

Blizard Research Committee (BRC)

Tuesday 11th April 2023, 2.00 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 Silvia Marino (SM)	

Part 1: Preliminary items

1. Apologies for absence

Prof Mary Collins (MC); Prof Xavier Griffin (XG)

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The BRC approved the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 13th March.

3. Matters Arising

- WA went through outstanding action points and asked at what stage was the implementation of LabArchives, now led at a faculty level. NMC reminded that NWOW will be implemented only when LabArchives is in place. NMC proposed to send an email to the procurement team to enquire. WA will bring this point to the Strategy Research Board to be held on the 25 April.
- CDO informs that the recording of the UKRI meeting by Bryony Butland is under approval before being available for circulation.

Part 2: Agenda Items

4. Blizard Bioinformatics Forum

- WA brings to the BRC's attention the Blizard Bioinformatics forum. WA asks the BRC's feedback on what can be done to support Bioinformatics and how we can leverage and make it better.
- SM comments on the importance to have a bioinformatic facility and refers to the epigenetic hub without computational facility.
- NM mentions the BSI course which is reasonable in terms of price.
- WA raises the difficulty to recruit bioinformatic staff who are paid much better in the private sector. WA suggests creating a hub of people to foster knowledge acquisition. With DERI being next door, a meeting with WA, MC, NMC and DERI is essential do discuss what investment is needed to shape a business case

(e.g. Free CPD courses for internal staff / charged for external people? Budget for training, another member of staff or both?) and ensure a more formal and sustainable support from the resources perspective.

- WA also proposes to ask James and Chaz their insights to figure out what's needed to build the network.

5. New ways of working (NWOW)

- DS asked about the row of offices. NMC confirmed that those will be repurposed for meeting rooms, reversible to offices. MMC is assessing with Rachael P. the number of desks to take off the booking system for staff members who work five days per week.
- NMC confirmed that Centres will be able to remove desks from the booking system. She also informs the BRC that NWOW will be implemented with a six-month pilot basis. SM highlights the importance to carefully monitor the pilot period.

Part 3: Standing Items

6. PGR Report

- KL informed the committee that there are three students enrolled in this current window.
- KL informs the committee that the Research Administrator post has been increased from 0.6FTE to a full time with 0.2FTE for research support and 0.8FTE for PGR support.

7. Grant Report March 2023

- CDO presented figures of the grants report for March 2023.
- The number of applications has increased compared with the two previous FYs but actual awards are still down from the same period compared to 2021 and 2022.
- Large applications recently awarded: £3.06M from NIHR (Prof Xavier Griffin) and £1.05M from MRC (Prof Andrew Prendergast). To note that the £1.2M from NIHR (Prof Klaus Schmierer) have not come yet into the reports.
- WA reminded the committee that projects are very welcome to whiteboard sessions which are still underused by colleagues.
- NM also noted that it would be great to have embryonic projects or preliminary ideas for projects in whiteboard sessions and not only polished applications.
- WA also raised questions regarding recovery of unsuccessful applications. How many are resubmitted? How to recover these grant applications?

8. Overspend on grants

- None reported

9. Honorary Staff Appointments

- The committee approved all the five applications submitted with one needing to be changed to Honorary application rather than Visiting.

10. Recruitments in progress

- Not reported in the committee.

11. Fellowships / Major Grant Initiatives

- Two fellowship calls that should be in the institute's radar:
 - NIHR Research Professorship and Global Research Professorship call 2023/24 call is not yet open but it is anticipated the guidelines to be similar to the previous year.
 - Marie Curie deadline for submissions is September 2023. JRMO is compiling research topics which will be advertised in the EU portal EURAXESS to give visibility to the institute and attract applicants from overseas.

Part 4: Other business**12. Any other business**

- WA brings to the committee's attention the project to appoint a Deputy Director of Research to second him.

Date of the next meeting: 09 May 2023

DRAFT

Outstanding action list

Meeting date	Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome
13/02/23	7	Check if data accessible in Researchfish.	CDO	Next meeting	