

## Minutes of the BCS IRSG Committee Meeting

31 January 2024

Zoom Meeting 17:00 (London)

### Present

Udo Kruschwitz [UK] (Chair, Minutes), Graham McDonald [GM] (Vice Chair), Tony Russel-Rose [TRR] (Events Coordinator), Gregor Donabauer [GD], David Rau [DR], Andy Hind [AH], Yashar Moshfeghi [YM] (Inclusion Officer), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Sean MacAvaney [SM]

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

Annalina Caputo [AC], Monica Paramita [MP], Nicola Tonello [NT], Iadh Ounis [IO], Haiming Liu [HL] (Membership Secretary and KSJ Award Panel Chair)

Minutes approved

### 2. Actions arising from Nov 2023

| Action Number | Action   | Action on                                       |
|---------------|--|---|
| NOV 21.01     | Address informer and external communications issues. See actions SEP 25.04, 25.05, and 25.09             | ALL in new committee<br><b>Ongoing (GM, UK)</b> |
| NOV 21.02     | Share / admin of IRSG Twitter account  | IF/IO <b>in progress</b>                        |
| NOV 21.03     | Raise awareness about Procedures for BCS   | IF <b>in progress</b>                           |
| NOV 21.04     | To send election results for Website   | SZ/UK <b>DONE</b>                               |
| NOV 21.05     | To handover files to new secretary + handover status of BCS file share.                                  | SZ <b>in progress</b>                           |
| NOV 21.06     | New Informer Manager, to work on this once informer handover complete. (can bundle with Sep 25.04/05/09) | GD <b>Ongoing</b>                               |
| NOV 21.07     | <b>New Committee</b> to decide when to send out call for 2026 ECIR.                                      | ALL <b>DONE</b>                                 |
| NOV 21.08     | GET New ICTIR member at next meeting   | ALL <b>DONE</b>                                 |
| NOV 21.09     | Fill Secretary and Early Career Advocate roles   | ALL <b>Ongoing</b>                              |

### 3. Items Agreed by email

Nothing this time

### 4. Chair's report

Three key points raised in the Chair's report:

1. Three roles on the committee are unfilled:
  - a. Early Careers Advocate: UK suggests to co-opt Andy Hind (Oracle) to this role who has indicated willingness in taking this on (Committee agrees to this; **Action UK**: inform BCS to update the group's Web site accordingly), **Action UK**: add AH to IRSG committee mailing list
  - b. Secretary: still unfilled and no volunteer, **Action UK**: find a candidate to fill the position and (once successful) inform the committee via email
  - c. Also vacant: ICTIR representative now that Frank Hopfgartner is no longer on the committee (Committee agrees to elect IF to be the new IRSG representative on the ICTIR Steering Committee; **Action UK + IF**: inform BCS and get in touch with the ICTIR Steering Committee)
2. The General Chairs (GCs) of ECIR 2024 approached UK to inform the committee of an incident in which an author of a submitted paper was in breach of the ACM's Policy Against Harassment that was adopted by the ECIR 2024 GCs. The committee discussed the case and agreed that there should be a one-year ban for this one author to submit anything to ECIR. **Action UK**: inform ECIR 2024 and 2025 General Chairs about one-year ban of author in breach of ECIR 2024 harassment policy
3. Informer will need to be revived. GD has volunteered to lead the project. **Action UK**: arrange meeting with TRR, GD and UK to get Informer up and running again with a target issue in April 2024. **Action ALL**: contact GD with contributions no later than first week of April

### 5. Event Organiser's report

The Search Network have asked me to raise this issue of the Search Insights one day event, originally scheduled for February but pushed back tentatively to May. In particular, does the committee still share an interest in holding this event and if so are there any further comments/feedback on the proposal?

From Martin: We agreed that we would lead on structure and content but IRSG needed to set a day, be responsible for working with BCS on the event as needed (eg web site updates) and setting the ticket prices.

**Action TRR**: connect with Search network and get requirements (dates, rooms, possible sponsorship), contact BCS, and feed back to committee

**Action TRR**: prepare call for one-day events and agree with committee via email

**Action IF:** confirm budget for one-day event support, i.e. whether we can promise support or not (or submit supplementary fund request)

## 6. Membership Secretary's report

BCS has approved our membership questionnaire, so I will send the questionnaire out ASAP in case people will have time to fill it in during the holiday.

## 7. The Future of Informer

Two reviews on Search Solutions 2023 to be chased up for inclusion in next issue.

**Action UK:** contact authors of Search Engine 2024 review and post on Industry Awards 2024.

## 8. KSJ Award / Funding

HL informed the committee in December: We have got a winner for KSJ award - Dr Hongning Wang. I have sent the information to BCS to update the website. Hope this will happen in the new year. I will liaise with EACL to arrange the keynote and order the trophy next.

**Action IF + UK:** continue effort to sort out future funding for KSJ award

**Action HL:** confirm updates to IRSG Web site with KSJ Award winner 2023 have been done.

## 9. Report Inclusion Officer

NO REPORT

## 10. Report Early Careers Advocate

Report by outgoing Early Careers Advocate GM: There will be elections to the BCS Council for Member Groups' constituencies in February. There are 5 nominees for 2 Young Professionals constituency vacancies. As a committee we need to discuss and decide who we will vote for (I expect we are to vote for 1 candidate). I emailed the details of the nominees to the committee. The committee's decision must be recorded in committee meeting minutes.

Young Professionals Constituency Nominees

- Samira Ali
- Jonathan Ayodele
- Hans Bathija
- Lasith Gunawardena
- Alexander Robinson

Nominees' statements:

<https://www.bcs.org/media/lm0hhohv/young-professional-nominee-statements.pdf>

The committee agreed on Alexander Robinson as the preferred candidate.

**Action GM:** vote for Alexander Robinson on behalf of the committee.

## 11. ECIR 2023

Has been wrapped up with anything left over (transfer of funds) to be reported after ECIR 2024

## 12. ECIR 2024

Author registration and Early Bird deadlines have now passed, and registrations are overall healthy at this stage. Taking into account previous discussions within the community, and to strike a reasonable balance between the authors' costs and financial risks to the conference, for author registrations, we allowed people to register up to 3 papers and only asked authors to pay their relevant registration fee (e.g., students paid student fees). This choice, thus far, worked very well.

We have started allocating student support grants and will continue to support further students as more promised sponsorship money materialises. The Proceedings have been shipped to Springer, and all local arrangements are now in place (incl. contracts).

From this week, all focus will be on delivering a great physical event. We are finalising the schedule and will be communicating to participants and authors shortly. We have abstracts for the keynote presentations and the best paper committee is deliberating the nominations for relevant tracks. In addition, we have a list of PC/SPC members to recognise for an Outstanding Reviewer Award.

The KvR Award received 5 strong nominations. The award panel has met and discussed the nominations. The majority of the nominations would have been worthy winners, but after deliberations the panel selected a winner. The winner has been notified and accepted the award. They will present an additional keynote during the main conference. The introduction of the award was very well received by the community. We received a number of personal messages saying that this type of award (specifically focused on contributions to IR theory) is a great recognition to the recipients and a welcome addition to the current (few) allocated IR awards. The panel also recommended that the award becomes a constant feature of ECIR from now on. We hope that BCS IRSG will get behind and support the KvR award going forward so that it can be a regular component of future ECIRs. We had initially thought that it would be good to have it awarded in the years that the KSJ award was not at ECIR. However, the feedback we received personally and from the award panel was pushing for it to be awarded on a yearly basis, given the large number of possible awardees.

## 13. ECIR 2025

NO REPORT

#### 14. ECIR 2026

**Action UK:** send out draft of bid to host ECIR 2026 to committee with timeline as in past year

#### 15. Search Solutions 2023

The committee agreed that the event was a success and worked well overall. There were about 50 attendees at the BCS venue in London for the main day (with two tutorials the day before that HL also judged to be a success).

There were a few problems in the run-up of the event that had to do with getting information onto the IRSG Web page (for which central BCS is in charge), setting up a registration form by the BCS on Eventbrite and a few other related problems.

#### 16. Search Solutions 2024

The committee agreed that the new Events Coordinator (TRR) should start planning for Search Solutions 2024.

**Action TRR:** prepare a plan for Search Solutions 2024 and inform the committee.

**Action ALL:** anyone who wants to be involved in organising Search Solutions 2024 should talk to TRR

#### 17. ICTIR report

NO REPORT

#### 18. Strix Award

Martin White's Strix annual memorial lecture was very well received by the audience. Around 50 people registered for the event. There are no further updates but there will be a recruitment drive to replace retiring members of judging team at some point this year.

#### 19. Budget

IF gave an update on the group's budget. The new budget is due in March and IF will inform the committee once this has been submitted. Two issues raised this time:

- Search Solutions 2023:
  - Income Reg Fees: £3,628.48 (Tutorials £941.71, Main £2,686.77)
  - Expenditure: £544.14 Catering
    - £328.63 Eventbrite Charges
    - £600 Honorarium Tutorials (in progress)
- Working on a special funding request (SFR) to support FDIA 2024

## 20. Search Industry Awards

TRR reported on the awards. The 2023 awards were considered a success. TRR noted that the number of nominations for the individual award categories vary from year to year. The main change for 2024 will be to go for just 3 categories by merging two of them.

## 21. AOB

Nothing this time

## 22. Next meeting

**Action UK:** Send around Doodle for the next meeting (planned to be towards end of May)

## 23. Actions Arising From Meeting

| Action Number | Action   | Action on |
|---------------|--|-----------|
| JAN 24.01     | Address Informer and external communications issues  | GM, UK    |
| JAN 24.02     | Share / admin of IRSG Twitter account  | IF/IO     |
| JAN 24.03     | Raise awareness about Procedures for BCS   | IF        |
| JAN 24.04     | To handover files to new secretary + handover status of BCS file share                               | UK        |
| JAN 24.05     | New Informer manager: to work on Actions SEP 25.04/SEP 25.05/SEP 25.09                               | GD        |
| JAN 24.06     | Inform BCS about new Careers Advocate to update the group's Web site accordingly                     | UK        |
| JAN 24.07     | Add AH to IRSG committee mailing list  | UK        |
| JAN 24.08     | Find a candidate to fill the secretary position and (once successful) inform the committee via email | UK        |

|                  |  |         |
|------------------|--|---------|
| <b>JAN 24.09</b> | Inform BCS about IF being the new IRSG ICTIR representative and get in touch with the ICTIR Steering Committee                                   | UK + IF |
| <b>JAN 24.10</b> | Inform ECIR 2024 and 2025 General Chairs about one-year ban of author in breach of ECIR 2024 harassment policy                                   | UK      |
| <b>JAN 24.11</b> | Arrange meeting with TRR, GD and UK to get Informer up and running again with a target issue in April 2024                                       | UK      |
| <b>JAN 24.12</b> | Contact GD with contributions to Informer no later than first week of April  | ALL     |
| <b>JAN 24.13</b> | Connect with Search network and get requirements for one-day event (dates, rooms, possible sponsorship), contact BCS, and feed back to committee | TRR     |
| <b>JAN 24.14</b> | Prepare call for one-day events and agree with committee via email   | TRR     |
| <b>JAN 24.15</b> | Confirm budget for one-day event support, i.e. whether we can promise support or not (or submit supplementary fund request)                      | IF      |
| <b>JAN 24.16</b> | Contact authors of two previously arranged pieces for Informer about Search Engine 2024 (one review and one post on Industry Awards 2024).       | UK      |
| <b>JAN 24.17</b> | Continue effort to sort out future funding for KSJ award   | IF + UK |
| <b>JAN 24.18</b> | Confirm updates to IRSG Web site with KSJ Award winner 2023 have been done   | HL      |
| <b>JAN 24.19</b> | Vote for Alexander Robinson on behalf of the committee.  | GM      |
| <b>JAN 24.20</b> | Send out draft of bid to host ECIR 2026 to committee with timeline as in past year   | UK      |
| <b>JAN 24.21</b> | Prepare a plan for Search Solutions 2024 and inform the committee  | TRR     |
| <b>JAN 24.22</b> | Anyone who wants to be involved in organising Search Solutions 2024 should talk to TRR   | ALL     |
| <b>JAN 24.23</b> | Send around Doodle for the next meeting (planned to be towards end of May)   | UK      |

Meeting Closed at 18:30