Physics Education Research Topical Group (PERTG) NEWSLETTER - WM2021

December 17, 2021

**What and why is this?**
This is the summer edition of the biannual newsletter published by PERLOC to keep AAPT’s Physics Education Research Topical Group (PERTG) informed about important news. We think of this newsletter as taking on the role of the announcements historically made in the existing RiPE meeting and PERTG town hall, allowing those meetings to be more interactive and useful. In addition to streamlining those meetings, the newsletter will allow people who were unable to attend the AAPT meeting to stay informed about what is going on in the community.

**Table of contents**
What and why is this?
Table of contents

**What has PERLOC been doing recently?**

**PERLOC Announcements**
- Money Matters
- PERTG MiniGrants
- Winter Meeting 2022 Town Hall
- PERC 2022 Organization Team
- PERC 2022 Proceedings Deadlines
- Funding Invited Presenters
- Working Group on Conference Accessibility (WGCA)

**Community Announcements**
- Grief LiteracyTM Workshop Share-Out

**How can people get involved?**

**Appendix: About PERLOC**
- What is PERLOC?
- Who are we?
- What does PERLOC do?
- PERLOC’s guide to acronyms
What has PERLOC been doing recently?
This is a new section to the PERTG Newsletter intended as an opportunity for transparency about the initiatives and tasks PERLOC has been working on. Below is a list of initiatives PERLOC has been tackling recently. There is additional information about these efforts in the PERLOC Announcements section below.

- Worked with PERC organizers, AAPT staff, and PERC Proceedings Editors to plan PERC 2021 and 2022
- Awarded PERTG mini-grants
- Hired and trained a support staff member for PERC proceedings
- Worked with the PERC proceedings editorial team and Lyle Barbato toward implementing a software platform of the PERC Proceedings for a more sustainable editorial workload
- Continued to sustainably implement accessible conferences practices (e.g., accessibility accountability liaison, tips for accessible presentations) and formalized the Working Group on Conference Accessibility (WGCA)
- Converted several high-workload volunteer roles into paid activities (including creating formal job descriptions, statements of work, budget line items), beginning with PERC organizers and PERC Proceedings editors.
- Implemented a plan to increase the size and diversity of the pool of PERLOC Councilor nominations through outreach and transparency

PERLOC Announcements

Money Matters
PERTG expenses include mini-grant awards and costs associated with PERC and PERC Proceedings. The vast majority of PERTG's revenue comes from dues and PERC registration fees. In recent years, expenses and revenues were relatively stable and PERTG maintained a balanced budget and carried a modest surplus. Having the last two PERCs being virtual affected both revenue and expense, creating some uncertainty for the budget. Despite this, we ended 2020 with a balanced budget. For 2021, PERLOC committed funds to support the PERC Proceedings Editors and Organizers, and provide administrative support to the Editors. However, we did not increase PERC registration fees, so a drawdown of the surplus is expected. If we continue this support for the PERC Organizers and Proceedings Editors, these expenses will need to be offset by additional revenue.

PERTG MiniGrants
PERTG MiniGrants continue to be awarded on a rolling basis through the AAPT Winter meeting while conferences are held virtually. A list of awardees will be available on the PERTG website, and will continue to be updated as we address proposals on a monthly
basis. Keep a lookout for the spring 2022 MiniGrant solicitation on our website and through the PERTG listserv, as PERLOC plans to move back to a bi-annual review process once in-person conferences resume.

Winter Meeting 2022 Town Hall
The PERTG town hall for the winter meeting 2022 will be held on January 6th at 5-6 PM Eastern. During the town hall, PERLOC will present an overview of PERLOC’s work and new business including PERLOC’s 2022 initiatives and the switch to AAPT COMMUNITIES. Here is the Zoom link for the PERTG town hall: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82313549193?pwd=eDRPUEp1TDNWZmYrdWpwQ2xhY1hsdz09.

PERC 2022 Organization Team
The PERC 2022 theme is “Queering Physics Education” and the core organization team includes Yasmeen Musthafa, Brianne Gutmann, Xandria Quichoch, Ben Pollard, Sara Mueller, Alia Hamdan, Michael Vignal, and Kelby Hahn.

PERLOC is actively seeking proposals for the PERC 2023 meeting. We are currently seeking community members who are interested in contributing to the organizing of the PERC 2023 meeting and conference themes that are of interest to the community. We plan to resend the call for proposals after the 2022 Winter meeting; but, if you are interested, have a theme suggestion, or have additional questions or concerns, please contact PERLOC’s PERC liaisons: Bethany Wilcox (bethany.wilcox@colorado.edu) and Rebecca Rosenblatt (rosenblatt.rebecca@gmail.com).

PERC 2022 Proceedings Deadlines
The PERC 2022 meeting is scheduled for July 14-15, 2022, which is substantially earlier than prior years. This means that the PERC Proceedings submissions will be due in mid-May 2022. This is not a change in the editorial process deadline, but instead a response to the earlier date of the conference. Please see the PERC website or follow PERTG on AAPT COMMUNITIES for additional details about the conference and proceedings deadlines as they become available.

Funding Invited Presenters
When organizing a session, you might want to invite a speaker from outside the AAPT community and want to help fund their participation (travel costs to the conference, offer an honorarium, etc). If you are inviting a speaker to AAPT who has not been a member for 5 years, then they receive complimentary full meeting registration. For PERC, there are no specific funds set aside to help fund invited speakers. (Remember, an attendee at PERC must also register for at least one day of AAPT.) However, MiniGrants are
available through both PERTG and APS GPER. You will need to be a member of the funding organization in order to apply. Both MiniGrants have “organizer strands” that are ideal for helping fund invited speakers at conferences. If you plan to invite speakers and request these funds, make sure to account for all of the costs they might incur!

Working Group on Conference Accessibility (WGCA)

Since 2019, PERLOC has been working with external consultants to assess the accessibility of the PERC conference with the goal of increasing access and support for all people to attend PERC. In 2019, in coordination with an external consultant, we surveyed the community about the current state of accessibility of the PERC meetings. After this evaluation, we generated a list of accessible conference planning practices, and we identified multiple conference aspects to target time and resources toward.

In 2020, the working group began implementing accessible conference practices including: a) hired an accessibility accountability liaison to support participants in accessing accommodations and to keep the working group accountable to our targets; b) created and disseminated best practices for accessible presentations to participants; c) led the inaugural Physics Education and Accessible Meeting Planning workshop for PER community leaders; and d) began the process of creating a strategic plan.

Also in 2020, the working group expanded their focus to include the AAPT summer and winter meetings in addition to the PERC. This partnership includes cost sharing between AAPT and PERLOC as well as expanding the working group to include AAPT stakeholders. The current list of working group members includes: Erin Scanlon, Adrienne Traxler, Stephanie Williams, Rebecca Lindell, Constance Doty, Tiffany Hayes, Cerena Cantrell, and Daryl McPadden. We recently were approved for AAPT working group status by AAPT’s board of directors, and we are working to create a website to share out the working group’s progress and accessibility resources.

In preparation for the 2021 summer meetings, we hired an external consultant, Dr. Linn Jorgenson (Disability Consulting and Training), to assist us with creating a policy for processing accommodation requests, creating a finer-grained strategic plan, and assisting the working group and conference organizers with planning inclusive and accessible meetings. The working group will continue working with a consultant to help PERLOC and AAPT sustainably implement these accessible practices, conduct training for the community related to accessibility/disability, and to guide policy making. Here is a link to the working group’s emphasis areas for the 2021 meetings.

If you are interested in joining the working group on conference accessibility, or would like to learn more, please reach out to us at: erin.scanlong@uconn.edu. All community members are welcome to join (e.g., students, staff, faculty, high school teachers)!
Community Announcements

Grief Literacy™ Workshop Share-Out

Eric Kuo, Alexis V. Knaub, and Dimitri R. Dounas-Frazer | October 2021

For many of us in the PER community, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in one or more forms of loss, and we are experiencing grief. Accordingly, we would benefit from learning strategies for processing grief and possibly also from connecting with others who are also grieving. To these ends, last summer, we (with support and advice from Vashti Sawtelle) coordinated with PERLOC and Being Here, Human to provide Level 1 Grief Literacy™ Training to up to 20 physics education researchers.

(More details about the Grief Literacy Training and participant experiences here)

We were pleased to be able to offer this session for members of the physics education community, and although this training has come and gone, we hope that the PER community can continue to engage with and embrace the entire human experience in our professional and personal lives.

How can people get involved?

We’re so glad you asked! There are multiple ways PERTG community members can get involved including:

- Joining one of the working groups
  - Contact the current PERLOC chair, Bethany Wilcox (bethany.wilcox@colorado.edu)
- Attend the facilitated conversations about the structure and future of PERTG community
  - Additional information is forthcoming
- Join PERLOC
  - Nominations will open in late summer/early fall 2021
- Become a PERC Proceedings Editor
  - Nominations will open in Winter 2021
  - Please contact Bethany Wilcox (bethany.wilcox@colorado.edu) with questions about the PERC Editor role, workload, and possible risks/rewards
- Become a PERC Organizer
  - Proposals for PERC themes will open in 2023
  - Please contact Rebecca Rosenblatt (rosenblatt.rebecca@gmail.com) with questions about the PERC organizer role, workload, and possible risks/rewards
- Follow PERTG in AAPT COMMUNITIES for opportunities to get involved
Thank you to all PERTG members for your active support!

Appendix: About PERLOC

What is PERLOC?

PERLOC is the leadership body of the PER Topical Group of the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT), founded in 2006. PERLOC was formed to address a growing need for communication and decision-making structures within the PER community, and a desire to promote and advance PER within AAPT and beyond. Many of the constituents of our organization are committed teachers (at universities/colleges, at high/middle/elementary schools, and in informal science learning settings) and/or scholars that research physics education across these many settings.

Who are we?

- Bethany Wilcox (2020-2023)
- Charlotte Zimmerman (2021-2023)
- Rebecca Rosenblatt (2021-2024)
- Rachel Henderson (2021-2024)
- Sujata Krishna (2022-2023)
- Raymond Zich (2022-2025)
- Lauren Barth-Cohen (2022-2025)
- Alice Churukian (2022) Ex-officio/RiPE Chair

What does PERLOC do?

We find and support PERC Organizers: PERLOC solicits proposals for the annual PER Conference and from these applications chooses the PERC theme and associated PERC organizing team. PERLOC works to maintain institutional memory from one PERC organizing team to the next, and assists the PERC organizing team in coordinating with AAPT to successfully run PERC.

We find and support PERC Proceedings Editors: PERLOC solicits and selects Editors for the PERC Proceedings and works with the PERC Editors to refine its operation. From the set of highly reviewed PERC proceedings papers, PERLOC selects a few “notable papers” to highlight to the community.

We handle PERTG’s money and award MiniGrants: PERLOC coordinates with AAPT to collect and then spend the membership dues that it collects. A significant portion of these membership dues are fed back into community activities through the PERTG MiniGrant program.
We help maintain and grow the PER community: PERLOC periodically reflects on the health and well-being of our community (such as considering appropriate actions that should follow the RiPE social activities survey). PERLOC also communicates and coordinates with: (a) its members (through the PERTG listserv, and updating our web presence on Compadre), (b) other AAPT committees, and (c) GPER within American Physical Society.

PERLOC’s guide to acronyms
- **AAPT** = American Association of Physics Teachers
- **PERTG** = Physics Education Research Topical Group (AAPT members who, as a topical group, assist the advancement, dissemination, and application of knowledge of physics education research)
- **PERLOC** = Physics Education Research Leadership and Organizing Council (A committee of elected representatives who has the general charge of the affairs of the Topical Group.)
- **RiPE** = Research in Physics Education (an area committee within AAPT appointed by AAPT Board)
- **PERGS** = Physics Education Research Graduate Students
- **PERCoGS** = PER Consortium of Graduate Students (a committee of elected representatives who has the general charge of the affairs of the PER Graduate Students).
- **APS** = American Physical Society
- **GPER** = Topical Group on Physics Education Research (a group within the APS whose objective is the advancement and diffusion of knowledge concerning the learning and teaching of physics).
- **PERC** = Physics Education Research Conference (overseen by PERLOC, but organized separately by volunteer organizers each year). It has conference proceedings that are organized by 3 volunteer editors (who serve 3-year terms).