

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

10 June 2020

Zoom Video Conference

Present

Stefan Ruger [SR] (Chair), John Tait [JT] (Minutes), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Andrew MacFarlane [AM], Dyaa Albakour [DA], Steven Zimmerman [SZ], Martin White [MW], Udo Kruschwitz [UK], Craig Macdonald [CM] (Membership), Phillip Mayr-Schlegel (PMS), Joao Magalhaes [JM], Frank Hopfgartner [FH], Jochen Leidner [JL], Haiming Liu [HL], Yashar Moshfeghi [YM].

Fabrizio Sebastiani [FS] (observing, as ECIR 2021 rep).

1. Apologies

None

2. Minutes of Previous IRSG Committee Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the 29 January 2020 were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising (covered under appropriate agenda item where possible)

3.1 Actions for the previous meeting:

Action Number	Action	Action on
Jan 20.01	Hand over Search Solutions Tutorial process to HL.	Done
Jan 20.02	Book BCS Copthall Avenue urgently for Search Solution 2020.	Done
Jan 20.03	Produce new draft CfP for ECIR 2022 and 2023.	Done
Jan 20.04	Ask KSJ Award winner Chirag Shah to produce a travel expenses estimate for ECIR keynote to be submitted to BCS HQ.	Done
Jan 20.05	Issue Call for Proposal for One Day IR meetings to take place later in 2020.	C/f as Jun 20.11
Jan 20.06	Make arrangements to move the IRSG committee list to the BCS service.	C/f as Jun 20.12
Jan 20.07	Initiate email discussion of form and venue of next FDIA.	Abandoned
Jan 20.08	Secretary to supply the chair with a copy of the IRSG/SIGIR agreement re ICTIR.	Done
Jan 20.09	Chair to write to the Chair of SIGIR to formally remind them of their responsibilities wrt ICTIR.	C/f as Jun 20.04
Jan 20.10	Treasurer to circulate the draft 2020/2021 IRSG budget at the earliest opportunity	Done
Jan 20.11	Contact The Metadata and Discovery Group to modify the agreement wording it make it clear the agreement was with the IRSG, not the BCS as a whole.	Done

4. Other Matters Agreed by email

- a. Jochen Leidner had been appointed as Karen Spärck Jones Award Chair with a term of three years
- b. It had been agreed with Evangelous Kanoulos (CLEF 2020 General Chair) that money set aside for student travel support for CLEF would be allocated to more general support for the conference which will operate online only in 2020.

Action Jun 20.01 Secretary was asked to get a report on the current situation from Evangelos Kanoulos.

5. Chairs report

Nothing to report.

6. ECIR – Issuing Calls for two upcoming years together

The current version of the call was agreed, subject to the correction of one typo.

After discussion it was agreed the deadline should be set as the end of August, as per the draft, and the call issued as soon as possible.

Action Jun 20.02 Secretary to issue call for proposals to hold ECIR 2022 and 2023.

7. ECIR 2020

Despite the late change of the conference to an online only format due to the COVID-19 crisis and consequent restrictions on travel, the experience of the conference was generally reported as positive.

Every paper was presented live which worked fine for full papers, but did not work well for short papers. The combination of Zoom, YouTube and Slack worked well in general.

Students contacting potential employers (and vice versa) didn't work well. Using Slack for this purpose seems possible, but needed more pushing to work well in practice.

Time needed to be set aside in the schedule to ensure sponsors got adequate exposure.

Refunds to non-authors have started.

Other than providing access to the proceedings on an Open Access basis the costs of the conference were covered by Sponsorship.

Problems with making the proceedings Open Access with Springer remain. The costs are high, and for some reason Springer are not willing to follow through the previous agreement as to the process.

[PMS and DA joined]

FS suggested setting up a task force to investigate alternative ways of publishing ECIR Proceedings. JM, JL, FS, IF, CM and YM volunteered to take part in the task force.

The chair noted how grateful the committee and the community were for JM and his colleagues making ECIR 2020 a success in such difficult circumstances.

JM in turn passed on his thanks to his colleagues.

8. ECIR 2021

The possibility of hybrid physical and online conference was being investigated by the organisers. The main chairs and other local organisational roles were now in place, and all remaining important roles were in process of being finalised.

The banquet venue has been booked.

Action Jun 20.03 FS to supply MW with a contact on the ECIR 2021 organising committee for Informer material.

[DA left]

9. Informer

A plan had been circulated for comment prior to the meeting.

MW thanked JM for the material related to ECIR 2020.

A new template was being considered for use in future editions of Informer and more information would be provided in due course.

10. FDIA

Nothing new to report.

It was agreed not to pursue Action 20.07 in part because 2021 was a year in which ESSIR normally takes place (and therefore FDIA also occurs) and in part because of the difficulty of planning due to the COVID-19 crisis.

11. Strix Award

The 2020 lecture will take place in the Royal Society for Chemistry Library on Thursday 26 November 2020. There will be no streamed content.

A Call for Nominations for the 2020 prize is being drafted.

12. ICTIR

Kristzian Balog (ICTIR 2020 General Chair) is planning a hybrid conference.

There was a short discussion of the lack of direction in ICTIR at present. SR (as group chair) had yet to write to the Chair of SIGIR on this issue, and this action was carried forward.

Action Jun 20.04 Chair to write to the Chair of SIGIR to formally remind them of their responsibilities wrt ICTIR.

13. Karen Spärck Jones Award

JL has been in touch with Hinrich Schütze (ACL President) to discuss more active involvement of the Association for Computational Linguistics in the award. Those discussions will continue later in the summer, but in the meantime he suggested contacting the European ACL.

A list of potential nominees has been compiled and a call document drafted, and there was a brief discussion of the best way to call for nominations given the COVID-19 situation.

Action Jun 20.05 HL & DY to arrange publicity on the web site.

In discussion the unusual arrangements for ECIR 2020 meant there was outstanding business in connection with 2019 Award.

Action Jun 20.06 Treasurer to make arrangements for the £1000 prize to be paid to Chirag Shah, the 2019 recipient.

Action Jun 20.07 UK to dispatch the trophy to Chirag Shah.

14. CILIP Metadata and Discovery Group

AM reported the group had agreed to be involved with the organisation of Search Solutions 2020.

15. Search Solutions

Arrangements for holding Search Solutions 2020 given the COVID-19 situation were discussed.

It was **agreed** planning should be on the basis of a hybrid or online only conference for the main day.

Online only tutorials potentially present more challenges.

Action Jun 20.08 IF to send out initial call for talks at SS2020.

Action Jun 20.09 SS2020 organisers to make a decision on the exact form of Search Solutions 2020 by 31 July at the latest.

MW pointed out making a decision a few days early would allow publicity in the summer edition of Informer.

16. IR Days

The proposed meeting on Fairness and Bias in IR in Glasgow had had to be postponed because of the COVID-19 crisis.

The organisers were still looking to organise the meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Action Jun 20.10 Secretary to ask the organisers to consider moving to an online only or hybrid meeting.

SR had not had time to pursue a new call (Action Jan 20.05) and there was discussion of dropping this action for the immediate future. After discussion it was **agreed** a new call focussing on online meetings would be desirable.

Action Jun 20.11 YM to draft call for online IR meetings.

17. Mailing Lists

CM had not had the opportunity to progress Action Jan 20.10, but after it was discussion it was agreed to carry it forward as Action Jun 20.12.

18. AGM Arrangements

In view of the COVID-19 situation, it was agreed to hold the Group AGM as an online meeting on Tuesday 20 October at 7:00pm (London) using Zoom.

Action Jun 20.13 Secretary to check the legitimacy of holding a group AGM online with Kerry Wear of BCS HQ Members Group Services.

19. Finance

The proposed group budget (previously circulated) had been submitted on time but to date no response from HQ had been received.

Action 20.14 Treasurer to ask for confirmation of receipt and approval (or otherwise) of the group's 2020/2021 budget from BCS HQ.

20. Any Other Business

HL reported that it had been difficult to motivate students to work on the web site redevelopment.

Agreed to provide a £50 incentive to students for the work.

21. Next Meeting

Tuesday 22 September 2020 at 17:00 (London) as a Zoom video conference.

22. Actions Arising From Meeting

Action Number	Action	Action on
Jun 20.01	Obtain report on the current situation with CLEF from Evangelos Kanoulos (CLEF General Chair).	JT
Jun 20.02	Secretary to issue call for proposals to hold ECIR 2022 and 2023.	JT
Jun 20.03	Supply MW with a contact on the ECIR 2021 organising committee for Informer material.	FS
Jun 20.04	Chair to write to the Chair of SIGIR to formally remind them of their responsibilities wrt ICTIR.	SR
Jun 20.05	Arrange publicity on the web site for the 2020 KSJ Award Call for Nominations.	HL & DA
Jun 20.06	Treasurer to make arrangements for the £1000 prize to be paid to Chirag Shah, the 2019 KSJ Award recipient.	IF
Jun 20.07	UK to dispatch the trophy to Chirag Shah.	UK
Jun 20.08	Send out initial call for talks at SS2020.	IF
Jun 20.09	SS2020 organisers to make a decision on the exact form of Search Solutions 2020 by 31 July at the latest.	IF, DA, SZ, UK, HL (as Tutorial Chair), plus Tony Russell-Rose
Jun 20.10	Secretary to ask the organisers of Glasgow IR Day to consider moving to an online only or hybrid meeting.	JT
Jun 20.11	Draft call for online IR meetings.	YM
Jun 20.12	Make arrangements to move the IRSG committee list to the BCS service.	CM
Jun 20.13	Secretary to check the legitimacy of holding a group AGM online with Kerry Wear of BCS HQ Members Group Services.	JT
Jun 20.14	Treasurer to ask for confirmation of receipt and approval (or otherwise) of the group's 2020/2021 budget.	IF

Meeting Closed 19:15