

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

25 November 2019

BCS London Offices, Cophall Avenue, London

Present

Stefan Ruger [SR] (Chair), John Tait [JT] (Minutes), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Andrew MacFarlane [AM], Udo Kruschwitz [UK], Dyaa Albakour [DA].

Via Google Hangouts Video Conference

Haiming Liu [HL], Craig Macdonald [CM] (Membership), Steven Zimmerman [SZ], [PMS], Joao Magalhaes [JM], Frank Hopfgartner [FH] (from 19:00). Fabrizio Sebastiani [FS] (observing, as ECIR 2021 rep).

1. Apologies

Martin White [MW], Yashar Moshfeghi [YM], Phillip Mayr-Schlegel (PMS).

2. Minutes of Previous IRSG Committee Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the 17 September 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
Sep 19.06	Circulate final ECIR 2019 financial report to the committee.	Done
Sep 19.07	Email current draft agreement between Signal and BCS to JM to ensure arrangements for the Jury are in line with that.	Done
Sep 19.08	Contact BCS London Office to arrange an inspection of the new premises.	Done

4. Other Matters Agreed by email

Craig Macdonald and Martin White had been co-opted as agreed by email.

Jochen Leidner had declined the invitation to serve because of the uncertainty of his employment situation; it was hoped this would be resolved shortly.

It was **agreed** to re-issue the invitation (**Action Nov 19.01**)

5. Chairs report

The chair had made efforts to resolve the situation concerning Chair's attendance at ECIR and the handling of KSJ Award recipient expenses but as yet no resolution has been reached so efforts continue. (**Action Nov 19.02**)

6. ECIR – Issuing Calls for two upcoming years together

There was a brief discussion of the merits of changing the call for proposals to hold ECIR so that proposals were made two years in advance as opposed to one year at present (so Calls for Proposals to hold ECIR 2031 would be issued in 2028, for example, rather than 2029 as per the current system).

It was **agreed** the Secretary should modify the Call for Proposals so that the 2020 call would be for two years (2022 and 2023). In 2021 the Call would be for one year (2024), assuming acceptable bids for both 2022 and 2023 were obtained in 2020.

Action Nov 19.03 Secretary to produce revised draft ECIR CfP for discussion and review at the next committee meeting.

7. ECIR 2020

JM had submitted a short written report prior to the meeting:

- submissions were very positive: 211 full, 159 shorts, 21 demo, 21 reproducibility, 10 tutorials, 6 workshops and 12 CLEF;
- Reviews were coming in and there was no delay in the process;
- some sponsorships: TextKernel and Amazon. It was hope this would attract more;
- There's now a new local organizer dedicated to ECIR2020.

In short, everything was progressing satisfactorily, although some small changes had been made versus the original proposal.

Action Nov 19.04 JM to confirm ECIR 2020 registration rates are unaffected by the changes.

8. ECIR 2021

FS introduced himself and outlined the facilities at the venue for ECIR 2021, and the progress to date. It was agreed all was progressing well.

[FS left the meeting]

9. IR Days

Talmiri (held in September in Luton) was judged a success, and there was a short discussion of running a follow up event.

One response (from the University of Glasgow) had been received to the Call for Proposals issued in September. As agreed by email, the proposer, Graham McDonald, had been asked to reduce the budget slightly. Prior to the meeting he had been in touch to say he and colleagues were seeking additional local funding to cover the gap, but this was likely to mean the meeting was postponed until March.

Action Nov 19.05 Secretary to give positive feedback to the proposers, but to note the need to avoid a clash with CHIIR and the difficulty of including a committee meeting in March.

10. Informer

MW had circulated a report prior to the meeting.

11. Mailing Lists

There had been no progress with moving the IRSG Committee list to the BCS service, so Action Sep 19.09 was carried forward as **Action Nov 19.06**.

AM and CM were moderating the ir@jiscmail.ac.uk list and this had been successful at reducing the amount of spam and other forms of less than strictly relevant content.

12. FDIA

Discussion of form and venue of the next FDIA had yet to take place, so Action Sep 19.10 was

carried forward as **Action Nov 19.07.**

13. Strix Award

Sep 19.11	Circulate Call for Volunteers to act as Strix Award rep.	Done
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There had been no volunteers as the IRSG representative on the Tony Kent Strix Award Committee. AM volunteered to continue in the role and after a short discussion it was **agreed** Andy should be appointed for a further two years (only) until the end of the award cycle in 2021.

14. ICTIR

Sep 19.02	Advise the ICTIR Steering Committee that FH is the IRSG representative from 1 January 2020.	Done
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[This item was returned to after FH joined the meeting]

FH apologised for his later arrival, which was due to confusion generated by a combination of timezone changes and an electronic scheduling system.

There was nothing to report re ICTIR.

Action Nov 19.10 FH to ask Leif Azzopardi (Past and Acting ICTIR Steering Committee Chair) whether there has been progress with identifying a replacement chair for the ICTIR Steering Committee.

15. Karen Spärck Jones Award

UK reported everything was proceeding satisfactorily for the announcement of the 2019 award winner in December.

He also pointed out the constitutional problem posed if Jochen Leidner (KSJ Award Chair designate) continues to decline to be appointed to the IRSG Committee.

Marti Hearst had been replaced by Hinrich Schütze as ACL President. The action to approach the ACL President about a more formal role in the KSJ Award had therefore been carried forward as **Action Nov 19.08.**

16. Finance

The treasurer briefly outlined the financial position of the group, and the need to start thinking about the 2020-2021 budget.

He asked members to think about the events we might support financially, so suitable provision could be made in the budget

Action Nov 19.09 Treasurer to send email to committee members outlining the information needed to provide financial support in the budget.

17. Search Solutions 2019

[FH joined the meeting during this item]

The tutorials had taken place earlier on the day of the meeting, with the main conference the next day.

Five tutorials had been organised but two had to be cancelled due to lack of registrations.

AM indicated he wished to step down after many years as Search Solutions Tutorial Organiser.

UK reported for the main event 10 speakers had been organised with 63 registrations.

Just one student fee waiver had been taken up, so perhaps new mechanisms for publicity are needed.

The working relationship with the BCS HQ in Swindon had worked less well than previously.

18. Any Other Business

a. *IRSG Website*

HL reported the website redevelopment project was progressing with a further student project initiated.

b. *Any other AoB*

There was no further business.

19. Next Meeting

17:00 (London) Tuesday 28 January 2019 at the BCS London Offices, 25 Cophall Avenue London, EC2R 7BP. Google Hangouts access will be provided as usual.

20. Actions Arising From Meeting

Action Number	Action	Action on
Nov 19.01	Invite Jochen Leidner to serve as a co-opted committee member.	SR
Nov 19.02	SR to address with BCS HQ the process for sending Chair to ECIR and handling KSJ Award recipient expenses.	SR
Nov 19.03	Secretary to produce revised draft ECIR CfP for discussion and review at the next committee meeting.	JT
Nov 19.04	Confirm ECIR 2020 registration rates are unaffected by the changes.	JM
Nov 19.05	Secretary to give positive feedback to the proposers, but to note the need to avoid a clash with CHIIR and the difficulty of including a committee meeting in March.	JT
Nov 19.06	Make arrangements to move the IRSG committee list to the BCS service.	CM
Nov 19.07	Initiate email discussion of form and venue of next FDIA.	IF
Nov 19.08	UK to approach Hinrich Schütze (ACL President) re more formal involvement of the Association for Computational Linguistics in the Karen Spärck Jones Award.	UK
Nov 19.09	Treasurer to send email to committee members outlining the information needed to provide financial support in the budget.	IF
Nov 19.10	Ask Leif Azzopardi (Past and Acting ICTIR Steering Committee Chair) whether there has been progress with identifying a replacement chair for the ICTIR Steering Committee.	FH