

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

28 January 2020

BCS London Offices, Cophall Avenue, London

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].

Via Google Hangouts Video Conference

Udo Kruschwitz [UK] (left 17:50), Craig Macdonald [CM] (Membership), Phillip Mayr-Schlegel (PMS), Joao Magalhaes [JM], Frank Hopfgartner [FH]. From 17:12 Jochen Leidner [JL].

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

1. Apologies

Haiming Liu [HL], Yashar Moshfeghi [YM].

2. Minutes of Previous IRSG Committee Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the 25 November 2019 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
Nov 19.01	Invite Jochen Leidner to serve as a co-opted committee member.	Done
Nov 19.02	SR to address with BCS HQ the process for sending Chair to ECIR and handling KSJ Award recipient expenses.	Done
Nov 19.03	Secretary to produce revised draft ECIR CfP for discussion and review at the next committee meeting.	Done
Nov 19.04	Confirm ECIR 2020 registration rates are unaffected by the changes.	Done
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.	Done
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 Schutze (ACL President) re more formal involvement of the Association for Computational Linguistics in the Karen Sparck Jones Award.	Done
Nov 19.09	Treasurer to send email to committee members outlining the information needed to provide financial support in the budget.	Done
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.	Done

4. Other Matters Agreed by email

Jochen Leidner had been co-opted as agreed by email.

5. Chairs report

The chair had had a one-to-one with Kerry Wear (Community Co-ordinator, BCS HQ). A process was agreed whereby KSJ Award winner and Chair's expenses to ECIR would only require her approval, subject to budget availability and submission of an estimate in advance.

Problems with Search Solutions 2019 registration were raised in the same meeting. She accepted she personally had underperformed on this occasion due to a house move in the relevant period.

6. Search Solutions

[JL joined during this item].

a. 2019 Report

Only three tutorials ran in the end, one with just two attendees. A significant problem seemed to be budget cuts in an institution which had sent many delegates in the past.

Earlier arrangements and advertising would help.

MW asked if linking the tutorials and conference sessions would help.

Generally it was agreed the programme was finalised rather too late to allow adequate publicity.

As he had indicated earlier AM wished to stand down as Search Solutions Tutorial Chair.

The chair asked if anyone present wished to become Search Solutions Tutorial Chair. He noted HL had expressed an interest. There were no other volunteers.

Agreed: HL to become Search Solutions Tutorial Chair.

Action Jan 20.01 AM to hand over Search Solutions Tutorial process to HL.

Generally things had worked well in the new venue, and the main conference day was a success.

MW was very pleased with Alberto Purpura on a good report of the meeting, to appear in the upcoming Informer. Alberto is a student who received a fee waiver for Search Solutions this year.

b. 2020 Organising Committee

The chair asked for volunteers to be on the Search Solutions Organising Committee. IF, DA, SZ and UK volunteered. UK suggested he also ask Tony Russell-Rose.

There was a discussion of the need for a chair, and IF volunteered.

Agreed: IF be Search Solutions 2020 Chair.

Action Jan 20.02: Book BCS Copthall Avenue urgently.

The use of Eventbrite, and the charges this incurs, is an issue.

7. ECIR – Issuing Calls for two upcoming years together

A revised draft Call for Proposals for ECIR 2022 and 2023 previously circulated by the secretary was discussed. Generally the draft was well received.

Two issues were identified to require further attention.

First the importance of Industry Day is not sufficiently emphasized in the draft.

Second the importance of maintaining the quality of the conference (for example as indicated by acceptance rates and other measures) is not sufficiently clearly communicated.

The need to retain the current length of 9 pages was agreed.

Action Jan 20.03 Produce new draft CfP for ECIR 2022 and 2023.

8. ECIR 2020

[UK had left the meeting]

Acceptance Rates for each category of submission were as follows:

Category	Submissions	Acceptances	Rate
Full papers	210	55	27%
Short Papers	151	48	33%
Demos			45%
Workshops	7	4	57%
Tutorials	10	3	33%

The increased numbers of presentations (not just full papers, but the Information Retrieval Journal session, CLEF Session with 12 paper, etc.) will necessitate three sessions being run in parallel, which is believed to be the first time this has happened at ECIR. The maximum session length has been kept at 1 hour and 40 minutes.

Industry Day and the Doctoral Consortium are in the process of being organised.

There was a discussion of whether the acceptance rate was appropriate and justified. Some members felt the increase in acceptance rate to 27% need more justification.

[PMS left the meeting]

9. ECIR 2021

Not much progress, in part because FS has a broken arm. The main venue has been arranged, investigation of the banquet venue is on going, as is website development.

[FS and JM left the meeting]

10. IR Days

The workshop for which funding had previously been agreed (on Fair Information Retrieval, Glasgow) will now take place on 27 March. A Call for Participation will be issued shortly.

There was funding for a further meeting in the 2019/2020 group budget, and, in view of the secretary's absence, the chair volunteered to progress this.

Action Jan 20.05 Issue Call for Proposal for One Day IR papers to take place later in 2020.

11. Mailing Lists

There still had been no progress with moving the IRSG Committee list to the BCS service, so Action Nov 19.06 was carried forward as **Action Jan 20.06**.

12. Informer

MW expected to issue the next edition in the 2nd week of February 2020.

Shortly thereafter MW would circulate a plan for the next few editions.

There followed a brief discussion of whether to include BC post nominals (mainly MBCS and FBCS) after authors names where relevant.

Agreed unanimously that in Informer post nominals should be included in author attributions in future.

13. FDIA

Proceedings of FDIA 2019 are finally online.

Discussion of form and venue of the next FDIA had yet to take place, so Action Nov 19.07 was carried forward as **Action Jan 20.07**.

14. Strix Award

The committee were considering a new venue for the 2020 lecture.

15. ICTIR

FH reported that Leif Azzopardi, whose term as ICTIR Steering Committee Chair had expired, continued to act as interim Chair in the absence of the appointment of a new chair. According to the agreement which was entered into when responsibility ICTIR was handed over from the BCS IRSG to ACM SIGIR it was clearly now the responsibility of the SIGIR Exec to identify a new chair.

There was a short discussion of possible actions to resolve the situation. There appeared to be little or no support on the committee to request the agreement of SIGIR to return the conference to the IRSG.

Action Jan 20.08 Secretary to supply the chair with a copy of the IRSG/SIGIR agreement re ICTIR.

Action Jan 20.09 Chair to write to the Chair of SIGIR to formally remind them of their responsibilities wrt ICTIR.

16. Karen Spärck Jones Award

[This item was taken out of order, after Item 7]

UK reported everything was sorted with the 2019 cycle and has been announced Chirag Shah of the University of Washington had been given the 2019 Award.

Discussions with Hinrich Schütze (Association of Computational Linguistics President) re formalising the relationship between the Award Panel and the ACL were continuing.

Action Jan 20.04 UK to ask KSI Award winner Chirag Shah to produce a travel expenses estimate for ECIR keynote to be submitted to BCS HQ.

[UK left the meeting at 17:50]

17. Finance

As agreed the treasurer had email members re meeting budgets, but no useful input had been received for the committee.

Partly as a result of this it was not possible to present the 2020/2021 group budget to this meeting.

The need for the whole committee to approve the 2020/2021 group budget before submission to central BCS budgetary process in February was noted.

Agreed to approve the group's 2020/2021 budget by email.

Action Jan 20.10 Treasurer to circulate the draft 2020/2021 IRSG budget at the earliest opportunity.

18. Any Other Business

a. *CILIP Metadata and Discovery Group*

The proposed collaboration agreement between IRSG and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals Metadata and Discovery Group was approved in principle, but made reference to BCS and BCS Members as a whole, for whom the group could not speak.

Therefore the draft agreement needed reformulation to reflect this.

There was a brief discussion of any possible conflict of interest with existing relationship with the International Society for Knowledge Organisation (ISKO), but such conflict was though unlikely.

Action Jan 20.11 AM to contact The Metadata and Discovery Group to modify the agreement wording to make it clear the agreement was with the IRSG, not the BCS as a whole.

b. *Sponsorship for CLEF*

A request for sponsorship for student attendance at CLEF 2020 had been received from Evangelous Kanopolous from the University of Amsterdam.

The treasurer pointed out that £3 000 remained in the sponsorship budget.

Agreed provide £1 000 of student support for CLEF 2020.

In discussion it became apparent no request for support had been received from ECIR 2020 due to an oversight.

Agreed provide £2 000 of student support to ECIR 2020 provided a suitable formal request was received.

c. *Any other AoB*

There was no further business.

19. Next Meeting

17:00 (London) Tuesday 9 June 2020 at the BCS London Offices, 25 Copthall Avenue London, EC2R 7BP. Google Hangouts access will be provided as usual.

20. Actions Arising From Meeting

Action Number	Action	Action on
Jan 20.01	Hand over Search Solutions Tutorial process to HL.	AM
Jan 20.02	Book BCS Copthall Avenue urgently for Search Solution 2020.	IF
Jan 20.03	Produce new draft CfP for ECIR 2022 and 2023.	JT
Jan 20.04	Ask KSJ Award winner Chirag Shah to produce a travel expenses estimate for ECIR keynote to be submitted to BCS HQ.	UK
Jan 20.05	Issue Call for Proposal for One Day IR papers to take place later in 2020.	SR
Jan 20.06	Make arrangements to move the IRSG committee list to the BCS service.	CM

Jan 20.07	Initiate email discussion of form and venue of next FDIA.	IF
Jan 20.08	Secretary to supply the chair with a copy of the IRSG/SIGIR agreement re ICTIR.	JT
Jan 20.09	Chair to write to the Chair of SIGIR to formally remind them of their responsibilities wrt ICTIR.I	SR
Jan 20.10	Treasurer to circulate the draft 2020/2021 IRSG budget at the earliest opportunity	IF
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.	AM

Meeting Closed 19:25