UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UNIVERSIDAD DE CALIFORNIA
Agricultura y Recursos Naturales

Terms of Reference Strategic Initiatives (SI) Leaders[1]

Strategic Initiatives (SIs) are the focus areas under which UC ANR research and outreach is organized.

Unify-Communicate-Advocate (UCA) - Major responsibilities: Spending up to 15-20% FTE, SI Leaders help create the umbrellas for the work across the system. In so doing, the SIs with their panels and informal teams help people connect by helping:

Unify
1. **Create vision & strategy**
   - Issue analysis and development leading to 2 page briefs*.
     *e.g., Fire, Virtual Reach, Food Systems; Extension of the Future; Urban and DEI needs
     References: Crystal ball; Initiative themes and Grand Challenges
2. **Build connections**
3. **Build capacity**
   - Host SI webinars/trainings
   - Support Program Teams

Communicate
1. **Collate stories & highlights**
   - Raise awareness. (UC ANR Blogs – PVS activated)
2. **Support communication of Educational content** e.g.,
   - Knowledge stream ; Spotlight webinars ; Trending ; SI Brief ; SI website ; Thematic sites: e.g., Fire ; Healthy Soil
3. **Build connections**
   - e.g., PT links & reports

     Assist (as needed) Program Planning and Evaluation with federal report preparation.

Advocate
1. **Represent the wider UC ANR body on Program Council**
2. **Represent UC ANR with stakeholders and government**

SI Panel. To assist with the above, SI leaders engage with an SI panel

The role of the panel continues to evolve. They can meet regularly (by zoom and at times in person) to review and plan activities to
 a) build the umbrella and elements of UCA, especially in relation to
   1. Revising the SI Key Initiative themes;
   2. Identifying themes for the future, research outreach and position gaps and other time-sensitive opportunities based on SI strategic priorities;

Note: Panels are typically composed of rotating members with staggered 3-year terms.
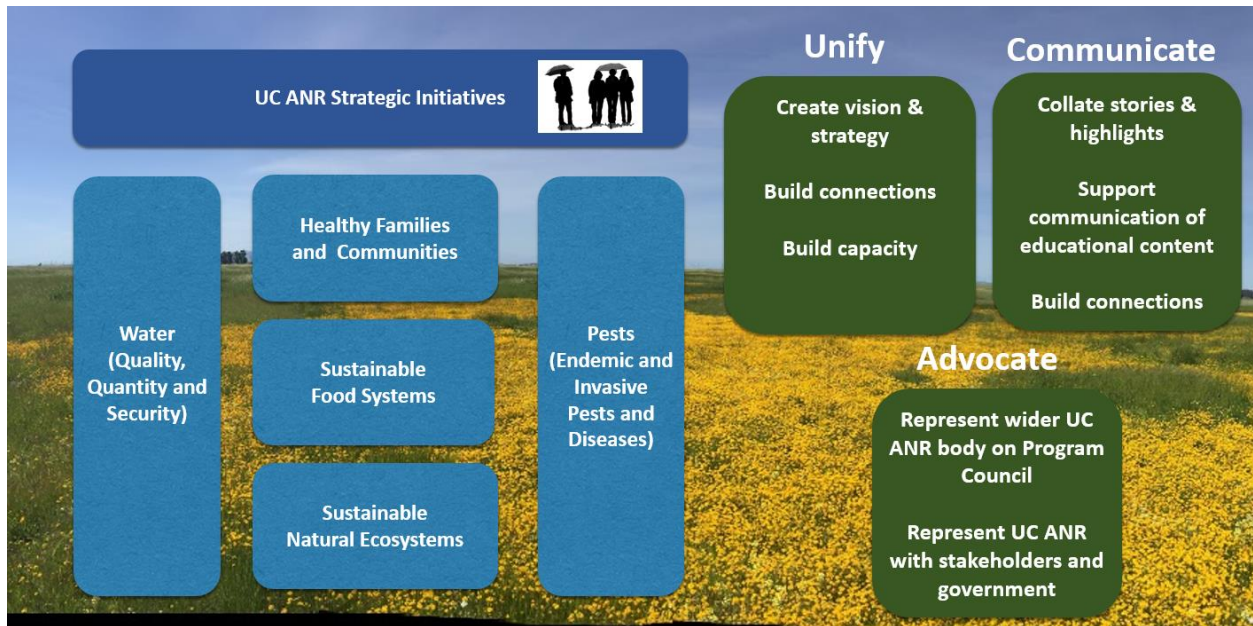
Length of SI Leader Service: 3 years (with option to extend upon mutual agreement).

Financial and Staff Support
- While we are increasingly using zoom, some funding is allocated for travel (SI Leader, SI panel, grant panel) and other expenses appropriate for productive interactions or promotion of activities, e.g., meeting expenses with other academics or external stakeholders.
- Funds are available to support SI leader group agreed initiatives
  o The SI trainings and spotlight webinars are implemented in coordination with Program Support Unit who provides planning, logistical and onsite support.
  o Program Support Unit also provides logistical and online (at times onsite support as needed) for approved panel meetings and SI activities.
- The leader who is rotating off will facilitate the new leader's integration for an agreed period (suggested timeframe is 3 months).

Desired SI Leader Characteristics
- **Leader**
  o Desire to influence the future of UC ANR and its impact
  o Ability to build teams and ownership, empower team members and build consensus so members feel committed and responsible to deliver target SI outputs.
  o Sense of humor and a willingness to explore the non-traditional approaches and themes
  o Goal-oriented with strategic planning skills.
  o Desire to learn about senior leadership decision-making and play an active role in providing positive input into that process.
  o Seeks an opportunity to serve the UC ANR organization in a capacity that drives collective impact.
- **Knowledgeable**
  o Has a breadth of understanding of issues across California.
  o Has an established network or knowledge of UC ANR personnel activities across the state and among disciplines or areas related to the SI.
- **Team player**

- o   Willingly represents and advocates at Program Council and elsewhere for the broader group putting aside their personal interests to give voice to all those contributing to all initiatives.
  - o   Directs research and extension to support other SI priorities.
- **Commitment**
  - o   Has time to provide the effort necessary to serve as an effective SI Leader – including attending (virtual or in-person) SI and Program Council meetings, etc. (monthly overnight travel is often required).

Note: in choosing SI leaders, consideration is given to representation across all UC ANR; considering both actual and perceived representation (e.g., discipline, geographic, cultural and gender diversity, etc.).

Wider representation of the Initiatives can be made through panel make-up and to a limited extent through the at-large Program Council seats.

Why be an SI Leader?

- Help set the UC ANR research and extension agenda through charting the future with the development of priorities, grants, position calls, convening of SI meetings and Program Council.
- Represent the SI in a leadership role.
- Help build broader connections, reach and impact of UC ANR work through this leadership opportunity.
- Service to the organization.
- Receive a modest stipend.