

Strategies for Working Remotely: Sustainable Hybrid Approaches

A Panel Discussion

Approved for public release



Guest Moderator:

Mike Heroux, SNL – ECP ST Director

Panel Series Lead and Moderator:

Elaine Raybourn, SNL – Site PI IDEAS-ECP

Moderator:

Ashley Barker, ORNL – ECP CAM

Panelists:

Katie Antypas, LBL - Division Deputy and Data Department Head

David Bernholdt, ORNL – Distinguished R&D Staff Member

Mark C. Miller, LLNL – ASQ Software Engineer

Hai Ah Nam, LANL – Computational Physicist, (CCS-2) Group

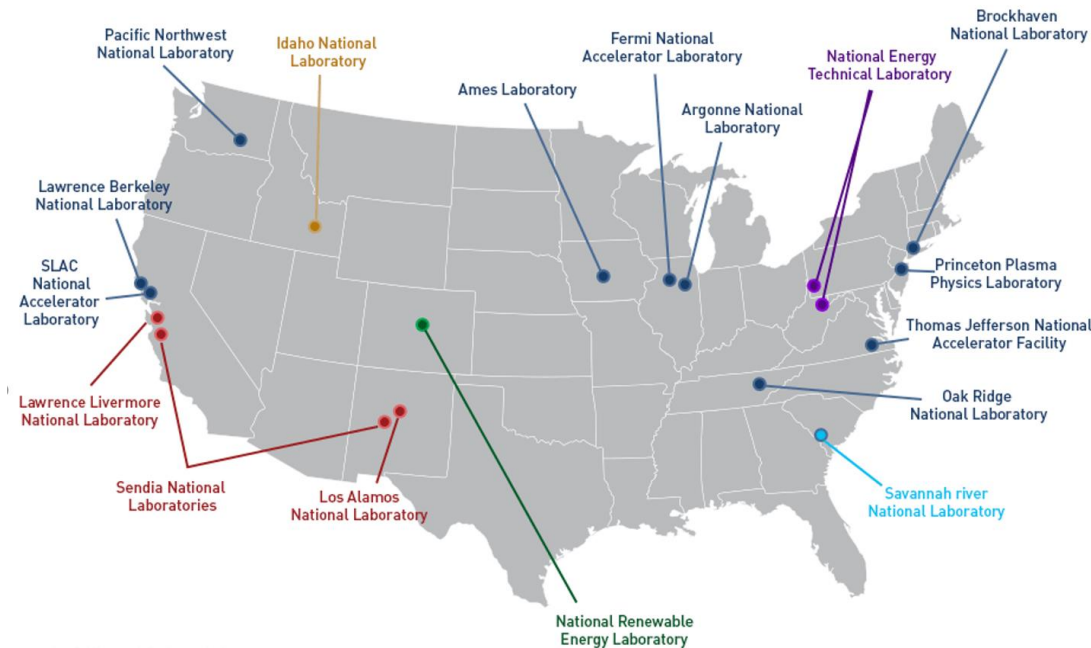
Valerie Taylor, ANL – Director, Mathematics and Computer Science Division



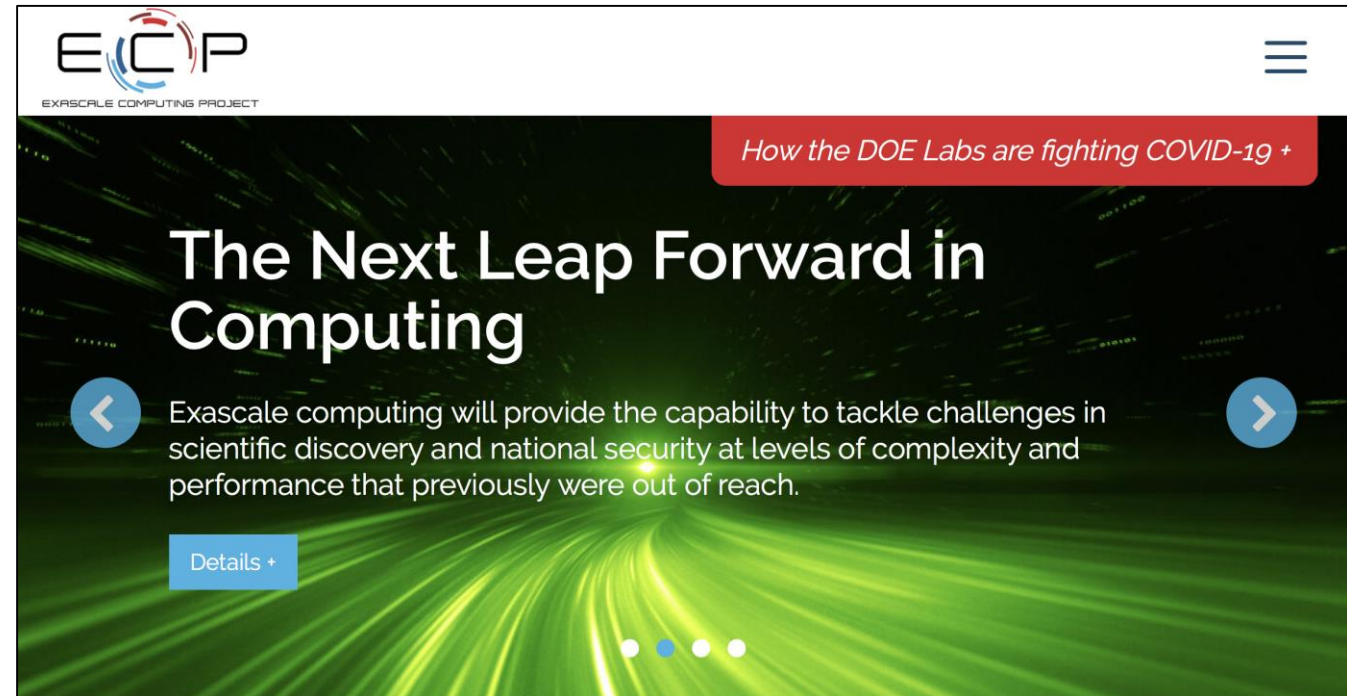
Who are we?

- Staff at U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) laboratories

DOE national laboratories: Leaders in science and innovation



- Involved in the DOE Exascale Computing Project (ECP)
 - <https://www.exascaleproject.org>
- Currently working remotely



Hybrid configurations add complexity, requiring that we unlearn some habits

Sustainable hybrid approach?

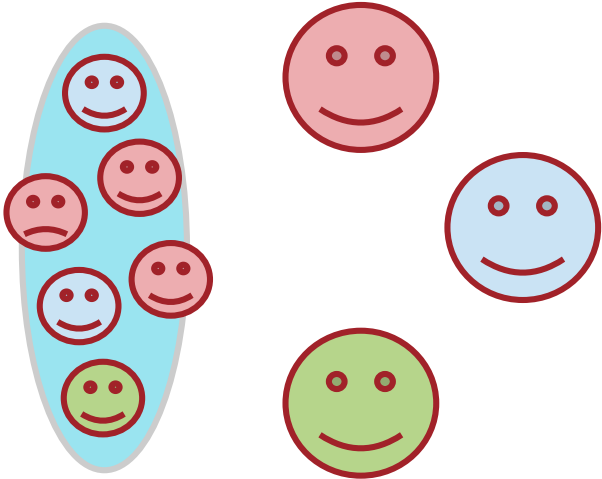
Fully Remote



Co-located Groups



Co-located + Dispersed



least conflict, most trust

most conflict, least trust

???

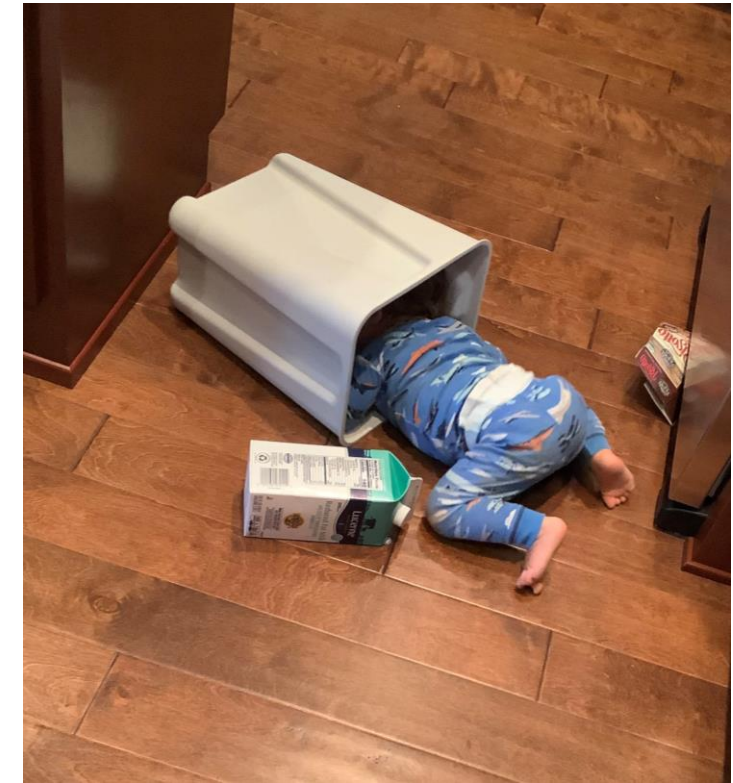
Adapted from Martin Fowler (2015) [Remote versus Co-located Work](#), Sekou Bermiss (2019) Leading and Motivating Dispersed Teams.

Panel Discussion Format

- Brief introductions from panelists addressing sustainable hybrid approaches
- Q&A:
 - Type your question in Zoom chat box, please indicate your first name and affiliation if possible
 - Moderator will ask if you'd like to unmute to ask your question, or if you prefer the moderator can ask on your behalf.
- We value your feedback
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NSL3WJG> fill out anytime after or during the panel
- Slides, video, and bios from today are available:
 - <https://www.exascaleproject.org/event/strategies-for-working-remotely-panel-series-hybrid/>

Katie opening comments

- I should probably be listening to the panel rather than be on the panel
- In general I'm a very positive and optimistic person, but sheltering in place with a 1 year old and 3 year old has tested my limits
- As a manager I'm now on zoom a lot and sit a lot (I don't like either)
- My survival techniques:
 - Walking meetings where possible
 - End the meeting when you out of topics
 - Join 'casual' settings once in a while NERSC has 'random connections', watercoolers, social hours for those off the cuff conversations
 - Give people a break and adjust deadlines as needed. Opportunity to focus on what is really important
- What I don't have answers to:
 - How to have more strategic, brainstorming and new directions meetings (feels very hard to do remote)
 - How and if it is possible to re-create those spontaneous and creative conversations that happen over lunch, coffee or just running into someone in the hall.



Rafi in the recycling during an early morning ECP call

David Bernholdt opening comments

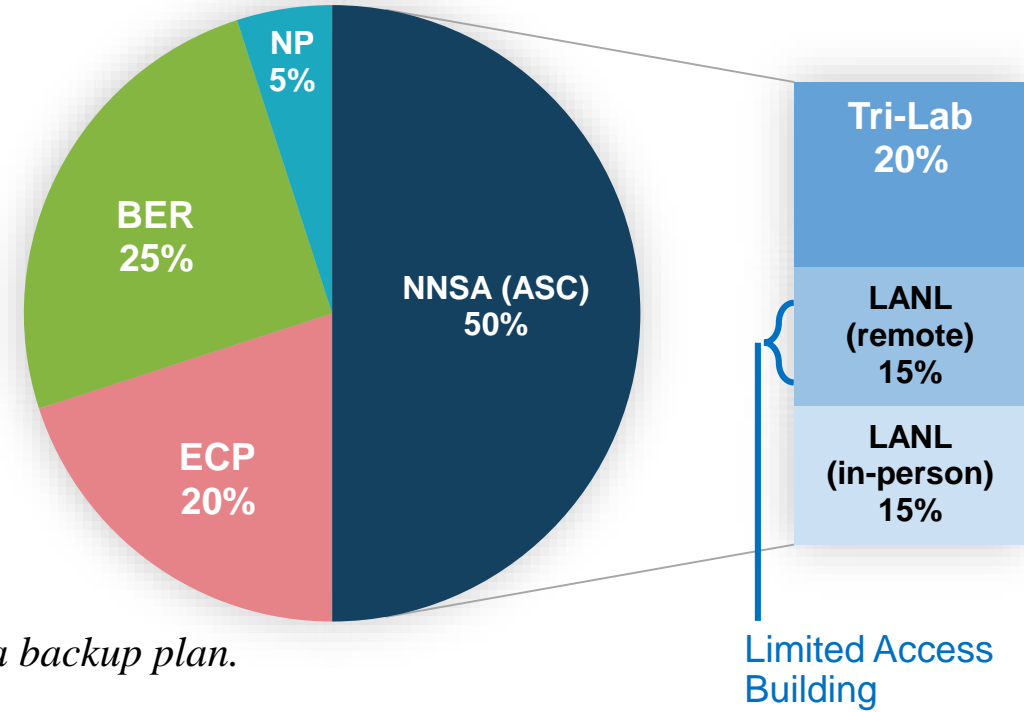
- We've been hybrid for a long time
 - Historically, nearly all the projects I've led or participated in for the last 20 years have involved multiple institutions, and usually more than one person at each
- Respecting people's schedules is important for making effective use of *everyone's* time, whether on site or remote
 - Schedule with realistic expectations of time required; stick to the allotted times
- The lesson from COVID is to level the playing field by making *everyone* remote
 - When you have sub-groups that are local, everyone who is remote is second class from a communication standpoint, but it spills over to other thought processes (consciously or unconsciously)
 - I "knew" this before COVID, but didn't practice it
- Have a good suite of communication tools available to the team
 - You do need to have a degree of buy-in from the team for the tools you choose
 - Use them appropriately. Set the expectation that others will use them too
 - Use them frequently enough to keep everyone informed and coordinated
- It may be harder to get to know your colleagues in a hybrid setting, but you should try
 - When in-person social interactions are possible, take advantage (e.g., team dinner at a conference)
- Management needs to let us have the tools (conference rooms, AV gear, cloud-hosted services, etc.)
 - Conference rooms don't support teleconferencing (well); key AV gear is an unallowable expense
 - Cloud services are not allowed or have high approval hurdles; procurement is painful, etc.

Mark C. Miller opening comments

- I live a moderate drive away from LLNL / On site one day a week (sometimes twice)
 - Commute is 3.5 hours each way (entirely via public transit) but get ~2 hours work done in transit both ways
- Wind up scheduling a lot of face-to-face meetings to take advantage of on-site time.
- Face time is still very important to team health so occasional all-hands very helpful
- Really get to know the available teleconferencing tools and be willing to train newbies
 - I often get more “face time” with users using teleconferencing from home than when on site
- Depending on organization’s posture, might avoid “advertising” you have a hybrid schedule
- Hybrid meetings need good audio and able moderators
 - Moderators need to pay attention to audio (and chat), occasionally poll audio attendees
 - In-person attendees need to be reminded to speak louder and not all at once
 - Many conference rooms need updated devices and technologies

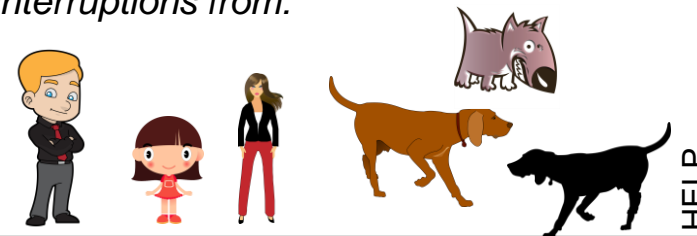
Hai Ah Nam opening comments

- For career preference, I have a diversified portfolio optimized for
 - interesting projects – ability to interact with a diverse and broad community – leverages my past work relationships – funding challenges...
 - now optimized for hybrid work settings!
Not optimized for sanity sometimes!



- Remote work is effective for me 85% of the time because it was already the norm. *Know how to use all technology well and have a backup plan.*
- I still need face-to-face for spontaneous synergies and to REALLY get my point across sometimes... both travel and time on site are important for collaborations.
- Time on site should include 'wasted time' to catch up and connect as human beings.
- Long-term hybrid settings only work if remote is the norm and in-person is extra (for managers).
- You don't have to use a camera, but put up a picture.

Disclaimer: remote work will become a lot more effective without the constant interruptions from:



Valerie Taylor opening comments

- First year at Argonne, worked remotely
 - In person, about twice a month and for major meetings
 - When at the lab, scheduled many face-to-face meetings and tried to have time to walk the halls
- Currently, go into the office about once every two weeks
 - Few people on site
- Working remotely is the current norm
 - Use slack for ad-hoc communication and “walking the halls”
- Have a weekly 30-minute coffee chat for the division
 - No agenda
 - Social gatherings are also important
- Some groups have meetings at a park, with social distancing
- I find that video is important when possible; pick up nonverbal cues
 - Large meetings, try to use polls when possible

Precious Commodity



Panel Discussion

We want to hear from you!

Please type your question in the Zoom chat window, and if possible type your first name and affiliation.

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Put your settings on gallery view to see all panelists



We value your feedback!

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• **Working Remotely: The Exascale Computing Project (ECP) Panel Series**

- E. Raybourn et al., 7/30/2020, blog post

• **Working Remotely: The Spack Team**

- T. Gamblin, E. Raybourn, 5/16/2020, blog post

• **Remote Working in an Agile World**

- R. Bartlett, 4/12/2020, intro to podcast by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT

• **Resources for Maximizing Remote Working**

- E. Raybourn, 3/18/2020, curated content on:
 - *Remote versus co-located work*
 - *The remote work playbook*
 - *How to lead in the age of newly remote teams*
 - *COVID-19 and the shift to remote work*

• **Clean Your Work Surfaces: One Way to Help Flatten the Curve**

- M.C. Miller, 3/19/2020



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 **Cleaning Your Work Surfaces: One Way to Help Flatten the Curve**
BLOG POST

Number of Cases
Time
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM CAPACITY FULL