

RESEARCH IT EXECUTIVE GROUP MINUTES

Thursday 9 January, 10am-12noon, Ground Floor Meeting Room, 2 Taviton Street

Present: (10) Chair: Prof David Price (DP), Prof John Brodholt (JB), Dr Andrew Clark (AC), Prof Anthony Finkelstein (AF), Clare Gryce (CG), Gavin McLachlan (GM), Dr Jacky Pallas (JP), Dr Jacob Sweiry (JS), Max Wilkinson (MW)

Apologies: Rabina Choudhry (RC), Graham Hunt (GH), Sinead Kennedy (SK)

Secretary: Yvette Pople

ACTION

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting. Apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September and Matters Arising

2.1 The minutes were approved as a correct record. GM went through the Action Points from the RITE of 16 September as follows:-

Budgets (Capitalisation) (minute 1.2.1) GM confirmed that the new Capitalisation approach had been fully approved for the current fiscal year 2013/14 budget and ISD has now received funding through approval from SMT of £11M instead of the £6.6M. In addition a strategic long term budget of £11M for the Fiscal years 2014/15 through 2016/17 has been approved. This will enable ISD to move forward with the long term planning for these fiscal years.

RITE

Terms of reference (minute 1.3.1 and 1.3.3) Completed.

Group # 3 & 4 Research Applications (minute 1.4.1) It was noted there was still a need to seek further Academic and Faculty membership. JS to write to Heads of Departments to encourage more participation. JS informed the group that the last meeting was cancelled.

JS

HPC/Datacentre (minute 1.4.2.) GM to provide update if required.

SLMS Facilitation & Communication (minute 1.4.3.) GM to work with Sammy Massiah week 13.1.13 to draft facilitation and communications document for SLMS Faculty Deans.

GM/SM

Joint Academic & E-infrastructure Partnerships & Collaborations (minute 1.5.2) A meeting was held with MRC before Christmas to institutionally understand the requirements of UCL. However there was a need to meet week 13.1.13 to deal with the FARR/CHAPTER spend.

GM

3. Review of the revised Capital programme plan (including the £11M ISD investment)

3.1 GM reported on the revised hand-out of the Research IT Capital programme of work which had finally been approved at £11M, having existed as £6.6M for half the fiscal year. He outlined the proposal for the initial allocation of additional funds which translated to 1.73M of cash spend in the FY as follows:

- *IRIS Enhancements (+£25k=total £75k):*
- *Research Data Storage Phase 2 (+£20k=total £91k):* Additional funding needed due to new features requiring high priority
- *REF 2014 IS Support Bid (-£57k=total £100k):* Less money needed than anticipated

- SLMS Data Handling Solution Phase 3 (+£68k=total £268k): SLMS requested additional storage as the original specification was “too light”
 - LAMIS (+£30k=total £180k): Additional amount welcomed for critical modules around stock control and to assist with field installation/software for Biological Board Strategy and the LAMIS Project Assurance review
 - RIM (+£80k=total £330k): Pfact less and less fit for the purpose. There was a need to concentrate on getting the grant costing tool replaced this year and the data architecture work has to be completed before purchasing this. £30k was estimated including an allocation of £100k in the budget. Any delay would have serious consequences.
 - E-infrastructure South Operational Value-Add (-£5k=total £15k): Adequately resourced
 - Software Development Infrastructure year 2 (+£24k=total £48k): Successful in additional external funding with two additional grant funded staff be added in March
 - UCL Research Equipment Catalogue Phase 2: (total = £0): There is no additional funding until next year. Roll out version 2 is ready. This needs to be on the priority list. Money to be sources from central ISG fund for human resources. DP emphasised that someone needs to own it in the Database team
 - RITA Service Improvement (+£20k =total)
 - Minor works: Research Computing Platforms & Development (+£50k=£129k): includes money on research equipment, £5.5M on small media projects, critical storage needs, a new archive extended to Research Data Service. GM to speak to Guy Morrell and Max Wilkinson about Janet Secure networking.
 - Scalable HPC Facility (+£143k=total £350k): CG will be using this on Legion.
 - Research Data Index Service (+£130k=total): **This is the exception.** The project would have been unable to complete within the MRC funding deadline, therefore it was agreed with the MRC to reallocate the funding to other Farr projects and to perform this project later using RIISG money.
- 3.2 DP requested the £1.73M complete breakdown on how the money is being spent across the Institutional School. GM to action. **GM**
- 3.3 GM to meet on 21 January to go through areas that could be seen as a priority with additional £200-£250k spend and to keep the RITE informed. If ISD were to get additional funding above £1.73M (to be spent by 31 July) it was suggested the funds could be used for the following: **GM**
- Clickview implementation
 - RIM for Pfact replacement
 - Web base service
 - IRIS - £25k for new requirements and another developer for more reporting and domain group work. It was noted this needs to be implemented quickly. A detailed list to be sent to GM **All**
 - Additional CPUs could be added to Legion
 - Three data services across UCL: Jill Daniel Centre, SLMS and Data Safe Haven. CG to talk to Max Wilkinson about Data Safe Haven. **CG**
- 4. Chair rotation of Working Groups**
- 4.1 It was agreed in principle that the Chair of the Working Groups should be rotated every three years to achieve consist practise across the groups and all groups remain active. GM and GC to propose a timetable for each sub-domain group. **GM**
- 4.2 It was noted that there is a need for greater academic engagement and active participation in many of the sub-domain groups, with representation, in particular, from the Dept of Medicine and SLASH. GM to send an email to the Deans and Heads of Department with the remit, current membership and proposed rotation of each sub-domain group, to encourage the academics to provide an input into how the £2M budget should be spent each year; the bids then being decided at the RITEG meeting. **GM**
- 5 RITS stats and measurements/Operational report**
- 5.1 GM gave an overview of the December draft monthly operational report. In summary, the RITS services had an excellent month with high availability and increased usage across the main Research IT Services.

- 5.2 In its capacity for monitoring the effective delivery and operation of Research Information & IT Services, GM asked the RITE for comments on the types of quality, operational service, and information to be incorporated. The following points were noted:
- Research Computing: CG to look at simplifying data for the slowdown and queue wait time reports for Cfl and Legion which is analysed through the monthly Computational Resource Allocation Group (CRAG). The metrics to be refined and made more consistent. **CG**
 - The RITEG expressed a desire for more to be done to enable UCL Researchers to make best use of the Emerald GPU facility to ensure that UCL uses its full 25% share.
 - It was noted that additional external funding would be required to secure the future of the Cfl services beyond 2014/15 when technology refresh would become necessary to remain competitive. At the present time it was felt doubtful whether all current partners would be willing to fund a hardware refresh (£3m-£5m) from institutional capital budgets.
 - Research Data: The RITE commented on the number of graphs –v- individuals and projects and asked MW to provide a breakdown across Faculties. **MW**
 - It was noted that as well as seeing Faculty breakdown for Research Data, this information should also be provided for Legion and for IRIS..
 - The RITE asked whether available funding could be used to enable more bespoke reporting on Cfi services, Iridis and Emerald.
 - Incidents: It was felt that the data definition should be clearer and incidents defined rather than be set numerically.
 - Research Applications: It was noted that the RPS/IRIS Faculty Engagement trend needs to be developed. DP requested a list of all those non engagers who had not edited any Faculty pages. GM to action and send the list to DP and the Deans for response. **GM**

6. UCL Datacentre update and strategy

- 6.1 GM gave an update on the Datacentre and the following points were noted:
- The Tactical Datacentre at Torrington Place was due to open in April
 - The Strategic off-site Datacentre was still in legal negotiations with HS2 in regard to compensation for the loss of Wolfson House, and the cost of a proposed new location which is still to be found. As a contingency plan and by default there would be a sub basement floor in Torrington Place, so the on-site and Tactical Datacentre will be in the same location but expanded in Teaching Rooms.
 - KLB will retain a small addition as the second on-site Datacentre to show
 - UCL, CRICK, SSE5, Sanger and Kings were all happy to contribute to the operational requirements of the shared off-site Datacentre. There was a need to factor in costs for HPC, research data and who pays for electricity and racks in the off-site Datacentre. This will go to tender in 2 weeks.

7. Agenda for RIISG on 20 January

- 7.1
- Report of this financial year (and future years)
 - Priorities of 14/15
 - Statistics on CPU and data usage. GM to work on a “slimmed down” version. **GM**
 - Timetable for project bids. GM to communicate to Deans and Heads of Departments **GM**

8. Action Points

No	Date	Minute	Owner	Action	Status	Notes
1.	9.1.13	2.1	Group Heads	Budgets (Capitalisation) : Individual groups to decide on 2014/15 purchases, 5 year strategies & spend plans.	Research domain groups to plan the spend at the next RITE	
2.	9.1.13	2.1	JS	Group # 3 & 4 Research Applications : Seek further Academic and Faculty membership		
3.	9.1.13	2.1	WG#1 & WG#2	HPC/Datacentre HPC Communications Group to be set up and formally report to Governance Group.		

4.	9.1.13	2.1	GM	SLMS Facilitation & Communication: Draft facilitation & communications document for SLMS Faculty Deans	Week 13.1.13.	
5.	9.1.3	2.1	DP/JP	Joint academic & e-infrastructure Partnership and Collaborations: Further meeting with MC to deal with the FARR/CHAPTER spend.	Week 13.1.13.	
6.	9.1.13	3.2	GM	Budget £1.7m breakdown: Request for complete breakdown and contribution charges. If less than £15k submit quote for project		
7.	9.1.13	3.3	GM	Priority areas for £200-£250k additional spend: Keep RITE informed	Next RITE	
8.	9.1.13	4.1	GM/CG	Chair rotation of Working Groups: A timetable to be proposed with a three year cycle.		
9.	9.1.13	4.2	GM	Working Groups/Domain Groups: The remit, current membership and proposed rotation of each domain group to be emailed to Deans and HODs to encourage the academics engagement and input into how the £2m budget should be spent each year.		
10.	9.1.13	6.2	CG MW GM GM	RITS statistics and measurements: <u>Research Computing:</u> Data to be simplified, metrics refined and made more consistent. <u>Research Data:</u> A breakdown to be provided across Faculties showing justification of usage <u>Incidents:</u> Data definition to be clearer and more defined. <u>Research Applications:</u> A list to be provided of all non engagers in RPS/IRIS Faculty Engagement		
11.	9.1.13	8.1	GM	Statistics on CPU and data usage: To prepare a condensed version	RIISG – 20 Jan	
12.	9.1.13.	8.1	GM	Project bid timetable: To communicate to Deans and HODs	RIISG – 20 Jan	

9. Next meeting

9.1 It was agreed that there should be an extra meeting of the RITE in March. (NB: This has now been arranged for 31 March 2014 3pm-4pm, 2 Taviton Street, London WC1H 0BT).