, administrators, facility directors, and other user facility professionals.

Following incorporation, NUFO will be known as **The Society for Science at User Research Facilities (SSURF)**.

A community of communities



2016 Annual Meeting Attendees

2016 NUFO Annual Meeting

The twentieth NUFO Annual Meeting was hosted by the National Ignition Facility (NIF) at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory on June 14-16, 2016. Among the more than 100 participants were 13 user committee representatives, senior Office of Science and National Science Foundation (NSF) officials, four facility directors, and one laboratory-level chief operating officer. Representatives of European Union facilities, private sector information management, and publishing companies also participated. With such diverse representation from NUFO’s member communities, the 2016 Annual Meeting was among the most productive and successful in the organization’s history.

With the impending organizational transition from NUFO to SSURF (see NEWS to the left), the meeting set out to identify opportunities for both continuity and progress, focusing on three thematic areas: improving the user experience, expanding the use of federated systems, and sharing best practices in information systems. With the active engagement of annual meeting participants in both plenary and facilitated break out sessions, we identified specific short- and longer-term opportunities for SSURF in each of these areas.

In the short-term, SSURF will concentrate on two tasks: working with facility administrators toward the adoption of common researcher identifiers such as the ORCID system, which many academic and national laboratory researchers are now using for publication tracking; and working toward reciprocal recognition of selected user training courses across the DOE user facility complex. The accomplishment of these goals will yield significant improvements in facilities’ operational efficiencies and in the quality of users’ experiences. To this end, SSURF will be working closely with the laboratory and facility operations officers, facility administrators, and the DOE Office of Science.

In the longer term, participants identified other potential actions and roles for which SSURF is well-positioned, including its hosting of a consolidated portal that potential users could use to apply for and gain access to member facilities. As shown in Cecilia Blasetti's invited presentation, the European Union currently has a single access portal where users can survey availability at, and apply for access to, any of Europe's twenty synchrotrons. The adoption of a similar system in the United States could greatly streamline and ease facility access here as well. SSURF also aims to resume and expand outreach and education efforts, including science expos, briefings, workshops, and Congressional meetings at user facilities and in Washington, DC.

A full report of the Annual Meeting will be distributed to the community later this summer.

Participation in this year's annual meeting reaffirmed the importance of a dedicated professional society for user science—a society to serve as a forum for discussing common concerns, sharing of ideas and best practices, and providing a consolidated voice for the community. SSURF looks forward to building on NUFO's proud twenty-year legacy of service to the user science community!

The agenda can be found at <https://lasers.llnl.gov/nif-workshops/national-user-facility-organization-2016/program/agenda>.