

Research Staff Forum Meeting

Wednesday, 24 July 2019, 12 noon, GC22

Minutes

Present: Daniel Bates (DB)
Celia Burns (CB) (Secretary)
Matt Danish (MRD) (Chair)
Andrew Caines (AC)
Minjung Kim (MK)
Indu Bodala (IB)
Zohreh Shams (ZS)
James Sharkey (JPS)
Sergei Skorobogatov (SS)
Caroline Stewart (CS)
Tian Xu (TX)

Introductions were made as there were a few new Forum members and guests.

1. **Apologies**

Andy Rice
Heidi Howard
Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraki
Marwa Mahmoud

2. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes from the last meeting held on 20 March 2019 were approved.

3. **Report on Actions from Last Meeting**

i. **Cycle Parking**

Due to the departure of the current department representative for the West Cambridge Shared Hub Project, CS is seeking a new representative. MD reported that Estates Management are looking into costing of the proposed changes to the cycle parking.

Action: CS

ii. **Improving the Progression of Post-Docs**

ZS had offered to set up and create a wiki page, and she plans to do so in August. The wiki page will provide information on all the options available to Post-Docs for career progression.

CS recommended Stewart Carswell (Web and Moodle Specialist) as a contact for website-related advice on the wiki page; MD reminded members to send ZS any points they wanted included on the page; and AC offered to help ZS with the page set-up.

Action: ZS and AC

iii. **Resources for Research Assistants**

A new representative for Research Assistants is being sought, to replace JPS who is now a Research Associate. JPS noted that he is happy to stay on the Forum in a Research Associate capacity, and he offered to email Research Assistants in order to identify a non-PhD Research Assistant replacement. CS will provide JPS with email addresses of all Research Assistants in the Department.

Action: JPS and CS

iv. **Post-Doc Training Fund**

CS reported that ACR had explored several avenues with a view to acquiring funding for post-Doc training, but so far nothing looked promising. MD said he would ask ACR if there were any further leads. CS noted that, if anyone had a particular need for training funding, they should ask the Department.

Action: MD

v. **Lecturing Opportunities for RAs**

It was noted that a Moodle sign-up sheet for those interested in guest lecturing had been circulated but no-one had signed up. CS agreed to re-circulate the link, and ZS offered to have a look at the sheet and provide some feedback about it.

CS clarified that the lecturing opportunities under discussion were for undergraduate guest lecturing, where the course titles are clearly defined. There is more flexibility on the content of MPhil lecture courses. Meeting participants agreed to mention the sign-up sheet to colleagues.

Action: CS, ZS, meeting participants

vi. **Researcher Developer Programme (RDP) Talks**

MD reminded Forum members that suggestions for talks which could be included in the Researcher Development Programme should be sent to Andy Rice.

Action: Forum members

4. **Group Photo for Departmental Post-Doc Committee Chairs' Network (DPCCN)**

MD reported that the DPCCN had requested a case study of where the Forum had made a difference, along with a photo of Forum members. MD had already sent details of the case studies for the promotions on our webpage (RA to SRA). A group photo was taken at the meeting, which MD would send to the DPCCN.

5. **Specific Discussion Topics/Presentations**

CS reminded Forum members that similar subjects to those proposed for the RDP Talks (item 3.vi above) could also be included as 20-minute presentations during the Research Staff Forum meetings, on topics such as research, writing grants, or individual's experience of promotion to SRA, for example. IB reported that the Office of Post-Doc Affairs 'Grant-Writing' talk was overly-subscribed, and therefore a similar talk tailored to specific aspects of this Department would be very useful.

6. **Any Other Business**

MD reminded Forum members of the Focus Group review and barbeque, to be held on Friday, 26 July. The Focus Group would be looking at what has been said about CPGS students' and Post-Docs' experience of their induction and initial time at Cambridge; and would be open to further comments.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

A late October date for the next meeting was suggested. A Doodle poll will be circulated.

Action: CB