

UKCRC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the UK Computing Research Committee held on **Friday 3 December** between 14:00 – 15:00 via video/teleconference.

Attendees:

Kevin Jones	UKCRC Chair
Michael Fisher	Executive Committee Member
Andrew Gordon	Executive Committee Member
Jane Hillston	Executive Committee Member
Amir Hussain	Executive Committee Member
Nadia Berthouze	Membership Panel Chair
Russell Beale	Member
Anthony G Cohn	Member
David Duce	Member
Stephen Furber	Member
Jeremy Gibbons	Member
Cliff Jones	Member
Mark Josephs	Member
Morris Sloman	Member
V Anne Smith	Member
Maxine Leslie	UKCRC Secretariat
Ruth Lehane	UKCRS Secretariat

Apologies:

Ann Blandford	Member
Alan Bundy	Member
Karim Djemame	Member
David Hutchison	Executive Committee Member
Christopher Johnson	Executive Committee Member
Michael Luck	Member
John McDermid	Member
Brian Randell	Member

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM [UKCRC/AGM2020/05]

The Chair introduced himself and welcomed Members to the AGM. The apologies for absence were received as above and the minutes of the AGM held on Friday 4 December 2020 were recorded as a true record.

2. Matters arising from minutes

All actions from the previous Annual General Meeting had been completed.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT – K Jones

RECEIVED & APPROVED - [Appendix 1](#)

The Chair thanked J Hillston for providing most of the report and for all the work completed during her term of office. A real difference has been made to the way UKCRC has been working.

K Jones outlined certain items in the report, namely the situation in Leicester. The restructuring at Leicester University led to a difficult discussion about the role of particular aspects of Computer Science within the discipline. There was real concern that a very narrow view of what was useful research was being taken by the senior management in Leicester. So UKCRC drafted a letter, and a response had been received. The outcome was that several staff took voluntary redundancy or moved on. The UKCRC registered concern about how research was characterised there, as did several other organisations. It was important that the voice of the UKCRC was heard.

K Jones reported that UKCRC was trying to increase membership from industrial colleagues. The UKCRC tried hard to ensure the criteria for membership were relevant with an industry research pathway, not just an academic research pathway and it would be good to get more nominations for people from an industrial pathway to balance out the membership.

K Jones reported that elections were held and Julie McCann and Faron Moller were elected to the Membership Panel.

For the Executive Committee, m c schraefel and Ann Blandford had reached the end of their terms and Bashar Nuseibeh had stepped down. Amir Hussain and Andrew Gordon have been elected to two of those positions for a term of 3 years. As B Nuseibeh stepped down before the end of his official term of office, Michael Fisher has been elected to serve the remaining two years of this term. Jie Xu has been appointed for a further 3 year term of office.

K Jones reported that UKCRC was involved with the Informatics Europe Curriculum Framework, in particular Alastair Irons who responded on UKCRC's behalf to that consultation.

With regard to the EPSRC review of Doctoral Education, J Hillston attended on behalf of UKCRC and out of that were a couple of key areas in which work will continue.

4. CONSULTATIONS & RESPONSES REPORT – C Johnson

RECEIVED & APPROVED – [Appendix 2](#)

C Johnson submitted a video update.

K Jones asked if there were any questions to be fed back to C Johnson and thanked him for submitting the video report.

J Hillston recorded her thanks on behalf of the membership to C Johnson for another year of consultations and putting them together on behalf of the UKCRC.

5. MEMBERSHIP PANEL REPORT – N Berthouze

RECEIVED & APPROVED – [Appendix 3](#)

N Berthouze introduced herself as the Chair of the Membership Panel and reported there were changes to the Panel with the election of two new members, Faron Moller and Julie McCann, as mentioned above.

The membership procedure continues to be the one that was put in place by K Jones. The Panel asks for a CV and if possible, a nomination from a member of the UKCRC. The criteria have been revised to invite more industrial applications. There have been applications from five new members of which four have been approved, one of which is from industry and there are few other applications coming in. The enquiries coming from industry have helped to refine the criteria, making the requirements clearer and avoiding the impression that only those with an academic profile are invited to apply.

K Jones thanked the Membership Panel and acknowledged the difficulty in making the criteria work well across both academia and industry.

A Gordon asked whether there were any stats or analysis on the demographics of the membership; how many members there are, how long they have been members by age and gender, nation, or university for example.

K Jones explained that the membership list is visible and annually new joiners have been discussed.

J Hillston stated that both she and A Blandford had pushed towards increasing gender diversity as there are relatively few women.

M Leslie reported that there is historical information and that new members by year have been recorded for 8 or 9 years so that information could be compiled and analysed.

K Jones would like to see if the UKCRC are going in right direction with diversity and assured A Gordon he would receive a response. N Berthouze offered help if required.

ACTION - Secretariat

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

M Josephs congratulated K Jones in taking on the role as Chair and noted how the UKCRC website has been recently updated but there is no longer a list of members on the site. There is a list of people by specialism, but his name wasn't there. M Josephs wondered how the list had been created and how it may need some consultation with members to ensure that it reflects people's interests.

M Sloman agreed and noted that his name was not on the list along with a few others.

N Berthouze explained how the website is being redesigned and there should be two lists – a full list of members and list of members with their specialisms.

K Jones noted that there have been some issues with the website during its migration to being a subdivision of the IET website. It is still a work in progress, but an action will be taken to ensure that the membership list is on the website *[action complete]*.

K Jones was unsure who decided which categories people sat under in terms of their specialist subjects and that maybe more thought was needed about how it's put together. V Anne Smith remembered a form being sent to her asking for her asking her to tick her subjects.

M Leslie confirmed that previously a form was sent to all members to express their interests and expertise which has now become part of the new member process.

K Jones suggested sending the form to all the members again to see if they would like to add their interests & expertise so that members can be called on to contribute to consultations and giving evidence.

ACTION – Secretariat

There had been some issues with member not receiving papers for the meeting and the inadvertent creation of a second MS Teams meeting room. The Secretariat apologised and undertook to investigate this so that it does not happen again. M Leslie also undertook to write to Cliff Jones who had not been able to join the meeting at all due to this error.
[action complete]

K Jones noted that there had been several people who mentioned that they feel there is very little contact between the Exec and the membership. One thing to be considered over the coming year is what the Exec need to be doing to communicate with the membership. K Jones asked that if there is anything the members would like to see from the Exec then to let him know. It would be useful

to know what would be considered valuable and useful and the connection can be maintained.

ACTION - Members

A Gordon reported on a conversation he had with Alan Hayes (Bath University) and Alastair Irons (Sunderland University) about the organisation of a mentoring scheme for early career academics, particularly aimed at academics in CS appointed at lecturer level. They had run a pilot programme during the previous academic year with training sessions, cross university mentoring and buddying. Last year, 52 early career colleagues participated in the training sessions. About 6 to 10 universities are currently involved but the plans are to open this up across the sector. They would like input from UKCRC on how to involve members in this initiative and if there are any companies which may provide some funding.

A Hayes and A Irons have also been speaking with Julia Adamson at BCS about setting it up as a BCS Specialist Interest Group for education, Higher Education or CS in Higher Education. A Gordon is going to stay involved with the initiative.

K Jones thanked all for attending the meeting and for future involvement in the coming year.

Appendix 1 – Chair's report
Appendix 2 – Consultations & Responses report
Appendix 3 – Membership Panel report

ACTIONS

- 2021.1** Membership Panel report
Compile data about the membership of the UKCRC. **Secretariat**
- 2021.2** Any Other Business
Distribute form to all members to establish their interests and expertise. **Secretariat**
- 2021.3** Any Other Business
Members to notify the Exec regarding what communications they would consider to be useful and valuable. **UKCRC Members**

UKCRC 2021: Chair's report

Change of Chair: After 3 years of exemplary service in the role, Jane Hillston stepped down in November and I (Kevin Jones) was elected to the chair. We thank Jane for all of the work she has done for ukcrc over her term and particularly in the last year, including providing most of the content for this report.

Restructuring and threatened redundancies at Leicester: Many of us were shocked by the plans for restructuring at the University of Leicester which led to the closure of the School of Informatics and the School of Mathematics and Actuarial Science, to form a new School focused on AI and Data Science. After consultation with affected staff the Chair wrote to the VC and other decision makers at Leicester.

We received a response to the letter that thanked us for our views and feedback and said that they would be considered as part of the ongoing consultation process.

After the 90 day consultation process we received the following update from Roy Crole, formerly Deputy Head of School in Informatics at Leicester:

A brief reminder that all staff, from Pure Maths and Foundations of Computing, were placed into a redundancy pool. Past research was assessed to see how well it fitted with a new School focus on AI, Data Science and Computational Modelling. Those whose research was deemed a poor fit would lose their jobs.

In Informatics

- *Five staff deemed aligned at screening-interview were taken out of redundancy (includes me)*
- *One staff member deemed un-aligned post screening-interview was eventually deemed aligned and was taken out of redundancy (so, they changed their minds about one case, and I am certain many of the letters of support helped here.)*
- *Two staff deemed aligned took voluntary severance (VSS) for special/personal reasons. VSS loosely speaking is agreeing to leave one's position but getting paid an amount rather more than standard redundancy money; usually there is a gagging clause.*
- *Two staff deemed un-aligned post screening-interview are accepting VSS (one is close to retirement, the other is just accepting the situation)*

So overall 10 staff ---> 6 remain in post

In Pure Maths

- *Two staff took VSS*
- *Three staff were moved to Teaching Focused contracts*
- *Three staff **were made redundant***

So overall 8 staff ---> 3 remain in post

Industrial membership: We are seeking to increase the membership of UKCRC from colleagues who are based in industry. This has led to a revision of the membership criteria. These criteria are now available on the webpage. As ever, all UKCRC members are encouraged to nominate suitable colleagues for membership.

Membership panel elections: There were three nominations for two vacancies on the membership panel. Elections were held and Julie McCann and Faron Moller were elected.

Elections for Exec: Over the summer we had four vacancies on Exec as mc schraefel, Ann Blandford and Jie Xu reached the end of their term and Bashar Nuseibeh indicated that he wanted to step down for personal reasons. We recorded thanks to all of them for their willingness to serve on Exec and their significant contributions. Only Jie Xu was eligible to serve another term and has agreed to do so. We sought nominations for the remaining roles and received three excellent candidates:

Amir Hussain, Napier University

Michael Fisher, University of Manchester

Andy Gordon, MSR Cambridge/University of Edinburgh.

As there were three candidates for three vacancies, Amir, Michael and Andy were duly elected.

Informatics Europe Curriculum Framework for Informatics Education in School: In collaboration with the BCS Academy/Alastair Irons we responded to an Informatics Europe consultation on their proposed Curriculum Framework for school children. (See supplementary paper).

EPSRC Review of Doctoral Education: On 9th March the Chair attended an EPSRC workshop on Doctoral Education representing UKCRC; all attendees at the workshop represented learned societies or other representative bodies. The two key areas of the current review were:

- 1) *The culture of doctoral education: what experiences are required to ensure that doctoral students are prepared for all future careers and how EPSRC can enable a diverse and inclusive student population.*
- 2) *How EPSRC can ensure our doctoral education investments allow the research landscape to respond to priorities and emerging areas of research.*

Following on from the March workshop and other consultations EPSRC published their review of Doctoral Education on 7th October:

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/skills/students/review-of-epsrc-support-for-doctoral-education/>

UKCRC were invited to a launch and discussion event for the review on 20th October. Further details are available on the EPSRC website.

Research Software Engineers: At the EPSRC workshop on Doctoral Education the Chair met the current President of the Society of Research Software Engineers. A subsequent meeting explored areas of common interest between SRSE and UKCRC. In particular we identified UKCRC might work with SRSE to try to establish both the careers of research software engineers and a more sound footing for the role of software underpinning research with EPSRC/UKRI. Exec member Dave De Roure, who plays a key role in the Software Sustainability Institute, has undertaken further dis

Report for UKCRC on Consultations

December 2021

Hi everyone, I have appended the list of recent consultations. With Ruth's help there should also be a video update for the meeting – I have to be at the Department for Transport at the time of the AGM.

In addition to the below, I have attended the meetings of the STEM APG at Stormont and have answered some requests from Holyrood.

All the best,

Chris.

Submissions

2021

Open

- DCMS Consultation on Wireless Infrastructure Strategy¹
- BEIS Consultation on Artificial Intelligence and IP: Copyright and Patents²

September

- RAEng, A practical guide for academic entrepreneurs looking to navigate the spinout process³.
- DCMS/BEIS Consultation on A New Pro-competition Regime for Digital Markets⁴
- Independent Review of Research Bureaucracy Call for Evidence⁵

July

- UKRI EPSRC SAT and ECR Briefing on Political Engagement

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/wireless-infrastructure-strategy-call-for-evidence>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/artificial-intelligence-and-ip-copyright-and-patents>

³ <https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/4S2P-70R/raeng-entrepreneurs-handbook-call-for-evidence?pfredir=1>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-pro-competition-regime-for-digital-markets>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-review-of-research-bureaucracy/independent-review-of-research-bureaucracy-call-for-evidence-document>

June

- Science & Technology Committee: Launch of new inquiry: UK Space Strategy and UK Satellite Infrastructure⁶

April

- The National Security Strategy Joint Committee, Call for Evidence on National Security Structures for Future Emergencies⁷
- The Foreign Affairs Committee, Call for Evidence on Tech and the Future of UK Foreign Policy⁸

February

- Competition and Markets Authority: Algorithms, Competition and Consumer Harm⁹

January

- The House of Lords Committee on Risk Assessment and Risk Planning¹⁰
- UKCRC/CPHC/UKRI/BCS Joint Workshop on Political Engagement¹¹

2020

November

- UK National Data Strategy consultation¹²

⁶ <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/459/uk-space-strategy-and-uk-satellite-infrastructure/>

⁷ <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/361/national-security-machinery/>

⁸ <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/420/tech-and-the-future-of-uk-foreign-policy/>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/algorithms-competition-and-consumer-harm-call-for-information>

¹⁰ <https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/339/risk-assessment-and-risk-planning/>

¹¹ <https://cphc.ac.uk/joint-ukcrc-cphc-ukri-bcs-workshop-on-policy-engagement/>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/uk-national-data-strategy-nds-consultation/uk-national-data-strategy-consultation>

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3 December 2021

MEMBERSHIP PANEL REPORT

The UKCRC Membership Committee has five Members including a representative of CPHC.

There have been changes in the panel formation. The current Panel comprises (new members in italic):

Nadia Berthouze (Chair)	Professor in Affective Computing and Interaction, University College London Deputy Director of UCLIC – UCL Interaction Centre
Phil Trinder	Professor of Computing Science, University of Glasgow
Carsten Maple	Appointed by CPHC Professor of Cyber Systems Engineering, WMG, University of Warwick
<i>Julie McCann</i>	<i>Professor of Computer Systems, Imperial College London</i>
<i>Faron Moller</i>	<i>Professor of Computer Science, Swansea University</i>

The Panel continues to work electronically, reviewing nominations and voting online. The application process follows the streamlined procedure put in place in the previous years. This procedure generally requires only a nomination from a member and an appropriate CV. To facilitate the application process and to increase industrial interest, we have revised the examples of selection criteria posted on the UKCRC Website, mainly the industrial ones. In addition, on the basis of industrial cases we received, we have added advises on the FAQ website on how to prepare industrial CVs to clarify how a candidate meets the criteria.

Over the last year, the following 4 nominations for membership were received and elected:

Professor Subramanian Ramamoorthy	Chair of Robot Learning and Autonomy, School of Informatics	University of Edinburgh
Professor Colin O'Halloran	Technical Director	D-RisQ Ltd
Professor Francesca Toni	Professor in Computational Logic	Imperial College London
Dr. Dirk Trossen	Chief Network Architecture Researcher	Huawei Research

We received one more interesting application. The applicant was contacted and invited to submit further material to clarify how the application meet the membership criteria. We are waiting for a revised submission.

Nadia Berthouze

November 2021