

Minutes of the 60th meeting of the UK Computing Research Executive Committee on Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 11:00, held online

PRESENT

Kevin Jones (Chair)	Andy Gordon	Jie Xu
David De Roure	Amir Hussain	
Michael Fisher	Chris Johnson	

BY INVITATION

Rob Aspin (CPHC)	Nadia Berthouze (Membership Panel Chair)
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IN ATTENDANCE

Maxine Leslie (BCS)	Ruth Lehane (BCS)
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APOLOGIES

Julia Adamson (BCS)	David Hutchison	Bill Mitchell (BCS alternate)
Michelle Busson (IET)	Alastair Irons (BCS Academy)	Edmund Robinson (CPHC)
Glenn Goodall (EPSRC)	Ahmed Kotb (IET)	
Jane Hillston	Rachel Lamb (EPSRC)	

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed Executive Committee members to the meeting and acknowledged apologies.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – Tuesday 8 March 2022

The minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 8 March 2022 were APPROVED and are now ready for transfer to the UKCRC website. *[Post meeting note: action complete]*

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No further progress has been made regarding Royal Society nominations and it is now too late for this year for nominations to be made. To avoid this happening next year, a working group will be established who will start work on this in January 2023. The deadline for nominations is June each year.

ACTION: Diarise RS nominations for January 2023 - **Secretariat**

Work on the UKCRC mission statement and skills list is still pending. The intention is to send the skills list to members and canvas for interest in being part of a working group to devise a revised mission statement, to be considered at the next meeting.

A Gordon suggested that data regarding skills could be harvested from the ORCID pages and suggested members could update their details there.

K Jones explained the process was started when Jane Hillston was Chair and part of the goal was to engage with members to create a more detailed list of expertise.

R Aspin suggested also using the CPHC mailing list to raise awareness of the existence of the skills audit.

D De Roure suggested that as the data would be appearing on the UKCRC website, that may motivate and encourage members to complete the skills list.

C Johnson clarified that the reason for devising a skills list was following approaches by government departments about areas such as 5G and 6G and it was decided to compile a list of expertise which was more amenable to government departments. The ACM classification or ORCID are not easy to interpret for those in the policy world.

The Chair confirmed that one of the aims of the skills list was to engage members further and compile a list of expertise which is more non-expert friendly, a 'one stop shop'. The goal will be to make it accessible to an external policy audience. The breadth of skills held by UKCRC is wider than any advisory body and that should be communicated and kept live.

The Chair confirmed that monthly meetings had been arranged for the Chairs of UKCRC, CPHC and the BCS Academy Board. Due to time constraints, the meetings have taken place with two of the three present, but future dates are in the calendar. The aim is to stay independent but have synergy between the groups.

A Gordon spoke about the mentoring programme and confirmed that six people had volunteered. A Gordon was meeting with Alastair Irons and Alan Hayes imminently to move this forward. The project is at an early stage, but the intention is to make a success with a small number of people then appeal for further mentors next year.

N Berthouze confirmed that her action to update the membership process on the website to make it clearer that applications must be supported by another member of the community had been passed to D De Roure to add to website. This will be completed after the meeting.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT [K Jones – verbal]

There will be discussions with individuals around the role of UKCRC and how visibility can be improved. K Jones is hoping to meet with Anthony Finkelstein and would like names from the Committee of any key players who may be able to help to contribute to this goal.

ACTION: Send K Jones names of anyone who may be able to contribute – **Exec Committee**

5. CONSULTATIONS & SUBMISSIONS [C Johnson]

UKCRC/2022/07

See paper.

C Johnson reported that the way the government is engaging is changing. Since the last meeting, C Johnson has been engaging in both pre and post consultation work as well as the consultations themselves.

C Johnson is concerned with the lack of responses to consultations and questioned whether it was time well spent. He is also concerned that sometimes the specific questions posed are not answered as part of the responses and therefore cannot be used. The members need to be encouraged to be more involved.

D De Roure thanked C Johnson for his time and work and explained that sometimes it was the case that individuals would be involved in multiple responses from different committees so

the response may come through another group. It may be useful to share what groups and committees the members are involved in.

C Johnson agreed that it would be useful to have a list of committees and involvements as there is often a mismatch between expertise and those who respond. Some do respond through their own universities too, but it is important to find synergy between what members are interested in and what they can be involved with. If there is genuine interest, there will be more motivation to be involved in a consultation.

A Gordon enquired as to whether there was a list of parliamentary committees and C Johnson added the following links to the chat:

UK govt consultations <https://www.gov.uk/search/policy-papers-and-consultations>

Northern Ireland, Stormont: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/corporate-information/secretariat/consultations/>

Scots consultations <https://consult.gov.scot>

Welsh: <https://gov.wales/consultations>

C Johnson explained that there are many unwritten rules and processes must be followed, even if the processes are not made clear. The secretariat team will upload responses annually following the AGM as nothing can be uploaded that hasn't been published. C Johnson also noted a couple of CSA posts coming up which would be good opportunities for members. The adverts will be forwarded on.

6. RESEARCH FUNDING AND POLICY

6.1 EPSRC Update [G Goodall]

UKCRC/2022/08

Apologies sent from both R Lamb and G Goodall. Paper noted.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Membership panel [N Berthouze]

N B had nothing new to report but noted that there had been no new applications for a long while and proposed reaching out to industry to encourage further membership.

KJ confirmed that to be nominated, there must be support from an existing member. It was suggested that the executive committee could think about who may be worth putting forward as members and then widening out to members. The clarity on industrial membership may mean there is a category which has not been reached before.

NB confirmed that she would be happy to discuss any potential membership.

ACTION: Think about potential members and communicate names to N Berthouze – **Exec Committee**

7.2 International Matters inc Informatics Europe [J Xu]

JX reported that Informatics Europe continue focus on open access related issues.

On 26 October there will be a workshop and prior to that, an online meeting to discuss the preparation. JX intends to attend on behalf of UKCRC if available.

KJ confirmed that members of the UKCRC do get invited along to IE events and meetings but often it is at short notice and if the meetings were known about further in advance, attendance is more likely.

JX noted that information about meetings often reaches him late and there is also an issue regarding funding. Often, by the time funding is approved, it is too late to book transport. ML noted in the chat that advance notice is important as both BCS and IET must approve the required funding.

JX confirmed that as soon as information is received regarding meetings and events, KJ will be consulted.

7.3 CPHC [R Aspin]

RA reported that CPHC had voted in a new Committee, Chair, secretary and treasurer. The initial meeting focused on the direction of CPHC over the next few years and how it will re-engage with the community. There was a focus on raising the profile of CPHC and how the CPHC will have an independent voice but work alongside UKCRC and BCS to raise all profiles. A more structured programme will be built as they come together as a new committee.

7.4 BCS Academy [A Irons]

Apologies sent. No report.

7.5 IET [M Busson / A Kotb]

Apologies sent. No report.

8. REF (Research Excellence Framework) results

KJ asked for this item to be added to the agenda as since the last meeting, the REF results have been published. KJ questioned how the outcomes may affect the UKCRC and if there were any trends or comments that would affect the state of health of computer research in the UK.

CJ added to following link to the chat:

<https://www.ukri.org/news/funding-bodies-launch-consultation-on-future-research-assessment/>

Funding bodies launch consultation on future research assessment

Today a consultation has been launched on the future UK-wide research assessment system.

CJ commented that it may be too recent, and time is needed to reflect on the processes in terms of submissions and that its too soon to discuss the health of the discipline. Much time is taken producing input for REF, but it has minimal affect on the funding settlement. The amount of time taken is not compensated for.

KJ agreed that the consultations often happen at the wrong point in the thought process and there needs to be impact at an earlier stage before government decisions are made. KJ questioned whether anything more could be done aside from just responding to consultations. The cost of the REF is in the region of a billion pounds and the results of the exercise are not clear.

DdeR suggested that if UKCRC were to do own review or health assessment, it wouldn't just look at Computer Science but could look round the edges too, engineering science for example.

CJ added the following links to the chat

[Funding bodies launch consultation on future research assessment – UKRI](#)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2836>, ARIA Act 2022

Advanced Research and Invention Agency Act 2022 - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament

Current version of Advanced Research and Invention Agency Act 2022 with latest news, sponsors, and progress through Houses

May 2022 ARIA update <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independence-of-the-advanced-research-and-invention-agency-aria>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advanced-research-and-invention-agency-aria-statement-of-policy-intent/advanced-research-and-invention-agency-aria-policy-statement>

KJ noted that there is disconnect on policy and assessment and interdisciplinary work.

ACTION: Discussion at later date when EPSRC present

9. Mentoring programme for Computer Science researchers in the UK [A Gordon]

See above

10. UKCRCEC 2023 Meeting Dates & Format

UKCRC/2022/09

The intention is for the next meeting on 25 October to be face-to-face in London, joint with CPHC. The UKCRC meeting will take place first, followed by a networking lunch and a joint meeting with CPHC. The CPHC meeting will take place in the afternoon.

KJ noted that there is a feeling of disconnect between the Executive Committee and the members and suggested a day to discuss strategy. It should be diarised well in advance to maximise attendance.

ACTION: Diarise strategy day - **Secretariat**

RA reported that CPHC had the same challenges regarding the disconnect and so too does the BCS Academy board so there is a need to find a common approach and spread the load and responsibility.

CJ noted the increasing workloads of many following the pandemic and how that should be considered.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No AOB

12. Date of next meeting

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2022 (11:00-13:00)

***Tuesday 25 October – BCS Offices, London**

AGM**Friday 2 December (14:00-15:00) – Online**

*to be co-located with CPHC Committee meeting if possible

NB: F2F/online format TBC; BCS and IET rooms subject to availability on these dates

UKCRC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN AT MEETINGS 2021-2

Outstanding Actions in Red

No.	Item	Item No.	Decision/Action	Responsibility	Complete
UKCRC Executive Committee Meeting ACTIONS from 7 June 2022					
3	MATTERS ARISING		Diarise RS nominations for January 2023	Secretariat	Complete
4	Chair's report		Send KJ names of anyone who may be able to contribute to visibility of UKCRC	Exec members	On-going
7	Reports	7.1	Exec to think about potential members and communicate name to N Berthouze	Exec members	On-going
8	REF results		Diarise discussion in future meeting – EPSRC to be involved	Secretariat	Complete
10	2023 Meeting Dates & Format		Diarise strategy day	Secretariat	On-going
UKCRC Executive Committee Meeting ACTIONS from 8 March 2022					
3	MATTERS ARISING: RS Sectional Comm. Nominations		Liaise offline with A Hussain and any other Exec member volunteers to re-establish the Working Group to suggest nominations. Names to go to A Blake by early June	K Jones	On-going
4	Chair's report		Email to be sent to members inviting them to be involved with work on vision statement. To be sent in conjunction with skills list	K Jones / Secretariat	On-going
UKCRC Executive Committee Meeting ACTIONS from 26 October 2021					
3	MATTERS ARISING Reports: Membership Panel	7.1	Update membership process on website to make it clearer that applications must be supported by another member of the community	N Berthouze (passed to D De Roure)	On-going
5	CONSULTATIONS & SUBMISSIONS		Add J Dracott to the Consultations WG member list. (Now G Goodall – D Hutchinson notified)	D Hutchison	On-going

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2022	*Tuesday 25 October – BCS Offices, London
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2022 14:00-15:00	Friday 2 December – Online

*to be co-located with CPHC Committee meeting if possible

NB: F2F/online format TBC; BCS and IET rooms subject to availability on these dates