

Minutes of the 48th meeting of the UK Computing Research Executive Committee on **Tuesday 5 June 2018** at **11:00** at BCS, The Chartered Institute of IT, Davidson Building, 5 Southampton Street, London, WC2E 7HA.

PRESENT

Ann Blandford (Chair)
Derek McAuley
Luc Moreau
Ahmed Kotb (IET)

Anthony Cohn
Jane Hillston (V)
David De Roure

Cliff Jones
Anthony Cohn

BY INVITATION

Adam Luqmani (EPSRC)
Edmund Robinson (CPHC)

Anna Angus-Smyth (EPSRC)

Sally Fincher (CPHC)

IN ATTENDANCE

Maxine Leslie (BCS)

APOLOGIES

David Benyon

Chris Johnson

Bill Mitchell/Julia Adamson
(BCS)

(V) = joining via GoToMeeting

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Chair welcomed Sally Fincher, Chair of CPHC to the Executive Committee meeting and also Anna Angus-Smyth of EPSRC, who was providing maternity leave cover for Samantha Francis.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 March 2018 were APPROVED for transfer to the UKCRC website.

ACTION: Secretariat/D Gladwin

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Action List was reviewed and the following updates, which would not be covered elsewhere on the agenda, were noted:

UKCRCEC meeting held on 13 March 2018

Item 3 – In relation to the action to agree a plan of action for making the most of time available to respond to calls, the Chair indicated that she would prepare an executive summary of the discussion from last summer about requiring Athena SWAN awards as a prerequisite for grant funding from EPSRC [now done] and that A Luqmani would check what data was available following a discussion with D McAuley (see minute 6.1 below).

UKCRCEC meeting held on 31 October 2017

Item 4.2 – For ORBIT services, it was noted that ORBIT was funded to undertake a number of activities. Some services were free but the payable services were designed to help with long term sustainability. J Hillston explained that the initial EPSRC funding was to create a market and to work on building a funding model for HEIs developing proposals to get help. A Luqmani indicated that after a phase of establishing themselves, the service has settled down and is now moving from a funded to a self-funding model.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

Members RECEIVED and NOTED the report. The Chair informed Members that the main item to note was the Informatics Europe Conference to be held in October 2018. No representative would be attending ECSS due to the inconvenient timing of the summit.

5. CONSULTATIONS & SUBMISSIONS

RECEIVED and NOTED the report.

6. RESEARCH FUNDING AND POLICY

6.1 EPSRC Update [A Angus-Smyth/A Luqmani – verbal]

A Angus-Smyth discussed the recent launch of UKRI, and the appointment of a new EPSRC Council and Executive Chair. The five UKRI led funds were discussed as part of this conversation.

- The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) was a key area of discussion, with conversation focussing on the outcomes of waves 1 and 2 of this fund, and the upcoming announcement of wave 3 challenges. A Angus-Smyth discussed the opportunity that ISCF currently presents to the Computer Science community, and encouraged UKCRC to facilitate greater community engagement where possible.
- The Strategic Priorities Fund is a newer UKRI fund, and the role of this fund within the landscape was discussed. It was noted that the recent UKCRC Network workshop focussed on the Big Ideas process, which EPSRC is using as an input to future waves of SPF.
- Talent and Skills, and particularly the current round of Future Leaders Fellowships were also discussed briefly.
- Less discussion of the Fund for International Collaboration and the Strength in Places Fund took place.

A Luqmani reported that the CDT call had now invited 200 full applications and an additional 34 full applications for AI CDTs. Information on this may be found on the website, with proposal writing commencing in liaison with industrial partners. The deadline is the end of July with interviews in October. The volume will mean a significant peer review exercise will be needed and Committee Members asked how EPSRC will ensure a standard approach. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion was now included as an assessment criteria in the CDT exercise, as a result of the mid-term review.

EPSRC is currently recruiting members for its strategic advisory bodies. There are vacancies available across all EPSRC areas and details of these can be viewed on the link below. In ICT, it is seeking to fill the following vacancies:

- Hardware (two vacancies spanning to electronics, photonics and architecture portfolios)
- Communications (with a pervasive technologies focus)
- Data Science (preferably someone who is also willing to interact closely with Maths advisory teams)

A Luqmani undertook to circulate this information to the UKCRC Membership. The closing date is 1 August.

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/governance/recruitment/membershipsab/>. *[post meeting note: this action is complete]*

The Committee had a long discussion about the short deadlines for calls issue, and in particular the difficulties these cause for some parts of the community. It was hard to establish that the short deadlines were affecting the quality of the research, but it would be important to quantify the impact on the community. C Jones and D McAuley undertook to work on a letter to the EPSRC CEO about this.

ACTION: C Jones/D McAuley

D De Roure indicated that he was currently writing a report on future data analytics for the SRC Council on which he would welcome input from the Executive Committee and UKCRC members.

6.2 Network Proposal [D McAuley – verbal report]

D McAuley reported that this workshop had been held in March to scope out ideas and look for volunteers to take these ideas forward with Executive Committee mentoring. Four groups emerged, two of which have produced reports. Derek McAuley was working with the leader in each of these two areas to submit the proposals in the correct format to EPSRC.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Membership Panel

RECEIVED and NOTED the report. It was good to see a growing membership and the Chair reminded Members to continue to encourage colleagues and contacts to apply, in particular rising stars.

7.2 International Matters [Luke Ong (IE)/Adam Luqmani (UKRO) – verbal]

IE: The report had not been received.

UKRO: A Luqmani reported that EPSRC now has a lead agency agreement with the Engineering Directorate of the National Sciences Foundation NSF (USA). For a longer time, there has been a trial agreement with a sub-division of this directorate (CBET) but the agreement had now been expanded to the whole engineering directorate, which includes some aspect of electronic and electrical engineering (EEE) researchers.. This lead agency agreement is now live and can be applied for, according to the rules on the website. There is a long-term plan to establish a similar lead agency agreement with the CISE directorate of NSF, which covers core computer science. Negotiations are at an early stage.

The Chair asked what was happening with global challenges research funds. A Luqmani replied that EPSRC is active in specific areas within GCRF, with more activity and funds within the UKRI central team.

A Angus-Smyth asked how EPSRC could help ICT communities engage with the opportunity of the UKRI administered GCRF fund.

7.3 CPHC [verbal]

S Fincher indicated that the report on the work undertaken in response to the Computing Graduate Employability would soon be published on the CPHC website.

Plans were being drawn up to hold more regular meetings with the CPHC Membership. These included a New Professors workshop at the 2019 CPHC Conference and a set of workshops called 'A Chair in 10 Years' for early career colleagues to help them build up their experience.

A Luqmani indicated that EPSRC had run early career workshops in the past and that there were resulting resources on the EPSRC website as a result of this. A Luqmani undertook to send the URL for this to S Fincher [*post meeting note: action complete*].

A Angus-Smyth indicated that EPSRC could come along to the event and talk to the slides.

E Robinson also reported that CPHC was looking to reach the more remote parts of country eg, Northern Ireland, which it would really like to support.

7.4 BCS Academy [B Mitchell]

Members noted that no report had been supplied. The Chair undertook to raise BCS representation on the Executive Committee with the BCS Academy Board Chair, James Davenport. **ACTION: Chair**

7.5 IET [Ahmed Kotb – verbal]

A Kotb reported that there will be a change in IET branding which will be announced on 10 October 2018. Other IET activities included:

- Cyber security activities affecting over 1000 people, many of which were young people. Discussions were being held with DCMS, BCS and (ISC)² in relation to career paths for young people. He undertook to circulate details. **ACTION: A Kotb**
- Liaison with industrialists in energy sector on cyber security.
- eVoting where the IET was looking to create a working group to address topical issues, including the Electoral Commission from a tech perspective. Members were asked to contact Ahmed if they want to be involved. Steve Schneider (Surrey) was chairing and also Martyn Thomas (ex-EC) was involved.
- The Immersive Economy on which a report has been produced on industrial applications. Will send report URL to the EC.
- 5G report was published last year and the next step was to speak to government.
- AI event in October 2018 would be focussing on health care, looking at applications and looking to partner with a law firm to ensure varied viewpoints are represented. If anyone wants to be involved or suggest speakers, let Ahmed know.
- Digital offer to organisations. The IET will be conducting interviews with a variety of organisations and will publish the results.

D De Roure reported that a Trustworthy IoT journal would soon be published.

8. ELECTION OF NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Chair reported that following some soundings, Jane Hillston had been proposed as UKCRC Chair and had agreed in principle to accept the role. There were no objections and Jane was duly appointed for 2018/19.

D McAuley left the meeting at this point.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

At the last meeting, concern had been expressed that the REF Panel had only been half appointed; this decision had subsequently been reversed and most members of the Assessment Panel for 2021 have been announced as well as the members of the criteria setting panel (which is convening this year). Depending on the expected profiles of submissions and the anticipated volume of work, a few additional people may be approached and appointed to ensure an appropriate spread of expertise.

A Luqmani informed Members that the Bond Report, which seeks to bring together mathematics interests, had been distributed for consultation. A Luqmani undertook to circulate the report for Members' responses. **ACTION: A Luqmani**

A Cohn left the meeting at this point.

It was reported that the call for Executive Committee nominations had gone out. There were three vacancies: A Cohn who had come to the end of his term of office, D Benyon who was stepping down and A Blandford who was standing as a Committee Member again. Members were asked to help with any nominations as none had been received to date.

ACTION: Members

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2018

Tuesday 30 October 2018 – IET Offices, London

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2019

Tuesday 5 March – BCS Offices, London

Tuesday 4 June – IET Offices, London

***Tuesday 29 October – BCS Offices, London**

*Co-located with the CPHC Committee meeting to be held in the afternoon (TBC). Opportunities to network will be available over lunch at 1pm.

NB: BCS and IET rooms subject to availability

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2018

Friday 7 December 2018 at 13:00 (virtual meeting)

ADDENDUM TO UKCRC EC MINUTES: CPHC-UKCRC COLLABORATIVE WORKING
(UKCRC Executive Committee Members joined the CPHC Committee for this item)

PRESENT – CPHC

Sally Fincher (Chair)
Rob Aspin

Edmund Robinson
Ray Farmer

Keith Miller
Miltos Petridis

PRESENT – UKCRC

Ann Blandford (Chair, UKCRC
Executive Committee)
Adam Luqmani (EPSRC)

Cliff Jones (UKCRC EC)

Anna Angus-Smyth
(EPSRC)

IN ATTENDANCE (Secretariat)

Maxine Leslie (BCS)

NB: minutes recorded below are also be included in the CPHC Committee minutes

CPHC-UKCRC COLLABORATIVE WORKING (UKCRC Executive Committee Members in attendance for this item)

A Blandford informed the meeting that UKCRC activities were currently on-going rather than completed actions. UKCRC was working with EPSRC on the Equality & Diversity initiative with C Maple. The main report had been published and was being acted upon. The next action for the Chairs to work on would be in 12 months' time. One of the key issues was the impact of short deadlines for research proposals.

S Fincher indicated that an important aspect would be the collection of community data (as discussed in the UKCRC EC meeting earlier) and offered to circulate any surveys to the CPHC membership on UKCRC's behalf.

A Blandford reported that there had been a network grant proposal meeting in March to bring together the Computer Science research community to think about big visions for research in the next 10, 20 and 30 years. Three Big Ideas had emerged, including partly formed research ideas which could be delivered by not just one group but across many. These 'big' initiatives would be circulated shortly. C Jones indicated that the meeting was set up specifically to ensure younger people could take the work forward (eg, new professors, rising stars, associate professors) to build an inclusive network.

E Robinson remarked that both bodies were engaged in responding to government requests for information. It would be more compelling if the community could speak with a co-ordinated (or single) voice. It was also useful to EPSRC if better ways of reaching parts of the community could be identified, in particular to widen participation by giving an early warning that something is coming down the pipeline.

A Angus-Smyth agreed that it was helpful to speak with one voice, but maybe this was more difficult in Computer Science compared with other areas such as chemistry where there is a strong advocacy voice. EPSRC could help with this, although there are no magic answers.

A Luqmani invited Members to bring ideas to EPSRC of how they would like to work together, and ways to help fill gaps in coverage to give CS a bigger platform, covering a wider area. **ACTION: Members**

A Blandford asked how UKCRC can continue to have value as an organisation. E Robinson expressed the view that UKCRC does a really good job on the research aspects and it was important to stay focussed, as CS research feeds into development, the needs of the country and leadership development programmes.

UKCRC had not been able to do much on policy as it is not currently a high priority in government. Once it comes out of the current phase, we may be able to have these discussions.

A Angus-Smyth indicated that EPSRC may bring together a group to address this as there is space for influencing policy outside of Brexit. There may be actions that other groups do very well that we could learn from.

There could also be overlap with planned CPHC workshops such as 'A Chair in 10 years'.

S Fincher had suggested during the earlier UKCRC Executive Committee meeting, that perhaps one of the CPHC workshops (at Conference or elsewhere) could be led by UKCRC. A Luqmani also suggested that EPSRC could do a workshop slot and offered to contribute slides from previous workshops.
ACTION: A Luqmani

A Blandford suggested that volunteers could be sought for roles, maybe from the international or industrial membership communities through the membership list.

Cliff Jones undertook to add Anna Angus-Smyth (covering for Sam Francis while she is on maternity leave) to JISCMail.
(UKCRC ACTION: C Jones)

The CPHC and UKCRC Chairs thanked everyone for their contributions.