**Raw Notes from ArchEE session at EENP**

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| **What could we do to really get into a quagmire and have a lot of problems?** |
| * *Have no quality control, no gatekeeper.* * *Try to serve too many user communities. Is the target user an evaluator or a client/recipient/user of evaluations?* * *Not having an administrator / moderator / quality assurance person.* * *Get into copyright problems, proprietary information, lawsuits* * *Build it and they don’t come. You need a critical mass of contributors and users to make it work. Chicken and egg problem – if there is no content nobody will use it, if nobody uses it there will be no content.* * *Make it too complex.* * *Make it stagnant – not continuously updated.* * *Make it hard for contributors to enter data; laborious, with lots of fields to fill.* * *Don’t have a plan and funds for technical infrastructure and technical support.* * *Get into the weeds on categories, keywords – too complex, too many confusing fields and definitions and choices and requirements, too hard to submit.* * *No capacity to maintain.* * *Not searchable.* * *No buy-in from community to contribute critical mass.* * *Rely on volunteers with no funding.* * *Avoid responsibility for hosting and maintaining the site over the long run; technical support, maintenance, base funding.* * *Market it too narrowly or too broadly.* * *Make the database too complex and difficult to maintain or update.* * *Have a complex and time-consuming data entry process.* * *Start out trying to do too many things.* * *Not having an administrator to oversee processes and adherence to criteria could lead to highly variable quality of what is included and variability in how documents are categorized or added to the system.* * *Legal problems if content is copyright protected and people adding content don’t follow laws of use.* * *Ensure there is a long delay getting new information up and available on the site.* * *Make it too hard to navigate and search.* * *Don’t ask others what they learned from flaws in similar systems.* * *Target a very limited audience* * *Don’t arrange for sustainable funding.* * *Don’t budget for maintenance.* * *Including reports that use poor methodology and/or conclusions; no boundaries or standards at all.* * *OMB or IRB coming in and finding studies that don’t have proper clearance or review.* * *Don’t speak with others who have developed these systems before.* * *Set up a fairytale taxonomy.* * *Use top down system development without stakeholder input.* * *No feedback loop.* * *Don’t include unpublished stuff.* * *Catalog information that is already cataloged.* * *Don’t link to other repositories.* * *Depend on management by volunteers.* * *Don’t use library science.* * *Start really big – inventory everything first, watch the project collapse under its own weight and expectations.* * *Don’t specify inclusion criteria.* * *Don’t include a rating system for quality.* * *Major time, money, effort sinkhole.* * *Unscreened mega-information with poor usability and unclear quality.* * *Who’s the gatekeeper? What voices are in or out? What does it cost and who funds it?* * *Miss the “little guys” – small organizations, programs, reports that aren’t typically shared.* * *Don’t beta test a smaller interface before going to scale.* * *Don’t be inclusive as you build it.* |

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| **What must be done for success?** |
| * *Avoid jargon, acronyms, exclusionary language.* * *Establish clear inclusion criteria, e.g. is it environmental evaluation or public health?* * *Do beta testing.* * *Use a login system so you know who’s using it; perhaps a username with no password?* * *Do “use cases” in the beginning to understand what users will actually do and how they will do it and what they need.* * *Build a RAPID prototype showing end-to-end functionality. Find the audience. Find the money. Make it cheap. Make users work.* * *Usability testing.* * *User feedback.* * *Expert review, usability testing.* * *Pilot test each phase.* * *Transparent process.* * *ADA compliance.* * *Develop broad community investment; use network; seed small experiments throughout to work on different aspects.* * *Build simple prototype for testing and adding to.* * *Funding source for seed grants.* * *Develop a place and a model for long term maintenance.* * *Make it as bottom-up as possible.* * *Arrange sustained funding for long-term maintenance and curation. Software becomes vulnerable and requires patching; the community needs cultivation and outreach; these tasks must be somebody’s job who is responsible and accountable.* * *Plan marketing, visibility – where will it be highlighted?* * *Explain all jargon, terminology clearly.* * *Start small, follow staged, phased-in development process.* * *Collaborative ownership to ensure diverse voices in the development and in the gatekeeper role.* * *Make use of existing sources like Better Evaluation.* * *Don’t start something that requires consensus that dictates whether the project continues.* * *Target specific audiences.* * *There must be some kind of taxonomy for querying tables in advance of artificial intelligence.* * *ViVo-digital CV – health field.* * *HUB Zero – open source.* * *First step: survey users to find out what they need most, first.* * *ArchEE creates competition in the education market.* * *Usability; if the interface of this repository can’t be used intuitively people will not like using it.* * *Minimum quality requirements.* * *A safe place (anonymous) for posting lessons learned and failures and problems and challenges.* * *Standards, boundaries, and transparent decisions about what’* * *Establish a home institution that can organize funding and maintenance/technical support.* * *Who are the stakeholders? Buy-in? Investment?* * *Seed the community with opportunities to beta test, usability test, etc. – maybe give small seed grants for stakeholders to become involved, perhaps do their own “use case” studies, etc. Provide small ways people and organizations can contribute and engage.* * *Identify what value you will add for what audiences. What are users doing now? Google? How would ArchEE help? The energy industry, public health and other sectors already have repositories of studies, so what do you add, or how do you connect or relate to other systems?* * *Use groups like the Environmental Education Association of Oregon to get feedback.* * *Find out if a subscription model would work – is there willingness to pay? Or a donation model like Wikipedia?* * *Make an end-to-end prototype.* * *Start small and expand.* * *Link to other repositories rather than duplicating their work.* * *Establish a funding mechanism.* * *You need a lead person or organization to make it happen; there should be a clear leader.* * *A clear organizational structure – who’s responsible for what – paid positions or rotating responsibilities among groups or something similar.* * *Be careful of hierarchies within user organizations – people at different levels of stakeholder organizations will have different perspectives on use, etc.* * *Establish a template and/or protocol for use cases and recruit lots of folks to contribute these.* * *Distribute small, defined tasks that build engagement and investment.* * *Ask developers of other repositories for advice.* * *Start small and focused, then add components.* * *Fundraising for administration, development, maintenance of the server, tech support, management of content, etc.* * *Establish clear criteria for inclusion; what crosses over the border from environmental evaluation to other sectors such as health?* * *Single decision-maker with clear criteria, guidance.* * *An organization that hosts responsibly.* * *Wiki-style.* * *Connect to other clearinghouse sites.* * *Who is your audience? Who do you want to engage? If all inclusive is that the best strategy?* |

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| **Next steps?** |
| * *Document/inventory all offshoots of EEN – conferences, collaborations, workshops.* * *Determine the audience for the repository – evaluators only? Evaluation consumers?* * *Conduct good social science survey of stakeholders as part of a needs assessment.* * *Phase the project, including beta testing.* * *Convene people, tools, li groups, and have designers develop architecture based on their input.* * *Use an agile development model.* * *Look at other repositories. What were their difficulties in design and implementation? What did they get right? How do things differ in their fields?* * *Seek potential funders whose missions are aligned with the goal of improving evaluation practice.* * *Fund it through membership fees with tiered memberships.* * *Answer the “so what” question: what is the theory of change? Be explicit about what you want the end user to get out of it.* * *Generate the list of potential contributors and end users.* * *Interview other repositories to find out about their lessons learned. What were their challenges, pitfalls, barriers to implementation?* * *Who will maintain it? Where will the funds come from? If it’s “free” that’s a problem. Will it work as a subscription model or a donation model like Wikipedia?* |

Other comments, ideas, miscellanea:

* *Build the database using a set of forced-choice, constrained tags and also the ability for users to define their own tags.*
* *Include environmental engineering, industry, regulatory literature?*
* *Debbie Ruggles can suggest contact info for people involved with public health research repositories, they may have advice on how to do a repository.*
* *What if foundations had a membership-based fee?*
* *Why would someone fund it if still need an evaluator?*