

Community Information/Informatics Systems (CIS):  
Mapping the Sector  
A Roundtable Discussion

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Final Agenda



April 11 (evening reception)  
April 12 (meeting all day)  
April 13 (meeting until 1:00)  
Conversation afterwards

Location:  
Garden of the Gods Club  
Colorado Springs, CO

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## Welcome

Welcome to the Colorado Springs Roundtable on the Community Information Systems/Community Informatics Sector. The purpose of the roundtable is to bring a diverse group of twenty-five ICT experts, practitioners, researchers, policy specialists and social activists together to examine the emerging CIS sector from a range of perspectives. Our intention is to identify and explore this emerging sector that builds upon 15-20 years of pioneering work in community networks, community technology centers, and public information services. The roundtable discussion will examine infrastructure, tools, financing, research and development, higher education, services, policy and local development requirements needed to accelerate the recognition and growth of this emerging sector.

The meeting is sponsored under a grant from the Ford Foundation to the New Jersey Institute of Technology, organized by Dr. Michael Gurstein, Project Director and Richard Cville, Project Co-director. The meeting takes place the evening of April 11 through mid-day Sunday April 13. There will be an opportunity for a continuation of informal conversations for those who wish to stay Sunday evening. The location is the Garden of the Gods Club in Colorado Springs, CO.

### Desired Outcomes

- To reach a general consensus on a basic CIS sector definition;
- To improve understanding of necessary conditions to support emergence of the sector;
- To assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats affecting sectoral recognition, and resource gaps to address them;
- To assess a range of practical options to support sector activation;
- To develop a follow-up plan of action.

## Agenda

Friday, April 11 7:00PM: Reception

- An informal reception with refreshments will be held the evening before the meeting.

Saturday, April 12: "Mapping the CIS Sector"

Please note there are no scheduled breaks other than lunch. However, there will also be plenty of time to get acquainted and talk informally. Occasional small outside conversations as interest arises are welcomed and personal needs can be easily accommodated at any time as required. There will be an on-site coordinator to assist with logistical needs.

### **7:30 am – 9:00 Coffee, Continental Breakfast and Conversation**

Take some time in the morning to meet other participants over coffee and breakfast.

### **9:00– 10:00 "Clearing the Decks"**

Our desired outcome for this session: *"Reach a rough consensus for the goals and process of the meeting."*

We sit around a good sized, "U-Shaped" table in a fairly large well-lit room with windows opening to outside decks. We turn off our cell phones. We close our laptops. (Note: We will have a DSL data

line in the room). We'll spend some time with introductions; review the overall agenda, desired outcomes and work to surface any manner of questions, pressing thoughts or agenda adjustments that need to be handled. In particular, with your consent, we hope to tape the meeting for a transcription to assist us in our final report.

#### **10:00 – 12:00 “A CIS Sector: Why Bother?”**

We first incorporate any agenda adjustments previously agreed by the group. Our desired outcome for this session is: *“To reach a rough consensus on a basic CIS sector definition and rationale.”*

We begin with a brief review of the CIS sectoral model that is being considered in the project, from the point of view of infrastructure, tools, financing, research and development, higher education, policy, services, and local development.

Then we'd like to ask the group: What's the point of all of this? Does it make sense; if so, why and if not, why not? By dropping the labels of past projects, funding initiatives, association agendas and policy models, what would a vision of a robust CIS sector look like in 3 years, five years, or ten? From an empirical perspective based on the experience, intuition and judgment of participants, what should local applications and services look like? What are the bellwether trends and models? Does the proposed sectoral model make sense? What is missing? What distinguishes Community Information/Informatics Systems (CIS) from Management Information Systems (MIS)?

#### **12:00 – 1:00 Lunch Buffet**

Enjoy good food, good conversation and with good luck, good weather!

#### **1:00 – 4:00 “Building CIS Sector: Linkages, SWOT, Options”**

Well fed and better acquainted, we hit the ground running. Desired outcome for this longer afternoon session are two-fold:

- To improve understanding of necessary conditions and linkages that must be strengthened to support emergence of the sector;
- To assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) affecting sectoral recognition, and resource gaps to address them;

We plan to use some helpful visualization aids, and standard group discussion approaches that many will be familiar with. We hope we are allowed to tape the session for a later transcription to help us capture nuances, stories and debate. This way we can be light on the rules while gathering lots of data, let the conversation flow where it needs to, allow folks to wander around a bit, go off and chat from time to time, while giving everyone a good frame of reference so we don't stray too far from the desired outcomes.

On one wall will be a large 'XY' grid, and on the other wall, a long sheet of paper. The 'XY' grid will help us maintain an ongoing SWOT analysis, for example, if someone points out an “opportunity” or perhaps a “weakness”, we'll quickly jot it down on a post-it note and place it on the SWOT grid for everyone to see and be reminded of. On the opposite wall, a large, long sheet of paper will have each of the major research categories listed in columns, so we can identify linkages and relationships among them with colored yarn and push pins, and notate the linkages with index cards clipped to the

yarn. We will also have access to a DSL data-line, and a laptop to display websites or other information as needed on a screen. We will have easel pads with magic markers as well.

After a while, we will achieve a collective overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats on the one hand, and the essential linkages that must be improved, nurtured or established for this emerging sector to be realized over time.

#### **4:00 – 5:00 “Breakout Sessions”**

We might now break down into smaller groups to achieve a session outcome: *“To assess a range of practical options to support emergence of the sector”* as for example:

- University based research and teaching—where can it go and how can we get there?
- CTC’s and other community based initiatives—where can they go and how
- Funding and funders—where are they going and how can they link into the development of a sector?
- Technologists—where is technology going and how can it link into the CIS sector?

#### Evening

Dinner, after dinner informal – but purposeful – discussion accompanied by pleasant amenities.

#### Sunday, April 13: “The Sectoral Development of CIS”

##### **8:00 am – 9:00 “Continental Breakfast and Informal Discussion”**

##### **9:00 – 1:00 “Practical Steps Towards the Vision”**

To wrap up our meeting, it seems to make sense to spend a good deal of Sunday morning to pursue an outcome to: *“Develop a follow-up plan of action”* or discover why none may be possible, with a strong leaning toward the practical.

We use the materials generated from the first day. We focus on issues and strategies concerned with sectoral recognition and activation in the coming years. We review and test any general consensus among the group on a basic CIS sector definition and the extent there is a shared belief that sectoral recognition is achievable and worth collective pursuit.

If so, what and where are the gaps that need to be addressed in order to achieve recognition and a critical mass of application development and local use? What appear to be the key issues, the major opportunities and the most pressing priorities? Perhaps most importantly, what small steps will each of us individually commit to do towards these ends within the next 3-6 months?

##### **1:00 – Through the Day “For Those Remaining”**

The formal agenda will conclude to give time for those needing to take early departures, and there will be a box lunch to take along. The project principals and coordinator will remain through the evening and invite others able to stay on for informal conversations and to enjoy the early Spring on the eastern slope of the Rockies.

## Travel and Lodging

The meeting will be held in Colorado Springs, at the Garden of the Gods Club ([www.gardenofthegodsclub.com](http://www.gardenofthegodsclub.com)). The Club is about 20 minutes by cab or van from the Colorado Springs airport. Detailed maps are available on the website. The Garden of the Gods Club rests on a crimson mesa rising above Garden of the Gods Park, where time and elements have transformed the rocky landscape into spectacular geologic formations. The club and guestrooms offer a spectacular view across the red rock formations overlooking Pikes Peak.

Please fly to the Colorado Springs airport. **Do not fly to Denver.** Colorado Springs has a major airport and is a two hour drive from Denver. To arrange a shuttle or taxi from the airport to the Club, call (719) 550-1930 twenty-four hours a day for information about ground transportation needs such as taxis, hotel shuttles, limousines, bus and ski shuttle services. A Ground Transportation booth, located on the lower level adjacent to the escalators, is open from 7 AM to 12 Midnight and provides a recorded message during off-hours.

