

Our pod met right after the last steering committee in August and then took a break this week because of the Labor Day holiday. This feedback is from August.

A primary point of discussion was Joni Rutter's plan to increase communication with PIs through a meeting format that would include the contact PI and the institutional official.

- With the exception of one individual who was somewhat neutral, the group felt that this proposed meeting would not provide any resolution for the objective to increase communication (and trust) between the PIs and NCATS.
- Communication with hub institutional leadership is the primary responsibility of the hub PIs. Many believe that the need to provide sufficient background to allow an institutional official to actively participate in a discussion would be wholly distracting and would not allow the real conversation that hubs desire.
- Additional points were to question the wisdom of communicating only with the contact PI who is more likely to be older, male, and less diverse at least from appearance. This was not perceived positively.

Overall, the pod conclusion was that this would add yet another communication pathway and one more layer, and would not resolve the core issue that hub PIs want more opportunities to discuss as a group and with NCATS leadership.

On a more positive note, the hub PIs reiterated their priority to work collaboratively to become a true consortium rather than a funding jeopardy model that promotes competition.

- The fall meeting should be face-to-face whenever possible and consideration given to a one-day PI meeting (prior to an all-CTSA meeting) for the purpose of an unstructured (or less structured) forum. Many expressed views that a meeting that is highly structured for transmitting information without extensive time for discussion was a poor use of money and time.
- The majority of time in a PI-only meeting should be spent in small group or large group discussion to allow deeper connections among pods and hubs, to nominate an agenda that the steering committee would work on over the next year.

The bottom line is that the hubs want the opportunity to engage with each other to set an agenda for the consortium.