

**Blizard Research Committee (BRC)****Monday 11 March 2024, 2.00 pm, Large Cloud and MS Teams****MINUTES****Present:**

Prof William Alazawi (WA)	Prof Mary Collins (MC)
Rachael Parker (RP)	Prof Denise Sheer (DS)
Prof Cleo Bishop (CB)	Prof Neil McCarthy (NM)
Vardhman Rakyan (VR)	Prof Silvia Marino (SM)
Prof Xavier Griffin	Prof Kenny Linton
Carlos De Oliveira (CDO)	Molly Ramalhos (MR)
Hamish Miller (HM)	Abigail Coetzee (AC)
Metka Gorkic (MG)	

**Part 1: Preliminary items****1. Welcome and Introductions**

The committee welcomed Abigail Coetzee (Postdoc rep), Metka Gorkic (PGR Rep) and Hamish Miller (PGR Rep – interim).

**2. Apologies for absence**

N/A

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted with no further comments and noted to be a true account of the meeting.

**4. Matters Arising**

- RP confirmed 30 managed tablets have been ordered for use on an ad hoc basis, rather than assigned to groups or centres.
- NM provided EMULATE costings for BRC to review - \$400k for entire suite, as well as rental options.
- CDO informed committee that he and David Bell are setting up Good News Inbox, identifying how to extract relevant information. Will set up for next BRC meeting.
- WA informed committee of Researchfish deadline having closed on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**Part 2: Agenda Items**

## 5. Blizard Club Seminar

- CB proposed hosting clinicians for talks, inviting group leaders across FMD – or QMUL - to present, and occasional external speakers. Possibly having more seminars with a single speaker for the entire session.
- Suggestions included clinical academics with honorary contracts to present as standard. Clinical interaction day – disease area or technology specific.
- DS encouraged focus on what people are doing in the Blizard and encouraging talks that are not fully matured would be beneficial. NM, AC and MG confirmed hesitance to present due to perception issue about needing developed scientific stories.
- All agreed to implement suggestions and encourage postdocs and PhD students who to give talks while story is still work in progress.
- WA tabled idea of rotating days.
- KL suggested including and inviting SBBS, DERI and Dentistry speakers, along with students and postdocs from Charterhouse Square

## 6. Postdoc Working Group

- RP informed committee of suggestions raised at Postdoc Working Group; hosting talks from people previously awarded fellowships and other funding – practicalities/ admin aspect rather than science, running grant writing workshops, highlighting fellowship opportunities and criteria, and career talks.
- WA informed committee of Clinical Academic Training School being set up to address aforementioned issues in context of clinical career.
- MC highlighted lack of submission for future leaders scholarship. Emphasised need to collate list of senior postdocs and centre leads to present list of most eligible postdocs for encouragement to go forward.
- NM encouraged signposting criteria and pathway for postdocs putting themselves in that position would be beneficial. Career sessions with academic and non-academic tracks.
- SM noted inviting reps from funding bodies.
- KL informed committee of Tania Maffucci proposed PhD Student networking forum, to be discussed at Student Staff Liaison Committee.
- MC reminded all that Postdocs can apply for FMD funded increment to their salary, should be communicated to postdocs.

## 7. Issues relating to JRMO

- VR noted concerns around delays with JRMO and incorrect information affecting grants. In querying whether reporting mechanism for this exists, committee agreed that any concerns to be fed through centre meetings and back to BRC.
- MC suggested centre managers receive more training on accounting around grants and advising on grant maintenance.

## Part 3: Standing Items

### 8. PGR Report

- KL informed committee of recent Doctoral College visit (6<sup>th</sup> March) to discuss The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2024 results – survey took place March 2023. Focal point being student engagement.
- Doctoral college have advised institute to host PGR Open Meetings and the first will take place Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April.
- Current thesis submission rate of 80%, with possibility to decrease with two possible late upcoming submissions. For 2018/19 cohort of 23 students, 3 are yet to submit. Of 20 remaining, 16 submitted on time, 2 have withdrawn and 2 are late submissions.

- MC suggested Tania Maffucci, in new capacity as Deputy Director of Graduate Studies could work with students on welfare issues and concerns that may better enable timely submission.

### 9. Grant Report January 2024

- CDO informed committee of continued positive trend as per 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 – 29<sup>th</sup> February 121 submitted applications (89) totalling £52.2 million in terms of value (£37.3 million). 51 awards (27) totalling just over £15.1 million (£5.9 million).

*\*Comparison figures for last year included in brackets*

- MC informed committee of research report at Faculty Executive meeting last week, which indicates lower figures than reported above. CDO to request research update document from Sab Vallari for confirmation on numbers discrepancy.
- WA congratulated Helen Rowe, Emanuel Rognoni and Karim Brohi on awarded grants.

### 10. Honorary Staff Appointments

- All approved, except the following.
- Xiong – form states ‘inclusion in clinical research,’ please amend form to highlight they will only be doing laboratory research and not be taking part in clinical research.
- Thomson – current PhD and so does not need an honorary contract with us.
- Nicely – what is their current role?
- Dantham – do they have a salary in India for 12 months? Check they are earning salary.

### 11. Recruitments in progress

- Clinical Senior Lecturer in Haematology post going live soon.
- Interviews for Senior Lecturer in Neuropathology taking place 12<sup>th</sup> March.
- Luke Gammon’s Deputy (Deputy Facility Manager) appointed.

### 12. Fellowships / Major Grant Initiatives

- TB bid has been submitted.
- Brain trauma team will not be going forward for transformational bid.
- Call for NIHR professorships is out, encouraged to raise profile of this within institute.
- MRC calls are out currently with upcoming April deadlines.
- At least one bid being submitted for Wellcome Career Development Award
- VR informed committee of new Royal Society Faraday Discovery Fellowship. Maximum of £8 million over ten years, mid-career researchers (10-20 years research experience post-PhD). MC suggested VR identify and encourage eligible candidates.
- WA informed committee of RSB updates, 2 research integrity champions have been nominated (Emma Chambers and Gareth Sanger).
- FMD focus on Impact with various workshops upcoming, forum on policy impact (20<sup>th</sup> March) and Entrepreneurs club (12<sup>th</sup> March), can present at the latter via self-nomination.
- BSU concerns @ WHRI: standard feed supplanted for higher fat diet without discussion with license holders.

- SM informed committee FMD and MC have been given 6 months to devise refurbishment plan to fit standard or close it. Will raise again at BRC in a few months. Whitechapel facility required by Blizzard users.

#### Part 4: Other business

##### 13. Any other business

- CB raised REF 2029 and the possibility of taking on 0.2 FTE academics, MC confirmed this is a possibility but would require them to decrease commitments at their institution rather than double their commitments.
- RCIF due 6<sup>th</sup> March but nothing heard yet and FMD equipment meeting to review >£75k equipment did not take place, new meeting scheduled on Wednesday. New list to be circulated to committee.

Date of the next meeting: 08 April 2024

DRAFT

### Outstanding action list

Meeting date	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome
11/03/2024	MR and CB to request centres suggest one or two external speakers for the next year	CB/ MR		Completed
11/03/2024	Committee to review EMULATE costings provided by NM	All		Completed
11/03/2024	WA to raise training school, whether at FMD or Blizard level, at next RSB	WA		Ongoing
11/03/2024	VR and centre leads to formulate fair and transparent process for selecting postdocs and putting them forward for future leaders scholarship and other fellowships for postdocs staying on at Blizard	VR		Completed
11/03/2024	WA and CDO to work on upcoming grant writing workshops	WA/ CDO		Ongoing
11/03/2024	Colleagues to relay JRMO concerns to CDO, carried forward from centre meetings	All		Ongoing
11/03/2024	KL to circulate PRES 2024 results to committee members	KL		Completed
11/03/2024	CDO to request research update document from Sab Vallari for confirmation on grant report figures discrepancy	CDO		Completed
11/03/2024	CB to circulate equipment list for ranking (<£200K)	CB		Completed
11/03/2024	Claire Cox and RP to discuss equipment workflow	RP		Completed

11/03/2024	CDO to setup Blizzard Good News inbox with David Bell	CDO		Ongoing
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