

Minutes of ILCC/HCRC Staff Meeting

Thursday 4th October 2012, 12.30 pm

Attendance

Steve Renals (Chair), Robin Hill, Korin Richmond, Bonnie Webber, Kira Mourao, Miles Osborne, Jon Oberlander, Henry Thomson, Simon King, Chris Geib, Alex Lascarides, Ewan Klein, Johanna Moore, Mark Steedman, Charles Sutton, Alasdair Clark, Ron Petrick, Nicola Drago Ferrante

1. Admin Update

Steve briefed the group regarding the current situation with the Portfolio Managers and advised staff to contact the following people in the first instance with queries until things get back to normal:

Current grants – Avril Heron (level 3 admin)

Grant proposals, costings – Julie Young

Staff are also encouraged to speak to Joanne Pennie or Fiona Williams.

2. Research news/ opportunities

Steve informed the group that if anybody is preparing a Marie Curie proposal which will involve PhD students at Edinburgh (for example, an ITN), to let Barbara Webb know, as PhD fees for Marie Curie fellows are now the responsibility of the school (previously they were paid for by the university centre). The closing date for the next round of proposals is next March (2013).

There is a final call for FP7 applications in January 2013. The call is in the field of 'Creativity' and covers a broad remit. ILCC are in a good position to take advantage of this. It was reported that the 'Human Language Unit' is now called 'Data Value Chain'. Henry Thomson indicated he has contacts in Open Data if anybody needs a collaborator.

3. ILCC website

Steve asked for a volunteer to take over the management of the ILCC web site from Sharon Goldwater. The person would need to be able to start this month (October). Presently Claire Edminson updates to the site, which is overseen by Sharon. The website will need to be kept up to date and interesting as this is an important tool for attracting new PhD students to the Institute. Contact Steve Renals for more information.

4. Gender Equality survey / Athena SWAN award

Bonnie Webber encouraged the group to complete the online questionnaire in connection with the schools application for an Athena SWAN award. At present 39 members of staff within the Institute have responded. Bonnie reported that since 1998, the percentage of women recruited as academic staff overall in the school is 14.5 % (7 out of 48). However, the percentage of women currently on academic staff in the School is only 14.1% (13 out of 92), and even worse, the percentage of women hired onto the academic staff in the past five years (i.e., since 2008) is only 9.2% (1 out of 12), which is very disappointing.

Caroline Wallace (HR) has been appointed to oversee the Athena SWAN project.

5. Space for human subject experiments

Johanna Moore referred to the lack of space available for human subject experiments in the forum. Experimenters currently have to rely on the availability of meeting rooms to conduct experiments or use a room in the basement of the Psychology building, which is not fit for purpose and does not have any windows. There is also an issue for disabled access. It was agreed that a business case needs to be made for a designated room for experiments somewhere within the central area.

Maria Wolters will send an email to ask for staff to provide more information to enable a case to be made.

6. Any other business

Ewan Klein asked the question about how we could be more proactive in the recruitment of women into computing for future generations. It was suggested that one way could be to target young girls aged between 10-15. Bonnie Webber cited the Google programme, 'Mind the Gap' as an example of how this could be done. The programme, which started in 2008, is aimed at encouraging girls to pursue maths, science and technology education and has so far been very successful in persuading girls to continue with their studies in these areas. Jon Oberlander suggested that the College Liaison Committee could look at this.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place in November. Date to be confirmed.