

RESEARCH IT EXECUTIVE GROUP

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: Monday 16th September 2013
Time: 10.00am – 12.00noon
Venue: Ground Floor Meeting Room, 2 Taviton Street.

Present (10): Chair: David Price **(DP)**,
John Brodholt **(JB)**, Andrew Clark **(AC)**,
Clare Gryce **(CG)**, Sinéad Kennedy **(SK)**, Gavin Mclachlan **(GM)**,
Jacky Pallas **(JP)**, Jacob Sweiry **(JS)**, Andrew Smith **(AS)**, Max Wilkinson **(MW)**

Deputies: Andrew Smith **(AS)** representing Anthony Finkelstein

Secretary: Rabina Choudhry

Apologies: Graham Hunt, Anthony Finkelstein

Matters Discussed

- 1.1 Welcome and apologies
 - 1.1.1 The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting.
 - 1.1.2 Apologies were noted.
 - 1.1.3 GM explained the main purpose of Research IT Executive Group which was to be a more focused and faster advisory body for Research IT at UCL.

1.2 Update of FY2013/14 budget and finances (Gavin McLachlan)

1.2.1 GM explained the new capitalisation method for IT Capital projects, has been agreed in principle with Rex Knight, Vice Provost (Operations) and Phil Harding, UCL Director of Finance & Business Affairs. This method will allow capital expenditure to be spread over five years however UCL finance would still require annual income and expenditure reports. GM confirmed that, should this new capitalisation approach be fully approved, the previously allocated £2.2m for Research IT (or a large part of it) would be available for FY 2013/14. Finance are working to finalise the capitalisation approach by the 20th September and to have agreed final budgets by the end of September.

Action: Group Heads: Individual groups to decide on 2014/15 purchases, 5 year strategies and spend plans.

1.3 Terms of reference (Chair and members)

(See Doc: RIISG Working Group TORs V13c redline version.docx)

1.3.1 It was agreed that the Research IT Executive Group would set the agenda for the RIISG; and that Working Groups would be re-named "Groups".

AGREED

1.3.2 The Research Software Development Board (RDSB) to be re-named to "Group" and the Research Software Development Executive (RSDE) to be also re-named Research Software Development Group.

ACTION: AS to convey to RSDB for consideration.

1.3.3 It was agreed that bid options and prioritisation would emanate from the individual groups, and the bid portfolio to be balanced by the Research IT Executive Group and then ratified by the RIISG.

ACTION: GM to amend ToRs accordingly.

1.4 Issues and Challenges from the Working Group chairs:

Sinéad Kennedy, Research Applications Group

1.4.1 SK informed all that Chair for this group would be passed on to Dr Jacob Sweiry. SK highlighted the lack of Academic and Faculty membership for this Group.

ACTION: JS to provide a short synopsis of group priorities, and seek further Academic and Faculty membership.

John Brodholt, Research Computing Platforms Group

1.4.2 JB commented on the need for a wider look at the long term HPC strategy and the balance between onsite HPC, offsite HPC and use of National facilities. GM informed all that Wolfson House (Data Centre) would be demolished by 2016 for High Speed 2 (HS2). Therefore it was imperative to build relationships and seek opportunities with other institutions such as CRICK, SSE5 etc. to enable UCL to share HPC facilities, broaden its HPC area, spread risks and leverage national and international institutions, as well as accommodate diverse users.

ACTION: WG#1 and WG#2 members to liaise, regards HPC/Data Centre requirements and consider a three year plan.

ACTION: CG to provide document as to why WG#1 should have ownership of HPC Data Centre Strategy and include vision of strategy for next RIISG meeting.

Jacky Pallas, Research Data Services Group

1.4.3 JP informed all that communications regarding services launch had gone out to the wider community. JP emphasised the importance of clear consistent information which must be joined up by the research activity. It was agreed that once a facilitator was in place for IT SLMS, they then collaborate with RITs facilitators.

ACTION: GM to draft facilitation and communications document for SLMS Faculty Deans.

Andrew Smith, Research Software Development Board

1.4.4 AS explained that this was a new group and had yet to meet and set ToRs, the RSD Executive had been meeting monthly since November 2012.

1.5 Joint academic & e-infrastructure partnerships and collaborations (Gavin McLachlan)

1.5.1 GM gave a brief update of the challenges, opportunities and strategy for the following UCL partnerships and collaborations:

- Science & Engineering South Consortium (SES-5)
- e-infrastructure South (Cfi)
- The Francis Crick Institute (CRICK)
- The FARR health informatics Institute /CHAPTER project

1.5.2 GM explained that the CRICK bid was predominantly steered by the Medical Bioinformatics community. The MRC money granted from this proposal would come with caveats e.g. to be spent by 2014. JP explained that this proposal had an academic steering board to ensure ownership, however this one system did offer UCL an opportunity to share of an off-site HPC and build an important relationship between the CRICK and UCL. This proposal was being driven by the Genomics England project with the intention to create a national biomedical informatics centre. JP would produce a memorandum of understanding for approval, with guidance from a technical group and legal group. DP was concerned that there was potential for UCL to lose control and integrity especially if this proposal was integral to UCL research.

ACTION: DP to meet with John Took and David Lomas to discuss implications of CRICK proposal.

ACTION: DP and JP to meet with MRC on 14th November 2013 to institutionally understand the requirements of UCL

1.6 AGENDA ITEMS FOR RIISG meeting

- Clarity of Governance
- Data Centre Strategy
- Update on Research Software Development Group
- Research Computing Data Strategy
- Financial Capital model, financial planning – 3 year plan from each group

2. Action Points

No	Date	Minute	Owner	Action	Status	Notes
1	16.9	1.2.1	Group Heads	Budgets (Capitalisation) – Individual groups to decide on 2014/15 purchases, 5 year strategies & spend plans.	NEW	
2	16.9	1.3.1	AS	Terms of reference – Rename the following: Research Software Development Board (RDSB) to “Group# 5”, Research Software Development Executive (RSDE) to “Research Software Development Group”.	NEW	
3	16.9	1.3.3	GM	Terms of reference – amend ToRs as follows: Bid options and prioritisation to emanate from individual groups, the bid portfolio to be balanced by Research IT Executive Group & bids set at the RIISG meeting.	NEW	
4	16.9	1.4.1	JS	Group # 3 & 4 Research Applications Provide synopsis of group priorities, & seek further Academic and Faculty membership	NEW	
5	16.9	1.4.2	WG#1 & WG#2	HPC/Data Centre Members to collaborate regarding HPC/Data Centre requirements & consider a three year plan.	NEW	
6	16.9	1.4.2	CG	HPC/Data Centre Provide document as to why WG#1 should have ownership of HPC Data Centre Strategy & include vision of strategy for next RIISG meeting.	NEW	
7	16.9	1.4.3	GM	SLMS Facilitation & Communication Draft facilitation & communications document for SLMS Faculty Deans.	NEW	
8	16.9	1.5.2	DP	Joint academic & e-infrastructure Partnerships and Collaborations Meet with John Took & David Lomas to discuss implications of CRICK proposal.	NEW	
9	16.9	1.5.2	DP, JP	Joint academic & e-infrastructure Partnerships and Collaborations Meet with MRC on 14th November 2013 to institutionally understand the requirements of UCL	NEW	

3. Next Meeting

- 3.1. 9th January 2014, 10am – 12noon, Venue: Ground floor meeting room, 2 Taviton Street, London WC1H 0BT