



Conference Group

Minutes

Wed 22nd June 2022

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Present: Deborah Munro (Chair, Aston), Laura Newman (Vice, Loughborough), Chris Bradford (Warwick), Adrian Clarke (Loughborough), Jo-Anne Watts (Wolverhampton, Steering Group), Ruth Houghton (Cranfield), Funmike Ifie (Loughborough), Matt Cunningham (MSDG, Loughborough)

Apologies: Gaz J Johnson (Mercian Collaboration), Catherine Robertson (Birmingham), Andrea Kellett (Birmingham),

Summary of Actions

ACTION: Speaker Liaisons and Chair to facilitate Ant's travel and attendance at the Conference venue

ACTION: Laura and Adrian to feedback to sponsor on paper format and duration

ACTION: Deborah to create first draft programme and share with the group

ACTION: All to review the programme and provide insight via email

ACTION: Funmike, Deborah and Catherine to coordinate and create finalised thematic programme

ACTION: Funmike & Catherine to inform all applicants of outcomes and invite speakers to present

ACTION: GJJ to check MC account for moderator rights and screen sharing

ACTION: GJJ to recirculate moderator guidance to all

ACTION: Deborah to coordinate with team for moderator guidance and training

ACTION: Deborah and Laura to firm up panel theme more concretely ahead of next meeting

ACTION: Deborah to draft a set a questions for the round table and circulate for input

ACTION: All to provide input and suggestions with panel questions

22/40 Keynote

Deborah reported that Ant Brewerton had confirmed as keynote speaker, and that there was a news item on the website about it.ⁱ Some of the details about Ant's travel needed to be sorted (mostly transfer from MK Station to campus), but this could be tackled nearer the time. It was noted that there was a 45 minute slot for the keynote, plus 15 minutes for questions, although as per later discussions this might be tweaked.

ACTION: Speaker Liaisons and Chair to facilitate Ant's travel and attendance at the Conference venue

22/41 Event Sponsorship

Laura reported back that there was now a *Platinum Sponsor* for the event, Bibliu, and noted thanks to Adrian for his work here. Helen Curtis as treasurer had been informed and would arrange for invoices to be sent to them. While there aren't any other sponsors, as this is a platinum one it brought in a considerable amount of funding, and hence was a success. The Chair noted her thanks to Bibliu, Adrian and Laura for their work here.

As a sponsor Bibliu asked to be included as a paper in the conference, which after some negotiation was agreed could be incorporated provided it was presented in concert with Mercian Collaboration member staff. The duration of the potential paper was discussed, and it was agreed where there was a rich crossover between the members (likely to be Coventry) and sponsor perspectives that 45 minutes might be possible, although a 15 minute slot in the programme might be preferable.

ACTION: Laura and Adrian to feedback to sponsor on paper format and duration

22/42 Submissions Review

The Chair discussed how to best review the papers and to fit the submissions to the draft programme structure. The draft programme was consulted and discussion ahead of the reviewing discussions.

The papers were reviewed by the committee, starting with longer slot submissions and then progressing on to consider the shorter ones. GJJ had highlighted all the papers which were submissions from people who had attended the Speaker Briefing events, and the committee agreed it was important to try to include these on the programme. It was agreed to consider the themes of the various papers, to ensure a diverse provision of the topics, alongside a spread of institutions.

It was noticed with respect to content there was more research related papers this year than in previous ones. Overall, though, a high standard of submission quality was observed.

It was agreed guidance would be offered to some authors encouraging them to tweak their sessions in terms of duration and alignment to the theme. After much discussion and debate it was generally agreed which papers and speakers to invite.

22/43 Programme Format

Ideally two parallel sessionsⁱⁱ would be set up, and people would not be able to swap (no switching during the session). After this they would be able to transfer to one of the other streams. It was clear there was a need to build in some slack in the programme to allow the Cranfield team to perform their admin tasks and allocate people to the right streams. Some economies with networking on day one would be needed, but then more time would be set aside for the event on day two.

It was noted that Tim Wales will deliver the host welcome on the first day, and this needed to be in the schedule. Potentially, he might be available for day 2 as well.

The outline programme once drafted would be circulated to the whole team ahead of the next conference. Deborah noted there is some time pressure to draw this together and then invite the speakers to attend as soon as possible. It was hoped for the 2023 conference that these paper reviews could be in person which would make matters easier.

It was noted the plan was to inform speakers by mid-July. However, questions about the practicalities of parallel sessions would need to be finalised in discussion with the Cranfield team, and hence this needed to take place before the speakers could be formally invited.

ACTION: Deborah to create first draft programme and share with the group

ACTION: All to review the programme and provide insight via email

ACTION: Funmike, Deborah and Catherine to coordinate and create finalised thematic programme

ACTION: Funmike & Catherine to inform all applicants of outcomes and invite speakers to present

22/44 Moderators

Deborah pointed out we would need four moderators for both days, but she would prefer to try to avoid people doing sessions back-to-back. As in previous years the aim was to have two people to moderate a session, one lead and one acting as a back-up (managing chat, problems etc).

There were some questions about breakout rooms and screen sharing and if this is enabled in the Collaboration zoom account (if used).ⁱⁱⁱ Deborah stressed if needed or we were short of moderators from within the group that it would be hopefully possible call on other staff within the Collaboration to help. It was noted that training and guidance would be valuable in making sure everyone can do the best job on the day.^{iv}

ACTION: GJJ to check MC account for moderator rights and screen sharing

ACTION: GJJ to recirculate moderator guidance to all

ACTION: Deborah to coordinate with team for moderator guidance and training

22/45 Round Table Discussion

The panel discussion set for the end of the conference (Day two) needed more development and additional speakers to be formally approached. Chris Porter, as Chair, had been invited plus Tim Welsh from Cranfield. Ruth had also informally approached Cranfield's archivist. Other names suggested included Helen Curtis (Aston). There was some debate that this risked loading the panel with too many senior managers, and some greater diversity would be valued. Matt offered to bring a customer service perspective, and this was warmly received.

It was noted the panel was a key selling point for the conference for day two, so it needed to be predominantly included and promoted within the delegate call.

A theme was needed for this panel and various ideas were advanced. It was suggested a contrast between the shift in library services from 'old school' to 'modern' library would be a good, and broad

focus. Drafting the questions ahead of time would also help shape the type of panellist who could be invited to participate. It was hoped to agree panellists to be approached at the next meeting.

ACTION: Deborah and Laura to firm up panel theme more concretely ahead of next meeting

ACTION: Deborah to draft a set a questions for the round table and circulate for input

ACTION: All to provide input and suggestions with panel questions

22/46 Programme

Chris noted she would start to draw the programme documentation together once the speakers and outline event details had been agreed. She added some lead time on this would be much appreciated. Focussing on the programme documentation, and the call for delegates would be a key area for review at the next meeting.

22/47 Cranfield Follow Up

Deborah, Laura and Ruth were meeting with the Cranfield team in a few weeks (18th July) to update them on our plans and follow up on some areas of concern. They would report back to the team at the conference meeting the following day (19th). Catherine and Funmike were invited to attend too, but it was unlikely that either was available due to prior commitments. It was noted while some issues were confusing at the prior meeting, now there was a strong view of the conference shape that they could be resolved. Ensuring that we refer to 'break out rooms' not 'parallel' would help in this respect, as the Cranfield team misunderstood our terminology last time.

22/48 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting is set for 19th July, 10.30am. Deborah thanked everyone for attending.

22/49 AOB

None.

22/50 Next Steps & Timetable

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| <p>January</p> <p>Initial Committee Meeting (14th)</p> | <p>February</p> <p>Collate, review and outline event theme</p> <p>Agree on committee role assignments</p> <p>Agree final sponsor offer</p> <p>Brief catchup meeting (16th Feb)</p> | <p>March</p> <p>Agree final event theme</p> <p>News Item: Theme Announce</p> <p>Draft call for papers/speakers</p> <p>News Item: Launch call for sponsors</p> <p>Committee meeting (16th Mar)</p> |
| <p>April</p> <p>Site visit – Chair/Vice (>May)</p> <p>News Item: Call for papers/speakers launched (pre-Easter)</p> <p>Conference Microsite Launch</p> <p>Committee meeting (postponed)</p> | <p>May</p> <p>Site Visit (Cranfield)</p> <p>Speaker briefing events (10th & 19th)</p> <p>Draft/update moderation guide</p> <p>Keynote(s) & panel identified</p> <p>Committee meeting (13th May)</p> | <p>June</p> <p>Papers/Speakers call closes (13th June)</p> <p>Draft joining instructions</p> <p>Paper selection meeting (22nd June)</p> |
| <p>July</p> <p>Speakers & Keynote Confirmed (Early)</p> <p>Draft programme created</p> <p>News Item: Delegate bookings open (25th)</p> <p>Define moderation expectations & consider training</p> <p>Finalise joining instructions</p> <p>Committee meeting (19th June)</p> | <p>August</p> <p>Weekly committee meetings from (15th Aug on, dates TBC)</p> <p>Bookings close (31st)^v</p> <p>Joining instructions to delegates & speakers^{vi}</p> <p>Final programme made available online</p> <p>Draft feedback form updated/created</p> <p>Sponsor invoices sent</p> | <p>September</p> <p>Pre-Event brief committee meeting (date TBC)</p> <p>Pre-Event Speaker Testing (5th)</p> <p>6-7th Conference Hosted</p> <p>Post-Conference Social event (6th)</p> <p>Delegate feedback forms disseminated</p> <p>Sponsor thanks letters disseminated</p> <p>News Item: Conference Report</p> |
| <p>October/November</p> <p>Review/Washup Meeting (date TBC)</p> <p>Conference feedback analysis report</p> <p>Older committee members standdown</p> <p>Handover Chair/Selection new Vice Chair</p> <p>Call for new committee members</p> <p>News Item: Conference feedback report</p> | <p>January '23</p> <p>Annual report to Steering Group</p> <p>First Conference 2023 Meeting</p> | |

Endnotes

ⁱ Keynote speaker announcement: <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/keynote-speaker-2022-conference-announced>

ⁱⁱ See later notes on the Cranfield Studio's preferred terminology for 'breakout' sessions

ⁱⁱⁱ GJJ note: We have the basic Pro account which permits us to host from the account owner, and they can transfer screen sharing rights to others in the session. However, they cannot be set up ahead of time (e.g. account owner needs to be 'in the room' at the time.) We could use it for a single break-out room (e.g. a separate meeting) – but we don't have the 'breakout room' plug in, as this would be an additional charge.

^{iv} GJJ note: I did create some guidance for moderation which I shared a couple of months back...shall I reshare it?

^v The exact date should be as late as possible, but may depend on the requirements of the Cranfield team to have access details for speakers and delegates

^{vi} And where eligible, sponsor representatives