![UK Computing Research Committee logo]

UKCRCEC/2016/10

Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the UK Computing Research Executive Committee on **Monday 6 June 2016** at **11:00** at the **IET, 2 Savoy Place, London, WC2R 0BL**

PRESENT

Dave Robertson (Chair)	Anthony Cohn	Cliff Jones
Ann Blandford	Iain Stewart	

BY INVITATION

Darren Gladwin (IET)	Bill Mitchell (BCS)	Liam Blackwell (EPSRC)
Miriam Dowle (EPSRC)	Adam Luqmani (EPSRC)	Edmund Robinson (CPHC)

IN ATTENDANCE
Maxine Leslie (BCS)

APOLOGIES

Tom Rodden	Joe Winchester	Martyn Thomas
David Benyon	Alan Berry/Paul Davies (IET)	John Baird (EPSRC)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received as above. The Chair undertook to write to Tom Rodden in relation to his Executive Committee membership. **ACTION: Chair**

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on the Monday 14 March 2016 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 14 March 2016

Item 5 UKCRC Junior Wing – the Chair reported that the proposal had been circulated to Members but not yet to EPSRC due to finalising of the costings. Liam Blackwell advised that ensuring that the networking is working effectively is the key and the engagement of industry and that the project manager shouldn't be too concerned about the financial aspects. The Chair undertook to relay this to Luc Moreau. Cliff Jones undertook to re-write the first paragraph of the proposal and send the amended version to Luc Moreau.
ACTION: C Jones

UKCRCEC meeting held on 2 November 2015

Item 9.2 AOB Snowbird Conference – it was reported that Tony Cohn and Steve Furber would be attending (the latter only for a half day to report on REF).

Item 9.3 AOB Chair's comments – to write a report of interesting points that emerge from UKCRCEC meetings and distribute these via email.   **ACTION: Chair**

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair announced that the new Chair of UKCRC would be Ann Blandford. The appointment would formally commence in November 2016 and the Secretariat and the IET undertook to update the official documents and the UKCRC website.

ACTION: Secretariat/D Gladwin

4. CONSULTATIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

REPORT RECEIVED AND NOTED: Tony Cohn undertook to circulate the report on the recent AI and Robotics submission, joint with AAAI on which Stephen Muggleton had also given oral evidence as an invited AAAI rep. One consultation was on autonomous vehicles. As Martyn Thomas had been unable to attend the meeting, the Secretariat agreed to contact Martyn to ask Mike Fisher if he was willing to lead on this response.

ACTION: Secretariat

5. RESEARCH FUNDING AND POLICY

5.1 EPSRC Update

Liam Blackwell gave an update on some of the finer details of the funding situation. The Global Challenges research had been assessed as being ODA (Official Development Assistant) compliant and EPRSC was looking for further opportunities for research that was ODA compliant. Some of the Research Councils budgets for ODA compliant funding within and across Councils must be spent by 31 March 2017. Other funding allocated to specific RCs must be spent in subsequent years, and planning is underway on this.

The White Paper on knowledge economy had just been published, setting out plans to create a new body called UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) which would incorporate the functions of the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and HEFCE's research and knowledge exchange functions. The intention was for the new organisation to formally commence operating in 2018/19. Members were presented with a summary of the EPSRC allocation and Delivery Plan and updated on the Balancing Capability exercise. Strategy for all EPSRC Research Areas is currently being refreshed and various engagement activities are taking place with the community. The Chair has been involved through his membership of the ICT SAT. Edmund Robinson informed Members that he had emailed the CPHC Members list about the Balancing Capability call for evidence but had received little response. Miriam Dowle indicated that the plan was on track for publishing the new strategies for all Research Areas in January 2017 following the Council meeting in December.

There were still vacancies on the Strategic Advisory Team (including five vacancies on the ICT SAT) for both academic and industrial/user positions. Members were asked to communicate these vacancies through their various networks, with a deadline of 1 July.

5.2 Equality & Diversity in ICT

Miriam Dowle updated Members on progress with this project. The situation for Athena SWAN in August 2015 was that, of the 181 ICT departments in UK universities, there were 15 with Bronze and 2 with Silver. This had increased to the current position of 32 with Bronze and 2 with Silver but still none with Gold. In other words, 19% of ICT departments had some sort of Athena SWAN award, although there was less clarity at faculty level.

RCUK/EPSRC had been asked by Jo Johnson to take action on equality and diversity in order to lead by example, challenge bias and ensure fairness, and lead and support change. The aim would be to secure the services of a minimum of 30% female participants on peer review bodies and SATs. Another aim was to improve the data on disability and other sections of the population. Council would like to see a step change in the next delivery plan period.

The issue of bias within language in communications such as programme grant documentation was raised, avoidance of which would be key to ensuring gender equality. It was noted that comparisons had not been drawn with other Theme areas and Members suggested drawing comparisons with maths, which had made good progress in this aspect.

Specifically for the ICT Theme, a modified panel selection process had been introduced to increase diversity, including early career participants. E&D is a standard agenda item on Theme visits and is built into the early planning stages of events. EPSRC was keen to work with UKCRC on commissioning an independent investigation into the status of under-represented groups in ICT. Edmund Robinson indicated the issues that had been thrown up during the Wakeham/Shadbolt Reviews in relation to interpretation of data and understanding the wider environment. Executive Committee Members were invited to sit on an expert group to advise EPSRC during the commissioning of this investigation and Miriam Dowle would liaise with the new Chair with further details of the work involved.

ACTION: M Dowle/A Blandford/Members

From the UKCRC point of view, it was suggested that the Membership Panel could proactively seek applications from females and other under-represented groups and the new Chair undertook to liaise with the Membership Panel Chair on this issue.

ACTION: A Blandford/(K Jones)

6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION VOTING

Members discussed the tracked changes on the voting process. It was recognised that for the Single Transferable Vote system, if there was a tie situation then counting forwards or counting backwards could still result in a tie (although unlikely). Members AGREED that in the event of a tie following a forward/backward count, a coin toss would be the deciding factor. This amendment would be added to the process.   **ACTION: Secretariat**

The Constitution states: 'There are up to nine members of the UKCRC Executive, Members of the Executive serve for three years, with one third elected each year. Members of the Executive may be re-elected once, for a further three-year period; there must be at least a one-year gap before any subsequent re-nomination for election.' It was pointed out that if an existing member leaves mid-term or a new member takes up a position mid-term, it is not clear whether this 'partial' term counts towards the total number of terms of office. Members AGREED that this should be written into the constitution by Tony Cohn and the Secretariat to update the process accordingly.   **ACTION: T Cohn/Secretariat**

7. REPORTS

7.1 CPHC

Edmund Robinson introduced the report from CPHC which Members NOTED. One key area of work emerges from the Shadbolt Review report which contains 10 recommendations, four of which directly involve CPHC. Other projects being undertaken were in the areas of Cybersecurity and continuation of the work on graduate employability.

7.2 BCS Academy

Bill Mitchell provided a verbal update and informed Members that the aim of accreditation would shift to a recognition of knowledge, understanding and skills, with an increased emphasis on skills acquisition. There were two threads to the current work:
1) Simplification of the accreditation visit submission process to streamline it for HEIs
2) Understanding the engagement of the student with industry. This was not limited to industrial placements but also sought to identify and share best practice in imaginative approaches to this.

Another aspect to address was the notion that it is not just one size fits all, it would be helpful to focus on describing accreditation in different ways which will hopefully be of more value. One comment was that this approach suggests a focus on corporates rather than SMEs in terms of the value proposition. Bill indicated that it would be important to understand how all types of company would be affected by practice and value should be built by getting employers to explain to students what they need to be able to do.

On another note, Bill reported that DfE had signed off a grant for 2 years for CPD for school teachers.

8. AOB

There were no items of other business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 1 November 2016** at the **IET Offices, London** *[PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE/VENUE]*

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2017

Tuesday 14 March 2017 – IET Offices, London
Tuesday 6 June 2017 – BCS Offices, London
Tuesday 31 October 2017 – BCS Offices, London