As was communicated at the 28th International Meshing Roundtable, after 28 years Sandia National Laboratories has decided to step back from organizing and operating the IMR. Sandia’s contribution to the meshing community through sponsoring this Roundtable is incalculable and we are all grateful for what they have created and provided to the meshing world. However, we now need to work together to find the best road forward for the IMR to continue to support and grow the meshing community.

At the end of this email you will find a link to a survey where you can provide feedback and guidance on what is described below.

**IMR Exploratory Committee**

At the 28th IMR, an Exploratory Committee was created consisting of Suzanne Shontz, John Chawner, John Verdicchio, Trevor Robinson and Scott Canann. I, Scott Canann, was selected to chair the Exploratory Committee. In addition, Kathy Loeppky has been a vital part of the IMR for years now and has been a key resource to the Exploratory Committee, providing us with historical context for past Roundtables, budget figures from past conferences among many other helpful insights. Of course, we will continue to be in touch with representative(s) at Sandia as we move forward for whatever is needed – things like access to financial reserves, questions about legal issues, previous contracts signed for publications, etc.

This Exploratory Committee is not to be confused with the Organizing Committee which runs the conference each year. We have an Organizing Committee in place already and like all previous years, they will elect a conference chair from their members once the IMR’s future direction is set. The Exploratory Committee will transition into a governing body to fill the role that Sandia traditionally had of providing oversight, setting up rules, controlling high level finances/budget decisions, etc.

The purpose of the Exploratory Committee these past few months has been to determine what feasible options exists for the IMR to continue and to thrive. An emphasis has been placed on finding ways to allow the IMR to keep its identity, while also looking for ways to grow. What we mean by “keeping our identity” is continuing to meet yearly with peer-reviewed papers, research abstracts, posters, invited speakers, etc. In addition, we want to continue our history of awarding best paper, best student paper, best technical poster, meshing maestro, IMR fellow, etc. Some options include being fully integrated into other large existing conferences, but our hope is to continue much as we have been, but inside an organization that can allow us to grow and thrive for many more years to come.

The Exploratory Committee has met frequently and has constantly been in touch. A large amount of legwork has been done chasing down legal issues, as well as future potential homes for the IMR. It is now time to communicate what we have found and get your feedback before any final decisions are made.

**Options Ruled Out:**

- **Find a replacement for Sandia (Government Lab, Company or University)**
  - This would be an awesome choice, especially if we could basically continue as we have been, but with a new sponsor.
  - We approached a few potential candidates (and perhaps more effort could have been put into this option), but ultimately no such sponsor was found, so we moved on from this option

- **Rotating Owners**
  - The premise here is for each Roundtable, a different organization (company, government lab, university, etc) agrees to be the “owner” for each roundtable in a rotating fashion. This idea is based on how the Tetrahedron workshop is run.
After much discussion, the option was ruled out, since it requires planning years ahead and it doesn’t allow for a fully consistent IMR from year to year, since it would likely be run differently from year to year, based on how each organizer decides to run it.

The main reason though is that although this model works well for conferences that are every other year or every three years, it would be quite challenging to do every year.

- **Become Completely Independent**
  - We had an attorney look into this option.
  - Unfortunately, this would lead to some serious legal challenges to deal with. Things like:
    - Challenges in rotating Board members on and off – have to legally “sell/transfer” shares of the company (regardless of if it is a non-profit or for-profit company)
    - Requires significant book-keeping for tax filing.
    - Doesn’t provide a financial backstop for years where we might come up a little short
    - Legal/financial liability of the members of the Board
  - Given all of that and other details, we decided not to go this route.

- **Other organizations** -- A number of other organizations have been investigated and for now have been ruled out because:
  - Meshing software development is not in their sweet spot (and thus they would not have the potential of growing the conference).
  - They would not allow for us to “keep our identity” and would require that we get completely assimilated into their existing conferences.
  - They were potentially too expensive.

### Candidate Organizations for the IMR

Listed here are the 3 best options that the Exploratory Committee has found. Note that all 3 organizations have been helpful and enthusiastic about the possibility of having us join them. All of the identified organizations allow us to maintain our identity:

- All three provide a financial backstop for the rare occasion when we don’t meet our financial numbers (has only happened once in IMR history but is very important).
- All help with the conference logistics and planning in one way or another. This is another invaluable thing that Sandia has provided all these years.
- None of these 3 options forces us to fully merge with a larger conference, but they all provide the possibility (or requirement) of co-locating with other conferences in their organizations, so as to keep costs down, add clout in negotiating and also allow for cross-pollination with other related groups.
- All three are supportive of continuing to have peer reviewed papers, poster sessions, research abstracts, collection of best papers in separate peer-reviewed publication (we have been using CAD and can continue to do so – although we may have other options with each organization).
- All three already have a meshing community that we could tap into to potentially grow our conference.
- All three allow for free online access to conference papers.
- All three have shown themselves to be enthusiastic about having the IMR join them.

The best options that we have found are in the following table (in no particular order).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Organization</th>
<th>Likely name of conference</th>
<th>Freedom to choose location</th>
<th>Option to co-locate</th>
<th>Continue with reviewed paper process</th>
<th>Continue with IMR Fellow Award</th>
<th>Ability to carry forward surplus finances</th>
<th>Both Europe and U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Co-locate Requirement</th>
<th>Would Require Coordination</th>
<th>Paper Acceptance</th>
<th>Planners</th>
<th>Planners</th>
<th>Planners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIAM</td>
<td>SIAM</td>
<td>No, Required to co-locate with another SIAM conference (separate events, same location)</td>
<td>Yes, (required)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>Yes, (and Asia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USACM</td>
<td>International Meshing Roundtable</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, Would require coordination if done before/after USNCCM)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>Yes, Would have to work through sister organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACM Siggraph</td>
<td>International Meshing Roundtable or ACM Siggraph International Meshing Roundtable</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Required to accept &lt; 50% of submitted papers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, (and Asia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SURVEY**

The Exploratory Committee invites your feedback and advice. The link below is to an anonymous, brief, online survey about the future of the IMR. We would appreciate that surveys be completed by Tuesday, **February 18**.

**Future of IMR Survey**

If you have questions or feedback you wish to give directly to me, feel free to contact me at my email address listed below.

Warmly,

Scott Canann
scott.canann@siemens.com