

## **Minutes of ILCC/HCRC Staff Meeting**

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015, 1.00 pm**

### **Attendance**

Jon Oberlander, Frank Keller, Robin Hill, Kenneth Heafield, Caroline Hastings, Sharon Goldwater, Simon King, Amy Isard, Helen Pain, Henry Thomson, Bea Alex, Hiroshi Shimodaira, Johanna Moore, Lexi Birch-Mayne, Chris Lucas, Alex Lascarides, Adam Lopez, Uli Germann, Steve Renals, Nathan Schneider, Matthias Huck, Nicola Drago Ferrante

Apologies were received from Mark Steedman, Bonnie Webber, John Lee, Helen New and Kami Vaniea

### **1. Matters arising from previous meeting**

**1.1** JO informed the group that we cannot draw funds from the HCRC reserves to support students. HT was commended for advocacy for studentships last year.

**1.2** Alumni destinations- JO contacted alumni services but left it too late.

**Action: HT to follow up by contacting existing staff to record destinations of students upon graduation.**

**1.3** The reflection event was held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015. A follow up is to be scheduled to discuss how the institute is to move forward.

**Action: JO to set up doodle poll.**

### **2. Director's report**

JO informed the group that Victor Lavrenko had now left Informatics and thanked him for his work, especially over the last couple of years. Kami Vaniea and Kenneth Heafield were welcomed as new members of the institute. Helen New, Portfolio Manager will be going on maternity leave in December and Carrie McNamee has been appointed as her maternity cover.

### **3. Institute reflection update**

The first reflection meeting looked at where we want to go as an Institute. A discussion took place regarding what we can do more of and the challenges faced. Current problems include lack of lab space and dedicated video conferencing facilities. It was felt that there should be conferencing or 'go to' skype facilities in every meeting room. HP mentioned that it would be helpful to also have a room for interaction studies. It was suggested that one of the rooms in the basement may be used for this.

**Action: JO to raise an item at buildings committee for skype facilities in the meeting rooms**

### **4. Undergraduate research**

AL and SG both had undergraduate interns over the summer. One was funded through the CareerWISE placement scheme and the other through personal grant funding. SG mentioned

that people should include costs for an intern with their grant proposals. HT suggested that resource page on the Informatics web site and a link to CareerWISE would be very useful.

## **5. Finance and funding proposals**

The grant submissions and awards table was reviewed. It was noted that there have been twelve grant applications made since May 2015 with one unsuccessful outcome received so far. A further sixteen outcomes from previous submissions have been received, fourteen of which were unsuccessful, one is to interview and another is at the negotiation stage. The majority of submissions were for Horizon 20/20 projects.

The financial summary was reviewed. CH stated that income from overheads is down from the previous year. This is due in part to the lack of EPSRC grants. It was acknowledged that if we don't get any more EPSRC grants, then it would become increasingly difficult to fund students and support staff. FK conveyed that the success rates for EPSRC grants, with particular reference to the area of ICT is approximately 40%, which is considerably higher than the Horizon 20/20 success rate. EPSRC do not set deadlines, but a panel meet every couple of months to discuss applications. JO encouraged the group to apply for more EPSRC grants.

## **6. Grant writing support**

A discussion took place regarding this. It was felt that more could be done to help in this area. Suggestions were as follows:

**6.1** To create a wiki style page which would include deadlines. This would be preferable to receiving a constant stream of emails.

**6.2** Repository – It would be useful to be able to view copies of successful grant applications. One Portfolio Manager from each institute could be responsible for uploading these to a central intranet. The repository would need to be set up so that grants can be easily sorted.

**Action: JO to contact Knowledge Management**

**Action: JO to discuss at research committee**

**6.3** Institute peer review – Where time permits, it was agreed that staff should have somebody else to look at their proposal before submission.

**6.4** Better interaction with ERI – The group were informed that ERI have a team of professional writers. FK has used them and found them to be very responsive for certain elements such as impact. ERI also offer grant writing workshops, which focus on impact and evaluation.

**Action: CH to ask ERI if they will run an institute workshop**

RH reported that other institutes incentivise staff to apply for more grants (for example writing grant proposals count towards admin time). The workload model should include time for writing proposals. The group were informed that when Informatics was set up, it was decided not to incentivise staff for this as everybody should be doing research, anyway. ILCC currently have very limited resources, but we are willing to explore ways of supporting people who are actively applying for grants.

## **7. Publicity**

A discussion took place in relation to how we can attract good PhD candidates. It was noted that earlier in the year, AL and FK had sent out a mail shot to target academics and other universities, which had led to an increase in enquiries.

It was also felt that there should be more information on the ILCC web site, in particular the people page should contain more information about current students, including their research title, research interests and name of supervisor. Academics should be asking students to provide this information, which should then be forwarded to Shay Cohen. An alternative is to set up a web form which students could fill in themselves and supervisors should ensure that it is completed.

**Action: SC to implement**

**Action: To discuss with ITO and Grad school about this**

## **8. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting has been set for Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 1pm in 4.31/33.