

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Annual General Meeting

18 September 2019

Putteridge Bury Campus, University of Bedfordshire

Draft

Present

Stefan Ruger [SR] (Chair), John Tait [JT] (Minutes), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Steve Zimmerman, Dyaa Albakour, Andrew MacFarlane, Haiming Liu, Sehrish Kahn, Mahmeud Artemi, Amit Kumar Jaiswal, X. Feng, E. Liu, M. Conrad, K. Chessum, Dharmesh Faquir, Xiaojin Wang, Yanjie Zhou, P. Pichappan, S. Chandrappa, G. Kazai, Martin White, Nick Collis.

The meeting opened at 13:00.

1. Welcome from the Chair

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2018 were approved unanimously.

4. Committee Member Reports

4.1 Chairs report

The chair reported that the group had been involved with the following events in 2018/19: the Workshop on Ethics, Privacy, Transparency and Bias in Information Retrieval (Sheffield 2018); The TALMIRI Workshop at the University of Bedfordshire, today; the European Conference on Information Retrieval (ECIR), held in Cologne this year and to be held in Lisbon in 2020; Future Directions in Information Access (FDIA) held in conjunction with the European Summer School in Information Retrieval held in July 2019 in Milan, Italy; the International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval (ICTIR) to be held in Santa Clara, USA in October 2019 and Search Solutions in London in November 2019.

The group continues to organise the award of the Microsoft BCS/BCS IRSG Karen Sparck Jones Award. The 2018 winner was Krisztian Balog of the University of Stavanger. The 2019 winner will be announced in December. The chair thanked Microsoft Research, Cambridge for their continuing support for the award.

The group arranged the following Industry Awards at Search Solutions 2018:

- Best search user experience: EmpathyBroker
- Most promising start-up: Luigi's Box
- Best open source project: Anserini (on behalf of the project to J Lin)
- Search professional of the year: Anna Brown
- Best presentation (at Search Solutions 2018): Martin White

Finally on prizes, the group is also one of the partners in the Tony Kent Strix Award which is organised by The UK eInformation Group (UKeiG), part of the CILIP, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. The 2018 winner was Prof. Pia Borlund of the Department of Archivistics, Library and Information Science at Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway. Google was thanked for sponsoring the 2019 Lecture which Prof Borlund will present.

The chair welcomed to new Informer Editor Martin White, thanked to Udo Kruschwitz for his service as the previous editor and for the easy transfer of responsibilities which he facilitated. He also thanked to Tony Russell-Rose and Steven Zimmerman for their work on production and distribution of the newsletter.

The new editor has brought Informer a new editorial aim: to present IR developments and achievements in as broad a range as possible of search applications, and to balance academic and practitioner interests.

The chair wished to note the service of several members of the committee, which the BCS has acknowledged with Long Service Awards, which can be made for 5, 10 or 25 years continuous service: Dyaa Albakour - a 5-year-award, who has 6 years continuous service and role as webmaster; Ingo Frommholz - 5-year-award, 6 years continuous service and his role as treasurer; John Tait 5-year-award, 8 years continuous service and his roles as chair and secretary plus previous stints as committee member; Udo Kruschwitz - 10-year-award, 11 years continuous service, previous role as secretary; Andy Macfarlane - 10-year-award, almost 20 years continuous service on the committee including previous role as chair.

Finally the chair noted we are in negotiation for a new award: ECIR Industry Impact Award, sponsored by Signal AI; and it was hoped these negotiations (between the group, BCS HQ and Signal AI) would be concluded positively shortly.

4.2 Treasurers Report

A detailed report was presented by the Treasurer. Briefly the group's income was slightly down on last year (£9943 as opposed to £10380 in 2017-18), but so was expenditure (£13436 as opposed to £13700), leaving us in a broadly similar position. The excess of expenditure over income is covered either by the group's annual budget allocated from BCS central funds for Member Group support, or by Special Funding Requests for particular projects.

In the course of the year the group provided financial support to the following activities:

European Summer School in Information Retrieval:	£1,000 (student travel support)
European Conference on Information Retrieval:	£4,997 (student travel support)
Karen Spärck Jones Award (from Microsoft):	£2,431
Future Directions in Information Access:	£ 471 (organiser travel)

3. Elections

A Call for Nominations for the Vice Chair, the Membership Secretary, and three members of the committee was issued in July. Udo Kruschwitz was nominated as Vice Chair by Stefan Rüger and John Tait. No nominations were received for Membership Secretary. By the due date the following had been nominated as committee members (nominators in brackets): Andy Macfarlane (John Tait, Udo Kruschwitz); Frank Hopfgartner (Udo Kruschwitz, Ingo Frommholz); Dyaa Albakour (Stefan Rueger, Ingo Frommholz); Steven Zimmerman (Udo Kruschwitz, Yashar Moshfeghi).

Udo Kruschwitz was therefore elected as Vice Chair unopposed, and since created an additional vacancy on the committee, all those nominated were also elected unopposed.

This meant the committee (with terms in brackets) was now:

Officers

Chair: Stefan Rüger (2020)
Vice Chair: Udo Kruschwitz (2021)
Secretary : John Tait (2020)
Treasurer: Ingo Frommholz (2020)
Membership Secretary: tbc

Members

- Haiming Liu (2020)
- Frank Hopfgartner (2021)
- Andy MacFarlane (2021)
- Yashar Moshfeghi (2020)
- Dyaa Albakour (2021)
- Steve Zimmerman (2021)
- Philipp Mayr-Schlegel (ECIR 2020)¹
- João Magalhã (ECIR 2021)²

The Chair thanked: Lorraine Goeuriot (as ECIR 2019 rep);- Craig Macdonald and Jochen Leidner for their contributions as past members of the committee.

4. Constitution

Following a suggestion by member Martin White, the committee wished to modify the group's constitution to allow proxy voting.

It was proposed to add an addition Clause 6.4.2 so the corresponding section of the constitution to read;

6.4 Voting

6.4.1 At any General Meeting each bone fida member shall be entitled to one vote per motion. Voting at any meeting shall be determined by a show of hands unless a ballot be demanded by at least one third of the members present.

6.4.2 Any bone fide member of the group may appoint a proxy to vote in their stead at a General Meeting. The member must advise the Secretary of the Group of the name of the proxy at least 7 days in advance of the meeting.

The change was approved by 10 votes to nil.

5. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed just before 14:00.

¹ Automatically co-opted.

² Automatically co-opted.