

UKCRCEC/2015/12

Minutes of the 39th meeting of the UK Computing Research Executive Committee on **Monday 8th June 2015** at 11.00am at BCS, The Chartered Institute of IT, Davidson Building, 5 Southampton Street, London, WC2E 7HA

PRESENT

Dave Robertson (Chair)	Anthony Cohn	Cliff Jones
Ron Perrott	Iain Stewart	Martyn Thomas

BY INVITATION

Liam Blackwell (EPSRC)	Bill Mitchell (BCS)	Edmund Robinson (CPHC)
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IN ATTENDANCE

Maxine Leslie (Secretariat)

APOLOGIES

Tom Rodden	Anke Davis/ Miriam Dowle/ John Baird (EPSRC)	Paul Davies/Alan Berry (IET)
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1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received as above.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meetings held on the Monday 3rd November 2014 were considered by Members as an error had been identified following the last meeting. The minutes from the meeting on Monday 16th March 2015 were also considered. Both sets were signed and APPROVED for transfer to the UKCRC website.

ACTION: D Gladwin

2.1. Matters Arising

The Action List was reviewed and the following updates noted:

UKCRCEC meeting held on 16th March 2015

Item 2.1 Minutes of the last meeting – Matters arising, ResearchFish – Cliff Jones reported that he had still not received a response from EPSRC. Liam Blackwell advised that a good point of contact would be Sue Smart (Ben Ryan's line manager).

ACTION: C Jones

Item 6 Minutes of the last meeting – Membership Panel – The Chair indicated that this action to contact Jeff Magee regarding the BCS nomination to the MP was still outstanding.

ACTION: Chair

Item 3 Chair's Report - EPSRC Network Bid – The status of this action was unclear as Tom Rodden was not at the meeting. The Chair undertook to email Tom to ask what (if anything) the Executive Committee could do to help progress the Bid. It was noted that it would be important if possible to complete and circulate the objectives to EC Members over the summer. An observation was made that it would be desirable for a team to be involved in undertaking this work in order to reduce the burden on a single person and minimise the risk of non-completion. Members were aware that networks were being established in other areas such as the Turing Institute, verification and HCI, and links to these as well as connections with industry would be important to consider in writing the objectives.

ACTION: Chair

Item 8.3 Reports – IET – Alan Berry to send EC information on the DAN (Demand Attentive Networks vision and the IET Manifesto). Secretariat to remind Alan to send these

ACTION: Secretariat

Item 9.1 AOB list of dissertations – the Chair thanked Anthony Cohn for sending these and Anthony undertook to continue with this.

Item 9.2 AOB (plus action from 3rd November 2014, Item 3 Chair's Report) Improving gender imbalance within EC/Membership of UKCRC – it was suggested by Cliff Jones that this action be taken forward to the next elections to ensure that more female members are nominated for the EC; also action to increase female wider UKCRC membership. Members reviewed the current list of UKCRC Members and it was AGREED that four of the Members would be approached to ask them if they would be willing to be nominated and stand for election to the EC.

ACTION: Chair/Cliff Jones/Martyn Thomas/Iain Stewart

UKCRCEC meeting held on 17th March 2014

Item 6 Membership Panel – this item was deleted as it had been superseded by 16th March 2015 matters arising Item 6.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

3.1 UKCRC Strategy

The Chair reported that the Impact Report with case studies which had been funded by CPHC was near to final version. The Chair thanked Morris Sloman on behalf of the Committee for his major contribution to this work and undertook to distribute the latest version to EC Members by the end of the week. Members undertook to respond with any final comments by the end of the following week (19 June).

There was some discussion about distribution of the Report both electronically and in hard copy. The plan was to print a limited number of bound copies for sending to MPs. Bill Mitchell suggested that the introduction to the case studies would need to be re-worded if the Report was to capture the attention of MPs; it would be helpful to gear wording towards the work of the DfE and BIS. Bill undertook to draft an 'aunt sally' version of the introduction for EC Members and Morris to consider.

ACTION: Bill Mitchell/Members

Edmund Robinson reported that CPHC was also planning to distribute copies of the Impact Report, including a copy to the Parliamentary ICT Forum (PICTFOR), Nigel Shadbolt plus the new HE & Science Minister Jo Johnson. Morris Sloman had obtained some reasonable printing quotes from QMUL and it was agreed that a quote for

distribution would also be sought from the printers. Bill agreed to liaise with Morris on this.

ACTION: Bill Mitchell

There was some concern that any mail-out would need to be accompanied by an announcement or campaign to maximise its possible influence. Liam Blackwell emphasised that now would be a good time to publish the report as the Chancellor's budget is planned for July, after which decisions on funding allocations to the Research Councils would be made. Edmund Robinson undertook to obtain a list of recommended recipients.

ACTION: Edmund Robinson

There was some discussion about the funding of the Report's distribution and who should sign the covering letter. It was suggested that the source material could be made copyright free and EPSRC volunteered to forward copies as well.

Once finalised, the Report would also be posted on the UKCRC website, preferably with each case study presented on a separate webpage (rather as a single PDF) in order to make it easy to navigate.

4. UKCRC AGM 2015

The Chair reported that the AGM would be conducted remotely as it was last time. The exact date was to be confirmed but was likely to be in September or October using webinar facilities provided by the ICT Knowledge Transfer Network.

5. CONSULTATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

REPORT RECEIVED AND NOTED: Martyn Thomas confirmed that he had received an acknowledgement for the UKCRC response on Nurse Review of Research Councils.

6. RESEARCH FUNDING AND POLICY

6.1 European Matters – the report from Chris Hankin was RECEIVED and NOTED.

6.2 EPSRC Update – Liam Blackwell reported on four items:

1. EPSRC had launched a competition to develop a new £10 million Research Hub, that will explore the interdisciplinary challenges around security, privacy and trust in the Internet of Things.
2. Equality and diversity – high level data had been published on diversity and this was not encouraging as gender/ethnic diversity numbers were low in terms of take up of opportunities.
3. July budget and allocations to RCs in autumn/winter – Anke Davis had presented about this at the last meeting. There were plans for regional workshops and EPSRC planned to engage with UKCRC about this for April 2016. Shaping capability will see importance of engaging with wider community. Cliff Jones asked if there would be scope for presenting the Impact Report to Jo Johnson, perhaps in a low profile setting. If a meeting could be set up, it would be good to involve some industrialists. The Chair undertook to email Andy Herbert about this and make other enquiries, whilst keeping Members informed.
4. Funding bids – Liam reported that whereas previously proposals were checked to ensure that content is appropriate/adequate with HEIs being asked to re-draft if needed, from now on proposals will go to Panel regardless and if not deemed acceptable will be refused. The onus will therefore be on the HEI to ensure that proposals are appropriate/adequate from the outset.

Following the equality and diversity report, Liam asked how UKCRC was dealing with this area. It was noted that female representation was so low in numbers that the same contacts were always being asked to get involved in projects and events, which put a greater burden on them. It would be important to ensure that ethnically diverse sections of the population and those with disabilities were adequately represented as well. Bill Mitchell informed members that in other areas it has been found to be helpful to engage role models at different stages of their careers, not just the 'stars', and this could be replicated in the academic world.

Although a challenge, could start by ensuring that there is diversity within attendees at events eg, by ensuring that practical arrangements take accessibility into account. It was noted that grants were available for different groups. Athena Swan submissions could help with sharing good practice and aspiration towards Silver/Gold Athena Swan could be encouraged through UKCRC membership.

6. MEMBERSHIP PANEL

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the report from Kevin Jones and were pleased to see the appointment of two new members from industry (IBM). It was agreed to continue to aim to recruit industrial members from a variety of organisations. One suggestion to encourage potential industrial members who might find it difficult to find the time to apply was for the nominator to confirm their interest and compile biographical information from web profiles to check with them before sending it over to UKCRC secretariat for processing. Members undertook to think about possible industrial nominees.

ACTION: Members

7. REPORTS

7.1 CPHC

Edmund Robinson reported that following the CPHC Annual Conference at QMUL on 27/28 April, the informal feedback received was positive. The key note speakers had been Bertrand Meyer and Maggie Philbin, and contributions from EPSRC (Liam Blackwell), HEFCE (Chris Millward) but not BIS directly due to the proximity of the General Election. There were also presentations from Morris Sloman on REF and from Stan Scott of Queen's University Belfast on Athena Swan. The presentations had been posted on the website at <http://cphc.ac.uk/>.

CPHC Committee Members involved in the accreditation review gave an update at the last meeting on 11 May. It was hoped that the result will be that accreditation is seen as being meaningful for employers (so says something about outcomes, not just course content), and is administered in a way that lets the process concentrate on dealing with real potential issues, rather than having documentation in the right format.

The CPHC strategy is to continue to try to engage with stakeholders and to act as a voice for the community. An example of this is CPHC's work (led by Sally Fincher) with HEA on a study identifying issues with employability.

It was Sally Smith's second year as chair and the current vice chair Carsten Maple would take over in April 2016.

7.2 BCS Academy

Bill Mitchell informed Members that the work with schools was continuing with the next phase of the network of excellence. Ten universities were to get together shortly to discuss how to progress and there had been a lot of interest from other countries eg South Korea, Netherlands.

The CAS Group had obtained a grant from Google for the development of teaching materials and Microsoft was also involved in similar activities. Workshops had been run by IT professionals with the aim of improving learning outcomes in maths and it was possible that BT would continue this work next year.

The Examination Boards for GCSE Computer Science were talking about developing a GCSE Information Technology. BCS was in discussions with them to see what this might involve.

Following the success of the Raspberry Pi, BBC and partners including BCS and the IET had been collaborating on developing the 'Micro Bit' device for introduction into schools in autumn 2015.

BCS was likely to continue to be involved with teacher training scholarships. In addition the government is looking to for CS graduates to convert to CS teaching. A hybrid undergraduate degree was being developed that included teacher training within the programme of study (as is currently the case with Physics degrees)

The summary of discussions at the BCS Accreditation Review meeting held in March was now available on the Academy website at <http://academy.bcs.org/accreditationreview>. A Working Group had been set up to carry this work forward with the aim of completing this by the end of the summer. Steps had been taken to ensure that Nigel Shadbolt was informed of progress to feed into his Review. So far the Working Group had asked 'why are we accrediting anyone anyway?' The aim was felt to be to produce graduates that have the knowledge, understanding and skills to embark on a career in computing which is also reflected in the draft QAA Computing Benchmark about to go out for consultation. It was felt to be important that accreditation was seen as something employers value; but also something of value to academics. Drafts would be circulated to UKCRC for Members' input.

7.3 IET

Nothing to report: the IET representatives had been unable to attend and had not provided a report.

8. AOB

There were no items of any other business.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2015

Monday 2nd November 2015 (IMechE Offices, London)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2016

Monday 14th March 2016 (BCS Offices, London)

Monday 6th June 2016 (IET Offices, London)

Monday 7th November 2016 (BCS Offices, London)