

Blizard Administration Committee (BAC)

Wednesday 11 April 2024 at 12:00, Small Cloud

MINUTES

Present:

Rachael Parker (RP) - chair	Richard Davies (RD)	Nebiyu Kibru (NK) on CC's behalf
Sam Matthew (SM)	Nici Kingston (NK)	
Carlos De Oliveira (CDO)	Sabrina Skeete (SS)	
Nawaz Ahmed (NA)	Nataly Murphy (NMu)	
David Bell (DB)	Lauren Exell (LE)	

In attendance:

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Part 1: Preliminary items

1. **Apologies for absence:** Claire Cox (CC)
2. **Minutes from last BAC meeting:**
 - The minutes from BAC meeting in March were approved.
3. **Matters Arising:**
 - Blizard Admin Assistant post recently interviewed has been retracted due to change in business needs. A revised job pack has been submitted for grading and we hope to be able to advertise soon.
 - Natalie McCloskey's farewell will take place during our monthly Blizard Staff Coffee morning on Monday 29 April.

Part 2: Agenda items

4. **PS Conference programme ideas**
 - Lauren Hall (Professional Services Executive Office) is arranging the PS Conference 2024 in November, and she has asked for programme ideas and staff volunteers to support/assist during the 3 or 4 days that the conference will run.
 - RP appealed to BAC members for help in the areas requested by Lauren Hall. As there is a plan for tour of the different campuses RD confirmed that the Centre of the Cell will be participating regarding Public Engagement (e.g Neuron Pod, STEM pod shows) and NK will liaise with Paul Delaney regarding lab tour (numbers to be discussed closer to date).

Part 3: Standing items

5. Finance

- We are £0.5m behind our cash generation target which is predominantly driven by research grant overhead income being lower than expected. This is an FMD-wide issue, not just Blizzard. Because of this we have been asked to minimise non-pay spend until the issue is understood more fully.
- Recruitment is also being delayed unless there is an urgent need.
- BAC members noted that there have recently been queries from finance around credit card expenses. This may be related to auditing in their department.

6. Education

- Current numbers compared to last cycle are: +7% applications, +31% offers, +25% offers, +26% firms.
- Krys Gunton and Rebecca Chappell have been appointed to the role of Programmmes Manager from 1st June. In next BAC in May NA will be able to share new Education admin structure once the team organise which programmes they are responsible for.
- NA has asked his team to use Key Travel as requested by QM Finance even if fees are more expensive than alternative travel suppliers. CMs confirmed that alternative providers can be used if it can be demonstrated that the cost is lower overall. NA to discuss with team.

7. Research

- The number and value of applications submitted is once again very positive: 157 applications submitted for a total value of £64.7M during the current financial year which means an increase of £17.9M total value submitted compared with the same period in 2023.
- Awards: the total value awarded since 1st August 2023 is £15.7M, which is slightly over £8M more compared with same period in 2023.
- The JRMO have published a Research Project Admin Handbook which covers pre and post award information. It is aimed to support PS staff and applicants, providing all the information in a single document. It can be accessed on SharePoint in the JRMO website  [Project Admin Handbook Version 1.0.pdf](#)
- CDO reminded CMs that colleagues can share feedback on positive stories or issues experienced with the JRMO regarding applications or grants in pre and post award stages as CDO keeps a log regularly updated with contributions from colleagues.
- Organisation of the Blizzard Summer Symposium with DB and MCB is ongoing. Comms will be circulated soon. This year the focus is on postdocs. There will be awards for the following categories as last year: PS staff, Public Engagement, Paper of the Year, Education.

8. Laboratory management

- Lab management staff will be visiting a freezer factory on w/c 15th April and there will be less colleagues on site.
- Izabela Glegola-Madejska (Containment Level 3 Facility Manager) will be leaving the Blizzard in June and advertising for her role will start later in April.
- Lab management thanked CMs for taking on arranging office only inductions. Forms to be left with Daniel Veevers in reception for him to add card numbers once received from Security so that Lab management can collect from him and keep the final version.
- HTA inspection will take place in June and Lab management will send out comms.

9. Reports from Centre managers

All Centres in attendance reported on posts as per updated recruitment tracker spreadsheet submitted to BAC by RP. Standing action for CMs: to update tracker either before or after BAC meeting.

➤ Genomics & Child Health:

- Aine McKnight's student Maximilien Biguet successfully passed his PhD viva on 26 March.
- The Senior Lecturer in Computational Epigenomics and Professor in Epigenomics adverts will close next week. These posts will be part of a new cross-faculty Centre for Epigenetics. Advertising for an administrator for the Centre soon.
- The Clinical Senior Lecturer in Haematology post will be advertised soon, aiming to hold interviews on 5 June.

➤ CB&CR:

- No new posts to report.
- NM reported that Key Travel prices change from one day to the next.

➤ Immunobiology:

- Chloe Orkin received the Inspirational Leadership Award in recognition of her transformational work on EDI.
- PhDs – Ivy Ankhurst, Cameron Ferguson, Shuwei Zhang
- Pierre Maillard secured an extension to an MRC/UKRI grant for a further 3 years

➤ NST:

- Alex Clark has appointed a new PDRA.
- Cara Croft has appointed a new Research Technician.
- Centre Admin post shortlisting done and interviews will take place on 30th April.
- Clinical Trial manager for Trauma to be advertised.
- Another Research Technician for Cara Croft to be advertised.

➤ Centre of the Cell (CoC):

- Nothing to report.

10. Feedback from FMD Operations Board

- Enquiry Management Project has been developed with the aim to be more responsive to students needs.
- Recruitment:
 - Shortlisting and references to be reviewed in Oleo with the aim of improving processes in Oleo.
 - Business case process will change, and business cases will no longer be needed for posts funded by FRFs.
 - HR working on including Honorary and Visiting applications in Oleo.

11. Marketing & Communications

- Signage: frames (A4 and A3 size) have been delivered and DB has identified the areas where they will be fixed by Estates so that if staff want to advertise an event, they will contact him before putting it in the frame. DB will manage/clear outdated events from frames.
- Noticeboard in the mushroom will be used only for EDI information. Tania has asked to use the glass cabinet near mushroom for an EDI initiative, however CDO has suggested that we use this to display highlighted recent publications as part of the 'good news' initiative. DB will consider with others how best to use the space.
- Marketing: Institute Recruitment Meeting will be held on 14 May. Reached out to programmes to get feedback on recent Market and HESA data report sent by Sasha Bishop's (FMD Marketing manager) team. DB asked programmes to feed back by 24 April.

12. Space

- NWOW issues/comments: to continue passing feedback to RP and SM.
- Tables and chairs for first floor North side kitchen area will be purchased.
- Blinds: no news when it will be finished but fault to be repaired soon.
- Mews project: no update.

13. Athena SWAN & EDI

- An EDI forum focussed on disability inclusion was held on 20 March. Some recommended actions were identified following an analysis of the contributions and feedback:
 - Provide clear guidance on how to share disability status.
 - Promote positive case studies/ examples of the positive impact sharing disability status can have.
 - Provide resources and support to managers/tutors on how to respond effectively when individuals share their disability status.
 - Raise awareness and challenge the stigma of having a disability.
 - Support our Staff Disability Network at University level.
 - Working with Estates and Facilities (EAF) colleagues to improve our approach to physical accessibility.

These recommendations should begin to be actioned shortly.
- Mental Health Awareness Week on w/c 13 May: there will be a Blizzard EDI event on 16 May at 1-2pm. It will be a practical and interactive workshop on stress management and building resilience presented by Suzanne Mason. There will be comms promoting the event very soon.

Part 4: Other business**14. Any other business:** none

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 15 May 2024 at 12:15, Small Cloud**

BAC outstanding action list

Meeting date	Minute Reference	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome