

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

30 May 2017

BCS Central London Office, The Davidson Building

Present

Stefan Ruger [SR] (Chair), John Tait [JT] (Minutes), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Michael Oakes [MO] (Membership) , Udo Kruschwitz [UK]

Dial In

Haiming Liu [HL], Craig McDonald [CM], Tony Russell-Rose [TRR], Dyaa Albakour [DA] (Joined 1725), Georges Quenot (in lieu of [Lorraine Goeuriot](#) [LG] for the ECIR 2018 Organisers) (Joined 1720) [GQ], Andrew MacFarlane [AM]

Apologies

Nicola Ferro [NF], Ayse Goker [AG]

Not present without apologies

Ingemar Cox [IC]

1. Minutes of Previous IRSG Committee Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016 were approved unanimously.

2. Matter arising (covered under appropriate agenda item where possible)

Actions for the previous meeting:

- Jan 17.01 – Done
- Jan 17.02 – Done
- Jan 17.03 – Ongoing – now May 17.01
- Jan 17.04 – Done
- Jan 17.05 – Ongoing - now May 17.02
- Jan 17.06 – Done – reported via email prior to meeting
- Jan 17.07 – Done
- Jan 17.08 – Ongoing – Now May 17.03
- Jan 17.09 - Done
- Jan 17.10 – Ongoing – Now May 17.04
- Jan 17.11 – Ongoing – Now May 17.05
- Jan 17.12 – Done
- Jan 17.13 – Ongoing – Now May 17.06
- Jan 17.14 – Done
- Jan 17.15 – Ongoing – Now May 17.07
- Jan 17.16 – Done
- Jan 17.17 – Done
- Jan 17.18 – Ongoing – Now May 17.08
- Jan 17.19 – Ongoing - now May 17.09
- Jan 17.20 – Done
- Jan 17.21 – Ongoing – now May 17.10

SR reported he had been in touch with Chris Bishop, MD of Microsoft Research, concerning continued sponsorship of the KSJ Award but it turned out his secretary had forwarded the mail to a department which deals with sponsorship. SR had pointed out that the issue was not a standard request in view of the special relationship between KSJ and the MSR Cambridge Lab, and she promised to raise it with Chris Bishop directly.

SR reported that he had nominated UK as Karen Spärck Jones award panel chair by email to the committee. There were no objections, so UK was duly appointed for three years from April 2017.

JT would suggest some other routes to progress this matter if no action was forthcoming.

3. Sponsorship of ESSIR for €1,000

Agreed prior to meeting by email.

4. IRSG 2017/2018 Budget

The level of travel costs had been questioned by the Members Groups Finance Committee, but a justification had been provided in terms of the desire to hold a committee meeting outside London, the high level of attendance at committee meetings by telcon, and by the need for the Chair to attend ECIR.

5. 17 May 2017 ISKO Meeting Report

This meeting had been cancelled because of difficulties in arranging a suitable programme. A new ISKO representative has now been appointed and discussions are proceeding with a view to arranging a joint meeting in the course of 2018.

6. Other matters agreed by email

The appointment of UK as KSJ Panel Award Chair had been circulated and there were no objections, so UK was confirmed as the Panel Chair for the next three years.

7. Chair's Report

The chair noted he had attended ECIR 2017 on the group's behalf.

The chair had taken chair's action to ensure FDIA was organised as part of ESSIR 2017. See report under AOB.

No one had attended the Spring Members Groups Convention on the Group's behalf, and there were no other matters to report.

8. KSJ Award

Jaime Teevan (2016 KSJ Award Winner) had presented the relevant keynote at ECIR 2017. The talk was well received.

UK has issued a Call for Nominations for the 2017 Award, which will be distributed at the ACL and SIGIR Annual Conferences.

9. Recording Meeting Attendance for Elections

It was agreed to adopt the proposal previously circulated by JT **except** that there should be no distinction in the election records between attendance in person and attendance via telcon.

10. Publishing Minutes on the web pages

This item had been concluded in the January meeting, and had therefore been included in Agenda in error.

Commented [SMR1]: Maybe repeat this proposal here, or attach as paper for the committee meeting. If we only publish the minutes it's not clear what this proposal is.

11. ECIR 2017 Report

(Thanks to Julie Dixon, of Aberdeen Conference Services, who provided a longer report of which this is an abstract).

The ECIR 2017 programme included a new Doctoral Consortium, enabling wider student participation. Workshops, Tutorial and Doctoral Consortium were held on Sunday 9th April in Robert Gordon University, the main conference was held from 10th-12th April in the AECC, and an Industry Day was held on 13th April, again in the AECC.

There was a total of 162 registrations for the conference, of which 61 were students. The delegates came from a variety of locations: 53% from Europe, 33% from Asia, 11% from North and South America, 1% from Australia and 1% from Africa.

There were approximately 70 attendees at the four workshops and the single tutorial on Sunday 9th April. The day generally went smoothly with required facilities provided.

There were 135 full papers submitted, of which 36 were accepted (27% acceptance ratio), and 101 short papers submitted, of which 35 were accepted (35% acceptance ratio). There were also 12 demonstrations submitted, of which 7 were accepted (58% acceptance ratio) and 72 posters were presented during the conference. In addition there were three keynotes and a panel.

There were about 65 attendees at the Industry for the ten talks presented.

(Subsequent to the meeting the final financial outturn became available: the conference made a profit of £1395 on a turnover of £63792).

Five members of the committee had attended ECIR 2017. Two (generally very positive reviews) had been published in Informer.

On the whole, the conference had gone well, although the positioning and format of posters for the Poster Session on Monday could have been better communicated. In particular people displaying posters had problems finding the locations of their posters, and were unclear when they were expected to stand next to them.

The new format (with shorter talks, no parallel sessions, and posters for many full papers) was generally liked, although some attendees would have liked earlier notice of the change in format. Also the different classes of posters (short paper vs full paper with short presentation and poster vs full paper with long presentation) could have perhaps been better communicated.

The simplified, all inclusive, registration was liked, although it was felt it would have been good to include the Conference Dinner.

Although numbers were around 25% down on 2016 this was considered a reasonably good outturn in all the circumstances. SR commented that the numbers at even well attended sessions seemed low compared with the registered numbers (perhaps 50-60). (However subsequent to the meeting Joemon Jose, the Programme Committee Chair, advised that during two formal counts the numbers exceeded 100, perhaps indicating that the audience was rather lost in the auditorium used).

AG thanked those involved for ensuring the conference was a success in difficult circumstances, and this was supported by the committee.

SR specifically thanked JT for stepping in to the role of Acting General Chair.

12. ECIR 2018

GQ reported all was going well, and MINATEC is now reserved. The site offers a great deal of flexibility as numbers and needs for the conference emerge. The web site is now up.

JT will arrange for the ECIR.INFO domain to point to it.

The conference will take place over four days with Workshops and Tutorials on Monday 26 March, the main conference on Tuesday and Wednesday 27 and 28 March, and the final day of the main Conference and Industry Day in parallel on 29 March. The main conference will be single stream on the final day, and consideration will be given by the general chairs on whether to run one or two streams on Tuesday and Wednesday, and the extent to which they follow the model used in Aberdeen.

The Call for Papers is in draft form at present. The committee encouraged early distribution of the Call.

The proceedings will continue to be with Springer. Although it was expected to distributed proceedings only on USB, JT pointed out that the default Springer contract (certainly for 2017), combined with late submission of copy to Springer in 2017 meant that 25 copies of the paper proceedings were received too late to be distributed at the conference. Distributing these is potentially a significant cost to the conference (although a way round this was found for 2017).

There was also a discussion of more open reviewing processes. On the whole the committee advised the ECIR 2018 chairs not proceed with this, although they would be supportive of awards for best reviewers as was tried successfully at ECIR 2014 in Amsterdam.

It has been agreed to use EasyChair as the review system. Charges for this need to be included in the budget.

13. ECIR 2019

JT will identify a suitable deadline for receipt of proposals to run ECIR 2019 in August and will revise and distribute the call for proposals accordingly.

There was agreement an example proposal would be useful: JT will approach Nicola Ferro to see if he is willing to allow the Padua 2016 proposal to be used.

14. ICTIR report

CM reported ICTIR 2019 will be in Santa Clara, California.

15. Search Solutions 2017

Search Solutions 2017 will take place on Wednesday 29 November 2017 with the Tutorial on Tuesday 28 November 2017.

The Call for Tutorial is out. One speaker has been arranged, and it was noted that the schedule will accommodate a short presentation on the IRSG.

TRR proposed some additional awards, but the consensus from the committee was that the present format, which has only been used for one year is best left alone.

16. Webmaster

SR noted it was desirable that DA had a deputy Webmaster. DA pointed out that TRR had access to the server and database.

JT was asked to check TRR still was happy to act as deputy web master.

17. Making AGMs more relevant

The discussion focussed on the possibility of running a new event in October to incorporate the AGM.

In the end it was agreed to make a final decision about how the AGM will be run in 2017 at the September Committee Meeting, which precludes running the AGM as part of a new event in 2017.

It was suggested running the AGM on the evening after the tutorials (i.e. Tuesday 28 November 2017).

JT will review the timescales to ensure there is adequate time for the election of committee members between September and 28 November 2017.

IF expressed interest in using the new audio visual equipment to encourage a participation in AGMs.

A specific call to run an event to include the AGM in 2018 will be issued in due course.

18. Finance

The rollover of £5481 has been confirmed for 2016/7.

Discussion on the 2017/18 budget continues – see item 4 above.

19. Informer

There was a new issue produced in April.

As ever there was an appeal for contributions from members.

20. Any Other Business

20.1 Taxonomy Boot Camp

It was agreed to collaborate on the basis proposed. JT to advise TRR.

20.2 FDIA

Ricardo Baeza-Yates, on behalf of the ESSIR 2017 organisers had approached Leif Azzopardi who had declined and approached SR on behalf of IRSG. SR had agreed with Ricardo to appoint IF and HL as organiser, with Leif Azzopardi continuing for this year only for continuity.

Therefore, the 11th Future Directions in Information Access will take place as part of ESSIR 2017 organised by Ingo Frommholz, Haiming Liu and Leif Azzopardi.

IF asked for IRSG support to attend. JT suggested that support should not come from the normal IRSG budget, but IF should put together an application for special support from the BCS centrally.

21. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 19 September 2017 at 5pm at the BCS London office, Davison Street.

Actions Arising From Meeting

Action Number	Action	Action on
May 17.01	Publish Minutes of January 2017 Meeting.	DA/JT
May 17.02	LG to keep and pass on a record of what worked well and what did not in organising ECIR 2018.	LG
May 17.03	Include short talk on IRSG in Search Solutions 2017 programme	UK/TRR/IF/DA
May 17.04	Propose organising a Spring Meeting in Glasgow in 2018 or 2019	CM

May 17.05	Propose an additional Autumn Meeting to be run in conjunction with the AGM during the lunch break.	IF
May 17.06	Propose updates to the constitution to regularise the situation with ECIR representation and other related measures.	SR
May 17.07	Suggest changes to the constitution to clarify the role of the Vice Chair	SR
May 17.08	Contribute to IRSG Informer	All
May 17.09	Write an article for Informer about the Italian National IR Workshop	NF
May 17.10	Circulate call for one day workshops	IF
May 17.11	Suggest other routes to progress KSJ Award Sponsorship	JT
May 17.12	Modify Attendance Policy as agreed by the meeting and publish on web site.	JT
May 17.13	Get ECIR.INFO to point to the ECIR2018 Web site.	JT
May 17.14	Review submission dates for ECIR 2018 in the light of Springer Schedule.	EQ/LG
May 17.15	Provide JT with past call for proposals for ECIR.	UK
May 17.16	Distribute ECIR 2019 Call for Proposals.	JT
May 17.17	Check TRR is happy to continue as deputy web master.	JT
May 17.18	Investigate using new BCS London office Video Conferencing facilities.	IF
May 17.19	Issue call for a one day event to include the AGM.	IF
May 17.20	Advise TRR that the IRSG will collaborate with Taxonomy Boot Camp on the basis proposed.	JT
May 17.21	Contribute to Informer	All