

Minutes for the BCS-IRSG AGM
29th November 2012
BCS Central London Office, The Davidson Building

Present

M-Dyaa Albakour, Leif Azzopardi, Ingo Frommholz, Udo Kruschwitz (minutes), Mounia Lalmas, Andrew MacFarlane (Chair), John McCubbin, Tony Russell-Rose, Milad Shokouhi, Nilesh Thatte (Treasurer), Max Wilson

Apologies

Ayse Göker, Gabriella Kazai, Michael Oakes, Stefan Rüger, Dawei Song, John Tait, Jun Wang, Murat Yakici

1. Welcome from the chair

The chair welcomed everyone for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

3. Committee Members Reports*3.1 Chair*

The chair briefly outlined the events which the IRSG was involved in throughout the current year. The two main events were ECIR 2012 in Barcelona and Search Solutions 2012 in London. The events have been very successful.

Informer has been relaunched in January this year as a quarterly *online* newsletter using Wordpress. More people are now involved including Cathal Gurrin, Tyler Tate and Udo Kruschwitz. In general this has been a good move. All attendees were asked to contribute to future issues of Informer, and the idea of using a specific IRSG Informer hash tag on Twitter was brought up. It was also suggested that Martin White should be approached for a free copy of his new book to be reviewed in Informer.

The third annual Karen Spärck Jones (KSJ) award will be announced soon. The winner will be invited to give a keynote talk at ECIR 2013. The previous winners are Mirella Lapata (2009) and Evgeniy Gabrilovich (2010), no award was given in 2011. The key dates for the current round are:

- Announcement and deadline for nomination has passed
- 31 January 2013: notification of the prize winner
- March 2013: winner presents keynote at ECIR in Moscow

Ayse Göker is the contact person for the award. It was suggested that Ayse should look into an earlier deadline next year to allow more time between the announcement of the award and Springer's ECIR proceedings deadline.

ECIR 2012 was held in Barcelona in April 2012. The conference was very well run and also scientifically very successful. Both the number of submissions and the quality of papers were excellent. The details are as follows:

- 36 papers accepted, 28 posters and 14 demos
- Themes included: query representation, blog and online community search, semi-structured retrieval, applications, evaluation, retrieval models, categorisation/classification/clustering, image/video retrieval, efficiency
- An Industry Day with 9 talks followed the main conference
- Prior to the main conference there were 3 workshops and 5 tutorials
- Two well-regarded keynote speakers gave talks: Yoelle Maarek (Yahoo! Labs Haifa) and Paolo Boldi (University of Milano)
- Sponsorship came from Google, Bing, MS Research, Yahoo! Research and Yandex. It seems to have been more difficult this year to obtain sponsorship.
- ECIR was organised in cooperation with ACM SIGIR.

ECIR 2013 will be held in Moscow (24-27 March 2013), organized by Yandex and the National Research University, Russia. This will be the first ECIR outside Western Europe. The discussion of papers is to end soon with notifications expected shortly.

A single bid was received to host ECIR 2014. This bid was discussed at an IRSG meeting and after having received a number of revisions and the clarification of some issues raised during the discussion in the committee it was decided to award the 2014 conference to the University of Amsterdam.

In the discussion it was suggested that more potential bidders should be approached and invited to submit an application in the future to avoid receiving a single bid as it happened this year as well as last year.

The fourth International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval (ICTIR) will be held next year. This had been awarded to the University of Copenhagen and the Royal School of Librarianship and Information Science. The general chairs are Birger Larsen, Christina Lioma and Peter Ingwersen. ICTIR 2013 will take place between 29 September and 2 October 2013 in Copenhagen. The Web site has gone live at <http://www.ictir2013.org>. Some local sponsorship by VisitCopenhagen has already been secured.

3.2 Treasurer

The treasurer presented the finances for the financial year September 2011 - August 2012. The main events were ECIR 2012 and Search Solutions 2011. IRSG is financially very healthy. Over the last financial year the group has again made a surplus with an income of £6,778 and an expenditure of £2,936. It was pointed out that the surplus cannot be carried over.

In the discussion it was suggested that some of the funds could be used for an IRSG social event to be organised half-way through the year. It was also suggested that a number of students should be allowed to attend Search Solutions 2013 for free. The treasurer pointed out that any such proposals should go into the budget (due in

March). Andy reported that the (generally small) surplus generated by ECIR is passed on to the next year's organisers to sponsor students attending ECIR.

Regarding the KSJ award, Nilesh reported that according to the initial agreement this will be the last year for IRSG to get sponsorship from Microsoft Research, and it will need to be investigated what happens next year.

4. Election of new committee

The chair displayed a current list of committee members and nominations for the new committee. The chair asked for a block election of the committee. The list of committee members put forward for block election were as follows:

Leif Azzopardi, Stefan Rüger, Tony Russell-Rose, Ayse Göker, Murat Yakici, Andy MacFarlane, Michael Oakes, Gabriella Kazai, Dawei Song, Udo Kruschwitz, Nilesh Thatte, M-Dyaa Albakour, John Tait, Ingo Frommholz, Jun Wang

Proposed by Milad Shokouhi seconded by John McCubbin

The exact roles of committee members will be decided at the next committee meeting.

5. ECIR sponsorship issues

The general downturn in the economy has affected ECIR sponsorship. Despite this ECIR 2012 managed to make a small profit. The issue of sponsorship is an important point to discuss within the IRSG and it was decided to be brought up as a separate discussion point in the next committee meeting.

6. Any other business

Leif reported that the Future Directions of Information Access (FDIA) symposium will be organised for the fifth time next year. It will take place in Granada as part of the ESSIR summer school. The PC is to be set up soon. Leif also reported that together with Max Wilson he will co-chair IiiX 2014. It was discussed whether ACM should be approached as a publisher, currently the BCS electronic workshop proceedings (eWiC) are being used.

Leif pointed out that he will organise an IR workshop in Glasgow next year and an IRSG committee meeting is planned to be co-located.

Leif asked the AGM to give the outgoing chair a round of applause for serving as chair over a period of four years. This was seen as a good idea and people applauded until it was time to sample the wine.

7. Closure of meeting

The chair declared the meeting closed.