

PdOC Society

Minutes 24 August 2016

Minutes of the meeting held at The Postdoc Centre, 16 Mill Lane at 6pm on Wednesday 24 August

Present: Adina Feldman (President) **AF**, Paul Coxon **PC** (Vice-President), Nicky Blanning **NB**, Paul Bennett **PB**, Marta Costa **MC**, Laura Fachal **LF**, Ghina Halabi **GH**, Arne Jungwirth **AJ**, Stephen Kell **SK**, Susanne Lager **SL**, Alessandro Rossi **AR**, Sarah Steimer **SS**, Lori Turner **LT** (Treasurer), Joy Warde **JW** (Secretary).

In attendance: Hannah Clements and Mary Beth Benbenek for items 1-4

1. **Apologies:** Alexia Cardona **AC**, Franck Courbon **FC**, Alice Hutchings **AH**, Tariq Masood **TM**

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July (**2016_07_13 minutes v2.docx**) were approved as an accurate record.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

SK is a member of the Board of Scrutiny (item 5.3)

4. **Researcher Development Programme (RDP) for Postdocs**

Hannah Clements and Mary Beth Benbenek, Researcher Development Consultants for postdocs, were invited to outline the Researcher Development Programme (RDP). The RDP has expanded the role of Researcher Developer for Postdocs from 0.8 FTE to 2 FTE with the aim of growing and expanding the RDP provision and support offered to the postdoc community. Further details are given in **Postdoc RDP Clements Benbenek.pdf** Mary Beth explained the '15 point RD framework for Cambridge researchers'. This was originally developed for PhD students but there is scope to remould and reshape for postdocs.

The RDP website is being redeveloped to make it more visible and intuitive. It will link to the 15 point framework. October launch.

The RDP offering for the new year was presented (**Postdoc RDP Clements Benbenek.pdf**). This included 3 new future developments around themes of Teaching/Learning, Coaching/Mentoring and Leadership. New pathways to obtain accreditation for teaching are being explored. In addition new leadership programs, specific to postdocs, are being developed in addition to the ERLDP programme. Mary Beth and Hannah are particularly interested in firstly, the day to day experiences of postdocs and secondly, provision for more senior, longer-term postdocs.

Advice was sought about effective communication mechanisms with the diverse postdoc community.

Ctte members raised issues around confusion between RDP and PPD. It was felt that RDP was lost within the PPD website although the new website should resolve this issue. Communication mechanisms were discussed both at a University and departmental level.

JW reported that the '15 point RD framework for Cambridge researchers' was likely to be the main topic for the DPCCN Michaelmas meeting.

Action: Suggested PdOC RD working group (MC)

Action Mary Beth and Hannah to write to DPCCN mailing list to encourage invitations to meet departmental postdoc groups.

5. **President's Report (AF)**

5.1. AF reported on the annual OPdA Steering Committee meeting, chaired by Prof Chris Abell PVC for Research. This is likely to be the last meeting of this committee as a proposal for a 'Committee of Postdoctoral Matters' has been proposed which will replace the OPdA steering committee. The new committee will be a joint committee of University Council and General Board. The terms of reference of this new committee were approved by the OPdA steering committee. There will be two postdoc representatives on the Committee for Postdoctoral Matters chosen by the PdOC Society and appointed by General Board. Formation of the new committee is awaiting approval by University Council and General Board.

An uplift in new postdoc salaries has been approved by HR committee. Newly appointed postdocs will start on a minimum of point 41 of the single spine salary scale (currently starting point in 39). This is now moving forward via the usual consultation channels.

The OPdA are planning to launch the Postdoc Centre at NW Cambridge in May.

AF reported that the BREXIT fallout has highlighted difficulties currently faced by non-EU postdocs relating to Visas and associated fees.

Director of Postdoctoral Affairs and Head of the OPdA have been invited to the next PdOC committee meeting and will expand on these areas.

5.2. AF reported on the PdOC Society submission of evidence to the Commons Science and Technology Select Committee on Leaving the EU: Implications and Opportunities for Science and Research (**PdOC_select_ctte_submission.pdf**). The ctte decided, by circulation to hold an open meeting to discuss the submission. The open meeting was held on 2 August and 21 postdocs attended. A PdOC response was drafted and sent out to the PdOC committee for consultation. This was confirmed by 8 committee members with no objections received. The evidence was submitted on Friday 19 August.

5.3. AF highlighted that there are a large number of references to postdocs in the most recent Board of Scrutiny report (<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2015-16/weekly/6433/section7.shtml#heading2-38>). AF proposed that PdOC should submit remarks, on behalf of PdOC, to the planned University discussion on the report, scheduled for Tuesday 11 October. It was agreed to proceed to formulate a response. Details of how, and from whom, input would be collected will follow.

Action: AF to contact all ctte members with process to collect opinions and formulate a response

5.4. AF reminded the committee of the upcoming PdOC away day on 17 September 11:00-17:00 at Newnham College. Apologies received from MC and GH.

Action: AF to email all ctte with agenda and preparation task(s)

6. Treasurer's Report (LT)

6.1. LT provided a written summary of the PdOC accounts (**PdOC_main_accounts_20160822.pdf**). The current effective balance currently stands at £5025.88. It was noted that the invoice for £2k to the OPdA dated 14 June 2016 remains unpaid.

Action: JW to chase the unpaid invoice with OPdA office manager

6.2. LT aims to work with the ctte to draft a budget for 2016/17 as part of the PdOC away day.

Action: ALL to estimated likely costs of their proposed PdOC activities for 2016/17

6.3. JW reported on the conditions of the public liability insurance policy from Endsleigh as circulated with the agenda. There are 2 main issues to highlight

- All PdOC activities need to be risk assessed and those undertaking risk assessments receive full training.

Action: SL, SS, SK, JW to attend University risk assessment training and then update PdOC risk assessments.

- No members of the management team (i.e. PdOC committee) have had any convictions, or declared bankrupt, or had any CCJs or had a company go into liquidation previously. No members of the management team have ever been investigated or have any on-going investigations by a regulatory body.

Action: JW to email all ctte members to establish if we meet this criteria.

Several members of the PdOC committee expressed dissatisfaction at these terms and conditions. It was discussed that the ctte should revisit PdOC insurance needs and conditions before renewal in August 2017.

Action: JW to include Insurance as PdOC business in April/May

7. PdOC Code of Conduct (MC)

7.1. MC summarised paper (**PdOC_code_of_conduct_v2_160806.docx**) outlining changes made to the previously proposed PdOC code of conduct.

The proposed Code of Conduct was approved by the PdOC ctte with no objections.

The committee is to consider that the Code of Conduct is now live. The PdOC constitution needs to be amended, via approval at an EGM, to include reference to the Code of Conduct.

Action: AF/JW to add addition of Code of Conduct to future EGM agenda

LT left the meeting

8. Regent House Letters to Faculties (AF)

8.1. AF outlined how the Roll of Regent House is formed and promulgated and the rights of Regent House members. AF reminded the ctte that in September 2015 PdOC wrote to 12 Faculties to encourage them to add all postdocs to their list of faculty members proposed for the Roll of Regent House. AF proposed that PdOC should repeat this exercise and send out letter to the same Faculties

(**RegentHouse_letter_faculties_2016.docx**).

The Committee agreed to this proposal with minor changes to wording and email address.

Action: AF to distribute letters

9. Researcher Development Events (MC)

9.1. MC presented a summary of the RD events planned for the new year (**RD_calendar_2016-17.docx**). These include (1) after work/lunch information events, (2) Crossing the Barriers Interdisciplinary lecture series, (3) PdOC Masterclasses. These events were discussed with some suggested alterations.

Action: ALL to send further suggestions of lecture speakers to MC

9.2. MC is looking to rebrand the 'Pizza and Beer' sessions to give more flexibility around food. Potential names were discussed and it was agreed to add this to the agenda for the away day in September.

Action: ALL to send naming suggestions to MC

9.3. JW reported that the year-end date for RD funding was being brought forward from 30 September to 31 July with effect from 2017 so as to coincide with the University's financial year. All RD providers would receive 10/12 of the annual allocation for this year only. PdOC's allocation would be £6666 from 1 October 2016 to 31 July 2017. This will require careful budgeting for events.

MC left the meeting

10. Events Report (SK/SS)

10.1. SS reported on the activities of the PdOC events sub-committee (**2016_08_11 PdOC events minutes.txt**). It was noted that there are a large number of small events supported by a large events sub-ctte.

SS reported that offers had been received for the Xmas dinner from a range of Colleges. The ctte agreed

that Newnham College provided the best option. VAT exemption was to be explored with the College.

Action: SS to proceed to book the Xmas dinner at Newnham College on Thursday 15 December.

11. AOB

11.1. JW circulated the known dates for inductions across the University. The following ctte members agreed to deliver the PdOC presentation or look after the PdOC stand.

5 October OPdA induction AM session Susanne Lager

5 October OPdA induction PM session Paul Coxon

7 December OPdA induction AM session Adina Feldman

7 December OPdA induction PM session TBC

10 November PPD all staff induction exhibition Adina Feldman

10 May PPD all staff induction exhibition TBC

11.2. AF proposed that the November ctte meeting is held in the new Postdoc Centre @ Biomedical Campus. The Director of Postdoctoral Affairs and Head of the OPdA have been invited to this meeting.

11.3. SK reported that he has updated the content of the PdOC new starters guide but he would like some help with the word formatting. NB very kindly offered help via the Accommodation Service

Action: SK to send updates to NB for updating

11.4. JW informed the committee that she has been offered and accepted a University secondment for the Michaelmas term. JW will work 3 days per week on secondment and 1.5 days per week in the Postdoc Centre (largely supporting PdOC). The OPdA has agreed to fund a temp staff member to support some of the PdOC admin tasks for the term.

12. Date of future meetings – Wed 14 September, Wed 19 October, Tue 22 November, Wed 14 December