

**Minutes for the BCS-IRSG AGM
21st October 2010
BCS Central London Office, The Davidson Building**

Present

M-Dyaa Albakour, John Collomosse, Ayse Göker, Andrew MacFarlane (Chair), Udo Kruschwitz (minutes), Stefan Rüger (Treasurer), Tony Russell-Rose, Nilesh Thatte, Vishwa Vinay

Apologies

Dawei Song, Leif Azzopardi, 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 outlined the events which the IRSG was involved in last year, primarily ECIR 2010 (with ECIR Industry Day), Search Solutions and the IRF Symposium. All events have been very successful.

Tony Russell-Rose has continued to do a fantastic job on the group's quarterly newsletter *Informer* in very difficult circumstances. *Informer* activity has slowed down a bit recently because we have run out of contents. The newsletter will be relaunched in January with a bigger team including Tony Russell-Rose and Udo Kruschwitz (co-editors), Cathal Gurrin (book editor), Tyler Tate (feature editor), Andy MacFarlane (events editor).

Murat Yakici has just revamped the website. The site is an important resource for the IR community. Murat and Tony will coordinate activities to transform the Web site into something more user-centred.

The annual Karen Spärck Jones (KSJ) award has been awarded for the first time this year. The 2009 winner is Mirella Lapata (University of Edinburgh) who was invited to give a keynote talk at ECIR 2010. The key dates for the next round of applications are:

- end of November: deadline for nominations
- 15 December 2010: notification of the prize winner
- March 2011: winner presents keynote at ECIR

Ayse Göker is the contact person for the award who asked members of the IRSG to be pro-active in putting forward names. Ayse will also look into the possibility of producing a small replica of the actual physical award that will stay with the recipient once the award has been handed over to the next winner.

ECIR 2010 was held in Milton Keynes. It was a very well run and successful conference with an excellent number of submissions and high paper quality. The details are as follows:

- 44 papers accepted from 202 papers submitted (acceptance rate of 22%), 61% of authors of accepted papers were students
- 23 Posters, 5 Demonstrations from 73 submissions (acceptance rate of 38%)
- 2 well regarded keynote speakers + KSJ Keynote speaker
- Sponsorship from GCHQ, Google, MS Research, Yahoo! Research, IRF, Exalead, Active Web Solutions, Funnelback, Apriorie, Flax, Springer
- 1st KSJ Award

ECIR 2011 will be held in Dublin (18-21 April 2011), organized by Dublin City University. The Workshops/Tutorials/Papers deadline has past, Posters and Demonstrations are due on 29th October 2010, notification will be 6th December 2010.

Bidding for ECIR 2012 was competitive with 2 excellent bids submitted to the IRSG, one Spanish and one Austrian. After a lengthy discussion it was decided to award the 2012 conference to the Barcelona bid (Yahoo! Research and Pompeu Fabra University).

After taking over responsibility for the International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval (ICTIR) last year the IRSG will organise the next conference in 2011 for which 4 bids were received, three European and one Australian. As with ECIR the bids were all very strong and it was finally agreed that ICTIR 2011 should be awarded to a joint Swiss/Italian bid (University of Lugano and Fondazione Ugo Bordoni). The conference will be held in Bertinoro, Italy, in September 2011.

A special issue of the Journal of Information Retrieval on Teaching and Learning in IR (TLIR) has been published with heavy involvement of IRSG committee members. The special issue continues to build on the theme from the TLIR 2007 and TLIR 2008 workshops, and papers were drawn from a selection of the best papers from the first workshop.

Another edited Springer book with Andy MacFarlane as editor is about to be published. 37 chapter proposals have originally been received (all of them reviewed by the editors), following that 16 full chapters were submitted (reviewed by a PC). Of these, 13 chapters were accepted, 3 rejected (acceptance rate: 81% on received chapters, 35% on proposed contributions). The final versions of the chapters are due 27th October 2010. The timeline slipped slightly, but the book should be published later this year, early next year.

3.2 Treasurer

IRSG is financially very healthy and has never delivered a deficit (without even charging membership fees). Over the last financial year the group has again made a small surplus with an expenditure of £12,100 and an income of £12,500.

The treasurer reported that BCS has taken more control over the IRSG finances over the last year. Financial Management is now with BCS head quarters. As a result budgeting has become more difficult. Parts of the proposed budget for next year were turned down by BCS with the argument that the IRSG is not supposed to sponsor community events. BCS assumes that each event should be managed so that all expenses are recovered. The originally proposed budget was around £12,000 but will now need to be revised.

A number of concerns were raised in the following discussion including the danger that we might lose our connections to the research communities in other countries, e.g. SIGIR, as a direct result of the constraints imposed by BCS. It was felt that the IRSG needs to keep its links with SIGIR.

It was suggested that the IRSG should try to turn the rules to its advantage where possible.

Tony indicated that the SGs started to become more autonomous over the years and the current development seems to be a move back to where the SGs were originally meant to be (i.e. closely linked to the BCS).

4. Election of new committee

The chair displayed a current list of committee members and nominations for the new committee. Three AGM attendees put forward their name for the new committee:

Vishwa Vinay, Microsoft Research
Nilesh Thatte, Fujitsu
M-Dyaa Albakour, University of Essex

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, Monica Landoni, Murat Yakici, Andy MacFarlane, Michael Oakes, Gabriella Kazai, Dawei Song, Mike Taylor, Udo Kruschwitz, Vishwa Vinay, Nilesh Thatte, M-Dyaa Albakour

Proposed by Andy MacFarlane, seconded by Tony Russell-Rose.

Exact rolls will be decided at the next committee meeting.

5. Any other business

No other business was brought forward at the meeting.

7. Closure of meeting

Chair declared the meeting closed.