

## PdOC Society

Minutes 12 November 2015

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Minutes of the meeting held at The Postdoc Centre, 16 Mill Lane at 6pm on Thursday 12 November

**Present:** Maya Ghossaini (President) **MG**, Paul Coxon **PC**, Adina Feldman **AF** (Vice-President), Alice Hutchings **AH**, Arne Jungwirth **AJ**, Stephen Kell **SK**, Severine Mollard **SM**, Marko Tainio **MT**, Lori Turner **LT** (Treasurer), Hannah West **HW**, Joy Warde **JW** (Secretary)

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1. **Apologies:** Paul Bennett **PB**, Nicky Blanning **NB**, Marta Costa **MC**, Antonis Kanellopoulos **AK**, Susanne Leger **SL**, Amir Mukadam **AM**, Clare Simpson **CS** Tariq Masood **TM**
2. **Minutes** – minutes of the meeting held on 15 October (**2015\_10\_15 minutes**) were approved as an accurate record.
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
The committee noted that JW was the line manager of Kristen Klebba.
4. **Introduction to the OPdA College Affiliation Project Officer**  
MG welcomed Kristen Klebba to the meeting. Kristen has been in post from late September for 1 year (0.4fte). Kristen outlined her role as (1) investigating College affiliations across the University to collate data on postdoc affiliation and identify and promote elements of good practice (2) mobilising the large Clare Hall Postdoc population to provide an example of a larger scale example of a successful affiliation scheme. Clare Hall is a College based on “advanced study and intellectual rigour” and views postdocs a key part of this academic community. Kristen was an active member of Queens’ College and considers access to Collegiate Cambridge an important part of the Cambridge academic experience. There followed a discussion with the committee of postdoc college affiliations. Issues raised included fundraising from potential College postdoc alumni, methods of collective action via intercollegiate committees, assessment of numbers of postdocs wanting College affiliation and barriers to access to Collegiate Cambridge (e.g. contract length criteria, family commitments, PI support). It was suggested that an information session on ‘Postdoc College Affiliations’ would be well received by the postdoc community.
5. **President’s Report (MG)**
  - 5.1. MG reported that she had been invited to sit on the interview panel to appoint the new Director of Postdoctoral Affairs.
  - 5.2. MG reported that she participated in a PostDoc@UC day at University of Coimbra, Portugal. PostDoc@UC is an initiative that aims to bring together all researchers holding both a PhD degree and an affiliation with University of Coimbra based on a temporary contract. In addition 2 other European Research Institutes were included. MG reported that Cambridge was advanced compared to the other participants. The groups planned to collaborate further via a European grant application.
  - 5.3. AF reported that, to date, the Faculties of Physics and Chemistry (attached), Earth Sciences (attached), Engineering and Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies have responded to the PdOC letter to encourage faculties to include postdocs in Faculty membership. It was reported that Engineering and Earth Sciences have now added postdocs to Faculty membership.

5.4. MG reported that MC has organised a meeting on 12 January with the aim of developing a PdOC committee Code of Conduct. This meeting will include MC, AF and AJ.

**Action: any other committee members wishing to join should contact MC.**

## 6. Treasurer's Report (LT)

6.1. LT provided a written summary of the PdOC accounts (**PdOC\_accounts\_20151107.pdf**). The current effective balance currently stands at £5089.83. It was reported that the PayPal fee for the Churchill dinner was approximately £110.

6.2. LT reported on the planning for a Hiking trip during May 2016 via sleeper to Ben Nevis for 28 people. Total cost for transport and accommodation (including food) is £160 per person. To secure the transport and accommodation a deposit of £32 per person is required, which totals to £896. Since the hiking trips have been fully booked in previous years, and to secure the bookings LT asked permission from the committee to use PdOC funds to pay the deposit before it is collected from PdOC members. The committee agreed to this proposal. Requests for future payment of deposits will be agreed/rejected on an event by event basis.

## 7. Researcher Development Planning 2015/16

### 7.1. Update on RD funding for 2015/16 (JW)

JW reported that the new financial year for RD commenced on 1 October. PdOC has received an allocation of £8k for RD events to be completed by end September 2016. Any unspent funds will be swept back at the end of the year.

### 7.2. Update on event planning

Unfortunately, AM was not present to discuss this item fully.

7.2.1. The ctte agreed to use the offer of dinner at Clare College as part of the interdisciplinary lecture series, subject to speaker and College availability dates. CS has invited Prof David Spiegelhalter to give the next lecture

7.2.2. AF reported on the success of the most recent 'Pizza and Beer' event on 'Postdocs and Pensions'. The committee agreed to continue this series with themes of 'Postdocs and Immigration', 'postdocs and Tax', 'Postdocs and teaching' etc.

**Action: JW/MG to liaise with the Immigration Compliance Officer to organize a 'postdocs and immigration' event.**

**Action: JW to identify a suitable speaker on the subject of 'Pensions and Tax'**

7.2.3. AJ reported that the first session, on the theme of 'Interdisciplinarity', is planned for 26 November.

## 8. Events report

8.1. SK provided written summary of the previous and upcoming PdOC events (**15\_11\_04 PdOC events minutes.txt**). It was reported that the recent Churchill dinner was successful with a good atmosphere during the dinner and afterwards. Thanks to Churchill College for hosting this event.

8.2. The PdOC xmas dinner at Selwyn College on 14 Sept has been advertised via the newsletter. The ctte discussed the VIP invitation list and agreed to invited selected staff from OPdA, Careers Service and PPD.

**Action: JW to draft up VIP invites for Selwyn dinner. SK to send out**

8.3. There have been a couple of reports of postdocs not being able to find the PdOC Tuesday lunch table. The ctte believes that the lunches are attended each week but it may be the case that if a postdoc arrives sharp at 1pm they might miss the table.

**Action: SK to email all who regularly attend to make sure the lunch is covered each week. JW offered to cover if no one was available in a give week.**

8.4. CS reported, in absence, that the family events at Fitzwilliam College and for Halloween had been successful and the feedback from guests was very positive. CS is planning a Family Christmas party on 12<sup>th</sup> December in the Postdoc Centre. The committee agreed a budget of £40 for the event.

**Action: JW to ask permission from NVS to use their piano for the event.**

**Action: Committee members who are available to help should contact CS**

8.5. The events subcommittee have discussed the idea of a PdOC trip to Cologne or Amsterdam. The committee have requested more information about the potential trip.

**Action: SK to report back to committee with further details and likely costs.**

## 9. AOB

9.1. AF reported on the on-going work Communications Strategy working group. Individual committee members will be contacted to provide input on their role in due course.

9.2. MT reported that he plans to resign from the PdOC committee. The committee thanked Marko for his dedication and work over the past couple of years.

9.3. AH reported that she submitted remarks to a Discussion on '*Topic of concern to the University: Phase 1 of the North West Cambridge development*'. You can read the report at

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2015-16/weekly/6400/section1.shtml#heading2-4>

and discussion at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2015-16/weekly/6403/section9.shtml#heading2-24>

9.4. JW updated the committee that the Athena SWAN awards process will be rolled out to departments in the Schools of Arts and Humanities, and Humanities and Social Sciences.

**10. Date of future meetings** – Thurs 21 January, Thurs 25 February, Tue 22 March, Thurs 21 April, Wed 18 May, Wed 15 June