

NCAR Data Stewardship Engineering Team (DSET) Charter

10 September 2015

1. Preamble

Sharing data assets with the research community has long been a successful activity at NCAR and the UCP. As a community-based organization, NCAR provides services to a mixed group of end users, from scientific experts to the general public. Current users who are familiar with NCAR services are typically well satisfied. New users, however, whether new to the Earth system sciences or from a different discipline, can be frustrated easily by the current lack of a comprehensive data discovery service across NCAR.

Today the NCAR community is large, growing, and more multi-disciplinary, the numbers of data assets are increasing and are more complex, and fortunately the IT systems to support these escalating trends have improved. In order to better serve the community, the NCAR Directorate has created the Data Stewardship Engineering Team (DSET) to lead the organization's efforts towards increased coordination around digital data discovery and access.

2. Vision

The DSET's long-term vision is a community-driven infrastructure that supports an integrated system for the discovery and access of digital scientific assets across the organization. Digital assets include datasets and supporting metadata, publications (text, images, audio, video), software applications, and model codes.

3. Mission and Goals

The mission of the DSET is to support easier access to all community - digital assets by a wide range of users, through the development and operation of a web-based system for digital asset discovery and access. Taking a user-focused approach, this will involve simplifying data discovery and sharing metadata within and across NCAR groups. From an organizational perspective, the goal of the DSET is to improve the efficiency of access to digital assets, improve the quality of the user experience in finding and using those assets, and reduce the costs associated with operating digital asset management, archiving, and access services.

4. Definition of Scope

Taking a broad view, the DSET is considering the digital assets managed by NCAR groups that are intended for shared scientific use and distribution, including data files, metadata, publications and reports, software, and related services. The scope may be expanded at a later date to include additional types of digital assets, such as educational assets, once the DSET goals have been successfully achieved for the initial set of assets.

5. Membership

The DSET relies on cross-organization participation. The DSET membership is constituted by representatives from each NCAR lab, the NCAR Library, and the UCP. A minimum of one representative will be named from each of these units by the unit's director.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The operations of the DSET will be conducted by individuals working within the following roles:

- DSET leadership
 - Chair
 - The DSET chair has the principal responsibilities for the operation of the DSET. The chair serves as the contact point for the NCAR Directors and the NCAR Executive Committee, and is responsible for ensuring effective communications with the DSET Executive Committee Liaison.
 - The chair is responsible for scheduling and calling DSET meetings, and for leading the setting of DSET meeting agendas.
 - The chair is responsible for reporting to the NCAR Directors on the management of the DSET budget.
 - The chair, with input from the Organizing Committee, is also responsible for calling any special DSET task teams to order, and for organizing the work of those task teams.
 - The chair is an elected role, with the election process and term length as noted below.
 - Organizing Committee
 - The organizing committee assists the chair in organizing and managing the DSET's activities. The organizing committee works with the chair to determine DSET meeting agendas, set the goals, set milestones, and evaluate success.
 - One or more members of the Organizing Committee may represent the Chair in communications with the NCAR Directors, NCAR Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee Liaison in the absence or by request of the Chair.
 - The Organizing Committee will consist of a minimum of three people (the Chair and two other DSET members), but may include more.
 - The Organizing Committee positions are elected roles, with the election process and term length as noted below.
 - Leadership elections & terms
 - Nominations for the Chair and Organizing Committee positions can be self-nominations or can come from other members of the DSET.
 - Term lengths for the Chair and Organizing Committee roles will be one year. Term lengths can be extended by re-nomination and re-election.
 - Elections will take place once per year.

- DSET Executive Committee Liaison
 - The DSET Executive Committee Liaison is a member of the NCAR Executive Committee who serves as the DSET's first point of communication with the Executive Committee. The Liaison is included in all internal DSET communications and is invited to all DSET meetings.

7. Operations and Budget

The DSET operations and budget shall be managed as follows:

- DSET Operations
 - Adjusting the charter
 - The charter shall be reviewed at least once per year by the full DSET. Modifications to the charter can be proposed by any DSET member and subsequently voted on by the DSET in an official DSET meeting.
 - Meetings
 - DSET meetings will be scheduled and organized by the Chair with input from the Organizing Committee.
 - Meetings will be held on a nominal monthly basis, unless scheduling difficulties occur.
 - Notes will be taken during meetings with all voted decisions being explicitly called out. The notes will be made available to anyone within NCAR and UCAR.
 - Invitees to DSET meetings include all DSET members and the DSET Executive Committee Liaison. DSET members may also invite additional attendees at their discretion.
 - Document management
 - The DSET will maintain a Google Drive folder to manage the DSET's documents. All DSET-produced documents, including (but not limited to) meeting notes, reports, and presentations, shall be posted in the DSET Google Drive.
 - The DSET Google Drive shall be open to viewing by all NCAR and UCAR staff. The ability to edit, add, and remove documents will be limited to DSET members only.
 - The DSET Chair, with input from the organizing committee, is responsible for the management of the DSET Google Drive folder, and the documents therein.
 - Decision making
 - Votes on decisions can be called by any DSET member, and a second by any additional DSET member.
 - Votes are allocated to DSET members, with one vote per Laboratory (HAO, EOL, ACOM, MMM, CISL, RAL, CGD) and one each for the NCAR Library and UCP. Decisions pass on majority vote. In the case of a tie

vote, the decision will be forwarded to the DSET Executive Committee Liaison for resolution.

- Non-consenting statements can be submitted to the Chair, they will be posted to the Google Drive folder, and forwarded directly to the Executive Committee Liaison by the Chair.
- Budget
 - Annually, the DSET meeting forum is supported by the NCAR Director's office. These funds will be equally divided between each NCAR laboratory.
 - Annually, the NCAR Director may also support specific DSET related work within the labs. This work is defined by the labs and reported to the DSET by the respective DSET members. Project achievement will be recorded in the DSET meeting notes.
 - Two positions, the Scientific Data Management Repository Engineer and Coordinating Metadata Engineer, are funded by a continuing and fixed amount. The funding allocation dedicated to each position is intentionally not fixed for the long-term. Annually, the DSET will evaluate progress and near-term challenges. As needs change, the funding allocations will be adjusted. Changes will be coordinated with the NCAR Director's office with discussion and approval from the DSET Organizing Committee and the Executive Committee Liaison.

8. Reporting and Deliverables

The DSET's external reporting and management of deliverables shall be conducted as follows:

- Reporting
 - In consultation with and at the request of the DSET Executive Committee Liaison, the DSET will provide progress reports to the NCAR Directors and the Executive Committee. These reports will outline activities taken since the last report and progress made towards the DSET goals. The reports should also include discussion of any critical decisions made and any important changes in the DSET's course or scope. They can also report on achievements of NCAR Director-supported DSET projects in each lab.
- Deliverables
 - The main deliverable of the DSET is an operational system that allows search and discovery of NCAR digital assets across NCAR labs and divisions.
 - Additional specific deliverables, such as deliverables associated with a DSET task team, will be overseen by the DSET Organizing Committee.
- Timeframe for the DSET's existence
 - In consultation with the NCAR Directorate and the DSET Executive Committee Liaison, the status of the DSET will be reviewed once per year to discuss the continued relevance of the DSET, and if necessary, to identify any changes in scope, direction, or termination. At a minimum, the consultation must include the DSET Chair, but it could also include the Organizing Committee or the full DSET membership, at the discretion of the Chair or the EC Liaison.