

Blizard Research Committee (BRC)

Monday 31 July 2023, 2.00 pm, Large Cloud and MS Teams

MINUTES

Present:

Prof William Alazawi (WA)	Dr Neil McCarthy (NM)
Carlos De Oliveira (CDO)	Prof Denise Sheer (DS)
Dr Natalie McCloskey (NMC)	Prof Cleo Bishop (CB)
Prof Kenny Linton (KL)	Prof Xavier Griffin (XG)
Prof Silvia Marino (SM)	Prof Mary Collins (MC)

Part 1: Preliminary items

1. Apologies for absence

Carlos De Oliveira, Dr Natalie McCloskey, Prof Silvia Marino, Dr Neil McCarthy, Prof Cleo Bishop, Prof Xavier Griffin, Prof Mary Collins.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The BRC approved the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 12th June.

3. Matters Arising

Blizard leaders for MDT Themes to be invited to BRC on a quarterly basis (CDO/MR)
CDO / NM to contact James Boot to discuss Bioinformatics support.

Part 2: Agenda Items

4. Equipment discussion and priorities

- WA to finalise equipment list rankings with NM/Cleo Bishop (CB) on Tuesday 1st August.
- Genome Centre: WA suggested better to replace more urgent equipment (liquid handler and PCR blocks), something to consider when ranking. Noted cell sorter is automated.

- BALM: KL noted only one working confocal, replacement for 710. 880 soon to be obsolete. WA question of whether 880 is sufficient. KL noted they have always had two 880s, and there is currently one left which is nearing the end of its cycle. WA to discuss ranking or providing more detail within current ranking. KL LSM880 is multiphoton, nearing disrepair and proposal form ranking implies three altogether with only one doing multiphoton.
- BHSC: WA clear to see how equipment would be of advantage to people. DS highlighted there was discussion regarding this at previous meeting, which was not well attended.

WA overall happy with equipment lists.

ACTION: WA to check best strategy for bidding with NM/CB. Is there a fixed budget in which to bid for the most out of or is it better to go through list.

Part 3: Standing Items

5. PGR Report

- KL updated the committee on the number of incoming PhDs. 12 students expected to join in September (WA noted he is expecting 1 further PhD). A few due to submit by September and more towards the end of the year.
- KL noted we need more students and should encourage applications for DTPs, currently some incoming LiDo and MRC DTPs. 2 HARP PhDs included in 12 incoming.
- KL informed committee of 3 students due to submit an interruption of studies in coming week, 2 of which concern mental health and are within the same year. KL important to acknowledge students still impacted by stress. Will impact their ability to submit on time and will have impact on submission rates. WA suggested email to supervisors reaffirming mental wellbeing resources within the institution such as advice and counselling. Important to identify and prevent these issues.
- KL notes depreciation in supervisor training uptake which occurred during pandemic, need to invite supervisors to complete refresher training which should include signposts for mental wellbeing services provided.
- KL introduced PhD project proposal to committee for approval, one of 12 incoming. Industry supported and internally reviewed, company with interest in treating balding. Mike Philpott an expert in field, with Ros Hannen co – supervising. KL noted candidate has been named for post, which is sometimes done without advertising. Mike to meet with funders this week to sign contract and confirm they are happy with named candidate.

ACTION: KL to send out communication to supervisors regarding wellbeing services for students.

6. Grant Report June 2023

- WA presented figures of the grants report for June 2023. Confirming awards are up, while applications are down – increase on year 2022, however decrease on 2021 figures.
- WA notes question for CDO: How are DTP awards featured in this data pool.

ACTION: CDO to confirm DTP query.

7. Honorary Staff Appointments

- All clinical with sources elsewhere. WA happy with all.

8. Recruitments in progress

- NMC not present, and so will update committee at next meeting.

9. Fellowships / Major Grant Initiatives

- WA reaffirmed committee agreement that all people thinking of fellowships and major initiatives to let committee know, either by whiteboard or major initiatives forum
- Whiteboard meeting to take place 1st August.
- WA informed committee he is still reviewing minutes from RSB. Notes need for discussion regarding what constitutes an internal peer review and who needs peer review. WA also highlighted EDI concerns of academic rank as per who requires a peer review. All agreed that at present, institute should stick to Blizzard policy.
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Part 4: Other business

10. Any other business

- DS raised concern regarding centre specific difficulties posed by NWOW. Currently 17 are in offices, and centre hosts a high number of clinicians with different commitments, who all require offices to maintain patient data. Current allocation of 5 offices per centre does not account for the increased risk of confidentiality breaches faced within Genomics and Child Health. DS informed committee of survey sent out within centre to discuss how to allocate offices but there needs to be guidance on office allocation for centres.
- DS queried whether JRMO are aware of impact and where clinical docs are to be stored, are 17 filing cabinets sufficient? DS agreed to discuss with NMC/ MC.
- DS, KL, WA wish to note congratulations and thanks excellent Blizzard Symposium and Tea afterwards
- Noted success of Blizzard Club – particular thanks to CDO for organising
- WA informed committee Lab Archives going ahead and will be paid centrally.
- KL queried whether any development on laptops for all PhDs, WA agreed this is better for MC/ NMC to confirm when present.
- WA informed committee that bid for two years' worth of academic clinical fellows was successful, have been awarded almost all posts we bid for.
- KL informed committee of Graduate Studies Day due to take place in early September and noted SSLC concerns of engaging new students.

Date of the next meeting: 11 September 2023

Outstanding action list

Meeting date	Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome

