

## **STEAC MEETING REPORT**

**(10/16/2024)**

The members of the STEAC met on October 16, 2024, with a quorum of ten members attending (Henry Bart jr, Jennifer Edmonds, Rich Fiorella, John Kochendorfer, Shannon LaDeau, Sydne Record, Samapriya Roy, Daniel Rubenstein, Shawn Serbin, and Adrienne Sponberg,). Four NEON-Battelle staff attended (Darcy Gora, Paula Mabee, Tanya Maslak, and Kate Thibault).

The meeting was virtual, and the following topics were discussed: I. Approval of the minutes, II. Welcome new members! III. NEON Convergence Summit planning.

- I. **Approval of previous minutes for 09/18/2024:** Minutes approved (Unanimous vote).
  
- II. **Welcome new members! Thank you to members cycling off and update on the secretary role.**

STEAC welcomes Jennifer Edmonds, Samapriya Roy, and John Kochendorfer and thanks Steve Petruzza for his service to STEAC. Rich Fiorella is now serving in the STEAC secretary role.

### **III. NEON Convergence Summit planning**

In an effort to broaden reach beyond ecological sciences, NEON is planning a Convergence Summit to be held in Boulder, CO, in fall 2025. The Summit aims to attract participants from diverse fields—ranging from engineering to atmospheric sciences to social sciences—and to explore how NEON data can benefit a wider community. The Summit aligns with NEON's strategic plan to foster broader community engagement. The Summit also aims to balance open-ended discussions with focused themes to support high-impact science while balancing practicalities such as meeting size.

STEAC recognizes the challenge inherent in planning an event that can effectively engage new users and ensure meaningful participation that could lead to ongoing collaborations. STEAC discussed the merits and limitations of other existing engagement models, including “teach the teachers” approaches, an unconference format, or using an “ideas lab” model.

STEAC supports NEON's effort to plan a Convergence Summit and the discussion yielded a few recommendations for initial steps to strategically engage broader disciplines and ensure alignment with NEON's goals. STEAC suggests using an intentional approach to invite stakeholders with genuine capacity for ongoing involvement, potentially from industries or sectors with direct relevance, like agriculture. To overcome unfamiliarity with NEON, STEAC recommends exploring targeted outreach to stakeholders and institutions that could offer cross-disciplinary insights. STEAC recommends NEON consider timing the event such that it can leverage other investments by NSF (such as the ESIIL working groups) or other agencies. Finally, STEAC discussed a deliberate approach to ensuring a sufficiently hands-on approach to facilitate participants leaving the Summit with new capabilities and collaborators.