UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Department of Computer Science & Technology

Minutes of the meeting of the Research Staff Forum held at 12 noon on Wednesday 20 June 2018, in Room FW11, William Gates Building

Present: Daniel Bates   Ekaterina Kochmar
Claire Chapman (Secretary)   Marwa Mahmoud
Stephen Kell (Chair)   Caroline Stewart
Andrea Kells   Noa Zilberman

1. Apologies
Alan Blackwell
Matt Danish
Alice Hutchings
Andy Rice
Zohreh Shams
James Sharkey

2. Minutes of last minutes
The minutes from the last meeting held on 28 March 2018 were approved.

3. Report on actions from last meeting

i. **RA guidelines on applying for travel/conference funds in exceptional circumstances**
Details of the Wiseman Award has been added to the Induction Checklist and last year's recipients are now listed on the Wiseman Award web page.

CS said a call for nominations for the Wiseman Award is circulated to PIs every July.

A link to the Cambridge Philosophical Society and information that it can fund travel for members has been added to the Induction Checklist.

As individuals are unable to nominate themselves for the award as it is dependent on nominations from their PI, it was agreed to add this sentence to the Induction Checklist 'Requests for travel funds can be made at any time to the Department Secretary and awarded at the discretion of the Department'.

Action: CLC

ii. **Finance Training for RAs and guidelines on Research Grants for web**
SRK reported that a productive meeting took place and all the suggestions and comments will be incorporated into the working document. It was agreed that the final version will be circulated to UTOs for their comments.

Action: ARK

iii. **Cycle Parking**
The proposals are still awaiting feedback from the Head of Department Team and this item will be kept on the agenda

Action: CS

iv. **How to improve the Progression of Post-docs beyond their current position in the Department**
NZ gave a brief summary of the results from the Career Progression Survey which was circulated in May 2018. Survey results attached (2018-06-3iv)

Replies were received from all research groups with the majority of replies from Post Docs who have been in post for 2 years or more.

One of the key outcomes received was: -

- Research Staff were interested in the setting up a Wiki page to include all the resources available to research staff and to include a mailing list for academic jobs. A volunteer from the forum is asked to come forward to initially set up the Wiki. It was agreed that a Wiki would be more suitable rather than a webpage as it will crowd source extra content

Action: Forum Member

In the short term, it was agreed to add links on the committee website regarding related resources.

Addendum:
NZ submitted the following resources to include on the webpage and Wiki: -

Postdocs of Cambridge Society (PdOC)
Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPdA)
Personal and Professional Development (PPD) training programs
Career service for postdocs
Postdoc induction event
Departmental postdoc mentoring scheme
Departmental postdoc social tea event
Lecturing opportunities
Entrepreneurial opportunities (EPOC)

NZ noted that one concern is that it doesn't provide a lot of resources for research assistants and this item will be put on agenda for discussion at the next forum meeting.

 Action: CLC

v. **Tracking the career path of past student alumni**
Suggestion of AH to hold a talk on the new Data Protection Act talk and how it will affect research. AFB submitted the following report:-

A session on Issues in online research and observation of human participants is presented by Cecilia Mascolo already in the Lent Term Research Skills Programme and is open to all forum members. Cecilia has suggested that AH covers the course next year, if she would like her own presentation to avoid

overlap of material.

Due to AFB and AH not being present, it was agreed to keep this on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: CLC

vi. **Admissions Selection help for Directors of Studies**
A list of attendees who attended the Undergraduate Admissions Training course run by Cecilia Mascolo and Andy Rice on 11 May have been put in reception and the list will also be included on the agenda of the DoS forum in July.

Action: CLC

4. **Revising the naming of the Forum and its statement of purpose**
The name of the Forum has been changed to Research Staff Forum on the committee page and the remit has been revised. SRK asked if the previous committee page can redirect to the new page.
A list of all Research Assistants in the Department (excluding PhD students) has been sent to JPS.

Action: CLC

5. **Post Doc training fund**
SRK sent a paragraph to ARK outlining his concerns why research money should not be used to fund training. ARK said that as University Policy mandates this, we can only register our objection. A list of funders has already been identified who will not meet this cost and this includes Wellcome, The Leverhulme Trust and CRUK. This item will be kept on the agenda for ARK to monitor and report back at the next meeting.

Action: ARK

6. **Researcher Development Fund**

Lise Gough submitted the following report:

'With effect from 2016, a proportion of the Researcher Development budget was set aside for the Research Staff Forum which was £500.00. As the budget for the overall Researcher Development has overspent this year, we will try to negotiate extra funds for 2018-19. It would be helpful if a list of activities from the Research Staff Forum is relayed to the Researcher Development Committee of the School of Technology to justify the allocation of an increased budget'.

CLC will send a list of yearly expenditure to Lise Gough.

Action: CLC

CS said that the majority of the Researcher Development Fund is spent on funding Language Training at The Language Centre. CS said that Language Training is available for Research Staff as well as PhD Students. As this was not known, it was agreed to advertise the language training to Post Docs.

Action: CS

7. **Lecturing opportunities for RAs, and what the Department might do to facilitate more of them.**

Forum members discussed the TMC comments. It was agreed that ACS courses are more readily susceptible of Post Docs lecturing. CS said this may be down to the TEF. There are requirements for student satisfaction and there has been feedback that students' expectations are that they are lectured by a University Teaching Officer.

Forum members had the following questions and SRK will draft a response and submit to the TMC for their meeting on 29 June:

- Deliver part of a lecture – does this mean a timed slot as part of a lecture or a number of lectures in the lecture series?
- Check exam questions – does this mean checking the exam questions or marking of scripts?
- Be involved in practical's – does this mean ticking and demonstrating?

Action: SRK

8. **Replacement of Chair for 2018-19**
CS thanked SRK for his work as Chair of the forum as he will be stepping down as Chair on 31 July 2018.

A new Chair is now sought from current forum members and anyone interested, should contact CS and CLC.

It was also noted that AH will be stepping down from the Forum due to her appointment as a University Lecturer and a new member from the Security Group is sought.

Action: CLC

9. **Any other business**
None.

10. **Date of next meeting**
To be held in Michaelmas Term