

Minutes from the ECR Liaison Forum (Exeter)

Thursday 31 October 2019 at Streatham Campus

Forum Training Suite 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Attendees:

- Dr George De Ath, ECR (CEMPS, Computer Science)
- Dr Helen Eales, ECR (College of Med & Health)
- Dr Michela Faccioli, ECR (UEBS, Business, Economics)
- Dr Ben Gardner, ECR (CEMPS, Physics)
- Dr Zoltan Gombos, ECR (CEMPS, Engineering)
- Dr Pablo Martinez Pancorbo (CEMPS, Physics & Astronomy)
- Prof Andrew McRae (Dean of the DC)
- Dr Krystal Warmoth, ECR (College of Med & Health)
- Charlotte Juggins, Doctoral College (PGR and ECR Experience Officer)
- Dr Chris Wood, Doctoral College (Researcher Development Manager) - Chair
- Juliet White, Doctoral College (Administrator) – Secretary to the meeting

Apologies:

- Dr Colleen Deane, ECR (CLES, Sport and Health Sciences)
- Dr Tristan Snowsill, ECR (College of Med & Health)
- Prof Kim Soin (Associate Dean of the DC)
- Drs Astrid Wissenburg (Director of Research)
- Kate Foster (Careers Coach)

1 Welcome & Introductions

Dr Ben Gardner introduced himself and explained his role in the ECR LF. He also explained about DCSB and RIEG. Everyone introduced themselves.

2 Networking 'in our own words' and updates from the ECRNs (including feedback from the focus group).

CEMPS Network Update:

Dr Zoltan Gombos circulated the CEMPS ECR Network Leaflet (a revised second edition is to follow, to include Penryn Rep). Useful information such as links and Concordat is included. The Network have held many events (approx. one/month) including a Welcome Social which was well attended. They feed information to Athena SWAN and would like to organise a Fellowship event. Dr Wood asked Zoltan to liaise with him before organising this as this is something that the RDRC team is looking to organise in Exeter. Dr Wood explained about the event 'Applying for Postdoctoral Funding' coming up on 21.11.19. Zoltan went on to explain about the positive culture in London at the UK National Postdocs event where over 100 attended in person and approx. 250 virtually. This creates one voice and he suggested that a future meeting could be held in Exeter.

IHR Network Update:

Dr Krystal Warmoth gave her report. Networks had met up in the summer where the Leadership structure was agreed however nobody has yet stepped up to offer support.

Sharon Savage from Psychology is linking with IHR. Dr Wood asked if Sharon could get in touch with him directly. The new Director of IHR is coming to talk to the group 21.11.19 who is keen to offer support to ECRs.

Dr Wood updated those present on the Network Focus Group Meeting held 30.10.19 which took place to invigorate Networks. Colleges have offered their financial support of approx. £500/college. This will be going to RIEG (Research and Impact Executive Group) in November. RDRC team will be able to offer £2,000 from their budget. Criteria for RLI has changed so that it will no longer fund formation of new Research Networks. Therefore, a total of c. £6,000 is a possible ongoing annual commitment towards Networks. There was some discussion around how best to utilise this funding and suggestions put forward included an annual ECR Event; a presence at the staff festival; half the money be used to run an event and the other half towards each individual ECR Network; perhaps something organised off the Research Week (if this still exists) in the spring. Dr Wood closed by reminding attendees that the Network Meeting Minutes would be circulated in due course.

3 **Changes to ECR representation and reporting to RIEG.**

Dr Chris Wood explained that 4 ECR Reps (2 Exeter, 2 Penryn) had previously sat on the DCSB (Doctoral College Strategic Board). DCSB no longer exists and now the same Reps will sit on the Research and Impact Executive Group (RIEG) which will have an ECR focused meetings, c. 4 times a year. Reps have been invited to a formal RIEG luncheon. RIEG is chaired by the Deputy VC for Research and meets.

An 'ECR Update' paper will be going to RIEG (November meeting) which will be an amended version of the DCSB September Paper with two additions (a proposal for a dedicated 'ECR Week' and, in addition to ECR LFs, the establishment of an ECR Steering Group set up to discuss more strategic related items outside of the ECR LFs).

4 **Update from the Doctoral College (Exeter Academic, HR Excellence/Concordat, ECR Brochure, Fellowship Funding).**

Dr Wood explained that we are working more closely with HR and People Development around the 'Exeter Academic' Project which consists a suite of developmental activities that covers all stages of career progression from ECR to 'world authority' researcher. It is designed to provide ECRs with information as to how you can progress through each level, with the associated promotion criteria and relevant training. Janice Button has been appointed the lead on the 'Exeter Academic' and Dr Wood is working closely with her with a view to ensure both agendas are congruent. Dr Wood is having regular meetings with Dr Clive Betts (Head of People Development) and Dr Roz Harrison-Brown (Research Services) around training programmes and Dr Wood will report back on progress at future meetings.

Dr Wood explained the 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers' which outlines to researchers, employers and institutions about what they should do to support career development of researchers and associated commitments. The 'Concordat' has just been revised which the ECR LFs took an active involvement during the institutional consultation stage. The language of the new Concordat has been changed from '*it is recommended*' to '*must*' and Exeter is proposing to be a signatory to the Concordat.

Those institutions who have a plan in place to implement the 'Concordat' are awarded an international 'HR Excellence' award and Exeter has recently been successful in retaining its

Award. Dr Wood, Tim Wilkinson and Clive Betts all took part in its implementation. Dr Wood explained that the University's Management is really supportive of this and the ECR development agenda, particularly Prof Andrew McRae (Dean of the Doctoral College), Drs Astrid Wissenburg (Director of Research Services), and Prof Neil Gow (DVC for Research).

Dr Wood stated that a small print run of ECR brochures would be available for the Exeter based 'ECR Orientation Event' on 6.11.19. This will be sent to PIs/ECRs, in due course. He also explained that the RLI funding is now open and deadline for entries is 25.11.19. If anyone has queries, please make contact with Researcher Development.

Finally, Dr Wood stated that GW4 Crucible applications are open. Expressions of interest have a deadline of 11.11.19 and Chris encourages those who are interested to contact him in the first instance.

5 **Results and discussion regarding the CROS survey results.**

Charlotte Juggins encouraged those present to form two groups to discuss the results of the recent CROS survey. There was a particular focus on what might be the reason behind the results (i.e. any underlining issues within the ECR community) and what the university could do to improve these scores. Notes of this will be circulated separately.

6 **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

7 **Close of Meeting (date of next meeting: 13 February 2020 (11 am – 1 pm) @ St Lukes Campus, Baring Court 128.**

The meeting closed at 3:30 pm.

Exeter ECR Liaison Forum - Action Points Summary

Item No	Action Point	Assigned to	Completed
2	Dr Wood asked Zoltan to liaise with him before organising a fellowship event as this is something that the RDRC team is looking to organise in Exeter.	ZG	
2	Dr Wood asked Krystal Warmoth if Sharon Savage could get in touch with him directly.	HE	
2	Dr Wood said that the Network Meeting Minutes would be circulated in due course.	CW	
4	Dr Wood stated that a small print run of ECR brochures would be available for the Orientation Event on 6.11.19. This will be sent to PIs/ECRs, in due course.	CW	