

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**of the**  
**POLICY AND RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
**held on**  
**Wednesday, 16 September 2009**  
**2:00 pm – 4:00 pm**  
**Turing Room**

**Present:**

Dave Robertson (Chair), Colin Adams, Stuart Anderson, Alan Bundy, Gordon Duckett, Bob Fisher (substituting for Sethu Vijayakumar), Michael Fourman, Johanna Moore, Alan Smaill, Jon Oberlander, Mike O'Boyle, Don Sannella, Mark Steedman, Perdita Stevens, Phil Wadler, Chris Williams, Marjorie Dunlop (Secretary)

**Apologies:** Bonnie Webber

The meeting began by welcoming Mike O'Boyle as the new Director of ICSA (taking over from Nigel Topham), Alan Smaill as the new Director of CISA (taking over from Dave Robertson) and Perdita Stevens as the new Director of Computing (taking over from Steve Renals).

**Item 1 – Research Opportunities (Paper A)**

**EPSRC Bridging the Gaps**

Only one proposal per University is permitted for this call and the one chosen is an Informatics-led bid involving several other Schools. This has now gone to EPSRC.

**EPSRC Innovation and Knowledge Centres**

Liz Elliott of Centre for Systems Biology is interested in collaborating on a proposal. The committee agreed to support this. Liz had offered to call a meeting of a preliminary group involving herself, Andrew Miller and Mark Parsons. The committee suggested that Stuart Anderson, Jane Hillston (suggested "champion" on the Informatics side) and Colin Adams should attend. Guido Sanguinetti (soon to be arriving as a new lecturer) might also be involved.

**Action**

Dave will give Liz the go-ahead to arrange a meeting  
Dave will ask Jane Hillston to act as Informatics champion

**EPSRC Next Generation Resilience Sandpit**

Stuart Anderson reported that two of our research staff have expressed interest in attending this meeting.

**Action**

Stuart to encourage them to attend

**EPSRC Extreme Computing Sandpit**

Mike O'Boyle is interested in attending. Miles Osborne, Phillip Koehn and Paul Anderson were suggested as potentially interested.

**Action**

Mike O'Boyle will coordinate our engagement with this

## **Item 2 – Research Opportunities (Paper B)**

### **EPSRC Career Acceleration Fellowship**

This year College offers (optional) reviews with the aim of improving the quality of proposals. This was welcomed.

### **Royal Academy of Engineering**

Three applications from the University can go forward. A ranked list of Informatics candidates will go forward to College selection committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

### **Royal Society of Edinburgh**

We have one candidate for this at present. It is believed that we had not yet had a scholarship from this source so this would be a welcome addition.

## **Item 3 - EPSRC Review of Impact Plans (Paper C)**

There was a discussion about how to promote best practice in explaining impact in research proposals. The committee suggested that successful grant proposals (including impact plans) should, with each relevant PI's permission, be put on our Web site as exemplars.

### **Action**

Gordon will arrange for successful grants to be on a website

Jon Oberlander volunteered to convene a small meeting (involving Julie Young and Steve Renals) to look in more depth at impact plans.

### **Action**

Jon to arrange a meeting to discuss impact plans.

## **Item 4 - Managing Cross-School Funding Opportunities (Paper D)**

The committee supported the proposed arrangement where we identify an internal “champion” for cross-School funding opportunities as quickly as possible. Where possible, PRC should be involved in the discussion of who it should be. There is a need to ensure that more junior academics are supported in championing proposals.

There also is an issue of how to use the Web more effectively to support our research strategy. This will be an item at another meeting but a Wiki should be set up before that meeting so that people can record information.

### **Action**

Phil will set up the Wiki

## **Item 5 - Idea Lab (Paper E)**

Mike Fourman reviewed the Idea Lab. There should be the potential to stimulate cross-School research that will obtain follow-on funding.

## **Item 6 – Informatics Recruitment Strategy (Paper F)**

Gordon reported our, and the University's, current financial position. We have filled eight out of ten SICSA posts and want to recruit the remaining two as soon as we can. It was decided that we should attempt to recruit a post in neuroinformatics and a post in security.

**Action**

Dave will (re)start the process of recruitment for these posts

**Item 9 – International Review of Informatics Research (Paper I)**

We have committed to an international review of Informatics this academic year so must now plan it, starting by identifying the key questions that we wish to answer.

It was suggested that Alan Bundy could be an anchor for this activity.

**Action**

Gordon will send out, for information, the remit from the last International Review

**Action**

Dave will ask Alan to be the anchor

**Item 10 – Move of Informatics Papers to Edinburgh Research Archive**

This will be reported at the General Meeting.

**Item 7 – Reacting to National Student Survey Results**

Stuart Anderson and Dave Robertson reported on a meeting with Dai Hounsell to discuss the NSS results. Stuart has prepared a plan of action.

**Item 8 – New Academic Governance Committees**

Murray Cole and Don Sannella are on the QA Committee. We are not aware of Informatics representatives on any of the other three governance committees.

**Action**

Dave will investigate who is on the committees

**Item 11– Swine Flu Preparations**

Although the impact of swine flu remains uncertain, we discussed our preparations for it.

**Item 12– Head of School's Business**

Jim Bednar has (unusually) requested an out of cycle application for a sabbatical (Semester 2, January to May 2010). This was approved (without prejudice for any other applications).

**Action**

Dave will tell Jim that he has approval

**Item 16– Any Other Business**

Graham Spittle is visiting on 5 October 2009. Graham should be briefed about IKC, entrepreneurship, ProspeKT and the industrial front. It was suggested that Stuart Anderson, Colin Adams, Jon Oberlander, Nigel Topham and Mike Fourman should talk with Graham.

**Action**

Dave will involve the relevant people

**Item 17– Next Meeting**

Because of various time conflicts, the next meeting will be on 7 October 2009.