

Minutes of the BCS IRSG Annual General Meeting

DRAFT

21 November 2023

By Zoom Video Conference and In person

Present (Total = 26)

Tony Russell-Rose [TRR] (Vice-Chair), Ingo Frommholz [IF] (Treasurer), Steve Zimmerman [SZ] (Secretary), Haiming Liu [HL], Graham McDonald [GM], Sean MacAvaney, Yashar Moshfeghi [YM], Gregor Donabauer, Andy MacFarlane, Phillip Leach, Craig MacDonald, Edward Richards, Fangzheng Tian, Hitarth Narvala, Iadh Ounis, Jack MacKechnie, Jinyuan Fang, Lubingzhi Guo, Maria Viachou, Monica Paramita, Nicola Tonelloto, Thomas Jaenich, Xinhao Yi, Zaiqiao Miang, Zeyan Liang, Zhaohan Meng

The meeting opened at 18:03

1. Welcome from the Chair

Due to travel delays the chair - Udo Kruschwitz [UK] - could not attend. The treasurer (IF) filled in and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes/Actions of Previous Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 were approved unanimously, and there were no matters arising.

Action Number	Action	Action on
Nov 23.01	There was some discussion about the Karen-Spärck-Jones (KSJ) award not being broadcast enough during the conferences. Add this + discussion around KSJ video recording to January committee Agenda	DONE
Nov 23.02	Update/correct slide 23 (new committee members)	DONE

3. Committee Member Reports

3.1. Chair's report

IF presented UK's report on the IRSG activities over the past year:

- Search Solutions 2022 was organised back in person in London after two years of online events. That all worked out really well. Search Solutions 2023 to follow the day after the AGM, i.e. tomorrow (with tutorials today)
- ECIR 2023 was a very successful in-person event in Dublin (as reported in more detail in the group's newsletter Informer and in SIGIR Forum).
- ICTIR was co-located with SIGIR 2023.
- FDIA 2023 was another successful event with IRSG involvement, chaired by Ingo Frommholz, Yashar Moshfeghi and Haiming Liu. This was co-located with ESSIR 2023 in Vienna.
- The CORE management team had reached out to us to indicate that the CORE

ranking of our flagship conference (ECIR) would need to be re-assessed given the last time this happened was about 5 years or so ago. Sean MacAvaney took the lead in this and prepared a submission. We were very pleased that as a result of this we retained the A ranking (which means the conference is classified as "Excellent")

- The Karen Spärck Jones Award 2022 went to William Yang Wang (University of California, Santa Barbara) who gave a well-received keynote talk at ECIR 2023. It was noted that in future the keynote is planned to alternate between ECIR and the conference of the European Association on Computational Linguistics (EACL) (starting with EACL 2024). An agreement about this had been arranged by Jochen Leidner, the previous panel chair (current chair is Haiming Liu). Microsoft Research was thanked for support of the award over the years. It was reported that the funding agreement has come to an end and Microsoft Research will not be in a position to renew this. We are currently talking to alternative sponsors.
- The winner of the Tony Kent Strix Award 2023 is Martin White (who also served as a co-opted IRSG committee member until he stepped down this year). An online lecture was announced to be held in December.
- This year there are a number categories for Industry Awards to be announced at Search Solutions 2023 (tomorrow)
- The group's Informer newsletter continued to be run under the leadership of Martin White, and the chair thanked him alongside Steve Zimmerman and Tony Russell-Rose who supported Martin. Martin has now stepped down from that role and the January committee meeting will decide on how to continue in the new year.
- The chair was very pleased to announce that ECIR 2025 will be hosted in Lucca. General chairs are Franco Maria Nardini, Fabrizio Silvestri and Nicola Tonellotto (Nicola is the co-opted ECIR 2025 representative on the committee).

3.2. Treasurer's Report

3.2.1. Financial Year 2022/2023

Search Solutions 2022:

Registration fees income £3,444.30 (last year: £655.33)

Speaker expenses £1,200

Sponsorship

KSJ Award £2,500 (from Microsoft)

CLEF £1,000

Total Income: £5,944.30

Total Expenditure: £3,233.29

3.2.2. Financial Year 2023/2024

Budget: £2,500.00 – subject to Search Solutions 2023 income.

Additional funding can be released with Supplementary Funding Requests (SFRs).

SFRs are in general required for each funding request. SFRs are required two months before expenditure.

4. Elections

A call for nominations had gone out in October to fill several vacancies on the IRSG committee (Vice Chair, Secretary, Early Careers Advocate, Inclusion Officer, Events Coordinator, one ordinary member of the committee).

There were no nominations for Early Careers Advocate and Secretary. All others were elected unopposed, namely: Vice Chair: Graham McDonald (nominated by Iadh Ounis, seconded by Craig Macdonald), Inclusion Officer: Yashar Moshfeghi (nominated by Udo Kruschwitz, seconded by Haiming Liu), Events Coordinator: Tony Russell-Rose (nominated by Udo Kruschwitz, seconded by Andy Macfarlane), Ordinary member: Gregor Donabauer (nominated by Udo Kruschwitz, seconded by Tony Russell-Rose)

As all nominations were unopposed, everyone was duly elected into these roles.

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

Officers

Chair: Udo Kruschwitz (2024)
Vice Chair: Graham McDonald (2025)
Events Coordinator: Tony Russell-Rose (2025)
Secretary : vacant
Treasurer: Ingo Frommholz (2024)
Membership Secretary: Haiming Liu (2024)
Inclusion Officer: Yashar Moshfeghi (2025)
Early Careers Advocate: vacant

Members

- Monica Paramita (2024)
- Sean MacAvaney (2024)
- David Rau (2024)
- Gregor Donabauer (2025)
- Annalina Caputo (ECIR 2023)
- Iadh Ounis (ECIR 2024)
- Nicola Tonello (ECIR 2025)

All outgoing members of the committee were thanked for their contribution to the IRSG (Steve Zimmerman, Martin White, Jochen Leidner, Frank Hopfgartner and Krisztan Balog).

5. Any Other Business

The concern was raised that Information Science seemed to be on a decline funding-wise due to the focus on generative AI. Others could not confirm this impression and mentioned that in particular IR has an important role to play.

6. Actions Arising From Meeting

No actions arising