

## Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

20 October 2021

Zoom Video Conference convened at 17:00 (London)

### Present

Udo Kruschwitz [UK] (Chair), Martin White [MW], Steven Zimmerman [SZ] (Minutes), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Fabrizio Sebastiani [FS], Haiming Liu [HL], Frank Hopfgartner [FH], Jochen Leidner [JL], Yashar Moshfeghi [YM], Krisztian Balog [KB], Dyaa Albakour [DA]

### 1. Apologies and Minutes of Previous IRSG Committee Meeting

Apologies received by: Andrew MacFarlane [AM], Stefan Ruger [SR] (also KB, DA and HL had indicated they would need to leave early)

The minutes of the meeting of the 11 May were accepted as a true record.

### 2. Actions arising from May 2021

Action Number	Action	Action on
May 11.01	[MW/SZ] To set up repository with IRJ agreement and other documents that should be readily accessible to IRSG committee members  <b>Action Oct 20.01</b> [ MW, SZ ] - Carry this forward	MW, SZ
May 11.02	[UK] To write a support letter for ESSIR, [JM] to determine what to include in this letter  <b>Action Oct 20.02</b> [ UK ] - Carry this forward	UK
May 11.03	[MW] - Informer article to explain the difference between KSJ Award vs KSJ lecture	DONE
May 11.04	[JL] - to follow-up via email on topic of KSJ award with EACL	Done
May 11.05	[ALL] Send Udo any things you wish to discuss for his meeting with Kerry Weir.	Done
May 11.06	[DA] Will provide [KB] with some guidance for the industry awards	Done
May 11.07	[UK] will ask Annalina Caputo to be ECIR 2023 committee chair	Done

<b>May 11.08</b>	[UK/SZ] discuss and resolve ECIR 2024 bid call draft online and distribute to channels.	Done
<b>May 11.09</b>	[JL] will send out KSJ call, [ALL] please send him any suggestions for draft	Done
<b>May 11.10</b>	[HL/YM/IF/JL] to come up with recommendations for publication strategy  <b>Discussed under point 14</b>	HL, YM, IF, JL
<b>May 11.11</b>	[UK] to connect [MW] via email with Ralph Samuels from UKeiG	Done
<b>May 11.12</b>	[AM] to forward related emails from previous years (e.g. related to ISKO) to [MW] for other possible collaborations	Done
<b>May 11.13</b>	[SZ/UK] to organize elections for AGM	SZ, UK
<b>May 11.14</b>	[SZ/YM] to have discussion about how best to include diversity in nomination call	SZ, YM
<b>May 11.15</b>	[UK] will send off a doodle to find dates / times in September for next meeting	Done
<b>May 11.16</b>	[UK] requested that [ALL] committee members create a contribution for informer  <b>Action Oct 20.03 [ UK ] - Needs a different strategy. Discussed under point 17</b>	Done

### 3. Other Matters Agreed by email

None

### 4. Chair's report

Given the long agenda the report was kept very short. Main points:

- We now have a brand-new Web site which was a major effort and UK thanked MW for driving this.
- There have been several emails sent around to the IRSG committee over the past few months (mainly actions conducted by MW) which had received very little response from the committee, this is something we will need to improve (even just a simple yes/no response will often do).
- Elections to the committee are coming up, recently issues were raised about publicity of this and steps had been taken this year to allow more time and broader publicity.
- The BCS Member Group Working Group has continued to work on recommendations to adjust the current processes and regulations. They have asked BCS members for feedback ([https://volunteer.bcs.org/MGWG\\_Recommendations-Introduction](https://volunteer.bcs.org/MGWG_Recommendations-Introduction)) by the end of October, and

UK has asked committee members to make use of this. UK noted that the previously published controversial suggestion to require any committee member of a BCS specialist group to be a full BCS member appears to have been dropped. The IRSG had argued that requiring committee members to be BCS members (apart from the roles which always required BCS membership) will be a problem in recruiting volunteers, in particular given the limited benefits such fairly expensive membership offers (when compared to ACM membership, for example).

## 5. ECIR 2022

KB reports the following

- Everything going smoothly with ECIR 2022
- Conference will be offered both in-person and remote
  - Considering ways to make it interactive for remote participants
  - Remote participants will have to pay a fee (smaller than in-person fee) to cover costs
- Submissions similar to last year
  - 5 out of 7 workshops accepted
  - 180 full papers submitted
- Brought up email from Nicola Ferro on the CLEF/ECIR overlap
  - Main issue is that it provides an easy pathway to ECIR
  - 14 CLEF papers submitted this year
- The challenge is there is no formal agreement as to how the ECIR/CLEF relationship should work

**Discussion:** FS provides a summary of the different publication pathways for CLEF/ECIR

- 1st Form (Labs)
  - Similar to workshops
  - Shared task
  - Every submission invited to discuss run
  - These submissions do not go into CLEF proceedings, it goes into the CEUR working notes (more detailed than proceedings)
  - Best lab participants are invited to submit to CLEF proceedings
- 2nd Form (Proceedings)
  - Similar to most other IR conferences
  - Goes into Springer proceedings
  - Only a subset of papers are from Labs.
- 3rd form (ECIR)
  - If author chooses to go into ECIR as well (must at least be in 2nd form), they can submit a short paper version to ECIR

**Action October 20.04** [UK] To clarify / formalize agreement between CLEF and ECIR

**Action October 20.05** [ALL] Provide suggestions to KB for Keynote Speakers

**Discussion:** KB regarding publication

- Proceedings publications discussions have taken place
- Keeping with Springer proceedings is the only viable option for ECIR 2022 at this stage

**1755 KB Logged off**

## 6. IRSG Web site

[MW] Reports the following

- A massive thank you to the IRSG Website team for making the transition to BCS hosting so simple
- Who is going to own/manage the Website content post MW role?
- Doesn't necessarily have to be managed by a member of the committee

**1800 DA Logged off**

**Action October 20.06** [UK] Assign role of content manager during next committee meeting (in Jan 2022)

## 7. ECIR 2023

UK reports that things are going to plan, venues are now being booked

**Action October 20.07** [UK] Co-opt Analina as ECIR 2023 chair in Jan 2022

## 8. Calls for bids for ECIR 2024

We received no formal bids for 2024 after 2 calls. Likely due to institutions not wanting to commit to anything due to pandemic risk

There were 4 parties that had expressed interest.

Discussion: Consider reverting to the old 2 year schedule.

**Action October 20.08** [UK] Add ECIR 2024 bids to agenda in January

## 9. Search Solutions 2021

**MW Reports the following**

SS 2021 will be virtual

5 themes in total with 2 panel sessions

Working with Tony Russel-Rose to give special attention to awards

Still waiting on Eventbrite link for registration

**Action October 20.09** [IF] Eventbrite link created and running

## 1820 HL Logged off

IF on SS tutorials:

- One tutorial will take place in person on NLP (Full day)
- ½ day tutorial to be run by IF and JL on evaluation from a practitioners' experience

## 10. Elections and AGM

SZ reminds everyone of the process. 2 nominations are required plus biography as outlined in constitution and website

<https://www.bcs.org/membership/member-communities/information-retrieval-specialist-group/governance/annual-general-meeting/>

MW confirms the AGM will be virtual at end of SS 2021

**Action October 20.10** [ALL] All who want to remain as members please follow instructions on website for elections

## 11. KSJ Award

JL reports the following

- EACL agreement has been resolved
- So far a small number of applications, however they are high caliber
- Need to find someone to mentee for handoff of role in next year

**Action October 20.11** [UK] Add as agenda item for January to identify new committee member to take on KSJ chair role next year

## 12. Tony Kent Strix Award

AM term has come to an end and someone will need to take on this role

**Action October 20.12** [UK] Add as agenda item for January for someone to take on Strix Award role

## 13. ICTIR report

FH confirms that ICTIR will take place concurrently with SIGIR 2022 in Madrid

## 14. Publication strategy group

Strategy group ([HL/YM/IF/JL]) gave an introduction to the informal verbal discussion held before today's committee meeting.

**Discussion:** A lengthy discussion took place and the key takeaways are as follows

- Not enough formality to this discussion to make any decision
- There are very differing views about the best way forward on the matter of ECIR publication

- In the short-term there should be a continuation with Springer
- Setup more formal meetings around this matter
  - 1st Separate IRSG meeting to discuss and produce bullet points of where we currently stand (e.g. ECIR 2021 panel outcomes, options available)
  - 2nd Have a more open meeting (e.g. ECIR community) to discuss further

**Action October 20.13** [UK] Schedule a meeting after elections to further discuss topic and produce more formal summary

#### **1850 FH Logged off**

**Discussion:** FS (ECIR 2021 chair)

- Suggests inviting different voices into the committee meeting
- Doesn't believe we need a public meeting at this stage as this topic was already heavily discussed at ECIR 2021

### 15. Budget

IF reports the following

- £4212.87 is the total budget available for 2021/22
- We must use caution with this budget given uncertainty with revenue (e.g. SS2021 online again)
- Budget was based on in-person SS2021
- Revenue will therefore be reduced

**Action October 20.14** [ALL] Please let IF know ASAP of any upcoming budgetary requests

#### **1854 FS Logged off**

### 16. Collaboration with ISKO

MW reports the following

- Sent out a proposal from ISKO in early October to ask for our support on workshops with a message asking IRSG committee to review and say yes or no to support of the proposal
- Not a single person from the IRSG committee responded on MW's message
- This lack of response does not look professional
- There is no additional action needed from our committee other than supporting the proposal.

**Decision:** Through a brief discussion of the proposal, it was decided that we do support this proposal.

**Action October 20.15** [MW] to confirm with ISKO our support

### 17. Informer

MW reports:

- Many of the articles are currently submitted by MW
- Efforts to recruit more authors, (e.g. from committee members) have borne limited fruit

- Recommends. that members of the committee go out and find people to write articles for Informer. We have good coverage of articles from non-academic areas, but we need much better coverage from academic research

## 18. AOB

None

## 19. Next meeting

**Action** [UK] will send off a doodle to find committee meeting dates / times in January after AGM

## 20. Actions Arising From Meeting

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Oct 20.01	To set up repository with IRJ agreement and other documents that should be readily accessible to IRSG committee members	[MW/SZ]
Oct 20.02	To write a support letter for ESSIR, [With Joao from ECIR 2020] to determine what to include in this letter	UK
Oct 20.03	Informer needs a different strategy for finding authors	UK
Oct 20.04	To clarify / formalize agreement between CLEF and ECIR	UK
Oct 20.05	Provide suggestions to KB for Keynote Speakers	ALL
Oct 20.06	Assign role of content manager during next committee meeting (in Jan 2022)	UK
Oct 20.07	Co-opt Analina as ECIR 2023 chair in Jan 2022	UK
Oct 20.08	Add ECIR 2024 BIDS to agenda in January	UK
Oct 20.09	Eventbrite link created and running	IF
Oct 20.10	All who want to remain as members please follow instructions on website for elections	ALL
Oct 20.11	Add as agenda item for January to identify new committee member to take on KSJ chair role next year	UK
Oct 20.12	Add as agenda item for January for someone to take on Strix role	UK

<b>Oct 20.13</b>	Schedule a meeting after elections to further discuss topic and produce more formal summary	UK
<b>Oct 20.14</b>	Please let IF know ASAP of any upcoming budgetary requests	ALL
<b>Oct 20.15</b>	Confirm with ISKO our support	MW

Meeting Closed 19:02