

Minutes from the ECR Liaison Forum (Cornwall)

Friday 14 February 2020 at Penryn Campus

Exchange Green 11:00 am – 1 pm

Attendees:

- Dr Adeline Loh, ECR (CEMPS)
- Dr Alejandro Roman Gonzalez, ECR (Geography, CLES)
- Dr Ajit Pillai, ECR (Engineering, CEMPS)
- Dr Camille Coye, ECR (Biosciences, CLES)
- Dr Carmen Falagan Rodriguez, ECR (CSM, CEMPS)
- Dr Clemens Ullmann, ECR (CSM, CEMPS)
- Dr Chris Yeomans, ECR (CSM, CEMPS)
- Dr Edward Mackay, ECR (Physics, CEMPS)
- Dr Erik Postma, ECR (Biosciences, CLES)
- Dr Katie Orchel, ECR (Geography, CLES- ESI)
- Dr Luke Palmer, ECR (CSM, CEMPS)
- Dr M D Sharma, ECR (Biosciences, CLES)
- Dr Sarah Bell, ECR (CMH)
- Charlotte Juggins (PGR and ECR Experience Officer) – Secretary to the meeting
- Dr Chris Wood (Researcher Development Manager) – Chair
- Professor Andrew McRae (Dean of the DC)

Apologies:

- Drs Astrid Wissenburg (Director of Research)
- Dr Neeltje Boogert
- Dr Jacquelyn Eales
- Dr Anne Leonard
- Fiona Pac-Soo
- Kate Foster (Careers Coach)
- Juliet White, Doctoral College (Administrator)

1

Welcome and Introductions

Dr Clemens Ullman introduced himself and explained his role in the ECR LF and how it fits within the framework of the ECR Steering Group and RIEG (Research and Impact Executive Group). Everyone introduced themselves. Dr Wood went through the Minutes of the last meeting, which were agreed were accurate.

Dr Wood set out the agenda and the plan for the meeting.

Action points from the last meeting:

- Dr Wood confirmed that he had to carry forward his actions
- It is hoped that Janice Button will be attending the next meeting to talk about the 'Exeter Academic' and the plans for progression training. Oscar Fitch-Roy will also be

attending the Cornwall April meeting to share his experience of applying for fellowships as an ECR, which will be shared across the two ECR Liaison Forums.

Issues raised:

- Concerns raised about not being able to be co-named as a PI.
- Guidance as to how ECRs can be included in REF, as an independent researcher was requested. Prof McRae confirmed that the REF deadline for ECRs to be included is the end of February. Any ECRs with concerns about inclusion of their work were advised to contact Dr Sumi David (REF Manager) directly.

2

Networking 'in our own words' and updates from the ECRNs

E-mails went to ECRs before Christmas about the university wanting to move away from fixed-term contracts to permanent. Some discussion around the Concordat followed highlighting that policies seem to be in place but not yet implemented across the University. It was felt that signatories need to provide an 'action plan' at a very high level and involving funders, etc, to be put in place and cascaded down. As a group, we contributed towards the new Concordat and it is hoped that in 5 years' time there is more awareness and consequences. Dr Wood explained that he sat on the Concordat Steering Group with Drs Yolanda Hill and Tim Wilkinson as ECR reps. Dr Wood will be working with Drs. Astrid Wissenburg (Director of Research) to help cascade information about the revised Concordat through the University hierarchy. This will include provisions for training and the desire for the University to move away from the use of fixed-term contracts.

The role of the ECRN lead was explained and how they would be expected to report back to ECR Liaison Forums, although it was generally understood that some Networks are more proactive than others.

RD&RC are be able to provide funding to support ECRNs and are seeking additional resource from individual colleges, via RIEG.

3

Strategic issues/requests to take forward to the new ECR Steering Group

Dr Ullman spoke about RIEG and his experience. It was friendly and inclusive group. Discussed matters include the 'ECR week', and how they might run (whether it is a week or individual days).

Going forward Dr Wood explained that he saw the ECR LF's as being an opportunity to enhance networking, now that the newly formed ECR Steering Group exists to take strategic items to ECR focussed RIEG meetings (dates yet to be confirmed). Previously issues were escalated to Doctoral College Strategic Board (DCSB; now discontinued) and then to RIEG. Dr Ben Gardner and Dr Helen Eyles (representing the Exeter Campuses) and Dr MD Sharma and Dr Clemens Ullman (representing the Cornwall campuses) are invited to attend the RIEG meetings and Dr Wood will be invited to attend future meetings, as Head of RD&RC. At the first meeting Drs Astrid Wissenburg and Prof Neil Gow asked Reps for their experiences. Dr Wood suggested that Reps contribute to the papers for these meetings and highlighted that Kendra Brown has offered advice on how best to set these out.

Going forward, it was felt that ECRs should be recognised in a type of celebratory 'Research Week' or possibly termly events throughout the year. Dr Clive Betts, Head of People Development, has proposed a 'Festival of Success.' More information to be circulated once

details are in place. Research Showcase, which will combine Images of Research, 3 Minute-Thesis (3MT) Competitions (PGR), ECR presentations and 'Tweet Your Thesis/Research', is scheduled for the spring. There will be the usual 3MT heats within Colleges with the winner going through to regional heats.

It was also mentioned that there should be some inclusion in the above of fieldwork on twitter and a link to #Fieldwork bingo.

Other issues to discuss at the ECR steering group:

- Dog policy on campus and wellbeing
- Co-investigator issues
- E-mail access at the end of the contract (Dr Wood to ask Emma Roberts about progress on this)
- Cross campus sharing of equipment and training (Prof McRae to discuss with Sean Fielding, Head of IIB)

4 **Update from the Doctoral College (Changes in the RD&RC Team, Changes to the ECR and Research Staff Training provisions, Research Staff Development Manager post)**

Dr Wood reported that he is now leading the RD&RC team and recruitment for his previous role as ECR Programme Manager would be commencing within in the next few weeks. An individual with post-doc experience and who has a good understanding of the cohort will be essential. The position will be permanent. Dr Wood offered to meet with anyone who might be interested in the post.

Further changes include the Research Programme/IIB Essentials Programme coming into the RD&RC remit on top of the 'core' ECR programme and RLI's. It is hoped that the newly appointed manager will be able to take this forward over the summer with Dr Wood and Roz Harrison-Brown. This will result in a more streamlined activities, larger cohorts and an enhanced more 'joined-up' programme. There will also be an increased focus on PGR and ECR training in Cornwall.

Dr Wood explained to members of the group about the ECR Inductions in Cornwall. An opportunity where we invite ECRs to talk about their experiences and explain what support is available to them.

5 **Any other business.**

There was no other business.

6 **Close of Meeting** (date of Next Meeting: 17/4/2020 @ 11 am – 1 pm in Exchange Blue)

The meeting closed at 1 pm.

Exeter ECR Liaison Forum - Action Points Summary

| Action Point | Assigned to | Completed |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| Charlotte Juggins to circulate electronic form of ECR brochure to PIs/ECRs. | CJ | |

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| Dr Wood to ensure that a schematic of how the ECRNs, ECR Liaison Forums, ECR Steering Groups and RIEG work together is available from the RD&RC website | CW/CJ | |
| Festival of Success information to be circulated (when received) | CW | |