

## Notes from ECR Liaison Forum Meeting held 6 December 2017 in the Council Chamber, Northcote House

### Present:

- Tristian Snowsill
- Liz Shaw
- Tim Wilkinson
- Helen Pisarska
- Jessica Ames
- Ben Gardner
- Emma Hudson
- Ryan Ames
- Zoltan Gombos
- Kitty Adhamy-Nicol
- Karen Leslie (Chair)
- Chris Wood
- Juliet White

### Apologies

- Dr Andrew McRae, Dean of Doctoral College
- Dr Kim Soin, Associate Dean of the Doctoral College
- JJ Valletta.

KL welcomed attendees along to today's meeting and everyone introduced themselves around the table.

Zoltan received an 18 page document to input towards changes/review to the Concordat at the National Postdocs meeting held last week. KL stated that Vitae are looking at reviewing the Concordat. Kate Lindsell, Assistant Director of HR, has submitted a representation on behalf of the Doctoral College. Zoltan will be attending the next meeting to be held sometime next year. Colleagues can feed any implementation and changes to RDT who will feed information back to Zoltan.

Tristan reported that The Institute of Biochemical Sciences in the Medical School is setting up an ECRN.

CW and Andrew McCrae met with Eric Lybeck of SSIS, to find out how ECRs progress. Eric would like to bring together a HASS Wide ECRN. CW meeting with Tim Coles ADR of the Business School who is keen to work more closely with ECRs. KL spoke of the strengthening connections and relationships with the Strategic Board.

Helen in Biosciences reported that couple of key people within their Network have been 'lost', and it would be helpful to be able to 'reboot' their ECRN via an RLI? She is looking for direction/support and KL agreed to continue with this conversation and CW offered support in formulating this.

Emma reported that CEMPS has been very supportive. Ben creating a CEMPS ECRN leaflet for postdocs. Will run past HR and RDT. KL said it would be good to have bullet point listed of successes. Kitty to approach Rob Wilson to be asked for more representation to sit on committee and with a view to restarting funding. Helen not sure how useful this would be. A functioning ECRN would be useful.

Ben highlighted that when ECRN contacts leave there may be a rapid decline and wondered how to combat this potential problem. CW suggested a range of people at various stages of their careers in order to avoid this 'black hole' effect.

Action: Introduce Eric Lybeck to Tim Wilkinson.

Kitty left the meeting at 10:47 am

Tim talked about succession planning of the ECRN, having instructions / guide available for people new to the ECRN. Ben said that this exists within his own ECRN. Tristian said that RLI events have helped kick start events but this has

been difficult when sometimes you feel unsupported. Liz said they are looking at dividing key roles to share the responsibility / workload and future proofs the ECRN should someone leave. Difficult to run and attend ECRN, and usually the same person volunteers for other event on top of the ECRN. KL recommended that those with a 'best practice' summary in place, please pass this through to RDT so that we can circulate to all. She reiterated the sustainability of the Networks and forums.

Emma asked for institutional support. ECRN should be long term and RLI's support thing short term projects. Ben recognised to have an RLI throughout the year would be really useful. CW re-emphasised how supportive the Dean and Associate Dean of the Doctoral College are of the ECRN.

KL spoke about wellbeing, via Employment Survey – Stress and Absentee rates. Kate Lindsell looking at a positive working environment and supporting the ECR group in particular and how we can look after this group in terms of mental health and well-being. Kim McNichol and Karen Griffiths doing mental health focus group work. The Uni are looking at putting together a toolkit for managers as a priority. Emma says that events tend to be career focussed and perhaps a focus on mental health would be useful. Possibly host an event for ECRN leads in the first instance. Helen suggested training people up as Peer supporters. Dignity and Respect Advisors meet regularly and Tristan would like to see a similar group of people as mental health advisors. KL suggested inviting Karen Griffiths and ? to the next Meeting. Clive Betts heading up People Development.

CW updated those present with website progress. Created a HUB Page and hope to work more closely with People Development to offer accreditation in the long term future. Charlotte Juggins will be able to keep website information up to date and if there are any changes needed please contact RDT. CW spoke about the monthly newsletter and mid-month update. Need to highlight that postdocs can attend any other courses attended.

KL updated those present of the 1:2:1 careers appointments opportunities that can be booked via Kate Foster / Juliet White following the success of offering these across Cornwall / Exeter campuses instead of group sessions which were not proving very popular.

One expression of interest had been received re: becoming a Representative on the strategic board. Meetings are on 9 Jan & 24 April 2018 and the representative would work closely with CW and KL to help put together papers. Tim, Eric, Helen, Ben put their names forward and Eric's name was drawn from the box as the person to represent ECRs on Strategic Board.

KL circulated the Terms of Reference and Membership for the Strategic Board. People were asked for their comments. Tristian suggested at least one representative from an ECRN. Emma explicitly mentioned Equality & Diversity; and KL suggested mental wellbeing.

KL to circulate CROS data by email and offered meetings if anyone would like to feedback information.

The Meeting Closed: 11:52 am.