



Research Staff Forum Meeting

Friday, 28 February 2020
12 noon, Room FW11, William Gates Building

Minutes

Present

Matt Danish (MRD) (Chair)	Dong Ma
Celia Burns (CB) (Secretary)	Zohreh Shams (ZS)
Franck Courbon	James Sharkey (JPS)
Heidi Howard (HH)	Sergei Skorobogatov (SS)
Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyraiki (AKA)	Caroline Stewart (CS)
(from 12.30)	Yi Ting Chua (YC)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Daniel Bates and Andrew Caines.

2. RSF Discussion Topic

Matt Danish gave a presentation on "People-counting with Pi". His slides are available [here](#). It was agreed that a call for the next RSF Discussion Topic presentation would be included in the Doodle poll for the next meeting.

Action: CB

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes from the last meeting (28 October 2019) were approved.

4. Report on Actions from the Last Meeting

i. Shared Facilities Hub

Following the departure of the former department representative for the West Cambridge Shared Facilities Hub, CS was seeking a new representative, possibly a senior member of staff who would have a broad view of the Department. CS reported that a new representative had not yet been found. MD noted that once the hub was built and the facilities up and running, the role would probably invite more interest.

ii. Improving the Progression of Post-Docs

ZS reported that she had revised the career progression wiki page following feedback received. It was agreed that ZS would circulate the page to research staff for their information and to invite any feedback.

Action: ZS

The Committee agreed to review the wiki page at every meeting as a standing item in order to ensure that it is kept up-to-date.

Action: CB

iii. **Representative for Research Assistants**

A new representative for Research Assistants had not yet been found. It was noted that the committee is seeking a Research Assistant who is not doing a PhD, which reduces the number of potential representatives.

iv. **Post-Doc Training Fund**

Forum members were to send EK any specific training ideas, which EK had agreed she would then follow up with the Researcher Development Unit and the Department. EK was not in attendance at this meeting; she will report at the next meeting.

v. **Lecturing Opportunities for Research Associates**

CS reported that she had fed back to the Tripos Management Committee (TMC) the request for the sign-up process for guest lecturing to be a more interactive, two-way process between UTOs and RAs. It was noted that the opportunity to consider offering lecturing opportunities to RAs might arise when UTOs have a new course or when they have been lecturing the same course for a long time. CS agreed to follow up with the TMC.

Action: CS

EK had agreed to speak to someone from the Post-Doc side of the process. EK was not in attendance at this meeting; she will report at the next meeting.

vi. **Mentoring Scheme**

CS reported that a new HR Manager will be starting in a few weeks' time and she would ask them to follow up on the recommendation from the RSF that the mentoring process could be more interactive and include College Fellows.

Action: CS

5. Wellbeing

CS reported that a Department Wellbeing Committee had been set up to explore what kinds of wellbeing issues might be addressed and possibly funded by the Department (for example, drop-in sessions with a member of staff, a counselling service on the West Cambridge site). A wellbeing webpage had been created with links to various wellbeing resources, and the Wellbeing Committee had requested that wellbeing issues are regularly considered by the Research Staff Forum and the Graduate Student Forum, and subsequently reported to the Wellbeing Committee.

It was agreed that wellbeing would be included as a standing item on the RSF agenda. In addition, any ideas or feedback should be submitted to CS or CB, who are both on the Wellbeing Committee.

ZS enquired about the success of the mindfulness study, which had been carried out last year, and CS reported that 20 participants had started the course but only three had completed it. MD suggested holding wellbeing events around the same time as the Friday Happy Hours, and which could perhaps be funded by the Department.

6. Postdoc Chairs' Network (PCN)—Quinquennial Report 2019

Committee members received for information the PCN Quinquennial Report.

7. Any Other Business

(a) **Statistics Request from the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Committee:**

MD reported that he had been approached by the E&D Committee to provide some statistics relating to diversity of the Department's research staff. MD had identified someone centrally who could provide statistics but who needed to know more specifically what was required. CS agreed to request more specific information from the E&D Committee regarding the information required, and feed this back to MD.

Action: CS

(b) **Representation on the Equality and Diversity (E&D) Committee:** MD reported that the Forum had been asked to propose a representative for the E&D Committee. Heidi Howard agreed to serve, and CB agreed to advise the E&D Committee accordingly.

Action: CB

(c) **Representation on the Buildings and Environment (B&E) Committee:**

MD reported that the Forum had been asked to propose a representative for the B&E Committee. MD agreed to serve, and CB agreed to advise the B&E Committee accordingly.

Action: CB

(d) **Researcher Development Concordat:** YC reported that the University had officially signed the new Researcher Development Concordat. There will be an open meeting on 4 March 2020, where Liz Simmonds, chair of the University's Concordat Working Group, will present further detail about the Concordat and its likely benefits and implications, and will update on progress of the working group towards an institutional implementation plan. YC agreed to send a link to further information so that CS could circulate it to RAs and SRAs.

Action: YC and CS

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held early in May, to be arranged by Doodle poll at the end of April, and to include a call for (i) agenda items, and (ii) a presenter for the next RSF Discussion Topic.

Action: CB