

Report on the Organization of the XXXII SCAR and Open Science Conference Portland, Oregon, 13 July-25 July, 2012

1. Planning and Preparations for SCAR XXXII/COMNAP XXIII
 - a. Overall schedule
 - July 13 and 14, 2012: SCAR business and subsidiary groups
 - July 15 and 20, 2012: Standing Scientific Groups
 - July 15, 2012: COMNAP Symposium (open)
 - July 16 to 19, 2012: Open Science Conference
 - July 16 to 19, 2012: COMNAP Annual General Meeting
 - July 18 SCAR + COMNAP 2012 Banquet
 - July 23 to 25, 2012: SCAR Delegates Meeting
 - b. SCAR conference requirements as documented in “Guidelines for Organizers of Biennial SCAR Meetings” (2005 revised version), was used as the foundation for local organizing. An updated document became available after planning was underway. Thereafter, version control caused some confusion.

The LOC interacted with the SCAR Secretariat (Mike Sparrow, Renuka Badhe, and Eoghan Griffin) in Cambridge, England, SCAR President (Chuck Kennicutt), and COMNAP Secretariat (Michelle Rogan-Finnemore) in Christchurch, New Zealand. Miscommunication was a key attribute of these interactions.
 - c. Venues: The Hilton Portland & Executive Tower was chosen for the SCAR business meetings and OSC because it is the largest hotel in Oregon, offered ample meeting space, professional AV support, proximity to the downtown core, and had Green Seal environmental certification. The downtown location simplified access to dining, social, and other functions for all meeting participants. The Hilton reserved 100% of its meeting spaces plus a block of rooms with discounted room rates (\$169.00/night) for attendees. Subsidized housing was provided on the Portland State University (PSU) campus. The SCAR Delegates meetings were held at Hoffmann Hall and the Native American Community and Student Center on the PSU campus.
 - d. Electronic circulars
 - August 2011: First Circular
 - October 2011: Abstracts open; Second Circular
 - March 2012: Registration Open
 - March 1, 2012: Abstract submission closed
 - April 2012: Third Circular
 - e. Registration fee structure
 - i. OSC Registration

- early: \$425
 - regular (before 1 July): \$475
 - late (after 1 July): \$525
 - student: \$175 (first 200 accepted abstracts free)
 - accompanying: \$60
- ii. OSC Banquet
- per person: \$85
 - accompanying under 18: free
- iii. SCAR SSGs and Delegates
- no cost for these events
 - if also attending OSC or OSC Banquet, fees (above) apply
- iv. Conference Hotel
- before 16 June: Conference Rate
 - starting 16 June: Market rate

f. Overall costs: Because the SCAR and COMNAP management were handled by the same LOC, budgets for the two events were interrelated, in particular as they related to staffing and fundraising. There were marketing benefits in the comingled audience. Expenses were less than budgeted due to the smaller than expected total registration for the meeting (catering costs were reduced in the weeks prior to the meetings) and special arrangements negotiated during meeting planning that were not known when budget forecasts were made. The LOC had no institutional support for budget forecasting and strongly encourages future LOCs to identify such support as early as possible.

The OSC Banquet was a ticketed event supported by individual ticket purchases and sponsorships.

- SCAR+COMNAP expenses \$575,971 (USD)
- COMNAP-related expenses \$ 73,320

- Registration revenue \$194,823

- OSC Banquet expense \$ 40,388
- OSC Banquet revenue \$ 26,677

g. Abstract management: Online system opened in early October 2011 after some internal testing. The first "live" submissions occurred almost immediately, as students became aware of the incentive program (free registration for first 200 student abstracts accepted). Approximately 50 submissions received by the end of 2012, and additional 100 were received by February 10, and another 500 submissions were received between February 10 and 15. The last day for submission was extended (as planned) to March 1, by which time a total of 920 abstracts were submitted. With late entries the total ultimately reached 935. Some of the late entries were allowed on the basis of unforeseen circumstances such as the fire at the Brazilian Antarctic base, with others being specific requests from session conveners.

- h. Student participation: The student registration incentive produced 200 free registrations, of which 160 were used. An additional 50 students registered at the regular student rate.
- i. Staffing: The LOC ran a “lean” organization, hiring a full time manager, accountant (a student intern with non-profit experience) and business sponsor development manager. Seven paid Portland State University student interns were hired in March. Interns were assigned to specific functional components such as COMNAP, OSC business sponsorships, registration, food and beverage management, banquet logistics, etc. A retired NSF division director joined the team as an advisor. Additional staffing needs were filled using volunteer Portland State science majors. The volunteers were involved in planning and logistics before and on site support during the conference; 20 hours of volunteer service gained access to OSC sessions.
- j. Registration opened online in early March, 2012. This slightly late availability was due to complications regarding banking regulations, university policies, and certification for the free student registration. The banking complications were resolved by partnering with the International Glaciological Society, an organization with extensive symposium management experience. The procedure for verifying “free student registration” generated another delay as we waited for the SCAR home office to confirm acceptance of abstracts. Some confusion for students was inevitable. Although not advertised, on site registration on a daily basis was an option.
- k. Fundraising for conference support included National Science Foundation, Tinker Foundation, and 15 business sponsors. Leading business contributors were Google and Canada Goose (both at “Diamond” \$20k level). The co-location of the SCAR biennial and COMNAP annual meetings may have offered some advantage for fundraising but this was difficult to evaluate. Many business sponsorship decisions were made late in the meeting planning cycle, with the result that registration fees were set higher than might have been necessary.
- l. A juried photographic exhibit, *Our Antarctica*, was sponsored by COMNAP via a generous donation of \$15,000. Dr. David Walton managed the competition and a PSU student intern was hired to provide local support, including photo printing, mounting and easel set up. Over 300 photographs were submitted and 50 were selected by the jury panel for display during the SCAR meetings and for competitive judging. The exhibit was held at the Hilton Portland on the Plaza level, where it was viewable by the general public. Multiple copies of the top 5 judged images were made for display at other venues. An exhibit opening reception was held Saturday evening before the Open Science Conference.

2. SCAR Business Meetings

- a. SCAR subsidiaries met for two days (July 13 and 14) prior to the OSC, Open Science Conference (ADMAP, WISSARD, SCADM-SCAGI, AAA, ISMASS, ACCE and PCBEA, GWSWF, SDLS,EGHBM). Logistical coordination with these subsidiaries was complicated by lack of responsiveness regarding meeting room needs, food and beverage requirements, and seating configurations.
 - b. Room allocation and scheduling of presentations was done at the SCAR office in Cambridge. The process, which relied on communication via a combination of lists and spreadsheets, was unwieldy.
3. SCAR Open Science Conference
- a. A summary of science week events (as a poster prepared for the OSC) is included at the end of this report.
 - b. On-site registration for the OSC opened Sunday afternoon, in advance of the icebreaker party and continued through Wednesday afternoon. Lines were long prior to the Icebreaker party due to the large number of registrants who did not pay in advance of arrival. Only one credit card could be charged at a time and the internet connection to the software required for those charges was problematic. Most participants were patient.
 - c. Delegate bags: The LOC produced guidebooks the size of passports that contained local information and maps, venue floor plans and meeting schedules. These were included, along with an 11oz coffee cup branded with the OSC logo, in each delegate bag at registration. Delegate bags were produced from recycled inner tube materials in keeping with the theme of using environmentally sound conference practices.
 - d. Sustainable practices: Environmental mindfulness was an LOC core value. Conference schedules were provided on neither paper nor thumb drives, a scheme strongly supported by the student intern staff. Daily detailed agendas were available online and posted throughout Hilton meeting spaces on easels, meeting room doors, and on a flat screen monitor near the coffee break stations. No bottled water or other disposable materials were used. Local coffee roasters recognized for sustainable management practices were highlighted each day. Attendees were encouraged to explore Portland on foot and via public transit.
 - e. Poster management: 470 poster abstracts were received. The poster space could accommodate 180 posters per day and 85 to 95% of the poster space was thus used each day. Three to four staff were required to run each poster session. Posters were hung on frames fabricated by the LOC and donated to the university for student conferences. This represented a significant cost savings.
 - f. Community engagement was emphasized in meeting planning and activities.

- i. Portland State Departments of Biology and Geology presented a five-week lecture series, *Antarctic Ecosystem Ecology*. The series was held on the PSU campus and featured lectures by Erik Steig, Andrew Fountain, Diana Wall, Hugh Ducklow, and Brad Buckley. This was supported via funding from the National Science Foundation.
- ii. Ted Scambos spoke at an Oregon Museum of Science and Industry *Science Pub* during the SCAR science week. The science pub was presented to a capacity crowd at the Baghdad Theater in southeast Portland. This was supported via funding from the National Science Foundation. Plans for additional Science Pubs fell through, in part because our planning began far in advance of the museum's planning timeline, so funds were reallocated to the Ecosystem Ecology lecture series.
- iii. An Antarctic arts series, organized by an independent committee, ran throughout the week.
- iv. The COMNAP Symposium, *Sustainable Solutions to Antarctic Challenges*, was held on Sunday, July 15th. The event was open and free to the public, and advertised locally by the SCAR LOC.
- v. The opening plenary session of the SCAR OSC was open and free to the public (including COMNAP participants).
- vi. Public school teachers were invited to attend the Open Science Conference at no cost. Fourteen people registered for the meeting via this option. Teachers were also invited to a reception with the OSC keynote lecturers and other dignitaries. The reception was sponsored by the Portland State office of Research and Strategic Partnerships.

4. SCAR Delegates Meeting

- a. The meeting was held at Hoffman Hall and the Native American Community and Student Center on the Portland State University campus.
- b. Although all meeting documents were uploaded in the SCAR webpage in due time, the LOC was asked to produce paper and thumb drive versions of meeting documents. This was an unavoidable breach of the LOC commitment to sustainable practices.
- c. Seating and microphone layout was determined by number of countries and unions attending. Open square lay out with head table required 36 table top microphones and six wireless mikes. The President of Portland State University, Wim Wiewel, welcomed delegates at Monday morning Plenary. Two sets of country name plates were printed to accommodate

second day structure. Delegates conducted two parallel meetings: “Scientific Affairs” and “Outreach and Administration.”

5. Attendance: The total number of SCAR-associated participants was 819. An additional 117 participants registered for the COMNAP AGM. SCAR OSC attendance was lower than projected for a North American location, perhaps due to competition with the IPY meeting earlier in the year and global financial instability.

• OSC regular	542
• Students	210
• Accompanying persons	23
• SCAR Delegates	80 (21 registering for Delegates only)
• SCAR SSGs only	9 (we did not police this registration class)
• Meeting sponsor reps	20
• K-12 educators	14

6. Social Functions

- a. A walking tour of Portland’s craft breweries organized by a meeting participant was held Sunday afternoon. Public transportation was encouraged, and maps describing an East Antarctica and West Antarctica (corresponding to east and west Portland) were distributed at registration tables.
- b. OSC Icebreaker was held in the Hilton Grand Ballroom the evening before plenary sessions and formal opening of conference. Tickets for two drinks were included in delegate bags handed out at registration. Although noise from attendees drowned out the Icebreaker speakers at podium, all had a good time. This could be avoided by opening the bar after the welcoming speeches. Live music was a band including faculty from Portland State Geology. A haiku contest, judged by a PSU professor, was well received. Major business sponsors such as Canada Goose and Google were highlighted. Canada Goose exhibited Antarctic outer wear line of products and Google displayed images from its Antarctic Street View product.
- c. The joint OSC and COMNAP Banquet was held at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Walking to the event was encouraged and PSU student ambassadors led guided walks to the museum. Bus transport across the river was also provided. PistenBully parked a PB-1 at entrance to OMSI and a replica ceremonial South Pole was set up nearby. Flags of both COMNAP and SCAR were displayed above the main museum entrance. Google brought “Street View Antarctica” and Paul Morin from the University of Minnesota’s Polar Geospatial Center displayed high resolution satellite imagery. Two Antarctic artists’ works were displayed: K.A. Colorado’s ice core sculptures, and Cheryl Leonard’s musical demonstration of instruments created with materials gathered during Antarctic expeditions. OMSI displayed data sets such as NASA’s “Frozen” on *Science on a Sphere*, in a 60 minute loop. The Awards Ceremony was held in the OMNIMax Theater. A mariachi band serenaded attendees until buses departed the site. Many participants walked back across the river to the Hilton.

- d. Alan Cooper and Julianne Stafford led an independent Antarctic arts program organizing committee. The theme for this first-ever series of events was *Antarctic Perspectives-Connecting the Arts to Science Films and Videos and historic Antarctic music*. The advertising flier placed in delegates bags Events included
 - i. Monday, July 16: Lunchtime showing of “When the Poles Melt-Expedition Antarctica” introduced by Karsten Gohl. An evening of scientists sharing stories with Robert Dunbar as host at the Mission Theatre
 - ii. Tuesday, July 17: Evening showing of three movies “Weddell Seal Population Project-Life of an Antarctic Apex Predator”, “The Last Ocean” and “Thin Ice: The Inside Story of Climate Science” at the Mission Theater.
 - iii. Thursday, July 19: Evening with music performance and two films at the Baghdad Theater. Julianne Stafford, Alan Cooper and Larry Schemel performed *Historic Antarctic Music:from Captain Cook to IGY* and the films were “365 days Under Antarctic Ice: Reflections 50 years after “wintering-Over in 1957-58” and “Challenger Sails South: First Deep-Sea Drilling Off Antarctica (1972-73).”
- e. SCAR Delegates’ Icebreaker was held outdoors at Hoffman Hall, adjacent to the main meeting venue. Musical entertainment, open bar, and hors d’oeuvres were provided.
- f. The SCAR Delegates banquet was held outdoors at an organic farm on the evening of Tuesday July 24. The Farm to Fork managed event at Square Peg Farm, 45 minutes from Portland, introduced delegates to Oregon’s sustainable ethic, via agriculture, viticulture, and cuisine. Feedback from attendees indicates that the event was a highlight of the conference. Participants were transported to and from the venue by bus.

7. Summary and Recommendations

a. Communication

- i. Insufficient communication between SCAR Cambridge and the LOC plagued meeting organizing. Everything came right in the end but missing information and unclear expectations led to significant, unnecessary stress. We recommend that regular meetings be scheduled (monthly, every two weeks, and weekly as event approaches) in order to fully coordinate space requirements and manage meeting details. Both SCAR and the LOC are lean organizations. The partner university, PSU, provided no staffing support although its University Communications office dedicated some staff time, as did the Department of Geology.

- ii. Lack of precise information regarding number of attendees at the SCAR Delegates meeting meant that many support activities were completed in haste at the “last minute.” Again, everything came right at the end but this was a source of stress for a lean logistics team.
 - iii. Reflecting on the skeleton timetable developed by the SCAR Secretariat, LOC, and ISOC, we kept remarkably close to the schedule despite the problems encountered along the way. This was accomplished in part by overwork on the part of a few members of the LOC, a practice we do not encourage.
 - iv. The LOC strongly encourages future SCAR Secretariat/LOC teams to develop one comprehensive online calendar including **all** meeting room requirements as early as possible in the planning process. A target schedule should be developed a year in advance of the meeting and adjusted as planning progresses. The LOC produced this on its own after it was determined that this was the only path. The calendar worked but unilateral, rather than team, construction is vulnerable to error and repetitive communication.
 - v. The LOC was not prepared in advance to provide proof of attendance letters for meeting attendees who required them. These were produced as requested at registration, a paper-saving alternative to producing letters for all attendees.
- b. Oral Presentation Support
- i. In the interest of cost savings, the Hilton AV vendor was given autonomous responsibility for arranging file transfer for oral presentations. Unfortunately, the vendor’s prior experience with security for file transfers did not match SCAR participants expectations. We were unable to change the protocol quickly enough to ensure secure transfer in advance of the OSC and relied instead on the Speaker Ready Room facility. Onsite slide set uploads worked well with two technicians.
 - ii. While future organizers should encourage speakers to submit their presentations early, we suggest that they also prepare to accommodate a large number of submissions on site during the OSC. Though we were able to add another technician relatively quickly, future organizers should make sure that their AV support teams are adequately staffed during the opening hours of the conference. In our experience, at least 2 technicians should be on hand.
- c. External communications
- i. The LOC produced and distributed press releases about public-access OSC elements. A reporter for the local regional newspaper, the *Oregonian*, attended the conference and produced a series of

news articles from it. The Google Antarctica Street View also generated media interest.

- ii. In future, the SCAR Secretariat and the International Scientific Organizing Committee should consider working together with session conveners to provide more diverse and comprehensive press support.

d. Staffing

- i. Limited staffing in both Cambridge and Portland were a problem. The LOC relied heavily on the time of one co-chair and was able to pull in assistance from other committee members in times of need but this was stressful.
- ii. SCAR Secretariat staffing was similarly limited in the weeks leading up to the conference. The largest effect of this was slow production of the final program, which in turn resulted in late nights for the LOC in the few days prior to the start of the OSC.

e. Arts

- i. The arts program was very well received but underfunded. The LOC is hopeful that success at the 2012 meetings will encourage financial support of arts program coordinated parallel to future OSCs.

f. Looking forward

- i. Environmental mindfulness was a core value in all aspects of local organizing. Our student intern team embraced this with great enthusiasm. Some older meeting participants complained at first about the lack of printed paper programs but seemed to adapt quickly. Carbon offsets and other options for reducing meeting impacts should be considered in the future.
- ii. The LOC lobbied to have a Native American welcome to the opening of the meeting. We were not sure that the reason for this was clear: we asked a representative of the original inhabitants of this land if we might be welcomed to use the land for our meeting. The issue is one of respect for the history and people of the place. Despite our strong request that this voice be the *first* voice heard at the Monday morning plenary, hers was the second voice. Nevertheless, the welcome was given and was well received by meeting participants. We strongly encourage future LOCs to consider cultural history as they plan opening events.

8. Acknowledgements

- LOC acknowledges support from National Science Foundation, Tinker Foundation, Portland State University, and corporate sponsors.

Account Name: Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

Post As: 2012 SCAR and COMNAP Meetings

	Sun 07/22/12	Mon 07/23/12	Tue 07/24/12	Wed 07/25/12	Thu 07/26/12
Contracted Rooms	50	50	50	35	
8 weeks prior to cutoff	12	12	12	10	
7 weeks prior to cutoff	14	14	13	11	
6 weeks prior to cutoff	17	17	16	14	
5 weeks prior to cutoff	22	22	22	19	
4 weeks prior to cutoff					
3 weeks prior to cutoff	27	27	27	23	1
2 weeks prior to cutoff	37	35	34	28	1
1 week prior to cutoff	39	37	35	29	1
Cutoff (6/18/2012)					
1 week after cutoff	40	38	36	30	1
2 weeks after cutoff	40	38	36	30	1
3 weeks after cutoff	40	38	35	29	1
4 weeks after cutoff	37	33	32	27	1
Day of Arrival Reservations					
Arrivals					
No Show					
Same Day No Show/Cancellation %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Final Pickup	40	38	35	29	1
GRIP Rooms					
Comp Room Nights (not included in final p/u)					
Total p/u including comps	40	38	35	29	1
% Wash from Cutoff	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Walks					

Business Sponsorships

Company	Email	Product
Whyte-Mackay	scott.campbell@whyteandmackay.com , dawn.lambert@whyteandmackay.com	Whiskey
Canada Goose	nwicznak@canda-goose.com , Ngagnon@canada-goose.com	Polar apparel
Tinker Foundation Tasmanian Polar Network	rennie@tinker.org peterfewkes@wadams.com.au	NGO Transportation
Ken Borek Air	bcrocker@borekair.com harald.haege@pistenbully.com, chaes@pistenbullyusa.com	Air travel Polar machinery
Pisten Bully		
Lockheed Martin	Ester.L.Hill@lmco.com	Science Support
Vernier Software	rjohnson@vernier.com	science software
Hammar Lift AB icebreaker	ac@hammar.eu matt.hazel@icebreaker.com melanieb@google.com , GLENN BROOKS < glenn@praxisevents.com >	Heavy machinery merino apparel
Google		The World
Antarctic Sci Jnl	caroline.sutton@co-action.net	scholarly articles
Springer	margaret.deignan@springer.com	scholarly articles
Cambridge Journals	sedgington@cambridge.org	science journal
PGC	Paul Morin lpaul@umn.edu	Geospatial Data



Antarctic Perspectives - Connecting the Arts to Science

Portland
July 15-19,
2012

Antarctic scientists will inspire **YOUR** imagination with **THEIR** fascinating stories and arts! Come experience five "Science-Arts Rendezvous" in Portland

- **Rendezvous 1: Tales in science, Scientists share stories with their own arts skills** 7/16, Mission Theater
open 5:30 pm, event at 7 pm
- **Rendezvous 2: Films and videos, Exciting discoveries in Antarctic science,** 7/17 Mission Theater
open 5:30 pm, event at 7 pm.
- **Rendezvous 3: Historic music and adventure, Stories of survival!** 7/19, Bagdad Theater 5:30 pm, event 7 pm.
- **Rendezvous 4: Photo exhibition: "Our Antarctica: Images from the Great White South."** Photos from scientists, 7/15-7/19 Hilton Portland
- **Rendezvous 5: "Cool" art,** 7/15-7/19, Portland Internat'l Airport, Hilton Portland

Don't
miss out!

All events are **FREE** admission



@ Antarctic Perspectives

