Applying for UKCRC Membership
Frequently Asked Questions

What is UKCRC and what does it do?
The UK Computing Research Committee aims to promote the vitality, quality and impact of Computing Research in the UK. Its Members are internationally leading computer researchers drawn from both academia and industry.

The UKCRC was formed in November 2002 and is an Expert Panel of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and the Council of Professors and Heads of Computing (CPHC). By contributing to policy formation within these two key national bodies, UKCRC enables UK Computing Research to speak with a single voice.

As examples of activities, Members of UKCRC meet with members of government to discuss strategy and funding for computing research, and the assessment of UK computing research quality via the REF. The Committee makes formal, written submissions in response to government and Research Council consultations and Members have been called to give oral evidence. UKCRC organises and endorses relevant events, and from time to time issues appropriate press releases.

Why be a Member of UKCRC?
UKCRC speaks for our discipline only with the authority that it accumulates from the reputation of its Members. By joining, you increase that authority and thereby the effectiveness of UKCRC. Membership of UKCRC also implies that you have been recognised as a leading member of the UK computing research community. In other words, membership of UKCRC is itself recognition of your status as a leading UK researcher in the area of computing.

As a Member, you will be asked to participate in or lead UKCRC activities, including the preparation of submissions to government and other bodies.

Who can be a Member of UKCRC?
Anybody with a legitimate interest in UK computing research can apply to be a Member; in this sense, membership is open. However, the aim of UKCRC is that membership carries with it some seniority status. That is, applicants for membership are required to give evidence of international research leadership and of a commitment to contribute to the wider interests of the Computing research community.
The application must also provide evidence of upholding BCS standards, conducting oneself professionally and fairly at all times.

What is Appropriate Evidence for Industry Researchers?
Indicators of national industry leadership include, but are by no means restricted to (and in no particular order):
- Having been or being a CTO, Director of R&D, Fellow, "Outstanding Researcher", "Master Inventor" (or similar denomination) of large companies
- Having a track record in leading successful tech start-ups Page 2 of 4
- Having a significant record of awarded patents
- Being a Fellow of a recognised learned society, e.g. highly competitive fellowships such as IEEE, ACM, Royal Acad. of Engineering, or at less competitive fellowships such as IET or BCS
- Taking a leading role in professional societies

- Being a recipient of a prize for industrial innovation (e.g. BCS Technology Excellence Awards, IET Innovation Awards, Queen's Award for Industry, ...)
- Playing a leading role in a Standards body
- Being a member of industrial advisory boards for leading universities
- Being responsible for setting research/development strategy within their company
- Having a tangible record of publications, including the publication of professional articles or books, or columns in professional magazines.

We also welcome applications that are not from an individual but from companies with a portfolio that meet the criteria exemplified above.

What is Evidence of International Research Leadership?
Indicators of international research leadership include, but are by no means restricted to (and in no particular order):
- Having a world class publication record
- Having a distinguished publication record complemented by a significant record of awarded patents (especially for mixed academic/industrial careers)
- Editing a leading journal
- Chairing a premium conference programme committee
- Being invited to speak at high impact/prestigious research events (e.g., major international conferences)
- Chairing an international research society
- Being the recipient of an international research prize or award (such as those made by ACM; "research award" in this sense is not the same as "research grant")
- Having a particularly strong citation record
- Playing a leading role within an internationally respected industrial or academic research group
- Being a Fellow of a recognised learned society, e.g. highly competitive fellowships such as IEEE, ACM, Royal Acad. of Engineering, or at less competitive fellowships such as IET or BCS.

What level of commitment to contribute might be required?
- Willingness to serve on UKCRC working groups, e.g. on open publishing
- Willingness to contribute to consultation exercises
- Willingness to lead on consultation responses
- Willingness to represent UKCRC at events and in other organisations, for example with CPHC or the BCS Academy of Computing
- Willingness to serve on the Executive group of UKCRC

How do I apply?
A new streamlined process for applying has recently been introduced where applications may be made one of two ways:

1)   By nomination by a Member of UKCRC
2)   Directly to the Chair of the UKCRC Membership Panel
(see https://www.bcs.org/membership-and-registrations/member-communities/uk-computing-research-committee-ukcrc/members-of-ukcrc/ukcrc-membership-panel/ for contacts)

In both cases, a letter of support from a UKCRC member is expected. New applicants are asked to provide a CV and any relevant documents to support their application.

All applications will be treated confidentially.

How Will My Application be Evaluated?
Applications are considered by the UKCRC Membership Panel. Essentially, the Panel asks the following questions: Does this candidate show sufficient evidence of international research leadership in computing? And is the candidate willing to commit to contributing to national and international policy in computing research by drawing on their research expertise? In reaching a conclusion on these questions, the Panel will consider both the nature and volume of evidence presented.

What about Unsuccessful Applications?
The single biggest reason for applications being declined is that the applicant does not demonstrate sufficient evidence of international research leadership. Several scenarios seem to recur:

The applicant demonstrates that they are an active researcher, but not that they are a research leader. "Research leadership" is obviously difficult to define, since it is somewhat subjective, but the list of indicators above should give you some feel for the level of expectation. Having demonstrated competence in research – even over a period of time – is not the same as being a leader.

The applicant simply expects the Membership Panel to realise what a big cheese they are, and does not bother to spell out their research leadership credentials. Computing is a broad church and the Membership Panel is drawn from many disparate areas. You need to describe clearly to the Panel why you should be regarded as a leader in your area.

The candidate demonstrates a high level of professional service, but not in research. Professional service is an important part of academic life, and professional service deserves to be rewarded; but the UKCRC is aimed at research. Accordingly, a track record of excellence in professional service is not necessarily an indicator of research leadership. If you wish to draw attention to professional service as evidence of leadership status, you need to demonstrate how it relates to research leadership.

If your application was unsuccessful, then the Panel will try (within reason) to give you feedback on why.

If you or the Panel feel that you could present your case better, then you can re-apply for membership.

If you choose to do this, we urge you to take seriously any advice that the Membership Panel may give you about missing or weak elements of your case. The panel reserves the right not to consider applicants who have made repeated failed applications.

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