

CASC Panel

Amy Apon, Ph.D.
Clemson University



Future Directions for NSF ACI

- The document is very broad, balanced, and comprehensive – clearly represents the significant efforts and expertise of the authors. Great work!
- Many (most?) of the authors come from a computer science community. Thus, the call to support “production capabilities” is a strong one
 - They think the emphasis is too much on the side of experimental activities (e.g., computer science)
 - For example, “modest investments should be made to explore” next generation technologies
- I like that they have stated this clearly, even if I may not agree

ACI Planning

- The report encourages NSF to collect community requirements and publish a roadmap, to set priorities, and adopt integrated approaches
- **The report could have gone further to recommend a process for the collecting of community requirements**
 - What about something similar to a standards organization? If the Internet can do it, then why not ACI?
 - Note, this is what organizations do that are trying to create production facilities...
 - Capacity and long-term planning is needed

(Clemson response next few slides)

ACI Division of CISE

- From our experience, the CI program targets and funding have not been much related to organizational boundaries
- It is up to people to work together
- The positioning could be relevant if the leader of the Office of ACI could make an impact on the funding trajectory and have the leverage to instill longer term stability

- It would be important to define the objectives and advantages of being at the level of an Office
- ACI should be at an institutional level if the mission is to serve the whole institution.
- **But this is not clear. Many CI investments are to specific science areas.**

Better assessment of impact is needed

- For example, the distribution of funding is disproportionate, and the data do not include comparisons of impact
 - E.g., Blue Waters versus smaller equipment awards
 - One may assess proportionality based on the “significance” of science advances, or the number of researchers and science areas they support
- We do not state a position about which way is “correct”, but we note that the provided data trends have not included such comparisons.

A long term strategy is needed

- **The change between ACI/OCI should not be an abrupt decision and should not be dependent on the current leadership of NSF and ACI**
- There should be at least one or two strategic reasons to move ACI to OCI
- There should be buy-in from the directorates
- The movement back and forth from OCI to ACI has been disruptive to the community, and affects long term planning of the science community.

Campus responsibility versus NSF role

- ACI needs to work on defining the balance between campus responsibility and the NSF role, and define how it will interact with the academic community
- The universities have a responsibility to invest in CI, but NSF has a responsibility to enable universities to respond to the CI of the IT in a changing world
- NSF needs to define its obligation to the campuses
- Our opinion is that NSF cannot support campuses for an extended period of time, but can be a stimulus to campuses
- **A model of sustainability is needed that will incentivize campuses to create long term funding models for CI**

Thank you.

Amy Apon, Ph.D.
aapon@clemson.edu