

Update on the Jefferson Lab Users Organization



Will Brooks
Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María
JLUO BoD Chair 2019-2020
JLUO Business Meeting, 22 June 2020



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA
FEDERICO SANTA MARÍA



University of
New Hampshire

JLUO Purposes

- **Encourage, promote** and **assist** user scientists and engineers
- Create **effective communication channels**
- Effective methods for giving **feedback** to the Lab Management
- Promote **advancement** of **basic scientific knowledge**
- **Impact on society**

Outline of this talk

- **Non-governmental email** list subscription
- Announcement of **new** JLUO BoD **members**
- New **US visa** developments affecting users
- Responses to recent **societal events**
- Revision of JLUO **bylaws**
- DNP executive committee **nominations**
- JSA **Initiatives Fund** Competition
- New **Journal Club** announcement

Non-governmental email list subscription

We stay in touch with you via email

We have **two** email lists

- cuga@jlab.org 1211 subscribers
- JLABUSERSORGANIZATION@sura.org 120 subscribers

We can **serve** you **much better** if you subscribe to **both**

For directions on how to subscribe, go to https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/Main_Page and follow the directions at the bottom of the page.

(Google search on “**JLUO wiki**” finds that page)

JLUO Board of Directors 2019-2020



Will

Chair



Kent

Chair-Elect



Ed

Vice-Chair



Julie

Past Chair



Lorelei

Secretary-Treasurer



Wouter

Outreach



Brad

Quality of Life



Yordanka

User/
Lab



Carlos

Foreign
Visitors



Susan

Software &
Computing



Emilie

Experiment-
Theory Liason



Amy

Graduate
Students



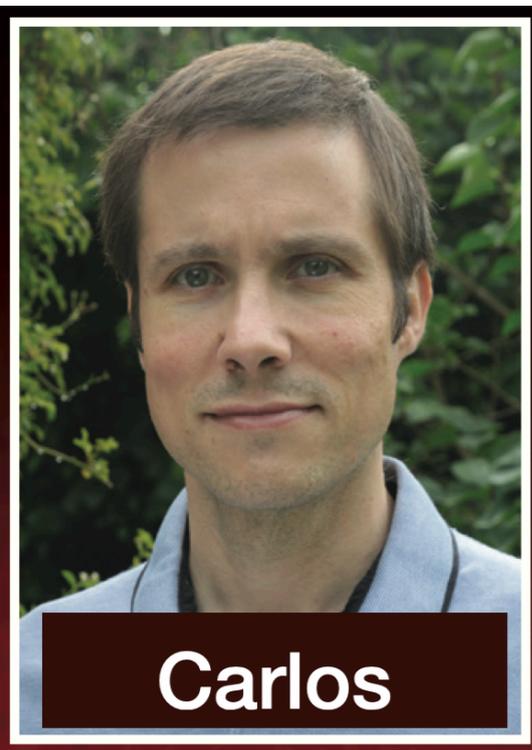
Eric

Postdocs

Contact the appropriate person to share your concerns and relevant information, or contact the chairline/Lorelei
[https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/JLUO BoD Contact Information](https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/JLUO_BoD_Contact_Information)

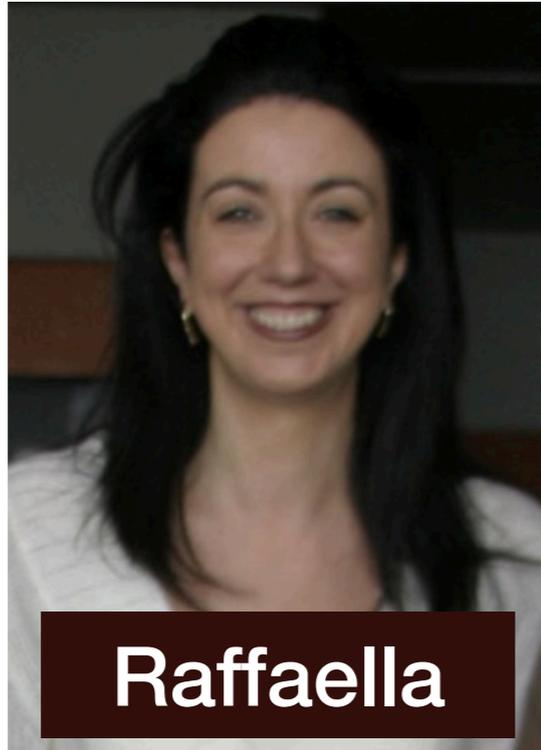
Election Results

New Members of JBoD for 2020-2021!



Carlos

Vice-Chair



Raffaella

**Member-
at-Large**



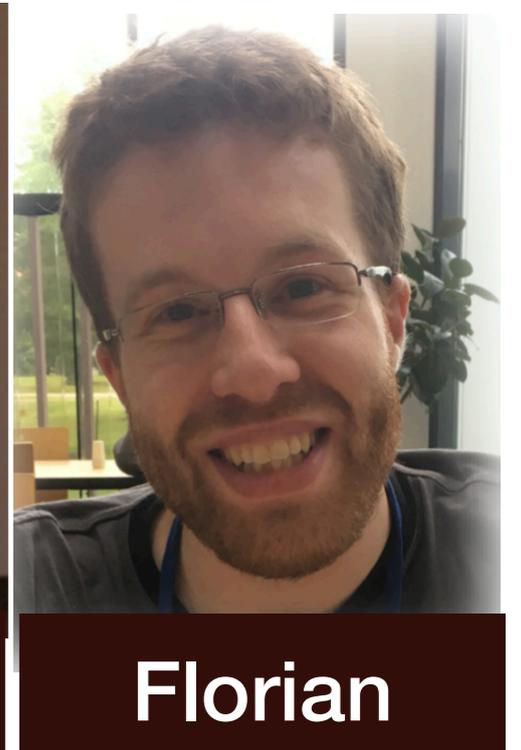
Daria

**Member-
at-Large**



Justin

**Member-
at-Large**



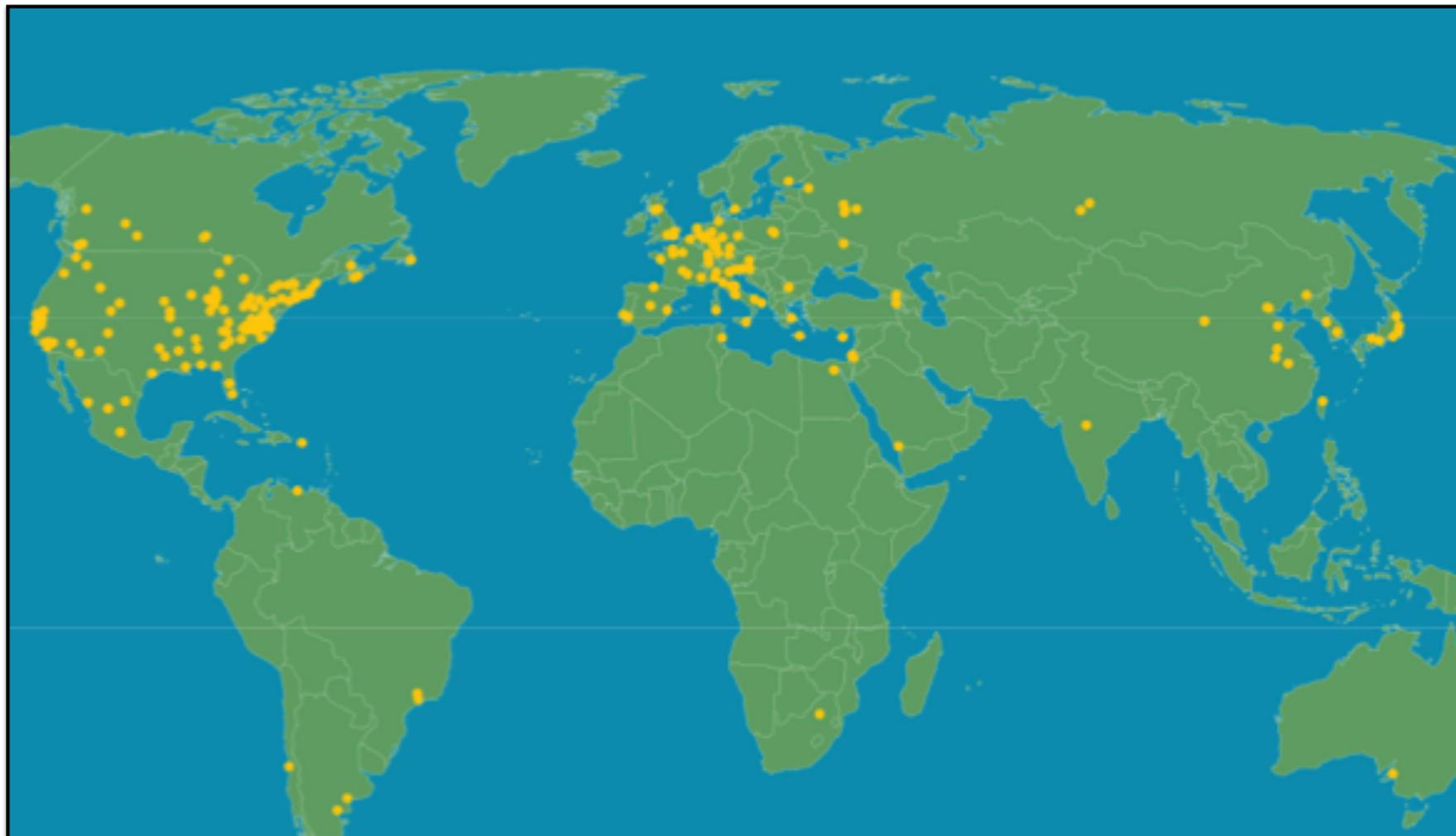
Florian

**Postdoctoral
Representative**

Congratulations to the new members!
A big thank-you to the members rotating off!
(Julie, Eric, Brad, Jordanka, Carlos)

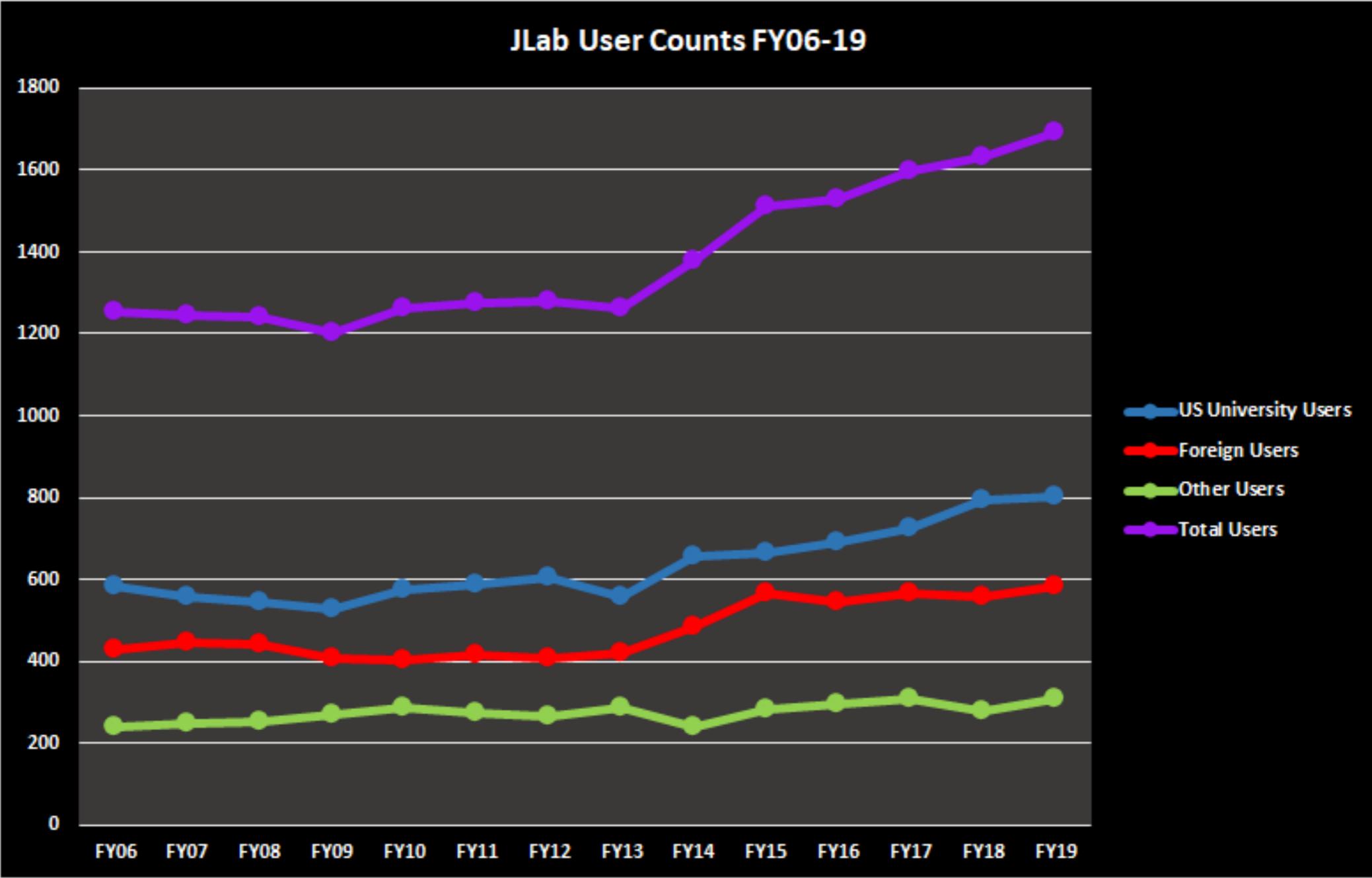
The Jefferson Lab User Community

- 1691 active[†] users
- 476 Physics Letters + Physical Review Letters; 1,618 in other refereed journals (FY2019)
- 658 PhDs granted; 195 more in-progress
- More than 182,000 citations for work done at JLab



[†] active \equiv 1+ badge swipes per year, authored a proposal, or maintained an active JLab computer account

The User Community is Growing



30% growth over the last 6 years!

The 2020 Annual Users Meeting

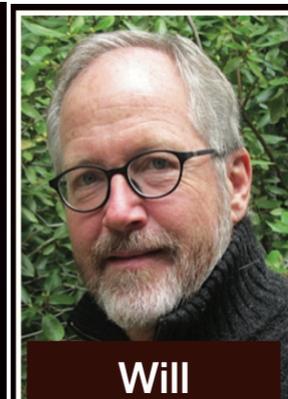
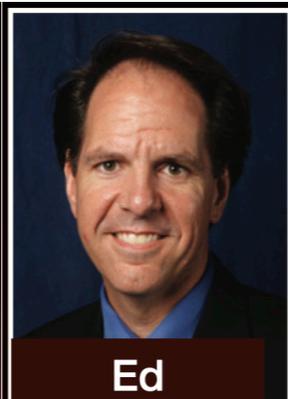
June 22-24, 2020

- Theme: **Celebration of JLab at 12 GeV**
- Important feature: **virtual poster session!!** please attend, it will be great! **2:30-4:30 TUESDAY**
- **EIC software tutorial** during lunch break (12:30) on Wednesday
- **EIC simulation Q&A session** at 3:20 on Wednesday

Please join this *Slack channel* for communication during this meeting:
https://join.slack.com/t/jlab12gev/shared_invite/zt-f3pn67km-6Ne5OxfTaJTEbims019ISg

Organizing Committee

Important Contributors



Some areas of **recent attention**

- Difficulties with **access** to the lab for non-US citizens
- Ban on access for **Russian** citizens affiliated with Russian institutions
- **Multiple** types of **problems with US visas** affecting our community
- The evolving **anti-racism movement** and our own community

Visa issues

material collected by Kent Paschke and Ed Brash

US Visa Issues

There are several important issues related to **visas** for **foreign graduate students, postdocs, and other junior scientists**

The JLUO Board of Directors seeks to

- **raise awareness** on these issues;
- develop better awareness and **tracking** of these issues;
- **gather information** on any immediate effects of visa problems that have been experienced by our user community;
- **share** this information with Jefferson Lab leadership as part of a continuing dialog on this topic;
- encourage **advocacy** on these issues by members of our user community, including amplifying **APS efforts**, engaging home universities and institutions, and working with other N.P. community organizations

Delays on visa documentation processing

Processing time for Petition for a Nonimmigrant work (I-129) at Vermont Service Center (Example from mid-May)

Estimated time range	Form type
4 Weeks to 4 Months	Blanket L
4.5 Months to 6.5 Months	E3 - Certain specialty occupation professionals from Australia
9.5 Months to 12 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Visa to be issued abroad
9.5 Months to 12 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Change of status in the U.S.
6.5 Months to 8.5 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Extension of stay in the U.S.

Now much improved (from June 20)

Estimated time range	Form type
5 Weeks to 4 Months	Blanket L
5 Months to 7 Months	E3 - Certain specialty occupation professionals from Australia
2 Months to 4 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Visa to be issued abroad
2 Months to 4 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Change of status in the U.S.
6.5 Months to 8.5 Months	H-1B - Specialty occupation - Extension of stay in the U.S.

You can check this here: <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>

June 2, 2020 Email to the CUGA Mailing List

Dear colleagues,

We are trying to **assess** the impact of the increasing restrictions of US immigration policies on our user community, especially on our young foreign users aiming for postdoctoral or tenure-track positions in the US.

As you may be aware, **current visa processing times** are up to 10-12 months.

If you are facing problems due to recent changes in visa or immigration policies, or you know someone who is, we would like to hear about it.

Please send the information to munoz@ipno.in2p3.fr

Feel free to forward this request to anyone who might be interested.

If you want to know more about the current situation, please let me know.

Carlos Muñoz,
for Jefferson Lab Users Organization Board

JLUO BoD Survey on JLab-related Visa Problems

- 12 responses within 48 hours
- Point of contact: Carlos Muñoz

Position**Problem**

PhD student	Affected by restrictions on China	
PhD student	Affected by restrictions on China	
PhD student	Indian student cannot come to Jlab anymore	He had B2 visa before
PhD student	Cannot get a visa	Iranian citizen
Postdoc	Cannot renew visa	Lawyer involved
Postdoc	Cannot renew visa	Several months waiting
Postdoc	Probably affected soon when visa renew is due	
Postdocs (2)	Cannot get a visa	One from Italy, one from China
Postdoc/tenure-tracks	Reports several colleagues affected	
Tenure-track	Cannot get a visa	Heavy delays
PI	Worries about potential delays to send students to Jlab	Origin: Europe
PI	Worries about potential delays to send students to Jlab	Origin: Japan

Post-graduate non-immigrant visa programs under threat

OPT visa program may be cancelled or frozen

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/05/29/trump-administration-reportedly-considers-restrictions-foreign-student-work-program>

H1B visa program is threatened with 2-6 month suspension

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/19/us/foreign-worker-visas-trump-coronavirus.html>

<https://www.npr.org/2020/06/20/881245867/trump-expected-to-suspend-h-1b-other-visas-until-end-of-year>

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/06/20/report-trump-administration-expect-to-suspend-h-1b-visas-for-the-rest-of-the-year/>

Those executive actions have been formally or informally explored, but not yet implemented. H1B visa action *may happen today.*

Support for the Optional Practical Training (OPT) Visa Program

The APS Office of Government Affairs has sent a urgent appeal for advocacy in support of the OPT visa program. From that email:

As you might know, OPT is a vital program that allows students to partake in temporary employment to receive practical work training to complement their education and is crucial to maintaining our nation's ability to attract and retain the best and the brightest students from around the world. If the rumored curtailment of OPT programs comes to fruition, we will lose a key segment of the US research enterprise and our nation's pursuits of discovery and innovation will suffer.

Presidential proclamation on Chinese grad student visas

New restrictions on F and J visas for Chinese trainees. On May 29, the White House released a presidential proclamation **revoking** F and J visas for some Chinese national graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. The restrictions are conditioned on current or past connection to an “...entity in the PRC that implements or supports the PRC’s ‘military-civil fusion strategy’...”.

Some have suggested this **may** affect only about **3000-5000** Chinese graduate students in STEM fields in the US.

An expanded **interpretation** of the language of the proclamation would have a much **broader impact**, and could affect **nearly all** Chinese graduate students and postdocs in the US.

The JLUO Board is concerned about the implementation of this policy, because of the non-specificity of the parameters which have been publicly released.

Chinese graduate student visas

The wording in the proclamation of who is impacted is vague. In a State Dept press conference on June 16, the **Australian Strategic Policy Institute** was described as useful guidance.

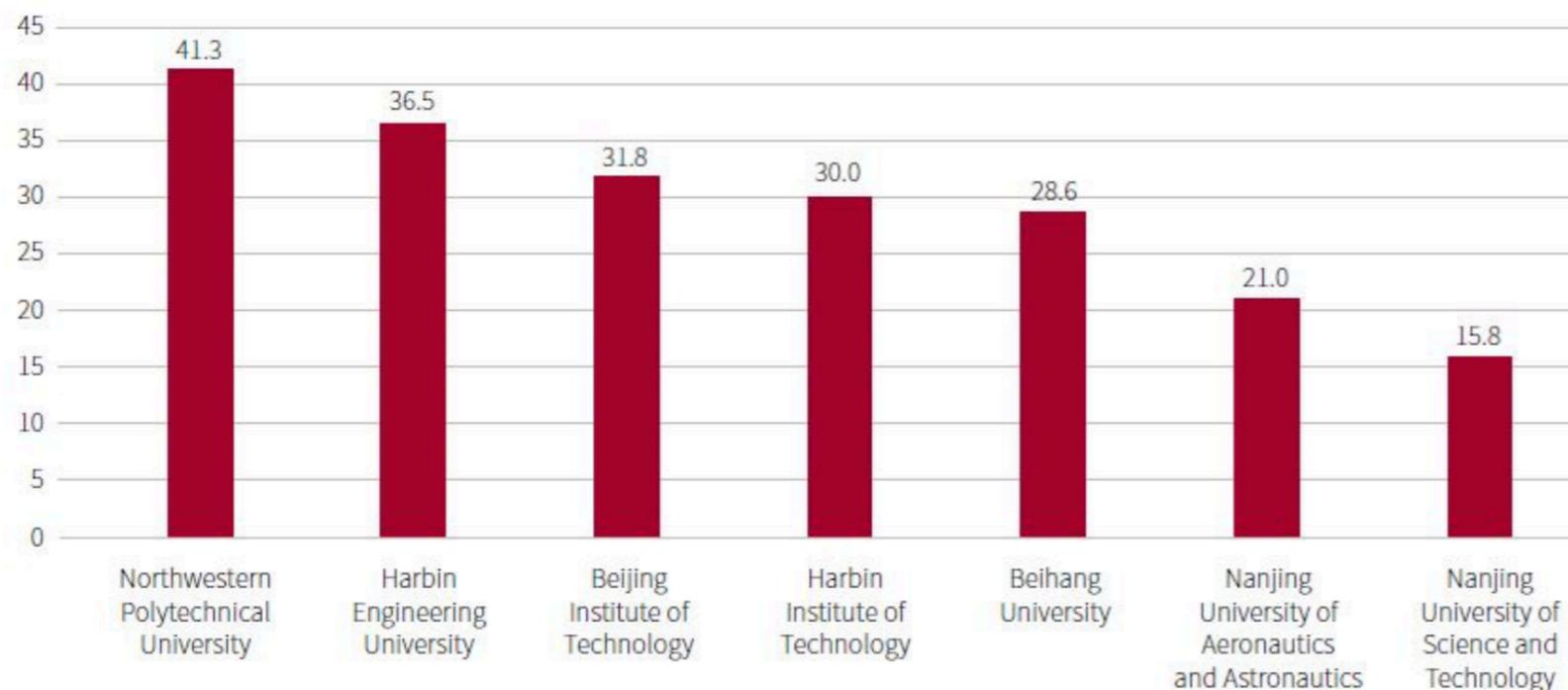
This page labels “seven sons of national defense” as universities closely aligned with Chinese defense industry. For example, the following graph:

There is also a much longer list of universities described as having connections.

Graduate students who had attended one of these universities may be at risk for visa revocation under the proclamation.

It is unclear whether this implies deportation, or just visa revocation (source: [NAFSA.org](https://www.nafsa.org)).

Figure 1: The percentage of employed 2017 or 2018 graduates of the Seven Sons working in the defence system



<https://www.aspi.org.au/report/china-defence-universities-tracker>

<https://www.aip.org/fyi/2020/trump-clamps-down-chinese-grad-students-and-researchers>

Australian Strategic Policy Institute

This “think tank” rates a very extensive list of universities for their **risk**. It is unclear which of these universities will be affected, or if only specific STEM fields or subfields from selected universities. It is also unclear when the specific policy will be known.

Examples of **nominal risk**, and additional information on specific programs, etc., is also posted

Very High

Sichuan
Shandong
Tsinghua U
Wuhan

High

Peking U
UST Beijing

Medium

USTC
Lanzhou U
Nanjing U
Shanghai U

What you can do

We will all benefit if we can create an informed community.

1. Encourage your Jefferson Lab colleagues to join our mailing lists, and share this message with colleagues who may not have received it. **One important note: do not use any federally supported email addresses or equipment for forwarding related information, including but not limited to the jlab.org domain.**
2. Share this information also with interested colleagues in other fields at your universities, and help your **universities to be active in tracking and responding to these issues.**
3. Stay alert to **APS emails** connected to these topics.
4. Share your concerns and experiences with JLUO Board members. In particular, we are currently seeking to **catalog specific impacts of visa delays** or threats to the cancellation of programs

Responses to Recent **Societal Events**

JLab issued a message on June 3, 2020 concerning the death of George Floyd



Subsequently there were many national and international **demonstrations** and protests, and a one-day STEM strike.

CNBC: “More than 5,000 scientists and two prominent scientific journals shut down operations and pledged to use the day to address **racial inequalities in science.**”

Part of JLUO Chairline participated in the **strike** on 10 June. Julie Roche took the lead on developing a JLUO BoD **position** and **action plan**.

The JLUO BoD would like to implement **lasting and impactful changes** to combat **systemic racism** in our **collaborations** and in the **institutions** of our field.

Possible Anti-racism Actions

On safety and concerns about the local environment for users:

Write a letter to NN city to advocate for de-escalation techniques because our users are traveling to NN and are not familiar with the locale.

We have already met (Ed Brash) with NNPD training officer to learn how they approach training principles for interactions with the public, aspects of interactions in traffic stops, training of private security officers in NN.

Meet with JLab guards to ask about their training, and at what point they would choose to call the NNPD for backup.

On creating an inclusive and diverse community:

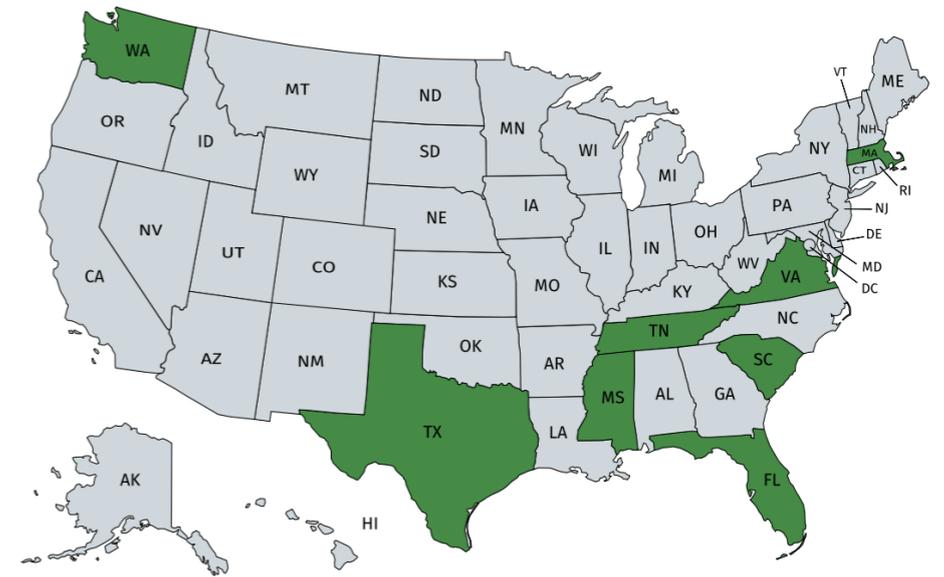
Gather **anecdotes and testimonials** on racist or related experiences within our collaborations. Post them on an allowed web server to raise awareness. Julie Roche proposal.

Gather thought-provoking information about **anti-black racism** in the **US** and in **academia** on an allowed web server. Julie Roche already has a list of links.

Your ideas...

Nuclear Physics on the Hill

- JLab, RHIC, FRIB and fundamental symmetry **user groups/organizations** meet with the offices of **senators and representatives**
- JLab participants (7th year):
 - 2013: 7 persons
 - 2017: 23 from 13 states
 - 2018: 27 from 13 states
 - 2019: 25 from 8 states
 - 2020: cancelled



➡ YOU ARE INVITED!! ➡

[Partial travel funds are available from JSA.](#)

To receive information on outreach like this,
send email to listserv@sura.org with this message:

[subscribe jlabusersorganization
from a non-governmental email address](#)

JSA Initiatives Fund

- Funds outreach and promotes S&T of JLab
- <http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFIndex.html> has info

☛ YOU can apply ☛

Twenty-eight projects were funded for 2020:

<http://www.jsallc.org/IF/IFProjects.html>

Award amounts from \$2k to \$125k USD

Total \$449k USD

Thanks JSA!!

Minor **Revisions** to the JLUO **Bylaws**

- We plan to propose minor **revisions** to the JLUO bylaws, to better match our current needs and practices.
- Members of the JLUO (you) will be asked **vote** on this at some point in the future. Previous votes on bylaw revisions were in 2014 and 2013.
- You can find the current bylaws on the JLUO wiki here: [https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/Current Bylaws](https://wiki.jlab.org/cugwiki/index.php/Current_Bylaws)

DNP Executive Committee suggestions.

- Deadline for nominations is 1 July 2020
- <https://www.aps.org/units/dnp/governance/officers/index.cfm>
- You can email suggestions to C. Weiss, D. Armstrong, I. Niculescu, W. Boeglin, or make your own nomination.

Executive Committee

Krishna S. Kumar, Univ. of Mass. Amherst, Chair (2020)

Sherry J. Yennello, Texas A&M Univ., Chair-Elect (2020)

S. Victoria Greene, Vanderbilt, Vice-Chair (2020)

Robert V.F. Janssens, Univ. of N. Carolina, Past-Chair (2020)

Kenneth H. Hicks, Ohio U., Sec.-Treas. (2020)

A. Baha Balantekin, Univ. of Wisc., Div. Coun. (2021)

Jeffery C. Blackmon, LSU (2020)

Evangeline J. Downie (2021)

Nadia Fomin, Univ. of Tennessee (2020)

Jeffrey S. Nico, NIST (2021)

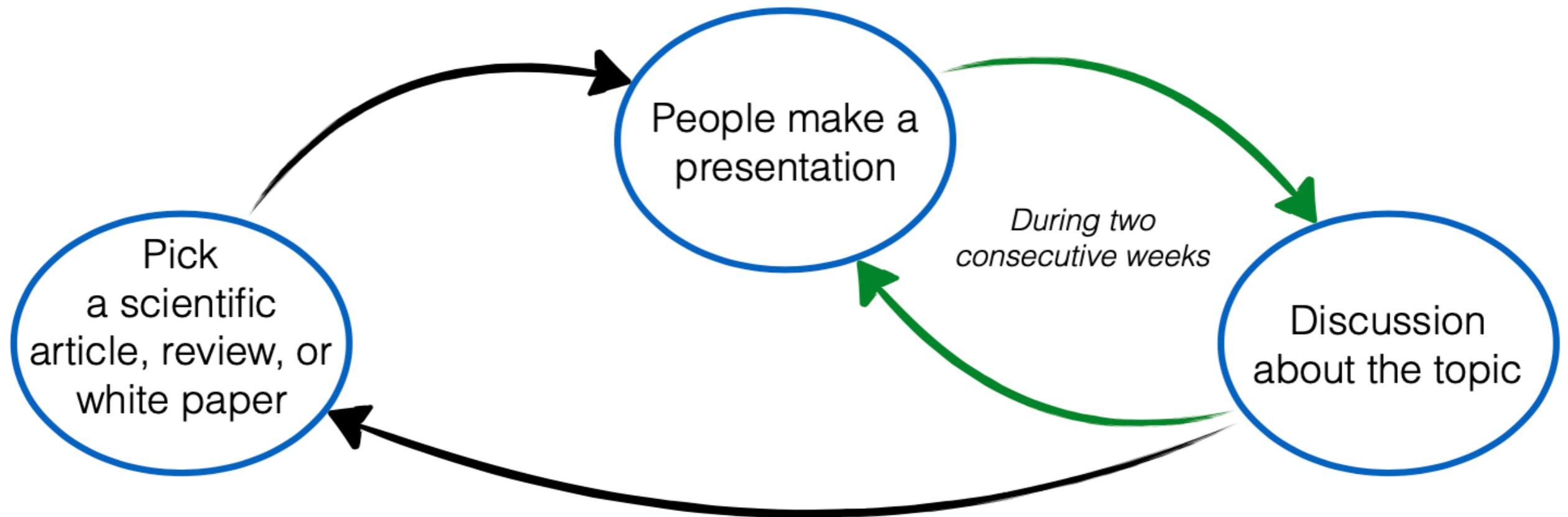
Jacquelyn Noronha-Hostler (2021)

Julie Roche, Ohio University (2020)

Announcement from Amy Schertz and Felipe Ortega (W&M)

Journal Club

Jefferson Lab's Graduate Student and Post-Doc Association



Interest form: bit.ly/JLabJC

**Who? Targeted to grad students and junior post-docs (but everyone is welcome).
When? Twice per month, beginning the week of July 6th-10th
Where? Virtually (for now).**