

Imaging Advisory Group (IAG)

24/01/2022

Minutes

Present:

Anna Dulic-Sills	ADS	Director of Research Operations
Atticus Hainsworth	AH	Reader in Cerebrovascular Disease - MCS
Billy Zeqiri	BZ	Finance Business Partner (Research)
Carlos Bueno-Beti	CB	Postdoctoral Research Assistant - MCS
Daniel Meijles	DM	Senior Lecturer in Cardiovascular Biology - MCS
Danielle Russo	DR	Head of Outreach and Widening Participation
Deborah Chong	DC	Lecturer in Infection and Immunity - I&I
Florencia Cavodeassi	FC	Senior Lecturer in Developmental Biology - IMBE
Greg Perry	GP	Microscopy Manager - IRF
Guy Whitley	GW	Professor of Cell Biology - MCS
Isabelle Crevel	IC	Senior Technician - Research Support -IRF
Jennifer Smith	JS	Research Publications Librarian
Paris Ataliotis	PA	Reader in Developmental Genetics - IMBE
Sandra Ashton	SA	Head of Facility - IRF (Chair)
Susanna Cooper	SC	PhD student - PhD Student Forum Representative
Tom Carter	TC	Professor of Endothelial Cell Biology
Yvette Bland	YB	Laboratory Manager - IMBE
Ana Araujo	AAr	Innovation and IP Commercialisation Manager - JRES
Camille Barro	CBa	Laboratory Technician - I&I
Mark Bodman-Smith	MBS	Senior Lecturer in Immunology - I&I
Suzy Lim	SL	Postdoctoral Research Scientist - I&I
Anna Blundell	ABI	Research Assistant - I&I
Jose Saldana Fabregat	JSF	Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences - IMBE
Wai Liu	WL	Senior Research Fellow - I&I

Apologies were received from:

Daniel Osborn	DO	Senior Lecturer in Genetics - MCS
Ferran Valderrama	FV	Reader in Cancer Cell Biology - IMBE

Item 1: Minutes

Spelling of Cairn Research corrected by GP

Minutes 27.09.2021 approved with no further amendments

Item 2: Updates on research, teaching /student support , strategic or commercial activities

Institutes

IMBE: FC – There are positive discussions within the Senior Lecturers Group regarding the IRF Research Excellence Fund

I&I: DC – IRF services are unclear to I&I PIs and an open day to showcase IRF services and equipment would be good to bring awareness

MCS: DM - IRF outputs could be promoted in internal seminars

Post-docs

CB: no updates

PhDs

SC: no updates

OWP

DR: Healthcare Dissected, working with Year 10 students, has been well-received. DR thanked everyone involved for the support.

SA: Outreach work currently planned will last until September and can be repeated annually.

DM: Initiative could be expanded to wider public

Finance

BZ: IRF is doing well, achieving targets. Currently there are issues with some grants that cannot be recharged to, that have had work accrued

DM: Asked whether projects could be charged before work takes place

ADS: Not possible under UKRI, BHF, and other grants – ADS/SA will meet with Jon Friedland and JRES to address issues

Library

JS: new starter (Library Research Service Manager – Carly Lightfoot), may attend IAG in place of JS at future meetings. JS took Research Publications Policy to Scholarly Communications Group mid-2021 and suggested changes re: acknowledgement of input from IRF; changes were not taken forward. Scholarly Communications Group, Responsible Metrics Group and Research Data Management Group have been dissolved and replaced by Research Publications and Data (RPaD), headed by Prof Jodi Lindsay – this new group will take forward matters held by predecessors, using Task and Finish Groups. CRIS, publications and data repository are up for renewal – will be addressed by Carly Lightfoot

SA: Jodi Lindsay has requested an academic from IAG to represent at RPaD

JRES

AAR: JRES is fully staffed and aims to be more effective at protecting Intellectual Property, finding new commercial opportunities, and setting up new partnerships with industry. In Feb/March will be launching project with IRF – full presentation will be given in next IAG meeting

Academic Director

Not in attendance

Actions:

1. AAR to present on JRES work with IRF in next meeting.
2. DC to discuss with TB users and report on interest in CL3 imaging in next meeting

Item 3: Report from IRF staff

Light Microscopy

GP: Slide scanner has an issue that will soon be resolved. Oil damage done to confocal microscope in Nov 2021 has resulted in lasting damage to 20X oil objective that will need to be sent to Nikon for inspection and service at cost – no date set yet but notice will be given that the 20X will be unavailable for a prolonged period whilst work is carried out. No estimates available presently. CL3 imaging – spare widefield microscope was suggested to be reallocated to CL3 labs to facilitate live imaging of TB. Technical issues were addressable but issues of ownership and responsibilities meant that there was no clear progression and the microscope has since been assigned to a function within the LM Suite in Jenner Basement. GP suggested that DC take the matter to Pathogen Management Group to discuss acquiring an imaging system for CL3 and that GP could advise on specification and applications.

DC: will raise issue at CL3 users meeting

Flow Cytometry

IC: The Cell Sorter has increased in usage and there is anticipated increases in use, all systems are under service contract but the Cytoflex does not have a backup in case of it failing

SA: Service contracts should be maintained wherever possible and older equipment can act as a backup/overflow for newer equipment. SA inquired about the possibility of pausing service contracts over one year when business is reduced – IC confirmed that by dropping a service contract then renewing it, companies will charge a much larger fee, negating the saving

JSF: There will be a new practical for undergraduates to analyse cell analyser data ideally using the Cytoflex, but there is a benefit to the simplicity of the Calibur

ADS: All service contracts can go in the Planning Round with a business case

SA: Service contracts will always be sought, but a plan should be in place in the case of budget not being allocated to service contracts

IC: Cell Analyser is busy and work is going well

SA: Welcomed Principle Investigators from I&I who have volunteered to be members of IAG (MBS, WL, JSF). They will join DC as representatives from I&I. SA thanked others from the flow users group for attending this meeting but they should not do so going forward as representation for PhD students and Postdoctoral scientist is covered by the PhD representative (SC) and the Postdoctoral Scientist representative (CB).

Update from Research Committee

SA: IRF Research Excellence Fund was well-received at Research Committee

Item 4a: Facility Access Policy

GP: there have been issues with users staying past the end of their booked sessions and causing knock-on delays for users booked after them, users booking until 5pm but staying later than booked, short-notice requests for extensions and out of hours access which is contingent on the Security Team and also needs to be assessed on a case by case basis as to the capabilities of the individual requesting the out of hours access.

SA: there is a need to frame the facility stance on matters of access, damage to equipment, and how users interact with the IRF

ADS: supports the creation of a Facility Access Policy. Research Operations budget cannot cover repeated damages due to neglect of equipment by users – this may need to be covered by the Research Institute of the user

CB: there should be flexibility in access and perhaps there should be training geared towards testing user aptitude for unsupervised out of hours access

GP: good examples of out of hours requests are several hours worth of notice. Metrics for competence are a difficult subject as damage has been done by a very competent and well-trained user. Feedback from IAG would be useful in establishing metrics for user competency

SA: suggested IRF staff draft contents for a Facility Access Policy. Majority voted in favour.

AAR: companies will expect access to equipment at the exact time booked and so an Access Policy would protect that

Item 4b: Future equipment procurement

SA: IRF staff have been asked to provide information on suggested equipment acquisitions to grow provision in their section – IRF will curate table of these items and identify avenues to acquisition and then open to input from IAG to make suggestions. The table will provide a reference for AAR to horizon scan for suitable funding calls. Completed list will be provided in March IAG meeting.

GP: Slide scanner has been discussed many times, and DC has suggested a plate reader applicable to a large number of IRF users – anyone with a suggestion should contact the relevant section lead. Any metrics other than cost that would impact applicability of funding should be noted on the equipment list – AAR to advise outside of meeting

SA: group applications for funding will carry more weight rather than individuals/smaller groups

IC: service contracts should be considered during planning

GW: funders generally don't support service contracts

ADS: confirmed that service contracts are overheads covered by St George's, which go into Planning Round

GP: asked about timing of Capital Bids round, and whether multiple applications can come from the same group (e.g. IRF/IAG)

ADS: there is one funding call because it goes into the Planning Round, multiple applications are accepted and judged on individual merit

SA: there is an interest in Electron Microscopy from an IRF user and the business case will be considered if it is submitted for consideration as part of the equipment procurement list – any technologies applicable to the IRF will be considered if there is sufficient need, but no equipment purchases will be made for very small numbers or individual users as the usage needs to support the equipment

Actions:

3. SA to provide draft of Facility Access Policy to IAG members for discussion in next meeting (with input from IRF staff)
4. IRF staff to complete equipment wish list for their appropriate sections and submit to SA by late February.
5. SA to provide table of future equipment acquisitions to IAG members for discussion in next meeting

Item 5: Any other business

After request for expression of interest were received, GP has been appointed Deputy Chair of the IAG with immediate effect – any matters for the IAG can be addressed to GP in the absence of SA

TOR will be amended to reflect GP as Deputy Chair

ADS, MBS, WL, JSF will be added to the membership list.

Meeting Closed

Dates of Meetings in 2022

All meetings commence at 11:00 am in Microsoft Teams unless otherwise specified.

28.03.2022

27.06.2022

26.09.2022