**ArchEE Workshop
June 17 -18, 2015
Washington, DC**

**Workshop Participants**

* Michelle Becker, US EPA
* Mark Braza, GAO
* Dennis Bours, GEF
* Kara Crohn, EMI Consulting
* Kathy Davey, US EPA
* Katherine Dawes, US EPA
* Gorm Dige
* Glenda Eoyang, Human System Dynamics Institute (Facilitator)
* Rubayi Estes, Santa Barbara Foundation
* Neal Etre, IEc
* Gabi Fitz, IssueLab
* Kirsten Gallo, National Parks Service
* Shari Grossarth, US EPA
* Marc Hockings, University of Queensland
* Richard Kashmanian, US EPA
* Matt Keene, EPA, EEN
* Andrew Knight, Imperial College of London
* Annamarie Lopata, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
* Michelle McGuire, International Energy Program and Policy Evaluation Conference; Databuild
* Nick Pittman, IEc
* Andrew Pullin, Collaboration for Environmental Evidence; Bangor University
* Kent Redford, Archipelago Consulting
* Johannes Schilling, EEA
* Eleanor Sterling, American Museum of Natural History
* Anna Viggh, Global Environment Facility (GEF)
* David Widawsky, US EPA

**DAY ONE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH**

**Official Welcomes**

*Katherine Dawes* thanked the ArchEE planning team for their hard work in pulling the workshop together. As the director of the Evaluation Support Division (ESD) within EPA’s Office of Strategic Environmental Management (OSEM) for nearly 15 years, she has hoped for something like ArchEE for at least 12 years, and was excited at the prospect of moving forward on the project.

*Johannes Schilling* noted that the European Environment Agency (EEA) faces similar problems as other evaluators, and has long looked for such a platform to support their work. He stressed that ArchEE should not be just a “stamp collection” but something useful for the evaluation community.

*Matt Keene* emphasized the diversity of people, uses, and interests within the room; some have been involved in the ArchEE conversation for nearly ten years, others for just a month. He provided brief background of the first Environmental Evaluators Network (EEN) meeting discussing the ArchEE concept in 2006 and noted that in subsequent meetings the conversation would halt when people began to discuss the specifics of the database. However, given these past conversations, this group is not starting the workshop with a blank slate. The design team organized the workshop to give structure to the design process while keeping it open participants to provide meaningful contributions to the development of ArchEE.

*Glenda Eoyang* served as the workshop’s facilitator. Glenda is the founder and Executive Director of the Human Systems Dynamics (HSD) Institute. Glenda emphasized that we should view the past and current conversations about ArchEE not as a straight line but as stretching and folding, with each fold strengthening the community and building resilience in the system.

**Opening and Introductions**

Each member of the group was asked to introduce themselves and answer two questions:

*Question 1:* What would ArchEE need to look like to engage you totally?

*Responses:*

* A network of people to learn from;
* Interdisciplinary, sustainable, and growing;
* Help evaluators push things forward and avoid always looking to the past;
* Willingness of users to share knowledge;
* A rich and detailed source of information to easily query;
* Help share evaluative methods;
* Help amplify successes of EPA programs, such as grants to states and non-profits;
* Access to knowledge sharing at various levels (small, medium, large projects);
* Have a simple site with good user experience to keep users on the site;
* Help share knowledge from completed evaluations ;
* Contain diverse knowledge;
* An online learning community;
* Facilitate learning for true stewardship;
* Easy to use, not just for the workshop participants;
* Good user experience, useful language taxonomy;
* Comprehensive, reliable, and without submission bias; want it to be go-to place;
* Deal with diversity of evaluative work and styles;
* Help create the future we want to create;
* Truly international, avoiding a national agenda;
* Be sustainable, populated over time; and
* User interface must be easy, simple.

*Question 2:* What is one burning question you have about ArchEE?

*Responses:*

* What does the social capital look like that is driving people to engage with ArchEE?
* Who will run and sustain ArchEE?
* How can ArchEE support researchers’ and evaluators’ existing needs, as opposed to being an “additional piece” of something to do?
* What are the incentives to encourage users to participate?
* How easy will it be to engage with ArchEE?
* Can users follow up with authors?
* How do we make environmental evaluation accessible to program managers who are not evaluators, but do appreciate and use the results?
* What is the next step? Focus on incremental development – develop, evaluate, adjust
* Should the questions from the past be the questions of the future?
* What is knowledge? Just program evaluation? How broad? What will go into ArchEE?
* How can ArchEE be different from existing similar platforms and achieve greater impact?
* What terminology can we use so that queries are strong?
* How can we use environmental evaluation work to tell a new story, promote conservation, and the interdependence between people and planet?
* How to keep ArchEE relevant?
* We assume that policy making is based on data, etc. – where will it stop? Where does our role end?
* What constitutes evidence?
* How to avoid privilege associated with printed, published materials? (Developing countries and indigenous peoples are often left out of conversation because of the nature of their work)
* What are the inclusion criteria?
* How will ArchEE improve evaluations?
* Who will help sustain ArchEE long-term? Users are often not in a position to do this.
* What is the future you want to create? Are the relationships between this vision and future meaningful to you?
* Who is the audience? What needs is ArchEE trying to serve?
* What are the other platforms out there?
* Once this is developed, how does it get outside of the workshop room? Who is the audience?
* Will the database be better than other existing databases? How do we make the case for ArchEE?
* How will we address the different levels of knowledge that users bring, and the different types of inquiries?
* Where will the studies and evaluations come from? How will ArchEE gather work from those outside the room?
* Is it feasible to create an overarching information layer/integrator?
* What do we mean by “environmental”? Has many different meanings to different people
* How do we ensure that we do not see the database as the end product?
* What tools will we have to identify patterns, analyze metadata, etc., to receive more than just a list of studies fitting a particular query?
* How are people going to search the database?
* Will the database just be a list with metadata with information coming directly from the evaluation, or will we impose a critical third-party evaluation of each evaluation by a third party?
* What will be the process to ensure a useful level of review, i.e. not having just one review/rating for evaluations?
* How will we handle existing evaluations that people do not want to submit to ArchEE, for instance because it showed negative results and thus they have no incentive to submit it?

**Discussion of Opening Questions**

Glenda prompted the group to consider the similarities in the questions asked, and what differences among them make a difference. We discussed these amongst smaller groups and reported out on these points:

* Expectations of what the database will do – will it just be a storehouse of information? A way to connect? A learning instrument?
* How will we sustain ArchEE?
* How to govern what goes in and out? What carrots and sticks will we use to get submissions?
* How will users access ArchEE?
* How will we pull lessons from the material to inform policy?
* How will we define success for ArchEE?
* The more ArchEE can do, the greater the benefits, but also the greater the risk.

**Systems Thinking, Adaptive Action, and Pattern Logic**

Glenda provided a brief overview of her work in Human Systems Dynamics and how these concepts are embedded in the workshop’s design. She emphasized creating a foundation for collective action to design, develop, implement, and sustain ArchEE. She then presented on the following aspects of her work:

* *Human Systems Dynamics:* Derived from chaos and complexity theory; taking the patterns from these sciences and relating them to humans working with systems they cannot predict or control.
* *Adaptive Action:* The system asks the following questions in order: What? So what? Now what? Then, the agent takes action, the system changes, and the cycle of questions repeat: What? So what? Now what?
* *Pattern Logic:* Systems are not random (even though they may appear to be), though we may not understand them. This method seeks out similarities, differences, and connections to form patterns; under complex conditions, i.e., open boundaries, multiple interdependent variables, and non-linear causality.

The participants focused on three types of questions: known, unknown, and unknowable:

* Several of the participants expressed difficulty working with the last category.
* One participant suggested adding a fourth category, “unknown, and without a method to figure it out.”
* Glenda also noted that in her work reducing uncertainty is not always the point; indeed, in some systems, trying to reduce uncertainty is counterproductive.
* Some participants noted that thinkers in their realms discuss essentially the same concepts, only with slightly different language.

The participants self-selected into the potential user groups/targets for ArchEE:

* Evaluators – use ArchEE to understand how to improve evaluations.
* Environmental Managers – use ArchEE to understand the results of evaluations.
* Brokers/builders/containers – construct and maintain ArchEE to provide meaningful information to users.

The participants briefly discussed ArchEE system boundaries:

* ArchEE can be somewhere between completely bounded and completely unbounded (and we should avoid the latter in part to avoid overwhelming users).
* We can also design the system for users to set their own boundaries, for instance by allowing users to pre-filter information before they search.
* The system could have multiple boundaries; however, for now, the participants agreed to focus on specific boundaries, while still considering the others.
* Learning may come from between areas that do not normally communicate.

**ArchEE Purpose**

Glenda began this session by introducing the most recent iteration of the ArchEE purpose statement:

*ArchEE is an open-access repository of evaluations and other evaluative knowledge that can be analyzed and synthesized to support evidence-based practice and improved transfer and use of evaluative knowledge for environmental management.*

In break out groups, the participants discussed the purpose statement, examining what works, exceptions, contradictions, surprises, and additional needs. It was emphasized that the participants focus on “good enough” rather than try to craft the perfect purpose statement in a group setting. Participants offered critiques of the statement, including:

* Too vague and passive;
* Needs a purpose that is desired outcome;
* Uses exclusionary language;
* Should be more a “marketplace” than repository;
* Does not say enough about users;
* Unclear what “evaluative knowledge” means;
* QA element missing; and
* Assumes particular relationship between knowledge and practice.

Additional questions explored:

* Does “evaluative evidence” include academic research?
* Does “sense-making” happen in ArchEE, or elsewhere?

After much discussion, highlighted by the critiques and questions presented above, we settled on this draft purpose:

*ArchEE is the collaborative space for the [open] sharing of evaluations and evaluative evidence to inform and improve environmental practice, learning and policy development.*

Additional notes from the purpose discussion:

* The participants agreed that ArchEE is not solely a repository, but a network of evaluators and evaluation users.
* Much of this information is available elsewhere, but it must be tethered together across disparate sources.
* ArchEE could be an informational source supporting a discussion space.

**Theory of Change (TOC)**

Matt Keene presented the Cradle to Cradle conceptual model, which aims to reduce waste by mimicking natural systems. Too often we see a “Cradle to Grave” approach for evaluations, where the evaluation is written and presented, then languishes in a file cabinet. A number of participants liked the metaphor, but questioned certain specific aspects, for instance:

* What is actually cycling through the system in this version – knowledge? Data? It was noted that use happens in multiple places, and we need to think broadly about different types of use.
* Value also comes from combination of existing work; knowledge comes out of the relationship between evaluations.

Some felt that the model is not a theory of change, as it has no endpoint:

* It was preferred to see the flows into each step as opposed to one closed circle.
* Consider the assumption between steps, and the intermediate drivers that continue the cycle.
* Emphasized that the concept/main point is important – that evaluations not vanish into a library but are continuously reused.
* Lacking the elements of working backgrounds and the role for decision making.
* It was noted that this is a logical framework, not a theory of change.

The participants agreed on the core ideas presented in the draft TOC, but disagreed on the specifics, particularly around the edges. *Note that at the conclusion of the workshop, a cluster of participants was tasked with revising the TOC for ArchEE.*

**Setting a Foundation for the Requirements Discussion**

Several participants shared their personal expertise and their views on developing ArchEE’s requirements.

Dennis Bours, GEF

* Focus on quality management, and not get too into the details of the technical backbone.
* It can be difficult to translate needs into effective access systems.
* Need to consider whether we are making a system all on its own, or an overarching one that links to other databases.
* ArchEE could potentially absorb some previous work.
* Network proliferation is a concern – many come and go quickly, and people do not necessarily know where to get information.
* Another central question is whether we want knowledge dissemination or generation – will we make a database just giving out reports, or do we want it try for “sense-making”?
* Regardless of the approach, it should be member-driven.
* Regarding database construction, some UIs and interfaces are easier to adapt than others. Aim to reduce the possibility of decisions made early in the design process making it hard for the database to evolve.

Kara Crohn, EMI Consulting

* Emphasized that we need to reach beyond agencies and NGOs; we must attract program designers, program implementers, research centers, investors, and market research firms.
* To attract users, we must bridge gaps, make it easy to upload and find reports on similar programs, and identify shared metrics (more than carbon emissions, for instance).
* Need to ensure that ArchEE is viewed as a new opportunity for other organizations to gain new members, not necessarily encroaching on their members.
* Participants noted that attracting people and getting them to stay are very different questions; we hope that getting people to contribute will lead them to further appreciate and value the resource.

Gabi Fitz, IssueLab

* IssueLab operates under the tension between democratic inclusion and information overload; the two extremes are a heavily curated collection and an extremely broad one.
* Decided to accept as much as possible at the start and make it easily searchable; this approach allows users to decide what is valuable for their practice and filter later.
* IssueLab has very clear inclusion criteria – including citations and making their editorial process clear. IssueLab finds information to add and receives submissions, though it skews toward the latter.
* IssueLab previously had users keyword and tag documents, which produced inconsistent and unreliable results; now they use natural language processing and auto-keywording.
* They also use topic modeling – breaking a PDF into paragraphs, comparing this information to Wikipedia entries, and seeing if keywords show up with similar frequencies. These processes can be difficult because the literature is so idiosyncratic.
* If a database is built right, it can pull from others, acting as a network of networks (though there can be licensing and copyright issues).
* Instead of thinking of ArchEE as “the” place for this work, we could think of the value of ArchEE distributing into other locations.

Marc Hockings, University of Queensland

* Currently working on a database to track evaluations of protected areas, progress towards goals, and learning from assessments.
* Focused on building the right user base and allies.
* The diversity of information/data has been a challenge – there are approximately 2,000 indicators used, which they binned into 45 categories.
* Found a lot of information around management practices and natural resource management, but little about people, governance, and equity.
* Emphasized the need to recognize what is useful to those trying to make a difference on the ground, and thus consider practitioners as well as evaluators.
* Need to acknowledge that people will want to know the benefit of sharing their data and evaluative work.
* Funding the database has been a challenge.
* Amongst their global group they have many who feed work into the database; they solicit information from international sources.
* They will do custom searches for people free of charge as long as it is not an attempt to use the information destructively.

Andrew Pullin, Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE)

* CEE rates research syntheses on measures such as bias, rigor, and transparency, and stores the results in database.
* The goals are to expose the poor state of evidence syntheses and help people who do not have the time or funds to do systematic reviews.
* Trained PhDs and post docs to provide the ratings based on standardized training.
* Syntheses are ranked in 13 categories on a 0 / 1 / 3 scale with a maximum rating of 39.
* Majority of synthesis rankings have achieved 0, 1, or 2 in total.
* Authors will be allowed to respond.
* Key takeaway for ArchEE: must weight evaluations by quality, as some are better than others. Without ratings, people may be swayed by the number of evaluations coming to a specific conclusion, rather than quality of those evaluations.

David Widawsky, EPA

* Leads five different environmental programs at EPA, and wants to use ArchEE to help decide what programs to invest in and efficiently invest in evaluation to improve programs.
* Would like to know how flexible and scalable the methodologies of evaluations he will encounter in ArchEE are, and emphasized that non-practitioners must also be able to understand the information.
* Taxonomy and natural language processing will also be important.
* Noted that what he thinks is important in an evaluation is often very different from what he is required to report on; for instance, many policymakers want to know how many jobs a program may create.

**Requirements and Success Criteria**

Participants were asked to comment on proposed requirements. The table below reflects the comments as developed on Day 1. On Day 2, the participants were asked to come back and indicate whether they agree with (+), disagree with (-), or wanted to discuss (?) each comment. The numbers in the table reflect the number of times a symbol was placed next to the comment.

* Key assumption: underlying these discussions is idea that better information leads to better discussions.
* Decision makers are not always held to their decisions; therefore, we should be careful about how we define success.

| **Requirements** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- |
| **+** | **-** | **?** |
| *Attract and retain the right user base* |
| Participatory engagement |  | 1 |  |
| Broad community investment |  |  |  |
| Distribute small tasks |  |  |  |
| Define audience to engage with | 4 |  |  |
| Identify value for audiences | 3 |  |  |
| Consider fee-based system |  | 1 |  |
| Clarify funding source/seed grants | 1 |  |  |
| Consider system with different user types (such as power users – get more functions for “better” contributors) |  |  |  |
| Clarify benefits/incentives to participate | 3 |  |  |
| Reconsider bottom-up approach |  | 1 |  |
| Create communities of learning with moderator/interpreter | 1 |  |  |
| Clarify governance to contributors | 2 |  |  |
| Manage power/politics (watch for groups advancing particular agenda) | 1 |  |  |
| All users have equal access | 2 |  |  |
| Moderate users without log-in | 1 | 2 |  |
| *Include the right stuff* |
| Clear inclusion criteria |  |  |  |
| Minimum quality requirements |  |  |  |
| Use existing sources (like Better Evaluation) |  |  |  |
| Standards, boundaries, and transparent decisions |  |  |  |
| Single decision-maker |  |  |  |
| Keep it fresh |  |  |  |
| Connect to clearinghouse sites, link to other sites rather than duplicating their work |  |  |  |
| Use other groups to get feedback |  |  |  |
| Follow the rules – copyright, ownership, privacy, clearance, and review |  |  |  |
| Define what is “right” at start and revisit periodically | 2 |  |  |
| NOT a single decision-maker | 1 |  |  |
| Process to review relevance and archive | 2 | 2 |  |
| Accredit other efforts with overlapping criteria and inform user |  | 1 |  |
| Learn from other efforts |  |  |  |
| Foster learning groups | 2 |  |  |
| Establish what is “private” and “ownership” |  |  |  |
| Pick topics of interest to users to start |  |  |  |
| Create publishing outlets and encourage work |  |  |  |
| Document the predecessor to the program you are evaluating and previous evals | 1 |  |  |
| Create incentives to contribute | 1 |  | 1 |
| *Use state-of-the-art methods* |
| Prototype – determine minimum viable product | 3 |  |  |
| Include list of additional possible features for future |  |  |  |
| Find out what users need most | 1 |  |  |
| Create adaptable platform | 1 |  |  |
| Determine methods for how to interpret content |  |  |  |
| Learn from IssueLab | 1 |  |  |
| Reuse or draw out usable elements from others | 1 |  |  |
| Get volunteers to test synthesis | 2 |  |  |
| Explain beta-testing | 2 |  |  |
| Expect course corrections | 2 |  |  |
| Start around key issue areas to build interest |  | 1 |  |
| Learn from what has not worked |  |  |  |
| Determine how to define boundaries of search and exploration |  |  |  |
| Have different levels/modules of access for different uses | 1 | 1 |  |
| Start with focused modules rather than trying to do a lot at once | 2 | 1 |  |
| *Keep it simple* |
| No password | 6 | 3 |  |
| Expert review involved (to make it easy to use) |  | 1 |  |
| Usability testing | 5 |  |  |
| Pilot testing | 4 |  |  |
| Use best of library science | 3 |  |  |
| Discuss “Wiki style” meaning (do we want?) |  | 3 |  |
| Discuss how library science achievers support effective information architecture | 1 |  |  |
| Discuss relationship between “keep it simple” and “state of the art” | 1 |  |  |
| Glossaries for key concepts/terms to retain important lexicons; promote consistency of tools/access/reports |  |  |  |
| Promote consistency of tools/access/reports/search | 1 |  |  |
| Concise overview |  |  |  |
| UI should have flexibility to allow creation of own queries |  |  |  |
| Data entry/upload needs to be really easy and fast | 2 |  |  |
| Provide flexible list for keywords to promote consistency (ex. Pollinator, pollinators, bees, bumble bee) | 1 |  |  |
| *Make it a learning system – adaptation* |
| Define learning system (options: user-driven, evaluator-driven) |  |  |  |
| Characterize user base | 1 |  |  |
| Actively involve users in governance | 1 |  |  |
| Lessons learned/summaries |  |  | 1 |
| Double-/triple-loop learning | 1 |  | 1 |
| User feedback |  |  |  |
| User registration |  |  |  |
| Use cases to understand users |  |  |  |
| Anonymous posting of lessons |  |  |  |
| Open resource site |  |  |  |
| Create competition in the evaluation market |  |  |  |
| *Sustain it – program design* |
| Cultivation and outreach | 3 |  |  |
| Develop a plan, model for maintenance and development |  | 2 | 1 |
| Clear role for data management and maintenance | 2 |  |  |
| Clear lead, open governance | 3 |  | 1 |
| Design to be adaptive, phased business model |  |  | 1 |
| Identify and cultivate partners | 1 |  |  |
| Clearly articulate value | 1 |  |  |
| Explore alternative funding models (“freemium”, subscription, custom searches) |  | 2 | 1 |
| Distinguish roles that require technical expertise | 1 |  |  |
| Lead organizations must not represent vested interest |  |  |  |
| Continual learning and assessment |  |  |  |
| Multiple donors | 2 |  |  |
| Clear network charter, enduring principles |  |  |  |
| Pick a growing technical partner |  |  |  |

**DAY TWO: THURSDAY, JUNE 18TH**

**Opening**

Participants reported out thoughts and questions from overnight. Topics included:

* How to move ArchEE from concept through to the operational phase?
* How to build it in a sustainable way?
* Who pays for ArchEE?
* Will ArchEE have staff?
* What is the need that ArchEE will specifically meet?
* Will ArchEE be evaluator- or user-driven?
* What is the “learning community”?
* Will ArchEE be a repository or a history?
* How to have it establish its reputation?
* Focus early on a particular topic?
* Make it a learning platform to include failure stories.
* ArchEE uniqueness: global, comprehensive, QA/QC.
* How will ArchEE be built.
* The social network implicated in ArchEE: EEN, its LinkedIn page and forum.
* Will the EEN power ArchEE?
* Avoiding any type of subscription/paid model.
* Looking for others in the development community who previously tried to build this type of system.

Key driving tensions behind ArchEE emerged:

* Detailed plan v. adaptive
* Narrow v. wide ambitions
* Integrated in ops v. onetime/single-use
* Success v. learning
* Repository v. engagement
* Compete v. complement [other repositories/systems]
* Methods v. outcomes
* Social network/learning community v. list of evaluations
* Begin with uses v. begin with content
* Focus v. diffuse

**How Might ArchEE Be Unique?**

The participants discussed what aspects of ArchEE could or should set it apart from current available databases or repositories with similar information. Potential features of ArchEE to set it apart include:

* Goals and values
* Comprehensive repository of evaluations
* Learning community that analyzes the information, synthesizes it, and feeds the synthesis back into the system
* Financial sustainability – mission-related investment, innovative funding
* Leverages existing tools to do it better
* Contains information to help learn from mediocre failures, promotes culture of learning from efforts that did not work out
* Comprehensiveness of outcomes and opportunity to report failures, so that not only successes are represented

The participants agreed that ArchEE should be/have:

* Clear, realistic boundaries
* Aspirational
* Transparent
* Include tensions: quality, comprehensiveness, capacity
* Staged/incremental

The participants stressed the need to build ArchEE incrementally, not trying to do everything from the beginning:

* How to start and what/whom to focus on at the beginning remains open for discussion.
* It is important to identify where to bound ArchEE.
* Suggested that we communicate that we aspire ArchEE to eventually be comprehensive, but be realistic about where the development is at the moment.
* Need to manage expectations and be transparent about what we know, what we do not know, and what is unknowable.

**Planning Clusters and Next Steps**

The group divided up into self-selected clusters to discuss specific aspects of ArchEE moving forward, including:

* IT options and designs
* Funding, ownership, and sponsorship [Delayed]
* Value proposition/theory of change
* Decision-making and governance
* Learning community
* Requirements and content

Each cluster identified and defined the following on pre-set forms:

* Purpose
* Deliverables
* Assumptions
* Tasks
* Schedules and milestones
* Resources
* Responsibilities
* Interdependencies with other clusters

Each cluster reported out to the wider group. The cluster report-outs, proposed deliverables, and associated commitments by partners provide the building blocks and structure for future ArchEE project planning. The cluster report forms, along with notes from the report out can be found in Attachment A below.

**Closing and Next Steps**

Participants expressed hopes for the future of ArchEE and appreciation for the hard work of workshop design team, including special appreciation for Glenda’s facilitation. To that, Glenda added that to a significant extent, ArchEE already HAS succeeded – the relationships, discussions, and insight from the workshop will carry ArchEE forward.

**ATTACHEMENT A: CLUSTER REPORT OUTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster Name** | Value proposition and Theory of Change (TOC) |
| **Purpose** | Draft value proposition and begin on TOC |
| **Team Members** | Marc Hockings, Andrew Knight, Kent Redford, Matt Keene (honorary) |
| **Deliverables** | See purpose |
| **Assumptions** | We provide rationale and framework for ARCHEE and the other working groupsThere is worth in unexamined evaluations Better information leads to better decisions ArchEE works for our vision Decision-makers / funders want better outcomes If we create a perfect ArchEE it will change behavior positively  |
| **Resources** | -- |
| **Responsibilities** | -- |
| **Interdependencies with other clusters** | We lead they follow (just kidding). |
| **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Who** | **When** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Checking the relevance of the other working groups against the Theory of Change (involving them in the review as necessary) | Collect the iterations of the Theory of Change  | This group | 2 weeks |
| Develop, share and revise the Theory of Change  | Agreed Theory of Change | This group  | 4 weeks  |
| Develop and elaborate the Value Proposition incorporating the Theory of Change | Agreed draft Value Proposition  | This group | 4 weeks |
| Float the V.P. with potential users + donors  | Final Value Proposition incorporating the views of users  | This group | 3 months |

Value Proposition

At the moment the evaluative process is:

* Largely study focused
* Restricted in its access and generality
* Of little use to adaptive management

ArchEE is a platform that allows practitioners, decision makers, and funders:

* Access to previously inaccessible evaluations and evaluative knowledge to improve future action.
* Allows decision makers to be confident that their investments are based on prior learning.
* Changes the culture of individuals, institutions and disciplines to encourage use of evaluations in developing and planning environmental interventions.
* Serves as a driver and anchor to build a learning community.
* Makes available all the knowledge in the system
* Adds new, sometimes unanticipated knowledge

Questions/Follow-up

* Participants found it interesting that the discussion was so focused on culture. Cluster members explained that this was because unless you change the culture surrounding evaluation work, just providing this architecture won’t do it.
* The governance cluster suggested that a group of people convene the working groups, specifically someone who loves project management.
* One person is the point person for each group, with this group of point people comprising the steering committee.

Commitments

Matt and Rubayi agreed to help coordinate next steps for this cluster.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster Name** | Locking in **requirements** (input) &**content** (output) |
| **Purpose** | To define what can go to ArchEE, when QC takes place, what content will be reflected in outputs |
| **Team Members** | Michelle, Dennis, Annamarie, Gorm, Johannes |
| **Deliverables** | * Definition and implementation of content management (and quality control as part of it)
* Definition of filter/requirements for accepting inputs to ArchEE, such as method and approach, evaluation process implemented, evaluation outcome, audience.
* Define robustness checks (and get rid of the garbage)
* Design platform accepting many evaluations and making robust/relevant ones searchable
* Definition of membership
 |
| **Assumptions** | * Step-wise approach
* Database both harvesting from other databases and accepting new submissions
* Input of different types of evaluations (or failed attempts of evaluations)
* Differentiate evaluations, assessments, incomplete evaluations, etc.
* Critical mass to start with, sufficient incentives for submitting evaluations, EEN and other networks reaching out to promote ArchEE
* Review of self-ratings of evaluations submitted
 |
| **Resources** | * Frontload IT efforts to reduce downstream resource needs
* Significant upfront investment
* 0.25-1.25 full time equivalent, depending on which of the following elements are covered:
	+ Governance
	+ Content management
	+ IT infrastructure
	+ Maintenance of the system

and depending on extent of outreach work + network effort on outreach |
| **Responsibilities** | See task list |
| **Interdependencies with other clusters** | IT; governance: what are offline components, steering of content management; learning community |
| **Task**  | **Deliverable** | **Who** | **When** |
| Finish task planning | task plan, including various definitions, concrete requirements and anticipated linkages | Dennis, Johannes, Gorm | Autumn 2015 |
| External outreach | Map external actors and inform them on the upcoming developments | Michelle | Winter |
| Mainstream all task plans into overarching project plan |  |  |  |
| IT implementation | Selection of beta testers from potential user community, beta testing of user requirements, translation of user requirements into IT requirements, IT implementation, beta tested of implementation | Annamarie on meta testing | Summer 2016 |
| Outreach, including to other networks for promoting ArchEE |  | EEN | Autumn 2016 |
| Harvesting from other databases | Inclusive harvesting with external stakeholders  | A team |  |

Questions/Follow-up

* The cluster participants discussed the ability of becoming a “power user” with the ability to post with less oversight and what that would entail and require.
* We will want to pay attention to the unintended consequences of peer networks on ArchEE – for instance, rating networks could foster cliques.
* Others questioned the use of user ratings, and pointed out that potential submitters may be hesitant if they worry about users poorly reviewing their work.
* Some users may have use for “dollar store evaluations” and so evaluations should not be critiqued solely as “low” or “high” quality.
* Glenda noted that many of these questions would be good to discuss at the next EEN meeting.
* Emphasized the need to provide a “carrot” for submitters; community engagement and instructive feedback will be very important.

Commitments

Johannes agreed to coordinate next steps for this cluster.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster Name** | * Decision Making & Governance
 |
| **Purpose** | * Propose and refine a governance and decision-making model
 |
| **Team Members** | * Kara et al.
 |
| **Deliverables** | * By-laws
* Organizational structure
* Accountability plan (risk management, M&E)
* Communications plan
 |
| **Assumptions** | * Not-for-profit, open-access model
* Demonstrated independence from vested interests with dominating agendas
* Likely organizational structure: Board of Trustees, Chief Executive, staff: fundraising officer, operations & finance officer, communications & development officer, human resources officer, special project lead.
* Begin with building own database with intention to bring in partner databases.
* There will be incremental development phases: demonstration, initial build, enhancement/expansion
 |
| **Resources** | * Lawyers
* Accountants
 |
| **Responsibilities** | * Reporting on Budget and Accountability
* Convening cluster groups
* Appointing staff
 |
| **Interdependencies with other clusters** | * All
 |
| **Task** | * **Deliverable**
 | * **Who**
 | * **When**
 |
| Decide if ArchEE should be registered in the U.S. (Delaware, California?) | * Filing
 | * Governance
 | * 6 months
 |
| Develop timeline and structure for founding organization phase, the stabilization phase, and then the governance phase | * Organizational development plan
 | * Governance
 | * 3 months
 |
| Define firewall between funders and governance, e.g., funders do not serve on board of trustees, rules for entertaining ideas from funders | * Bylaws
* Conflict of interest statements
 | * Governance
 | * 3 months
* 6 months
 |
| Work with Funding group to decide how governance accommodates but remains independent from funding sources | * Bylaws (see above)
 |  |  |
| Convene a working group to find preliminary funding | * Development strategy
 | * Finance and communications
 | * 6 months
 |
| Work with funding group to hire development officer |  |  |  |
| Work with IT to decide which IT structures are in-house, outsourced, collaborated |  |  |  |
| Work with IT to ensure quality assurance |  |  |  |
| Convene check-ins for clusters  | * Conference call
 | * Governance
 | * ongoing
 |

Questions/Follow-up

* Many assumed that we are forming an organization.
* There are numerous options for this including a corporate structure, distributed ownership, a project of an existing organization/housed within an existing entity, a consortium model, or within a university setting.
* Even within an existing organization ArchEE would need its own structure, governance policy, and board.
* The university setting option could potentially compromise ArchEE’s longevity if particular researchers using the repository leave.
* The cluster would like to have a call in six weeks for the group to check in on these various tasks.
* Matt has six-eight briefings to give to people who would have liked to attend the workshop; some of them might like to join the future planning process.
* The EU or UK might also be an option for where to base ArchEE.

Commitments

Kara agreed to help foster the ongoing conversation in this cluster, but cannot commit to leading the effort. This cluster will need additional support and commitment from others in the near future.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster Name** | IT Options / Designs |
| **Purpose** | To scope technical options to meet ArchEE requirements and support decision-making on those options. Work closely with technical partners to implement design and development. |
| **Team Members** | Shari, Gabi, Neal |
| **Deliverables** | * IT Options
* Milestones and timeline (roadmap)
* Implementation
 |
| **Assumptions** | * Clear decision maker at all stages
* Hire external technical partner(s)
* Clear budget and funding sources
* Content and curation are handled outside the IT functions
 |
| **Resources** | * Funding
* Time
* Staff
* Content
* Stakeholder engagement
* IT Infrastructure
 |
| **Responsibilities** | * Ensuring the designs and features reflect group decisions
* Gathering feedback and testing prototypes
* Options analyses and recommendations
* Reporting to and communications with other clusters
 |
| **Interdependencies with other clusters** | * Confirmed requirements (which can adapt)
* Governance structure has been worked out, e.g., who is the client and how are design and development decisions being made, budget
* Funding model that supports maintenance and enhancements
* Content/data strategy, policies, and protocols
 |
| **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Who** | **When** |
| Scoping IT Options | Presentation of high-level scenarios |  | 3 Months (Sep 15) |
| Recommendations of IT Options | Memorandum |  | 4 Months ( Oct 15 or 1 Month after Receipt of Comments) |
| Roadmap  | Project Plan |  | 6 Months (Jan 16) |
| Design and Development | ArchEE Prototype |  | 9 Months (Apr 16) |
| Scale Up | ArchEE |  | TBD |

Questions/Follow-up

* The IT group will need to be included in the governance and content discussions. They will also need to tell the governance group the deadline for last-minute changes.
* Participants expressed concern about the disconnect between the builders (who understand the minute details) and the managers; we need an iterative process to communicate on this.
* The IT group emphasized that the prototype will try to avoid real world-level detail and may not look at all like the final product.
* It was noted that university students could potentially help develop the prototype, or interview potential users to see what they are looking for.

Commitments

Shari agreed to coordinate next steps for this cluster.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cluster Name** | Learning community  |
| **Purpose** | Learning community to inform and improve environmental field. Supported by learning system, process by which double and triple loop learning happens. 1) Using previous evaluations/analyses to better care for the environment. 2) Learning to do a better job with evaluating environmental interventions, etc. |
| **Team Members** | Kirsten Gallo, Nick Pittman, Anna Viggh, Eleanor Sterling. |
| **Deliverables** | Defined/engaged learning community, TOR (terms of reference) for learning community. Portfolio of searches, summaries, analyses, syntheses, lessons learned. Space for exchange and dialog. Gap analysis of user base. System by which you can share/communicate lessons learned. Monitoring and evaluation of ArchEE. |
| **Assumptions** | Forum will spur learning about how to do better evaluation and about how to learn from those who are learning about evaluation (double and triple loop learning). People are interested in learning about evaluations and evaluation implementation. People will use the materials. People will learn from others. Provision of materials will lead to better implementation. People interested in using evaluated evidence/findings for future environmental actions and policy. Language is not a barrier.  |
|  | Environmental Evaluators Network – could be/host learning community as a working group. Other learning communities, such as around GIS – lots of energy and success in these communities. Potentially moderator would be needed – overall high in personnel time. Different organizations represented in this group could contribute to initial content and outreach to partners.  |
| **Responsibilities** | See task for developing TOR |
| **Interdependencies with other clusters** | Need users to use the repository, connections to most other clusters.  |
| **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Who** | **When** |
| Form learning community, identify interested members, what motivates them to engage | Learning community engaged |  | *First* |
| Develop ideas for what learning community will do, how it will function – include users in governance.  | TOR for learning community | *EEN* | *First* |
| Undertake sample searches so people can access raw materials in database and show how to use it – use cases?  | Model searches, guidelines, use cases.  |  |  |
| Undertake sample summaries, analyses, syntheses.  | Model summaries, analyses, syntheses, guidelines, use cases.  |  |  |
| Undertake sample lessons learned, process by which users can feed lessons\*\* back into the system. \*\*Lessons for evaluators and lessons for practitioners/managers/planners/donors/funders/policy makers/other stakeholders (students, teachers, researchers, etc). | Model lessons learned, tailored to different stakeholders.  |  |  |
| Space/Forum/Linked In/Research Gate set up that can facilitate learning from experiences, both success and failure. FAQs or keyword match for questions to help with lessons learned. | Space/forum for exchange |  |  |
| Method for gathering information on who users are, what they get from the resources (statistics could help with making case for importance of product for donors, but also need to help with learning aspect). What is demand? What do they want? Trends in statistics could help with understanding future directions. | Gap analysis/needs assessment of user base |  |  |
| Develop criteria, ideas for how lessons learned can be shared. | System by which you can upload lessons/interact with system.  |  |  |
| Develop methods for assessing evaluations – (criteria, standards for inclusion/exclusion, method for review of what is included - feedback on what? Anonymous? Curated? Rate reviews and reviewers?). (Problem with values base for evaluation).  | System for reviewing evaluations – which to include, but also what is good about what is included.  |  |  |
| Design ArchEE Evaluation - What are stakeholders learning from ArcheEE, etc.  | ArchEE evaluation |  |  |

Questions/Follow-up

* Glenda noted that the September EEN meeting could be a good location to continue this discussion.
* Dennis has ToRs from relevant situations that would be examples for those working on this.

Commitments

Eleanor agreed to provide some initial support, but will need additional help from other EEN members.