

**Applying for UKCRC Membership:
Frequently Asked Questions**
October 2009

What is UKCRC and what does it do?

The UK Computing Research Committee aims to promote the vitality, quality and impact of Computing Research in the UK. Its members are internationally leading computer researchers drawn from both academia and industry.

The UKCRC was formed in November 2002 and is an Expert Panel of the British Computer Society, the Council of Professors and Heads of Computing and the Institution of Engineering & Technology. By contributing to policy formation within these three key national bodies, UKCRC enables UK Computing Research to speak with a single voice.

As examples of activities, members of UKCRC meet with members of government to discuss strategy and funding for computing research, and the assessment of UK computing research quality via the RAE/REF. The committee makes formal, written submissions in response to government and research council consultations and members have been called to give oral evidence. UKCRC organises and endorses relevant events, and from time to time issues appropriate press releases.

Why be a Member of UKCRC?

UKCRC speaks for our discipline only with the authority that it accumulates from the reputation of its members. By joining, you increase that authority and thereby the effectiveness of UKCRC. Membership of UKCRC also implies that you have been *recognised* as a leading member of the UK computing research community. In other words, membership of UKCRC is itself recognition of your status as a leading UK researcher in the area of computing.

As a member, you will be asked to participate in or lead UKCRC activities, including the preparation of submissions to government and other bodies.

Who can be a Member of UKCRC?

Anybody with a legitimate interest in UK computing research can apply to be a member; in this sense, membership is open. However, the aim of UKCRC is that membership carries with it some seniority status. That is, *applicants for membership are required to give evidence of international research leadership*.

What is Evidence of International Research Leadership?

Indicators of international research leadership include, but are by no means restricted to:

- being a Fellow of a recognised learned society

- having a world class publication record
- editing a leading journal
- chairing a premium conference programme committee
- being invited to speak at high impact/prestigious research events (e.g., major international conferences)
- chairing an international research society
- being the recipient of an international research prize or award (such as those made by ACM; “research award” in this sense is not the same as “research grant”)
- having a particularly strong citation record
- playing a leading role within an internationally respected industrial or academic research group.

Typically UKCRC members have a number of such elements in their profile.

How do I apply?

The formal process is as follows: send an application to the Secretary (mailto:ukcrc@bcs.org.uk), which should include:

- a *thorough and up-to-date* curriculum vitæ,
- a statement of *up to* 2000 words showing evidence of international research leadership,
- the names of a proposer and seconder, at least one of whom should be a member of UKCRC, with contact details.

(All applications will be treated confidentially.)

How Will My Application be Evaluated?

Applications are considered quarterly by the UKCRC membership committee. Essentially, the committee asks the following question: *Does this candidate show sufficient evidence of international research leadership in computing?* In reaching a conclusion on this question, the panel will consider both the nature and volume of evidence presented.

What about Unsuccessful Applications?

The single biggest reason for applications being declined is that the applicant does not demonstrate sufficient evidence of international research leadership. Several scenarios seem to recur:

- *The applicant demonstrates that they are an active researcher, but not that they are a **research leader**.* “Research leadership” is obviously difficult to define, since it is somewhat subjective, but the list of indicators above should give you some feel for the level of expectation. Having demonstrated

competence in research – even over a period of time – is *not* the same as being a leader.

- *The applicant simply expects the membership panel to realise what a big cheese they are, and does not bother to spell out their research leadership credentials.* Computing is a broad church and the membership panel is drawn from many disparate areas. You need to describe clearly to the panel why you should be regarded as a leader in your area.
- *The candidate demonstrates a high level of professional service, but not in research.* Professional service is an important part of academic life, and professional service deserves to be rewarded; but the UKCRC is aimed at *research*. Accordingly, a track record of excellence in professional service is not necessarily an indicator of research leadership. If you wish to draw attention to professional service as evidence of leadership status, you need to demonstrate how it relates to research leadership.

If your application was unsuccessful, then the panel will try (within reason) to give you feedback on why. If you or the panel feel that you could present your case better, then you can re-apply for membership. If you choose to do this, we urge you to take seriously any advice that the membership panel may give you about missing or weak elements of your case. The panel reserves the right not to consider applicants who have made repeated failed applications.