



# POD Network News

Spring 2018 Issue

## Engaging with the Future of the POD Network in Higher Education

POD Network News, President's Column  
April 30, 2018

Greetings! As happens every spring, you have a new POD Network President; as one member of our triple president structure, I am delighted to be working in close collaboration with Past President, Mary Wright, and President-elect, Angela Linse. If you would like to know more about me, here is a link to my [bio](#). The short version, which may sound familiar in part or in whole to many POD Network members, is that I'm first-generation college graduate and a scientist by training who was always intrigued by the teaching and learning process; making this the focus of my career has been deeply rewarding, as I hope it is for you. It is an honor to serve this organization, which provides a vital community, filled with professional support, collegiality, and growth. As to our future, I highlight below several updates and ways to engage.

### Strategic Planning

As you will see in the [Strategic Planning Update](#) in this newsletter, a dedicated ad-hoc committee, with your input, is making excellent progress on developing a new plan to guide the POD Network over the next five years. This process includes evaluation of our progress on the last strategic plan, analysis of POD Network and external data, and input from the Core Committee, members at large, and Committees and Special Interest Groups (SIGs). As always, I am struck by my POD Network colleagues' discernment and interest in asking and reflecting on tough questions: How can we address trends and needs that acknowledge our organization's state (inward), respond to and engage with the larger higher education context (outward), and set clear, attainable, yet flexible goals (forward)? How can we iterate between building organizational capacity and making progress on "stretch" goals requiring new capacities? This is exciting work, and I encourage you to get involved.

**How to engage:** Over the summer, the Strategic Planning group will host several virtual discussions open to all members, to be announced via POD Member Email. I encourage you to join a [committee](#) or a [SIG](#) and contribute your expertise to help shape both the strategic plan and how it will be carried out and evaluated. In the POD Network, executing our strategic plan is shared by committees, SIGs, and the organizational leadership ([Core Committee](#) and [Executive Committee](#)). Emails are listed for all committees and SIGs – reach out to explore how you can get involved.

## **Partnering to Advance Educational Development**

Mary Wright wrote in the [Winter 2018 POD Network News](#) edition about the evolution of the POD Network's thinking and action in terms of advocacy for the field of educational development. In addition, we recognize that in order to help shape the conversation about and future of educational development, the POD Network needs to bring our members' unique, collective expertise forward, and that partnerships with other organizations can help us accomplish more together.

Recently, the POD Network has launched a partnership with the American Council on Education (ACE) to adapt and revise the *Faculty Development Center Matrix*, an evidence-based template intended to help new and experienced center staff reflect upon center development and institutional commitment across several domains. This effort, led by POD Network former President, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, and ACE Director of Academic Innovation, Steven Taylor, will build on the [beta version](#) of the matrix released in fall 2017 to create an updated and open-source tool.

The POD Network now has a robust infrastructure to support the exploration and creation of new partnerships, thanks to the work of the [External Partnerships and Outreach Committee](#), led by Carol Hurney. With a clear process and guidelines, the POD Network is actively discussing new partnerships with other organizations, adding to our long-standing collaborations with the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) via the annual [Organizational Development Institute](#), the National Education Association (NEA) [Higher Education Advocate](#) publication via the "Thriving in Academe" series, and others.

**How to engage:** Are you involved with another higher education organization whose goals or initiatives align with the POD Network? Have you noticed opportunities where engaging the expertise and knowledge of POD Network members would make a difference? Please [let me know](#). If this type of work appeals to you, ask me about opportunities to join the External Partnerships and Outreach Committee as well.

## **Making POD Network Leadership Accessible**

I could not be more excited about the theme for this fall's POD Network Conference, "Leading in Times of Change" and hope you will check out the [Conference Update](#) in this edition of the newsletter. In order to ensure that leading the POD Network in these times of change is as widely accessible to members from diverse institutions, positions, and backgrounds as possible, the Core Committee voted this spring to adopt an increase in available travel support for those serving in an elected position to this group, the POD Network's governing board, which meets twice per year (once just prior to the fall conference; once in spring at another location). Pathways to the Core Committee often involve service through the POD Network's Committees and SIGs, which typically meet virtually throughout the year and at the annual conference, offering many ways to become engaged and help lead the POD Network. Over the past several years, we have also begun to convene Committee and SIG Chairs twice per year (both online and in person at the conference), provide a set of shared resources, and run an orientation

program for new chairs. Supporting POD Network leadership development is a priority and I welcome your additional ideas.

**How to engage:** If you are interested in helping to lead the POD Network and want to find out more about getting involved, I invite you to [contact me](#) or reach out to any of the current a [committee](#) or [SIG](#) chairs to explore the possibilities.

Finally, please join me in thanking those who have recently concluded their terms on the Core and Executive Committees for their generous and thoughtful service: Kevin Barry, Victoria Bhavsar, Allison Boye, Jake Glover, Carol Hurney, and Roben Torosyan. This organization thrives because of the expertise, creativity, and commitment of all of our members. I look forward to working with you.

Best wishes,  
Cassandra

Cassandra Volpe Horii is the founding director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Outreach at the California Institute of Technology. She served as POD Network Conference Co-chair (2012), as National Outreach/STEM Co-chair (2014-16), and on the Core Committee (2013-16).