

Minutes for Thursday 19th April 2018
College of Medical and Dental Sciences Medical School. Medical School,
University of Birmingham, Vincent Drive, Edgbaston, B15 2TT

10:00 - 13:00: Main meeting

People whom attended:

David Barry, Crick
Laura Murphy, Edinburgh
Jeremy Pike, Birmingham, host
Graeme Ball, Dundee
Stephen Cross, Bristol
Erick Martins-Ratermero, Warwick
Josette Camilleri, Birmingham
Dominic Waithe, Oxford, acting chair
Ziqiang Huang, Cambridge
David Strachan, Glasgow

Apologies:

Alex Sossick, Cambridge
Martin Jones, Crick

Goal: Discussion of focused interest group outline document and remit of group to be formed.

Minutes: (David Strachan typed a transcript and minutes for the meeting, below is a summarised version):

- The different possibilities of the groups name was introduced and discussed.
 - It was considered important that the name of the group should be flexible to accommodate the different types of image analysis and not focus on a specific role (e.g. bioimage analysis). We want to attract input from scientists with bioinformatics, computer vision, mathematics and physics backgrounds as well working with microscopy of different types.
 - RMS-IA (Royal Microscopy Society-Image Analysis) was considered the best option by most members present at the time. N.B. This name was subsequently put forward as a suggestion to Allison Winton (RMS Chief Exec.) and further revised to IAFIG-RMS (Image Analysis Focused Interest Group of the Royal Microscopy Society).
- **The overall mission of the group being formed was discussed and several areas were highlighted as being core to the group's activities:**
 - It was concluded that we want the group to be strongly synonymous with the Neubias organisation (<http://eubias.org/NEUBIAS/>) but with a slightly different focus on certain issues. The sentiment being that through acting slightly differently we can distinguish ourselves and have a meaningful impact in specific areas.
 - It was discussed that we want to produce courses for members of this group in terms of boosting the skills of existing image analysts and to do so in an ad-hoc manner. In addition we would act as a community to reinforce the training being performed for less skilled audiences. This would involve getting trainers accredited by other trainers before they run courses and through providing feedback as necessary as well as through sharing resources. Gabriella Rustici was recommended by several members as a good person to help host and create training with.

- To actively represent the image analysis community to the funding bodies as well as creating guidance for awareness and acknowledgement of member activities. Presently, Image Analysts are underrepresented, as they are not usually allowed to write grants. To help with representation it was discussed that this could be achieved by encouraging the appointment of image analysts and related members on funding bodies and other decision-making councils. Furthermore, the nature of funding was also considered. It was clear that no one existing model was appropriate. Some of council members wanted stable long-term funding without the need for academic progression. For this, the Research Engineer or Facility management model would be more appropriate. For other members, a more academic route was attractive. It was universally agreed however, that image analysts should be able to shift between training/support duties at different phases of their career. It was also deemed highly necessary that training/support duties should be encouraged through stability of funding, whereby riskier research could be supported through contributions to the research community on a support/training level. Furthermore the group would like to pursue the creation of funding for software maintenance. If an image analyst has provided a valuable resource for their community, and they can justify this, then they should be able to apply for funding for its upkeep and maintenance. Furthermore, this scheme should be available to image analysts at any stage of their career.
- To develop model strategies for cost recovery. Several of the members present were engaged in some kind of cost recovery strategy within their institute. This issue was deemed very complex and no one had found an adequate strategy for full-cost recovery. It was discussed that group would work towards providing models for this as a reference for institutes and funding bodies to follow as well as to highlight the concerns of cost-recovery when applied to image analysis.
- Affiliation options for its members. It was discussed that a great way to encourage members to contribute would be to offer affiliations which they can use on their email signature and on their CV. For example, RMS-IA council member or trainer. It was also considered important that for affiliation that members would need to undergo a certain amount of training, though the specific nature of this had not been decided.
- UK scientific integrity was also discussed. It was agreed one of the hallmarks of UK science is its integrity and credibility and that the group should act to reinforce and make use of this resource. To this end it was put forward that the group create guidelines for publication and analysis, which the community and journals can reference.
- Finally it was discussed how we can ensure that Bio-imaging Analysis is represented in the curriculum of computer science as well as biomedical sciences. It was thought that lecturing to PhD students may be too late a point in their education. It was put forward that we should be involved in undergrad teaching courses. It was thought unlikely that universities would pay for doing this in the form of lectureships but the university/institutes may be willing to contribute to the cost recovery process by doing this. It was thought this may help image analysts gain permanent contracts as we providing cheap lecturers for the university. In the first instance it was deemed more realisable in the short-term to run small lecture courses and charge modest up-front fees to participants rather than to get involved in undergrad courses. These courses would form an excellent basis for future integration into undergraduate courses.

- **What are the next steps.**
 - Formation of a mailing list with the group's decided name.
 - The creation of a simple website which describes the group and references its members. The website would remain quite simple with links to teaching resources and other useful media. Word-press was broadly agreed upon as being a good content management system for a website of this kind. This was also thought to be a good resource for companies to find consultancy services through the group. It was concluded however that the committee would not actively engage in mediating consultancy, except to promote the skills of its members through the website and other channels.
 - Better utilisation of existing resources created by Neubias (e.g. WIKI) and other activities of the work-groups. It was discussed whether a forum or workgroup should be created within the Neubias infrastructure or somewhere else for the UK group. Also should existing profile sites be utilised rather than reinventing the wheel by producing our own. Also if we just link to existing sites then there is less to keep up-to-date. Examples are MedIAN or LinkedIn for member profiles.
 - Engagement with existing UK based training schemes, e.g. Software Carpentry and to companies (e.g. Google). Representation at computer vision type conferences. CBS computer vision conferences. Computer vision and machine learning. British Machine Vision. Some events in Edinburgh and Dundee. Some have very good workshops for learning, although generally expensive. It was suggested we invite their key speakers to come to us rather than us go to them. This could save costs. Other organisations are NAG, Numerical Algorithms Group, and ARCHER the National Supercomputing Service. It was requested that if anyone sees any other groups that they please feedback to the group so we are aware.
 - To provide a narrative for interaction with the funding bodies and for the petitioning for a more dynamic and appropriate funding model it was concluded that there must be better communication and representation with funding bodies. To this end, following the creation of the group outline document for the RMS, that letters be written to the various funding bodies introducing the group and outlining its goals. It was noted during the meeting that the BBSRC had already reached out to committee members in regard to this.

Action Points:

- Jeremy: Draft a Best Practice Document relating to the conduct of image analysts and publishing of image analysis research in journals.
- David: Minutes of meeting. # *Summarised above.*
- Dominic: To write to RMS regarding the name of the group. # *Update we have agreed with RMS that IAFIG-RMS (Image Analysis Focused Interest Group of the Royal Microscopical Society) would be appropriate. None of the member of the group protested this name.*
- Dominic: Mailing list with new name - JISC mail in first instance.
- Dominic: To research and develop website for group.
- Dominic: Drafting letter to research councils introducing community as well as the need for reforms to funding and representation.
- Date of next meeting.
 - 6 months time, likely to be at NEUBIAS meeting in Edinburgh with a provisional 3-hour time slot.

- Laura: Investigate forum options for keeping touch.
- Dominic: Once document and affiliation is established, work out post titles and roles for members.