Response to NDS Shared Vision of Success and Consortium Charter

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A review of the NDS Consortium Charter and NDS Shared Vision of Success finds that both documents are well written and comprehensive in defining the scope of the National Data Service. The consortium charter follows a traditional model and the template for participation appears to be comprehensive and designed to encourage constructive participation. Many practicalities will be worked out in the implementation, however, as written, the documents represent an excellent starting point with re-assessment possible at the transition from interim to permanent management.

The scope of the NDS focuses primarily on data services after post-collection/observation/generation/processing/analysis of the data, and takes an approach of data services in federation. These are shrewd choices and can be viewed as promoting services for digital research data that have been available, highly used and valued in the publication space for many years.   Structuring the service offerings in a familiar way may be one way to start to build a community.

The NDS is founded on the principle that collaborative science across multiple disciplines and federating large digital data sets is "the way of the future". There are skeptics in the community who will cast doubt on this approach, so the development of pilot projects **that produce real scientific results early on** using this approach is critical to acceptance.

Genetics has a community norm called the "Fort Lauderdale Agreement" (http://www.genome.gov/10506537) that says PIs owning expensive genetics sequences need to release their data promptly. In exchange for early release of the data, the community promises to not scoop the PI on the PI's announced research topics. This could be an area where the higher levels of NDS might engage and make some progress.

The goal of being a community driven effort is readily apparent in the structure of the charter.   Less clear are the decision-making processes. How will the pilot projects be structured into a portfolio?   Are there mechanisms for incentives for uptake of the services and for reuse?   How will domain specific policy considerations be accommodated?   How does the NDS interact with existing domain specific services, atlases and/or databases? Is the focus on the physical science domains?   Are there mechanisms to encourage public-private partnerships?