

UKCRC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the UK Computing Research Committee held on **Friday 2 December 2022** between 14:00 – 15:00 via video/teleconference.

Attendees:

Kevin Jones	UKCRC Chair
David De Roure	Executive Committee Member
Simon Dobson	Executive Committee Member
Andrew Gordon	Executive Committee Member
David Hutchison	Executive Committee Member
Ann Blandford	Member
Cliff Jones	Member
Dirk Trossen	Member
David Robertson	Member
V Anne Smith	Member
Peter Andras	Member
Maxine Leslie	UKCRC Secretariat

Apologies:

Michael Fisher	Executive Committee Member
Nadia Berthouze	Membership Panel Chair
Alan Bundy	Member
David Duce	Member

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed UKCRC members to the AGM and the apologies for absence were received as above.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM [UKCRC/AGM20210/06]

The minutes of the AGM held on Friday 3 December 2021 were recorded as a true record.

2.1 Matters arising from minutes

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

3. CHAIR'S REPORT [UKCRC/AGM/2022/02] – K Jones

RECEIVED & APPROVED - Appendix 1

The first physical Executive Committee meeting for 3 years had been held in October and proved particularly beneficial for networking (unlike virtual meetings).

Monthly meetings of the Chairs of UKCRC, BCS and CPHC are underway and one output is the production of a short document to lay out the relative positions of the three organisations to be shared with the respective communities. Broadly UKCRC for research, BCS as the professional body and CPHC as HE's representative body within Computer Science, in particular as the distinctions have previously lacked clarity. For UKCRC, the plan is to map out a clear mission statement about its role

of representation and lobbying for the research community in the UK, to be discussed further at the Strategy day. It would be really useful to involve more people in UKCRC's on-going practices (eg, for consultations and responses) and it may help if there is greater clarity about what UKCRC does.

There has been considerable work, led by Andy Gordon, in setting up a Computer Scientist Research Mentoring programme (see item 6 below).

The Chair thanked Jane Hillston and Chris Johnson, whose terms of office come to an end in November, for all they have done in the last 6 years, Jane as Chair and for the last year as Executive Committee member and Chris for his hard work and significant impact in representing UKCRC's views in consultations and submissions. The end of Chris's term has left a significant hole in UKCRC'S capability to respond, which the Exec Committee is looking to address.

The Committee is seeking to find out the preferred level of communication by members. It is important to avoid 'spamming' about activities that they are not interested in, but there is an awareness that the membership would like to hear more about UKCRC activities. Members (both those in attendance and the wider community) are asked to let the Committee know what they would like to have more information about.

ACTION: Members

In response to a question, the Chair confirmed that the Strategy day will be held early in 2023, preferably as a physical meeting.

ACTION: Secretariat

4. CONSULTATIONS & RESPONSES REPORT [UKCRC/AGM/2022/03]

RECEIVED & APPROVED – Appendix 2

The Chair indicated that most of the responses to consultations listed in the report had been made by C Johnson. UKCRC has been quite successful in making sure the concerns of CS research in UK have been represented within consultations. C Johnson stepped down from the UKCRC Executive Committee in November, having completed two terms of office and, as noted above, there is a vacancy for the Consultations and Responses role on the Executive. This role is key to the goals of UKCRC as, when active, we can make a significant contribution. C Johnson has agreed to support the new role holder during the transition period.

In response to opening this item out for questions, it was suggested the Consultations and Responses role be one of co-ordination and pulling together responses and members agreed that it would be important to retain a single voice, co-ordinated by the role holder.

5. MEMBERSHIP PANEL REPORT

There had not been much activity this year and there is a need to elicit interest more actively, for example for "rising stars" and this is something that the Membership Panel is looking to address. There have been discussions about increasing the number of researchers from industry within the membership and how to ensure that the criteria for admission are inclusive for industrialists and "rising stars".

6. OTHER ACTIVITIES – Research mentoring

RECEIVED & APPROVED – Appendix 3

A Gordon presented the slides and the Chair opened the floor for questions, indicating that if this programme works, it will be of a significant advantage to early career researchers. Its success hangs on the willingness of potential mentors to engage with the programme. A Gordon was cautiously optimistic, signifying that it was up to researchers like those UKCRC members on the call to get involved. There are challenges as it would be entirely voluntary and dependent on those that believe in the good of CS in the UK. Issues with strike action and problems with conditions are worrisome but it would not need preparation on the mentor's part and had the added interest of getting to know about someone else's area of research. Even a small fraction of the potential pool would be a start and this could be built upon if feedback is good, producing testimonials, videos and typical questions. It is low risk to try, especially as BCS is contributing with paid staff help.

A Blandford noted that EPSRC used to do group events and mentoring in research funding area, but there was a query as to whether this has continued post pandemic. It will be important to ensure that internal mentoring programmes complement this external programme. D De Roure welcomed the support this could offer and flagged the need for interdisciplinary mentors, which may be a challenge. A Gordon explained that there would be a free text field in the mentor/mentee forms to ask about topics of interest and also a general comments field. The accuracy of the CS rankings list and a potential US bias were queried. It was not intended that the rankings would be published, however they were a concrete dataset. Rankings could be ignored, the main purpose being to gain access to sub-topics and use this spreadsheet as a tool within the Pairing Committee. However, signposting to alternative lists would be welcome.

V Anne Smith noted that most mentoring programmes have the chance to sign up whereas this is cold contact. One approach could be to include a tick box to contribute as part of something else and then get them involved later.

There was a discussion about branding and a concern was raised that doing this under a BCS banner might deter non-BCS members from getting involved, particularly if they think BCS membership is a pre-requisite. However UKCRC branding may be less well known than the BCS brand. On the other hand the UKCRC brand could be built upon with a programme like this. Members agreed that the title '*UK Computing Research Committee scheme*' with UKCRC in the subtitle could help with this.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of AOB. 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 – Research Mentoring update

ACTIONS

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------------|
| 2022.1 | Chair's report – let Committee know what communications would be of interest in relation to UKCRC activities by emailing ukcrc@bcs.uk . | All members |
| 2022.2 | Arrange date/venue for UKCRC Strategy day early in 2023 | Secretariat |

Chair's Report

This has been a year of coordinating and preparing for the future and has resulted in a number of activities that will bear fruit in the coming year.

There have been on-going discussions with the Chairs of CPHC and BCS Academy Board, to properly establish the positioning of each group within the broad area of computing in the UK. From a UKCRC point of view, the agreement is that the focus of our committee is Academic and Industrial research activity and capability, as stated in the original charter as an expert body of the BCS/IET/CPHC. We expect a document to this effect to be circulated to the membership and the larger community in the near future.

There has been considerable (joint) work, led by Andy Gordon to set up a Computer Scientist Research Mentoring programme (more details from Andy later in the agenda), which is an important initiative and a good example of cross organisation collaboration.

Andy also developed a WikiData entry for UKCRC which is useful for identifying members and potential members.

There have been a number of 1:1 discussions with past and present members of the Exec, and other influencers within the sector, to start the process of re-establishing the UKCRC as **the** expert body for CS research within government and industry in the UK. A new strategy and mission statement are being developed and should be circulated following an exec away day early in the new year.

A number of key and long serving exec members have stood down this year, having reached the end of their terms on the committee and we'll express thanks to those who have served UKCRC so well: Jane Hillston and Chris Johnson, who as Chair and Consultation Coordinator have been incredibly active and influential in the activities of the UKCRC.

And finally, there have been a number of queries on the level of communication between the Exec and the Membership. It would be very useful to know what members would like to see on this front and comments are invited.

Kevin Jones
November 2022

Report for UKCRC on Consultations & Responses December 2022

(inc summary of reports from Chris Johnson during 2022)

July

- [Call for evidence: First phase of online safety regulation](#)
- [Consultations: Smart and Secure Energy \(cyber\)](#)

June

- [Consultation on Data storage and processing infrastructure security and resilience](#)

May

- [Open Consultations: Extraction of information from electronic devices: code of practice](#)
- [Open Consultations: App\(store\) security and privacy](#)

April

- [Consultation on the future of REF](#)

March

- [Open DCMS Consultation: Proposal for new telecoms security regulations and code of practice](#)
- [BEIS Consultation on National Cyber-Physical Infrastructure](#)

February

- [Open Consultations \(Online Sales Tax and Quantum Strategy\)](#)
- [Online Sales Tax Policy Consultation \(HM Treasury\)](#)
- [DCMS Consultation: Embedding standards and pathways across the cyber profession by 2025](#)

January

- [DCMS Consultation: Legislation to improve the UK's cyber resilience](#)
- [Review of UKRI](#)

[Report from March 2022]

Since the AGM, I have worked with Bill Mitchell from the BCS to increase our coordination in response to consultations. We have focussed on the following two:

- DCMS: Embedding standards and pathways across the cyber profession by 2025

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/embedding-standards-and-pathways-across-the-cyber-profession-by-2025/embedding-standards-and-pathways-across-the-cyber-profession-by-2025>

- DCMS: Proposal for legislation to improve the UK's cyber resilience

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposal-for-legislation-to-improve-the-uks-cyber-resilience/proposal-for-legislation-to-improve-the-uks-cyber-resilience>

The former consultation raised interesting issues as the BCS are heavily involved with the IET in the draft standards as part of the UK National Cyber Security

Council. Discussions about the best approach to raise concerns for high education and UK research are on-going. The DCMS proposals do not mention either topic and so our members working in this area would not be competent to practice in many areas of cyber security in which they are world leading authorities.

I have been recruited to the DCMS College of Experts so will raise some of these issues directly through that interface. I have also been involved with BEIS and with CPNI on the implementation of the National Security and Investment Act (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-strengthen-national-security-come-into-effect>).

[Report from June 2022]

Since the last meeting I have issues request for input on four consultations but have not had any response from members – am assuming this is a result of the topics but also the workload post REF and as we get back to “normal” following COVID.

In the meantime, I have been involved in policy related initiatives.

- I gave evidence to Sir David Grant’s review of UKRI, facilitated by BEIS;
- I chaired two workshops on behalf of UKRI related to the consultation that UKCRC responded to in March on UK cyber-physical infrastructures. This provided further evidence back to BEIS – in particular identifying remaining research priorities and also security/resilience of digital twins.
- I had separate meetings with DCMS and NCSC on UK strategy for the security of Operational Technologies.
- Finally, I have supported the DCMS College of Experts work on future digital landscape documents.

[Report from October 2022]

Over the last 6 months, I have assisted DCMS on a number of policy issues including the National Risks Register for Cabinet Office. I have provided contacts to UKCRC colleagues for the digital team in DCMS - for instance, connected with 6G policy. I met with Tom and his team and also Sarah Sharples and her team as CSA in DfT. I met Nadhim Zahawi and also assisted Patrick Vallance/Go-science but the specific issues are confidential.

The last 2-3 months have been very quiet with a pause firstly during the Tory leadership election and then while the new cabinet dealt with their incoming briefs.

See Research Mentoring slides PDF

inc 2022 papers

Research Mentoring

An initiative of BCS Academy of Computing, BCS HE CoP, CPHC, and UKCRC

Presentation to UKCRC AGM, 2 December 2022

All this is a draft – feedback very welcome!

Prepared by Andy Gordon and Alan Hayes (co-chairs)

Purpose

- Cherish the careers of **university researchers** in computer science
- Initial scope: offer every **new research-led computer science lecturer** 1:1 external mentoring toward career goals, eg, chair in 10 years
- The Guardian lists [110 UK departments accepting CS students in 2023](#)
- CSRankings lists [42 UK departments accepting CS PhD students](#)

Institutional Framework

- The **BCS Academy of Computing** [[tor](#)] is a cooperative partnership between **BCS** [[charity](#)], the CPHC and the UKCRC. The Academy of Computing Board reports to BCS Trustee Board.
- The [UKCRC](#) aims to **promote the vitality, quality and impact of Computing Research in the UK.** [[mission](#)]
- BCS HE [Community of Practice](#): "The aim of our group is to ensure that computer scientists at their early to mid-career stage have a supportive community of practice to engage with that develops and shares best practice in the delivery of computer science education." (associated with BCS Academy)
- Other mentoring schemes: BCS itself, IET, RAE, [SIGPLAN-M](#), EPSRC [advice](#), [vitae](#)
- *UK-CSR-M is an initiative of UKCRC, BCS HE CoP, and BCS Academy of Computing*

People – 2022/23

- BCS Academy (chair Alastair Irons)
- BCS HoE CoP (chair Alan Hayes)
- UK-CSR-M Pairing Committee
 - Co-chairs Andy Gordon and Alan Hayes
 - 20 members each promising to pair 5 mentees with mentors
 - We select senior people proportionate to size of research themes
 - Some UKCRC folks already volunteered

start	1186
ai	254
chi	223
mlmining	221
vision	173
robotics	165
log	155
nlp	132
plan	124
soft	108
mod	95
sec	95
act	92
visualizatic	63
ir	44
ecom	42
arch	39
graph	39
ops	39
metrics	38
mobile	35
hpc	34
comm	27
da	27
bed	24
bio	20
crypt	20

Call for Research-Led Mentees

- Announced by the Pairing Chairs (via all CPHC)
- Includes names of Pairing Committee
- Get endorsement from BCS Academy, UKCRC, CPHC, all FRS's in CS
- How to apply: put your details into an Office Form, deadline TBD 2023

- (We'd need to filter based on pubs on DBLP,Orcid,GS,etc)
- (Maybe we can offer alternatives)

We Approach Mentors on Demand

- Members of the Pairing Committee select and encourage senior people to act as mentors, by suggesting they mentor specific person.
- We maintain a list of people who have declined so that they are not asked again.
- We maintain list of people who have accepted/declined, together with their wishes (how many mentees at once, anyone they don't want to mentor)
- Incentives: could list mentors on website; short video interviews; Sue Black podcast??; teaching credit?; high-quality training
- Guidance: important to provide suggested topics

BCS Hosting and Privacy

- We act as volunteers for BCS, a legal charity
- Julia Adamson and Jon Jeffery helping us with GDPR compliance
- Likely hold all data in a BCS-controlled Microsoft Team

- Form to accept to be on pairing committee
 - (name,orcid,dblp id,main institution,research interests, remarks, agree to code of conduct)
- Form for mentee to apply for mentorship
 - (name,orcid,dblp id,main institution,csranking topics, PhD year and uni, remarks about purpose, agree to code of conduct)
 - Form to set expectations on limits to mentoring (eg 3-6 meetings), disclaimer, spirit of support
- Form for mentor to accept or apply
 - (name,orcid,dblp id,main institution,csranking topics, mentoring topics, remarks, agree to code of conduct)
- Form to give feedback on pairing
 - (optional name, mentor or mentee, free text feedback, satisfaction score? *“How likely would you be to recommend the scheme”* 1..10)
 - Need data on how the mentor/mentee relationship is progressing
 - Need mechanism to change mentor/mentee if problems arise on either side
 - Need anonymized data to pick up and report upon generic issues across the sector – to issue annual report???

Workflow – 2022/23

- We broadly advertise the existence of the scheme and issue a Call for Mentees. Video endorsements from luminaries.
- After the deadline, in spring 2023, the chairs assign applications to committee members based on theme.
- Each committee member promises to assign 5 mentees to mentors.
- For each pairing, the committee member needs to identify a potential mentor (using their expertise and helped by cstrankings data), mail the potential mentee, get their agreement, and then make the intro. Repetition may be needed.
- We give guidance to each pair, but it's down to them.
- We use surveys to gather info on how well the scheme is doing.

Guidance

- Important for both mentor and mentee – plan fruitful discussions
- How to learn from the process and pass it on
- FAQs; BCS uses a GROW methodology
- Question/answer pairs sourced from the discussions
- Quora or reddit
- How to support under-represented groups
- Material on "Chair in 10 Years"
- [How to run your own mentoring ring | by Grace Francisco | Medium](#)

Code of Conduct

- Likely adopt the BCS Code of Conduct:

[BCS Code of Conduct for members - Ethics for IT professionals | BCS](#)

Appendix:

CPHC: A Chair in 10 Years (Dec 2018)

Title: A Chair in 10 Years

Audience: Early-career academics (“future leaders”). Participants must have completed their PhD and be in post. The first instantiation of this Workshop is aimed at women only. There will be future instantiations open to all.

Purpose: Networking for those at a similar career stage.

This workshop looks at some of the issues for those aiming to develop a career in academia. It is designed for post-doctoral staff and staff in the early years of their careers. The outcome should be a clearer understanding of how promotional procedures operate, and the start of an action plan to achieve longer term career goals.

Ambition to succeed is great; aspiration, dedication and enthusiasm are great. Progress is undoubtedly helped by an agenda, plans, a strategy and objectives. The point of these workshops is to help colleagues move to practical issues that can assist in career management.

Before the Event

Participants must submit in advance:

- a brief biography (PhD details, where employed, how long employed);
- their institutions’ promotion criteria;
- a one-page grant proposal. This should cover all the essential aspects of an EPSRC New investigator Award (or equivalent), on one side of A4.