

**Blizard Research Committee (BRC)**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 2.30 pm, Small 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**

None

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The BRC approved the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April.

**3. Matters Arising**

None

**Part 2: Agenda Items**

**4. Blizard Bioinformatics Forum**

- WA proposed to invite James Boot and Chaz Mein to the next BRC meeting to discuss different ways to support the bioinformatics forum. CB suggested to share with James ahead of the next BRC the ideas proposed by CB&CR for this meeting.
- In parallel to the Bioinformatics point, MC also raised a question to the committee around the right shape of Lab Management currently in place and proposed to invite Claire Cox to the next BRC to discuss around this question.

#### **5. IP/Innovation: how to bring Innovation into the Research Agenda?**

- CB raised the question of support when PIs have to write IP/innovation parts of their applications, especially for specific equipment schemes like the Catalyst fund. WA suggested to get in touch with Heather Ramsay (BD manager for the FMD) who works close with the QMI team. If PIs give a reasonable notice ahead of the submission, they can write IP/innovation parts in the application for PIs.

#### **6. LEAF (Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework)**

- CB brought the LEAF which is already rolling in her research group to the BRC's attention and stated how important it is to reduce plastic waste. It doesn't require a lot of change and there are different programmes we could explore. She asked the committee how this could be expanded to the whole institute. The committee supports unanimously the idea.

#### **7. Laboratory equipment overview**

- CC informed the committee about equipment not claimed by colleagues leaving the institute and/or from grants coming to end. When it occurs these pieces of equipment fall in the Lab Management remit and there is now an extended list with equipment that we need to decide what to do with.
- SM proposed to identify equipment that is in use and that isn't to get rid of useless items. NMC also highlighted that we need to figure out the budget needed for maintenance of equipment in use. CC informed the committee that there is already a list that she will send to CDO to circulate to the BRC.

#### **8. LabArchives update**

- WA informed the committee that the FMD was looking to pay the licence as LabArchives is going into the NWOW. The WIPH might not be interested in LabArchives as it is probably not fit for purpose at the WIPH.
- MC also raised the point regarding the impossibility to digitise everything.

#### **9. Nominations for symposium award categories**

- The committee discussed the criteria for selection of young investigators following on questions from Immunobiology. As selection shouldn't be based on a cut of age, WA proposed to leave selection at the discretion of Centre Leads. The committee agreed on this approach.

### **Part 3: Standing Items**

#### **10. PGR Report**

- KL informed the committee about the PhD proposal for which Edel O'Toole is the primary supervisor. The committee approved the application.
- KL announced that new PhD students will be welcome soon at the Blizzard with the biggest enrolment coming in the October window.
- WA raised the importance to increase the number of students by researcher which is less than 2 at the moment and ideally should be 2 to 3.
- KL informs the committee that the students database will be updated and circulated to the BRC members once Susanne's replacement is in place. He updates the committee about the Research Administrator recruitment: six pretty good candidates will be interviewed on the 17 May.

**11. Grant Report March 2023**

- CDO presented figures of the grants report for April 2023. The same trend remains with the number and total value of applications substantially higher compared with the two previous FYs but actual number and total value of awards are still down compared to 2021 and 2022. WA highlighted the need to increase the number of PIs submitting applications. MC also noted that it is important to support young colleagues and encourage them to put in more collaborative grants.
- WA reminded the committee that whiteboard sessions are still underused by colleagues. WA also informed that whiteboards with projects in between early idea / written down stage might be considered as a peer review (discussions ongoing in the RSB) to encourage colleagues to use them more.
- NMC asked if we are still sending congratulations to awardees. WA stated that every new awardee should get one so he is more than happy to send out individual emails for each new award.

**12. Overspend on grants**

- None reported

**13. Honorary Staff Appointments**

- The committee approved all the four applications submitted.

**14. Recruitments in progress**

- MC updated the committee with new appointed colleagues and informed that a Clinical Senior Lecturer will be appointed in Gastro.

**15. Fellowships / Major Grant Initiatives**

- MC suggested to not email all the staff with calls where there is an institutional demand management to but to forward these specific schemes to eligible individuals. WA and CDO informed the committee that we have already had this approach by identifying and targeting eligible colleagues.
- MC proposed to discuss other bids and funders at the next Blizard priorities for major bid applications meeting scheduled on the 12 June.

**Part 4: Other business****16. Any other business**

- WA raised a question that came up after the open staff meeting about bullying and harassment and our response to it. How to codify and embed it in our environment statement for grant applications? WA proposed the committee to bring this question to Tania Maffucci and ask her to draft a text with specifics around what we do.
- MC stated the need of a postdoc group. CB informed that we have post-doc network that would need to be reactivated. NMC advised on the need of an academic lead for this network and a call out should be sent out to ask for interest.

Date of the next meeting: 12 June 2023

### Outstanding action list

Meeting date	Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome
09/05/23	4	Invite James Boot and Chaz Mein to the next BRC for discussion on Bioinformatics.	CDO	Next meeting	
09/05/23	4	Invite Claire Cox to the next BRC meeting for discussion on Lab management structure	CDO	Next meeting	