

ACT Call November 21, 2013

On Call: Jerome, David, Shamako, Jackie, Alfredo, Monica, Rose, Walda

Facilitator: Shamako; Notetaker: Jackie

1. Check-ins
2. Special Meeting Agenda

How to make sure the NPC special meeting is productive? What do we expect to come out of this meeting?

There was never a space for discussion of the understandings of polycentric USSF on ACT; no space for deliberation with NPC members since Atlanta meeting where we opted to move in this direction.

Three questions:

- 1) Reopen site selection process/application process?
- 2) Flipping dates of National PMA/USSF3 to let USSF3 follow PMA 2015/2016
- 3) Structure/forms of Polycentric forum—including implications for mobilizing/organizing process

Discussion: Noted that ACT needs to build NPC as decision making body, and this convo can help do this. Concern that this could be a momentum killer. Philly has stepped up, so the process seems sloppy and not responsible to the Philly groups stepping up.

But also recognition that there were some concerns/hesitations in ACT about the site decision, and this process may open space to consider some alternative ways forward.

ACT Should be coming up with another recommendation to the NPC based on the alternative proposals and discussions.

EVELYN: PWG is working on developing **glossary** of USSF definitions so that everyone knows exactly what we are talking about when we use certain terms.

Monica: Noted concern that we be attentive to process. How to balance input and stay true to process? Has ACT fully integrated the input from NPC members in Atlanta in thinking about polycentric forum.

Walda: The PMA process is the road to USSF3. The PMAs will inform USSF. So we are talking about a radically different USSF. We need to restate this. We've also said (Site/ACT) as we build the PMA process, the sites should emerge. So we need a political convo about what are the strategic fronts, who has been engaged in the process, etc.

If we want to move beyond the USSF as a 'fair of workshops' we need a more conscious convo about this. This changes the question from site-hub and centrality to more of how the PMA process will inform thinking about polycentrism.

Shamako: Raises point about language/accessibility

Alfredo- questions about site selection that we cannot answer right now. Because we have a PMA process in place that is emerging. This is helping us gage where different struggles are, where our capacities and commitments are.

How do we bring in to the fullest extent possible the struggles that are emerging/in motion. We have to be patient and allow the PMAs to help us answer these questions.

We **need to build trust** in the movement. This is hard to convey to people.

Jackie: site selection was shaped by expectations from past; tension between working to transform within the existing system. So we're facing a familiar tension here. We have opportunity to open space to **decenter the USSF leadership**. We need more folks leading and PMA process can help us build and identify this leadership and invites more participation than a more centered process.

Shamako: Anchoring the process in a space is organizationally useful. **Patience** is good. **Courage** to make decisions that can help move process.

David: On NPC Call we need someone who has been in USSF since beginning to frame discussion for NPC members who have come and gone.

Monica: Budget question is important. How do we manage this in the polycentric framework? Resource Dev. Working group is working on this.

Jerome: Reminder in Atlanta there was NPC decision to hold USSF in 2015. Proposal to reopen site selection shaped in part about concerns with Philly as central site. Re-opening site selection takes time; makes a 2015 forum impossible. We can raise the question of national PMA-USSF timing 2015/16 and stay within NPC mandate.

Rose: Need someone to review NPC notes and identify these decisions that affect the current debates. This will reinforce the proposal we use to frame the discussion with NPC 11/26.

***Decision Making Process**

Tradition has been to seek consensus as preferred option; but have used majority vote in past.

This special NPC meeting is for dialogue. If it is possible to reach a formal decision we will do that. But if not, we will postpone formal decision to the December NPC meeting. We need to create space for dialogue and engagement in the process, but a desire not to rush the decision in ways that can cause some to feel left out of the deliberation.

But note that we will not dedicate a lot of time in December NPC call to deliberation on this decision.

***New Member Applications**

Will happen at the regular NPC meeting.

***Working group updates**

-Gender Justice: Excitement/energy. Ready to engage.

-Road: meeting/ working on polycentric question; has promo film ready, working to improve it.

-PMA: SOA PMA coming up; AfGJ PMA follow-up—they have applied to join USSF NPC; M2A will anchor and support several PMAs. Notes the date of 2015 has been important to stimulate activism/impetus in PMAs.

-Comms-tech: Newsletter coming out. Comms-Tech will have convo. About what polycentric forum might mean. **REQUEST for DEFINITION of polycentrism from Comms-Tech. that incorporates discussions since Atlanta (i.e., when we adopted the initial comms-tech proposal).** NOTE: The discussion of polycentrism is political and goes beyond this working group. But Comms-tech is being called on to provide concrete support and info. about what is possible technologically so this can inform the larger visioning and political decision making that we're engaged in. Rose: Good reminder about the politics of technology. Need to make sure politics are leading technology discussion. Knowing what is technologically possible will help inform the political planning work. I.e., how many hubs can connect at once?

-Arts/Culture: Moving forward.

-Outreach: Expecting new proposal from Jackson MS on hosting possibilities. 3 new NPC applications; discussions with Indigenous Environmental Movement about re-engaging and bringing climate justice in more centrally.

-Resource Dev.: Working on 2015 budget so need info on polycentrism. Following up with M. Casey. Needing clarity on PMAs and USSF polycentric work to expand outreach; following up with affinity groups. End of year email blasts—one per week.