NSDL ANNUAL MEETING SURVEY, 2006

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Contents

Summary

The 2006 NSDL Annual Meeting was highly rated, and survey respondents provided thoughtful and comprehensive feedback. They were energized by the more focused and mature nature of the AM, suggesting that the lack of focus reported from the 2005 AM survey has been successfully addressed. The poster session was again highly rated, and the 'ice-breaking' feel to having the poster session at the beginning of the meeting was much appreciated.

Some nuts-and-bolts logistical issues detracted from the overall AM experience, and some attendees would have appreciated more comprehensive logistical support prior to arrival.

1 Introduction

The 2006 NSDL Annual Meeting (AM) was held in Washington, D.C., in October 2006. Following the AM, attendees were surveyed about their meeting experience. The survey questions were closely based on the 2005 AM survey, although following discussions with the Annual Meeting Planning Committee, several questions from the 2005 survey were removed because they were thought to be superfluous. The survey included an additional section that asked respondents about their use of NSDL organizational communication; the findings from this section will be reported separately.

The survey was hosted by an online survey tool, SurveyMonkey. Three invitations were sent out by email at weekly intervals after the Annual Meeting, which included an embedded URL linking directly to the survey. The majority of responses were received in the hours following the emails' being sent out, suggesting that the 'one-click' access to the survey made it easy for people to respond.

By November 15, a total of 99 responses had been received. Approximately 175 registrants attended the AM, and so the response rate was 56.6% (2005, 45.0%; 2004, 35.6%; 2003, 24.8%; 2002, 49.0%). The responses included approximately 200 unstructured comments. 31 people provided names and e-mail addresses for possible follow-up questions.

2 Analysis

The overall meeting rating was 3.99/5.00, in line with previous years (2005 = 3.97; 2004 = 3.99; 2003 = 3.50). Ratings in various categories, from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), were as follows:

2006	2005	SURVEY CATEGORY	2006	2005
4.52	4.60	Meeting support staff	1	1
4.48	4.43	Online registration	2	=2
4.24	4.13	Closing session (Sustainability panel)	3	7
4.18	4.36	Poster session and reception	4	4
4.12	4.05	Discuss NSDL community issues	5	10
4.10	3.68**	Interact with NSDL staff	6	15**
4.02	4.08	Information about the meeting on nsdl.org	7	8
4.01	4.29	Share/find new ideas	8	5
3.99	3.97	OVERALL MEETING EXPERIENCE	9	12
3.91	4.06	Proposal submission, review and acceptance	10	9
3.90	4.16	Find new collaborators	11	6
3.88	4.43	Information about travel and lodging	12	=2
3.84	3.54	Opening session: NSF and CI update	13	17
3.77	3.61	Interact with NSF staff	14	16
3.72	3.13	Opening keynote (Cyberinfrastructure)	15	19

* Average of 'Interact with Core Integration,' 'Interact with Standing Committee,' and 'Interact with Policy Committee' responses

Attendees made some very positive comments about the meeting (see Appendix, especially section 12). As with previous meetings, respondents emphasized the importance of the AM in allowing them to meet with and talk to other projects and people, including meeting face-to-face with people they may only have interacted with over email or telephone. 'Meeting,' 'collaborating,' 'interacting,' 'networking,' and 'energizing' are some keywords used by respondents, a finding very much in line with previous AM surveys.

In terms of social interaction, the poster session once again emerged as a favourite activity, with complaints often being that it was not long enough, either in terms of the Wednesday evening session, or in terms of being spread over additional days. Attendees also appreciated the poster session being scheduled at the beginning of the meeting, and functioning as an icebreaker.

Respondents responded positively to the more tightly-focused program and session topics, although this was also seen as a little bit intimidating by some new attendees. There were also some complaints about there being too many concurrent sessions. However, the AM generally came over as being a more coherent, focused, and mature event than in previous years, a perception that then reflected back on some attendees' perceptions of NSDL itself as being a more mature organization.

The AAAS location itself was well-received (although there were reservations about the meeting venue being separate from the hotel – see below). The AAAS space was intimate, and provided spaces for conversations between the sessions. The small meeting rooms and seminar/roundtable layouts were appreciated, although several people noted that this also led to more crowded sessions, and several suggested that the AAAS was perhaps slightly too small for the number of attendees.

Information about travel and lodging

A few aspects of the AM were rated lower than in previous years. 'Information about travel and lodging' declined from 4.43/5.00 and second most highly ranked item in the 2005 survey, to 3.88/5.00 and twelfth rank in 2006. The rest of this report will explore some explanations for this decline.

The Denver location for the 2005 AM was rated highly (for example, for access to local restaurants). The 2006 AM location in DC was not as well received, especially in terms of cost. The Marriott Metro Center discount rate was $269.00/night, compared with $115/night for the Denver AM hotel, and this was a barrier to participation for some people.

A number of respondents experienced difficulties with either locating or interpreting the hotel information on the nsdl.org Annual Meeting website. Some respondents assumed from the website that the Marriott Metro Center was the NSDL-recommended hotel, and was offering a block of discounted rooms for attendees. However, as the meeting was not held at the Marriott, while a small block of rooms was reserved at the Marriott at modest discount, it was expected that participants would make their own reservations in the area. Further, the discounted rooms at the Marriott were reserved for members of Core Integration, and it was the surplus from this block that was offered on the AM website prior to the meeting. This led several respondents to note that the hotel details were posted with only a short time before the block rate expired, or claimed that they could not find this information at all on the AM website.

The split venue caused some confusion. One respondent noted that the lack of a map of the locations of the Marriott and AAAS in the program caused some people to miss the first part of the Thursday morning. The split location made evening networking difficult, as at the end of the afternoon, people disappeared from the AAAS building, and did not reconvene in the Marriott. Networking was also hard for those who had arranged their own accommodation; again, they did

not know where to meet people for the evening social activities.

Several respondents would have appreciated a structured series of pre-AM emails addressing such issues as the release of the program on the website, and notification of cancelled sessions. Some would have appreciated an indication of the catering schedule – the lack of breakfast on the Thursday was mentioned – as this would have allowed them to plan ahead and eat before arriving at AAAS. Here, a map of local breakfast places and restaurants would have been appreciated. Finally, a pre-AM email with a map of the location of the Marriott and AAAS would have been useful.

3 Preliminary Summary and Recommendations

Respondents provided thoughtful and comprehensive feedback on the 2006 NSDL Annual Meeting. They were energized by the more focused and mature nature of the AM, suggesting that the lack of focus reported from the 2005 AM survey has been successfully addressed. The poster session was again highly rated; and if possible, consideration should be given to extending the 2007 poster session, either by an hour or two, or perhaps over a half-day or full day.

The 'ice-breaking' feel to having the poster session at the beginning of the meeting was much appreciated, and this could be supported in future with an accompanying 'Minute Madness' session to introduce the various presenters.

Some nuts-and-bolts logistical issues detracted from the overall AM experience, and some attendees would have appreciated more comprehensive logistical support prior to arrival. Providing such support should therefore be a priority for the 2007 Annual Meeting. Issues to consider here, particularly if the AM returns to DC in 2007, include:

- Providing a short, simple introduction that explains the rationale for holding the meeting in DC (access to NSF officers, etc.)
- Providing a list/map of alternate/cheaper hotels, located nearby or close to a Metro station
- Providing instructions for how to reach the meeting venue from the main hotel and the nearest Metro station
- Indicating whether or not breakfast and other catering will be provided
- Providing a list/map of local restaurants, bars, sandwich places, and so on
- Disseminating the relevant information in a timely way on the AM website, by email to registrants, and in the registration packet

These important activities support people's core expectations for the AM – the opportunity to meet and network with colleagues and the NSDL community – and supporting these activities will help to assure that the Annual Meeting attendees will have the best possible experience.

APPENDIX: SURVEY DATA

1 Which days of the 2006 Annual Meeting did you attend?	n	06 %	05 %
Wednesday	77	**79%**	n/a
Thursday	91	**93%**	n/a
Friday	71	**72%**	n/a
Total Respondents	98		
(skipped this question)	1		

2 Are you a member of:	n	06 %	05 %
A current NSDL project	48	**50%**	56%
A past NSDL project	1	**1%**	3%
Both a current and past NSDL project	36	**37%**	30%
I have never been a member of an NSDL project	12	**12%**	10%
Total Respondents	97		
(skipped this question)	2		

3 How is/was your project funded?	n	06 %	05 %
NSDL Collections Track	10	**11%**	22%
NSDL Core Integration Track	25	**17%**	11%
NSDL Pathways Track	31	**35%**	23%
NSDL Services Track	19	**22%**	20%
NSDL Targeted Research Track	5	**6%**	5%
Project is/was part of NSDL but not funded through NSDL program	2	**2%**	4%
I don't know	6	**7%**	9%
Total Respondents	88		
(skipped this question)	11		

4 If funded by NSDL what year did your project start?	n	06 %	05 %
FY 2000	12	**14%**	8%
FY 2001	4	**5%**	5%
FY 2002	12	**14%**	9%
FY 2003	10	**11%**	17%
FY 2004	14	**16%**	19%
FY 2005	14	**16%**	19%
FY 2006	8	**9%**	--
Don't know	14	**16%**	10%
Total Respondents	88		
(skipped this question)	11		

5 Pre-Meeting and Meeting organizational support (= n/5.0)	06	05
Meeting support staff	**4.52**	4.60
Online registration	**4.48**	4.43
Information about the meeting on nsdl.org	**4.02**	4.08
Proposal Submission review and acceptance	**3.91**	4.06
Information about travel and lodging	**3.88**	4.43
Total Respondents	**94**	
(skipped this question)	**5**	

6 Positive and/or negative comments on pre-Meeting organizational support

Positive

I represent the K-12 community of learners and am very impressed with the diligence of NSDL to make accessible the rich content of the NSDL Digital Library. I would highly recommend that your presence at conferences such as the American Association of School Librarians in 2007. School librarians need to know more about the NSDL Toolbar (excellent by the way) and are hungry for resources to support STEM learning.

I was very happy that the meeting was open to non-NSDL organizations. I learned a great deal from my time at the meeting.

Very informative. It was very satisfying to dialog with other school based library personnel from all over the US.

Seemed like any information I wanted was available. Good job.

Things were run smoothly.

Nice job all.

It all went very smoothly.

Negative

Submitting a proposal

It would be helpful to know proposal submission requirements beforehand (i.e., # of words for abstract, # of authors)

Only will note that I got questions from colleagues (DLESE) about poster acceptance prior to them being notified (which was within a day or so, I believe).

When submitting a proposal, many open-ended questions are asked in addition to providing a proposal abstract. Answering those questions takes considerable time. Could any be non-essential questions be dropped? Currently, only presenters and a moderator may be named in the submission form. Often, others who will not be speaking contribute significantly to a presentation. It would be very helpful to have an other contributors box where they could be named to recognize their contribution.

I still find the site difficult with things like proposal submission and poster abstract submission.

Slow review process.

Booking a hotel

The block of hotel rooms was announced quite late, two days before the offer expired, which was inconvenient.

Reserving a block of rooms might have made it simpler and less expensive to book a hotel room.

Lack of a conference hotel made networking very difficult - people just disappeared after Thursday's sessions!

Conflicting info on whether selected hotels had government rate rooms set aside.

The lack of sponsored hotel options made it difficult to plan and have our entire group attend.

The hotel was a bit expensive. I stayed elsewhere.

6 Positive and/or negative comments on pre-Meeting organizational support (contd)

It said first that there was no hotel booked and later it turned out that there was.

Hotel rates were very high - I didn't see the logic in not having a pre-negotiated conference rate at some hotels. The address of the AAAS building was nowhere to be found on the program. Several people arrived late on Thursday morning because they were looking for the building.

Hotel info late and with little lead time.

Meeting schedule

It would be nice to know about times of presentations a little earlier for travel plans.

I was surprised not to get a pre-conference email letting us know when the schedules had been posted.

The draft programs did not print out well...next time, pdf's please!

When I made plane reservations, it wasn't clear what time the meeting would end. It turned out to make little difference in the end, but knowing conclusion time earlier (or more obviously on the website) would have helped.

I could not find any information on the Wednesday Pathway meeting on the NSDL Annual Conference or Pathway web pages. And since I am a subcontractor, I never received (I think; not sure though) emails about this meeting either.

Just a little confusion over the combining of sessions. I wish we hadn't had to do that.

Were session scheduling conflicts for presenters considered? There seem to have been quite a few.

On-site registration

Needed a registration table Thursday morning rather than just Wed night.

It would have been better to have coffee and registration available prior to Dr. Atkins' address.

It would have been nice to have a list of participants in a format that could have been alphabetized.

Poster session

I was very surprised that the poster reception was held in Marriot. (Was there an announcement for it? I didn't know. I found it out that morning.)

The directions on the poster session were not very clear in terms of how much space I would be given, whether I needed to share it with another person from the same project, and what the setup would be like.

Finding my way around

I didn't *see* any directions from the hotel to the AAAS, but given that it was so easy, it wasn't a big problem. Would have been nice to know ahead that the meetings were so close by the hotel.

7 Usefulness and interest of the General Sessions (= n/5.0)	06	05
Closing Session	**4.24**	4.13
Poster session and reception	**4.18**	4.36
Opening session: NSF and CI update	**3.84**	3.54
Opening Keynote speaker (Dan Atkins in 06)	**3.72**	3.13
Total Respondents	**93**	
(skipped this question)	**6**	

8 Positive and/or negative comments on the general sessions

<u>Positive</u>

Sustainability Panel was excellent.

Outreach to the K-12 community was excellent.

I thought the external speakers brought energy and interest to the meetings in the general sessions and also the breakout sessions.

Poster session is a great way to 'break the ice', start networking.

Yahoo! Well done.

Many useful topics.

I thought the variety and focus was good - heard generally good comments about nearly all sessions.

I think it worked well to have fewer, more pithy sessions.

The poster session was very well organized, I liked the layout with the food in the center. There was a lot of space for mingling and talking.

<u>Negative</u>

The poster session [Note: Many of these negative comments are actually of the form 'I liked the poster session but it wasn't long enough']

The setup for the poster session was really poor. People had to scrunch into tiny spaces to view the posters. If there were more than a couple of people in a poster cubicle, nobody else could view a poster. The posters were oriented such that the flow of people went past them without the audience being able to catch a glance of the poster. Very poor design. The poster session could have been on two nights or longer and no one would have minded.

Poster session was way too short and should have been on multiple days; it's the most valuable portion of the meeting because of the dialogs that take place, and one session of two hours is not enough time.

The posters suffered from being just one evening, but that was related to the space we had.

The posters were interesting as usual, but the poster session was quite cramped.

Spacing of the posters in the ballroom did not leave enough room for people to walk up to some posters and easily view them and talk to project personnel.

Because this was my first NSDL Annual Meeting, poster session after the presentations might have improved my ability to interact with presenters. The view that web services like NSDL should become a commodity like gas or electricity was wonderfully intriguing. I am still a bit concerned that across disciplines, science educators are unable to share their research published in peer reviewed journals. I hope that NSDL will add or associate with a PubEd component soon.

Directions to poster session from outside the building would have been helpful (room in Marriott listed on website, or signs on site).

Schedule

At some times there were too many scheduled at the same time.

8 Positive and/or negative comments on the general sessions (contd)

Too many concurrent meetings.

Fewer concurrent sessions would have been helpful with such a small group of attendees.

NSDL and NSF information

More focus on the work of implementing the NSDL (rather than candycoating the progress) also would have been helpful. It seems that the organizational structure for the NSDL with the standing committees and policy committee is completely broken, as illustrated in the opening session.

There wasn't much stated on the CI & NSF update.

I would like to hear more detail about the direction that NSDL is headed in. I would like to have more in-depth technical discussions about collaboration between small and Pathway projects.

Could Dr. Lee Zia talk about the NSDL funding direction for the coming years in the future Opening session?

Other

Too many speakers talked in computer-ese...not everyone there is CI...many are content people!

Was disappointed by the cancellation of the "Passionate Users" session.

The sustainability panel was interesting, though the intro and outro were a bit long.

Dr. Atkins talk was quite quick - will you have the slides online at some point?

9 Opportunities to engage in the following activities	06	05
Discuss NSDL community issues	**4.12**	4.05
Interact with NSDL staff	**4.10**	3.68
Share/find new ideas	**4.01**	4.29
Find new collaborators	**3.90**	4.16
Interact with NSF staff	**3.77**	3.61
Total Respondents	**94**	
(skipped this question)	**5**	

10 Positive and/or negative comments on meeting activities

Positive

I found this to be a very engaging and interactive meeting.

Birds of a feather was a good idea-- first meeting I have been to with that explicitly built into the agenda. Nice opportunity to talk with people working on similar projects.

I liked the layout at AAAS. It facilitated easy interaction with all attendees.

Negative

Schedule

Too many sessions were cancelled.

I think all of the above elements are possible at the AM meeting but given the number of people attending, the number of sessions are too many making it difficult to do the above items.

There were separate meetings regarding the implementation of the pathways projects. Where were all the sessions to build on the collections and services projects that had been previously funded? Does the NSDL consider those earlier funded projects a complete right off? Core Integration is not integrating.

Spaces between session are far too short to have useful interactions.

Very brief meeting, with relatively little time for out-of-meeting interactions.

10 Positive and/or negative comments on meeting activities (contd)

Meeting space/Refreshments

Breaks were too short, entire meeting was too short - would have liked to have more informal options, space was cozy, but hard to talk to folks.

It was not clear that no food or coffee or even water would be available until people arrived at the meeting Thursday. Many had not had any breakfast. The food that was served later, though, was tasty and thoughtfully prepared.

Other

"Birds of a feather" is a great idea but should be better organized. Perhaps by requesting for and voting on group types prior to general meeting - people might then be able to pre-register for one??? Need more events designed for members to mingle with each other.

It was great to talk to Dr. Lee Zia. But in the future, could we have more NDSL program directors there to talk about funding opportunities in NSDL. (I only saw Dr. Zia, but there could be others there who I missed.)

Opportunities for workshops would have been very welcome; meeting theme was too limiting.

This was a much smaller meeting than in other years. Many of the older projects were not represented, so some of the opportunities present in years past were not available this year.

The need to agree on certain features suddenly became apparent at this meeting.

11 How does this meeting compare to previous meetings (= n/5.0):	06	05
Length of meeting	3.52	--
Opportunities for interactions - in sessions	3.37	--
Meeting/hotel location	3.35	--
Refreshments/catering	3.23	--
Opportunities for interaction – outside if sessions	3.16	--
Variety of session topics	3.02	--
Total Respondents	66	
(skipped this question)	33	

12 Overall positive comments (n=58)

The sessions were great! You guys did a great job organizing everything. I love the Poster Sessions best, but everything was good.

The chance to interact with other folks

The opportunity to learn about NSDL.

Opportunity to talk to people from other projects.

Location and the opportunity to discuss issues with library professionals from so many diverse backgrounds and responsibilities.

Chance to meet with others engaged in the NSDL.

I would have loved for things to begin midday Wednesday.

Chance to see everyone in person and catch up on event of the past year.

Final panel discussion organized by the sustainability committee!

The interactive sessions and the poster session were valuable in understanding other projects and finding possible collaborators

Interaction opportunities at the sessions

Networking, hearing about what other projects are doing. Meeting was well organized.

12 Overall positive comments (contd)

Meeting other project staff. Putting names and faces togeher. Learning about CI tools and being able to ask questions

The opportunities to meet and talk face-to-face with the NSDL community and see the range of work going on within the program.

AAAS space was nice, but didn't keep people together -

An opportunity to meet with other CI and projects.

The chance to interact face-to-face with other projects. Everyone was most helpful in sharing information. The location (Washington, DC) allowed us to bring our project leaders together for face-to-face discussion that proved most worthwhile.

The opportunity to learn more about the scope and depth of the program and what I can use in bibliographic instruction.

Poster reception

Meeting people from other projects

Nice that it was in DC good length

Food at AAAS was outstanding. Haikus were great, as always. Panel choice on closing session was very good.

Ability to learn what others were doing and chance to exchange ideas during longer breaks, potential future collaborations

On-line pre-meeting preparation easy; lots of information easily accessible from the NSDL site.

I enjoyed the enthusiasm in the meetings. I also appreciated a new feeling of people working together and not just touting their individual or group achievements.

Chance to hear many different presentations/panels/discussions in breakout sessions.

Networking.

Location, excellent catering, meeting people (especially those I've interacted w/online)

So many fine minds in one place, all sharing ideas!

Hotel close to the Mall. Enough technical representatives attended to make side meetings possible for discussing tech issues.

The opportunity to collaborate with people from a variety of grade levels and schools

Meeting length TERRIFIC. Variety was down because meeting was smaller and shorter -- not a criticism, but a description. Hotel way too expensive. I stayed far away and took Metro -- cost 1/2 what the conference hotels were charging. Lunch good, and food wasn't overdone as in some past years.

The final panel session on Sustainability.

The topics were interesting, and I was excited to see the NSDL itself cohering as I learned about the upcoming work being done by CI.

The smaller rooms with tables in a circle. It was easier to discuss things in the sessions.

sharing ideas and experiences

Opportunity to see what people are doing, and what they need from services.

The opportunity to talk to folks from different projects.

Meeting with project members and NSDL staff that I had only previously communicated with by phone or by e-mail.

Meeting time with collaborators to discuss and coordinater cooperative projects. Starting the meeting with a poster session offered a nice way to mingle and make introductions.

Thought it was the best I've attended. Especially liked the smaller, more intimate AAAS venue, which promoted discussion during the sessions. Also, hotel was convenient and nice enough (not over the top like we sometimes have).

12 Overall positive comments (contd)

Seeing the advances in the NSDL infrastructure

Short; to the point.

Networking opportunities.

Poster session.

Meeting kids on their own turf session with NetDay, Yahoo, and MIT - It was worth attending the entire meeting for that one session!!!!

The location: Washington, DC and AAAS Most of the sessions were very well done and informative.

The ability to network and meet colleagues in person.

The chance to hear what others are doing was great. It energized me to get back to work and to contribute more.

There was less variety in session topics--which was MUCH BETTER. The meeting was more focused and it seemed like more real work got done than in previous years) A sense that the NSDL is getting a clear direction and cohesiveness.

Seemed a more cohesive sort of meeting to me- not so all-over-the-place - more focus. Probably due to the maturity of projects over last year. The AAAS venue was very nice - the food was great, the closeness of the hotel to AAAS.

Big panel discussions--Web Kids and Sustainability. Topics were interesting and relevant enought to spark interest and comment.

The number of compelling session topics that were of interest to multiple groups of people.

AAAS facility was very nice.

I'm finding each meeting to be more and more exciting. So many long-term initiatives are starting to mature.

Birds of a feather time and workshops-- good opportunities for interaction.

Opportunity to interact and see what is going on with members via the poster session.

It seemed more focused than previous AMs. There were less introductory sessions, and more opportunities to get up to speed with working projects. This was more useful I thought.

13 Overall negative comments (n=53)

I prefer to go back to having it in a specific hotel so that we can go to our rooms quickly and still be with everyone. My room was quite a walk away.

It was a bit short, would have liked just a little more time.

I would highly recommend that the next meeting provide an opportunity for more K-12 involvement - perhaps market the meeting through journals and organizations specific to the K-12 community.

The poster session.

The community is very hard to break into if you are a newcomer. The alliances, collaborators, and friends behave as if they have all the collaborators and friends they need thank you very much. It's a very closed shop in my eyes. But that said, I think I'll learn a lot interacting with these folks to the extent that they feel like engaging people who are new to the NSDL

Expensive hotel.

There are still disconnects in the community between the needs and perspectives of higher ed and K-12 projects, as well as the perspective of research/library oriented participants and producer/outreach oriented participants, so I find that discussions in the sessions tend to be somewhat frustrating when trying to reach more understanding.

Not enough information about future direction of the NSDL and how all of the various parts (projects) can fit together. Poster session was good except that if you have a poster it is hard to go around and see what other projects are also doing. Washington is very expensive. A hotel "block" would help.

13 Overall negative comments (contd)

Not getting breakfast.

I missed the extra day to have time to talk to more people. Not sure exactly how this discussion or guidance would be implemented, but I would also like to have a more direct understanding of where NSDL is going as a community, the status of a mangement structure, and where future funds and outreach efforts (including grade levels targeted) will be directed.

No coffee on first day. No water available in th emeeting rooms.

Given the number of attendees, I think it would be useful to reduce the number of sessions and tracks. It would increase attendance at the sessions, which hopefully should encourage greater "community" discussions, and give people to opportunity to learn about work going on throughout the NSDL. We could encourage broad participation within the NSDL by having only multi-project contributed sessions, rather than single project contributed sessions.

Not having a central location - hotels way tooooo expensive for most budgets. Meant staying far away from group - people tended to hang in cliques, e.g., their projects and not much else. Sessions were so few that not much new or varied occured. Participants most of the 'old timers' I wonder how new attendees felt - excluded, I bet.

Some of the breakout sessions seemed to be more of a general idea session. I think instead of having so many sessions, just have a few more focused sessions that meet longer with milestones, direction and deliverables as the outcome of the session.

Perhaps having a place where posters could be kept up longer to encourage more discussion. I understand with the change of venue it was necessary to take them down. It is a lot of work with little time to share/explore.

I think as an outcome of the Pathways focus on NSDL, the meeting seemed much smaller than past meetings. This made it more difficult to find new ideas and collaborations.

Number of attendees seemed small.

Well, it is nobody's fault, but I felt a little like a wedding crasher, walking in on a work/community in progress.

The length of the meeting would have been better, if the poster reception was moved to Thu or Fri, so overall, the meeting would be 2 days. (because of teaching duties and other out of town trips to conferences, I really prefer a shorter meeting.)

Fewer sessions.

Didn't like having it outside of a hotel.

Session topics were not of much interest. Poster session was way too short.

Breaks were in a very small area, not much room to sit down or "break-out" in hallway across from session rooms.

Not enough time to both see other posters and at the same time be at my own.

The city. I thought it was better to meet in Chicago and Denver. Any smaller, less expensive city would be better from my point of view. There wasn't time to take in any of the offerings that D.C. has, so why be there?

Not having the posters avialable. It would have been nice to have a little more space for impromptu meetings or discussions.

Would have liked refreshments during the day

I found very few of the sessions useful.

Meeting room space was good, but the lobby & hallway area was a bit cramped. More than a bit, actually.

Committee meetings in the middle of the day

Conference hotel way too costly (but I dodged that bullet). Overall, best of the 3 conferences I've attended.

13 Overall negative comments (contd)

Food at AAAS was great, but there should have been some food at breaks.

I was pleased to see the AAAS offices, but the space was not well suited to a meeting of this size. Meeting rooms were consistently cramped, and gathering space was generally "on top of" other groups who were talking and gathering for other sessions.

The food situation :). Lunch was great but it was tough to sustain myself through an entire morning without anything to nibble on. Why not put out a bunch of cookies with tea and coffee? It seemed really low budget in that sense.

Not enough room for partcipants in some sessions -- standing room only

Low attendance.

AAAS coffee was terrible! Also, hotel was quite expensive, even given the "conference" rate.

The meeting was smaller and quite expensive.

Not being aware that coffee/bagels would not be available......did not allow time for breakfast elsewhere. Some of the meeting rooms did not accommodate the large groups attending the session. Because many individuals live and breathe the rarified air of NSF, digital libraries, or whatever other grant funding stream exists, they sometimes forget that the use of so many acronyms can be frustrating for those of us who are just regular folks. There is life outside the realm of the alphabet soup.

There is never enough time to talk with everyone

Washington DC; a more central, less expensive location would be preferable.

The layout at AAAS was cumbersome - as a presenter it was especially difficult to not be able to have water for the panel to drink.

Sitting too much.

Lack of water - it would have been nice to have bottled water or pitchers of water.

Scheduling - as the timing conflicted with other meetings.

There was no coffee the first morning.

Repetitive nature of types of discussions related to "big" ed DL issues--evaluation, standards, content, reuse, metadata etc. with not much new to add.

It felt very rushed and jam packed. Perhaps 2 full days would be better.

Seemed rushed. Buffet lunch coupled with standing committee meetings was difficult. People who spoke at those meetings didn't really get to eat anything. Individual bottled drinks would have been helpful to speed the beverage line along.

In many ways things are too rushed. Not in the sessions themselves (they're about right), but it's extremely unfortunate that copious time and opportunity (and resources) are made available for participants to interact since so much of the NSDL's success relies on these kinds of interactions.

The closing session-- I didn't feel it was very engaging.

14 Overall experience	06	05
Discuss NSDL community issues	**4.12**	4.05
Interact with NSDL staff	**4.10**	3.68
Share/find new ideas	**4.01**	4.29
Find new collaborators	**3.90**	4.16
Interact with NSF staff	**3.77**	3.61
Total Respondents	**94**	
(skipped this question)	5	

15 Any other comments (n=19)

Good job!

I like the format this year. It provided a good focus

I very much want to attend future meetings and I hope to be kept up to date on NSDL activities. We want to submit a project for the NSF DR K-12 program that brings us into the NSDL community.

AAAS is to be commended for making their meeting space available -- it was a great location, I thought.

Will there be others? Seems like there's nothing new to say - especially if there is no new community. Small PI meeting of pathways and people who share work may be most useful - the community doesn't seem to be there - too bad. This was the only opportunity for people to come together, that seems to be dead. The community, I mean.

The AAAS accommodations were terrific and the staff was very gracious and helpful. I am not sure it was worth my time to attend. I felt as though the sessions were not as useful.

I came away with new enthusiasm and a much better vision of what is transpiring, as well as what the current problems and concerns are. Thanks to the people who made it possible.

No signage in the meeting areas so it was tricky to find one's way.

If this arrangement (with AAAS) is something that works for all parties (AAAS, NSDL, NSF, etc.), then by all means, let's meet there again. It was nice that the meeting was shorter but harder to go to all the sessions I wanted as the overlapped.

Provide some snacks with coffee, e.g., cookies -- there wasn't enough time to go out to eat.

Some of the last sessions on Friday seemed a bit ad hoc.

Nice job!

I had to register in order to register for a poster, but I did not attend the conference.

The NSDL ToolBar is GREAT! Thank you!I thought that this year was a huge improvement. Across the board there seems to be more direction and focus. The different working groups are tackling serious problems that will reach across NSDL efforts and have a huge impact. There is still a sense that some of the things that it seemed were agreed upon years ago are still being discussed, like agreed upon vocabularies, and there is still progress to be made in that area.

The AAAS location had many technical limitations (Macs didn't work on the podium in the auditorium, hotel was extremely expensive, AAAS was somewhat uncomfortable to work in, few places to plug in computers, low bandwidth available for wifi and with many services blocked (at least on the Mac).

Nice job!