

# **BRITISH COMPUTER SOCIETY INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SPECIALIST GROUP**

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **1. TITLE**

The name shall be the BCS Information Retrieval Specialist Group (BCS IRSG) of the British Computer Society.

### **2. INTERPRETATION**

In this constitution, except where otherwise required:

"Group" shall mean BCS Information Retrieval Specialist Group.

"BCS" shall mean British Computer Society.

"Member" or "Members" shall mean a person or persons qualified under article 4 of this constitution.

"Committee" shall mean that body of members elected, appointed or co-opted under article 5 of this constitution.

"Officer" or "Officers" shall mean the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and such other appointments which the Group may make under article 5 of this constitution.

"Professional Member" or "Professional Members" shall mean a person or persons holding membership of the BCS in one of the following grades: Fellow (FBCS) or Member (MBCS)

"Chartered Member" or "Chartered Members" shall mean a person or persons holding membership of the BCS in one of the following grades: Fellow (FBCS CITP) or Member (MBCS CITP) and entitled to use the designation "Chartered Information Technology Professional."

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The aims of the Group include supporting communication between researchers and practitioners, promoting the use of IR methods in industry, and raising public awareness. The Group produces a newsletter called The Informer; organises an annual conference --- European Conference on Information Retrieval Research, ECIR --- and sponsors and organises other conferences, workshops and seminars.

Information Retrieval (IR) is concerned with enabling people to locate useful information in large, relatively unstructured, computer-accessible archives. Much of the technical challenge in IR is in finding ways to represent the information needs of users and to match these with the contents of an archive. In many cases, those information needs will be best met by locating suitable text documents, but in other cases it may require retrieval of other media, such as video, audio and images. In addition, IR is also concerned with many of the wider goals of information/knowledge management, in the sense that finding suitable content may only be part of the solution --- we may also need to consider issues associated with visualisation of the contents of an archive, navigation to related content, summarisation of content, extraction of tacit knowledge from the archive, etc.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

#### **4.1 Qualifications**

Persons eligible for membership of the Group shall be any member of the BCS and others interested in the objectives and activities of the Group.

#### **4.2 Admission**

All applicants holding BCS membership at any level shall be admitted without charge. Other applicants shall be admitted to membership after payment of the annual subscription in accordance with article 7.5.

#### 4.3 Resignation

Any member of the Group may resign by giving notice in writing, or via email, at any time but shall not be entitled to a refund of any subscription paid.

#### 4.4 BCS Membership

It shall be incumbent upon the Committee to encourage all members of the Group to apply for membership of the BCS.

### **5. COMMITTEE**

#### 5.1 Members

5.1.1 The business activities of the Group shall be controlled by the Committee which shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary and such other Officer posts as may be required and six other members who shall be elected at each AGM and/or by Remote Voting.

5.1.2 The committee shall have the discretion to decide whether an election takes place at the AGM, by Remote Voting or both.

5.1.3 The Chair, Treasurer and at least one more elected member shall be professional or chartered members of the BCS.

5.1.4 The Chair shall be responsible to the BCS for the finance, policy and activities of the Group.

#### 5.2 Eligibility of Officers for Re-Election

5.2.1 The Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Secretary shall normally be elected for a term of two consecutive years.

5.2.2 No Officer may normally hold an office for more than a maximum of two consecutive terms each of two consecutive years.

5.2.3 The immediate past Chair shall be ex-officio a member of the Committee for a term of one year.

#### 5.3 Nominations

The name of any member accepting nomination for election or re-election as an Officer or as a Committee member should be submitted in writing, or via email, to the Secretary 21 clear days prior to the date of the AGM by two members of the Group and with the written consent of the nominee. A request for nominations of Officers, where applicable, and Committee members shall be made in good time before the Committee election in a similar manner as the notice of the AGM.

#### 5.4 Election of the Committee

5.4.1 If there is more than one nomination for any Officer position, an election will be held at the AGM and/or by Remote Voting. Remote Voting shall be operated by BCS Headquarters. In the case that both methods are used BCS Headquarters will generate a list of who has voted (but not what the vote was) so that at the AGM those who have already voted remotely cannot do so in person.

5.4.2 If the nominations number the same or less than the remaining vacancies for the Committee members, all shall be deemed to be duly elected.

5.4.3 In the event of there being more nominations than vacancies, the elections shall be by ballot. Each member present may vote for up to as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled

and no more.

5.4.4 Committee members shall normally be elected for a term of two consecutive years.

## 5.5 Resignation from the Committee

5.5.1 In the event of any elected officer resigning, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy.

5.5.2 In the event of a committee member resigning, their place may be filled by co-option for the residual of that individual term.

## 5.6 Co-option to the Committee

The Committee may normally co-opt to their number up to a maximum of three members serving at any one time. Co-opted members shall have the same voting rights as other members of the Committee.

In addition, one current General Chair of the Group's annual conference ECIR - or their nominee - and one immediate past General Chair – or their nominee - shall be co-opted on to the Committee. At the end of the ECIR conference the current General Chairs of ECIR become immediate past General Chairs, and the designated General Chairs for the following ECIR become current General Chairs. Once known, one designated General Chair of the ECIR following the immediate next one – or their nominee - will normally be invited to committee meetings as observer, but does not have voting rights.

## 5.7 Committee Meetings

5.7.1 The Committee shall meet at such times and in such places as the Committee may determine and in so far as is practicable they shall meet at least three times per year.

5.7.2 All Committee members shall normally participate in at least one Committee meeting per year by physical attendance, telephone or video conference.

## 5.8 Quorum

5.8.1 33% of the elected and co-opted members of the committee including either the Chair, the Vice Chair or the Treasurer shall constitute a Quorum.

5.8.2 Should a committee meeting be or become inquorate draft minutes will be circulated by email. If no objections to any decisions proposed by the inquorate meeting are received by the Secretary or Chair within 14 days those decisions shall be binding.

## 5.9 Voting

At any Committee meeting each member of the Committee present, save the Chair, shall be entitled to one vote but, in the event of equality, the Chair will use his/her casting vote.

## 6. GENERAL MEETINGS

6.1 The AGM of the Group shall normally be held in the UK at an open meeting of the group in the autumn, at the direction of the Committee, for transacting the following business:

- a. To receive the Annual Report of the Chair
- b. To receive a financial statement of accounts
- c. To elect the Officers and Committee where necessary for the ensuing year
- d. To consider any other business relevant to the AGM

## 6.2 Notice of General Meetings

6.2.1 The notice shall be conveyed in writing or by email to every member of the Group.

6.2.2 The notice shall be issued at least 28 clear days before the date of the meeting and shall indicate the business to be transacted.

6.2.3 The accidental omission to give notice of any meeting or non-receipt of such notice by any person entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate any resolution passed.

### 6.3 Chair

At all General Meetings and meetings of the Committee the Chair of the Group, or in his/her absence the Vice-Chair, shall be Chair. If both are absent, the members present shall appoint one of their number to be Chair.

### 6.4 Voting

6.4.1 At any General Meeting each bone fide member shall be entitled to one vote per motion. Voting at any meeting shall be determined by a show of hands unless a ballot be demanded by at least one third of the members present.

6.4.2 Any bone fide member of the group may appoint a proxy to vote in their stead at a General Meeting. The member must advise the Secretary of the Group of the name of the proxy at least 7 days in advance of the meeting.

### 6.5 Quorum

At any General Meeting of the Group, ten members shall constitute a quorum. A list of members present at the general meeting will be kept.

### 6.6 Absence of Quorum

At the discretion of the Chair, any meeting may proceed with its business, but all resolutions passed must be confirmed at the first subsequent, quorate General Meeting.

### 6.7 Extraordinary General Meetings

Extraordinary General Meetings of the Group shall be convened by the Secretary by direction of the Committee or on the request of ten members.

## 7. FINANCES

7.1 All finances of the Group will be managed by BCS Accounting Service.

7.2 The Treasurer shall monitor and keep Records of Account as provided by the BCS Accounting Service and shall present as complete a statement of accounts as possible each year to the corresponding AGM.

7.3 The financial year of the Group shall commence on the first day of September each year.

7.4 The funds of the Group shall be under the control of the Committee.

7.5 The annual subscription rate shall be such amount as the Committee may from time to time decide. Currently the subscription rate is set at zero.

7.6 The annual subscription, where levied, shall normally become due on 1 January.

7.7 All membership fees and any surplus arising from the activities of the Group shall be managed in accordance with the financial guidelines agreed by the BCS.

## 8. RECORDS

8.1 A correct record of the proceedings of all Committee and General Meetings of the Group shall be kept by the Secretary.

8.2 The Membership Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a correct record of members of the Group.

## **9. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Public announcements concerning the Group shall be made only by or with the consent of the Chair.

## **10. LOCAL MEETINGS**

Local meetings of the Group may only be held with the consent of the Committee and the organiser shall notify local BCS branches and other relevant specialist groups.

## **11. BCS**

The Group shall be subject to the BCS Charter, Byelaws, Members' Regulations and Trustee Board Regulations.

## **12. WINDING UP**

If upon winding up or dissolution of the Group, there remain, after the satisfaction of all its liabilities, any assets, they shall be vested in the BCS.

## **13. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The constitution may be altered at any time by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a General Meeting and/or Remote Voting.

Final Approval by the IRSG AGM, [Putteridge Bury country house, 18.09.2019](#)