

Blizard Research Committee (BRC)

Tuesday 10th January 2023, 2.00 pm, Large Cloud and MS Teams

MINUTES

Present:

Prof William Alazawi (WA)	Prof Denise Sheer (DS)
Prof Mary Collins (MC)	Prof Silvia Marino (SM)
Carlos De Oliveira (CDO)	
Dr Natalie McCloskey (NM)	
Dr Neil McCarthy (NMC)	
Prof Mike Philpott (MP)	

Part 1: Preliminary items

1. Apologies for absence

Prof Kenny Linton (WA), Prof Xavier Griffiths (WA)

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- Minutes approved.

3. Matters Arising

- WA reviewed the outstanding action points from previous BRC meetings.
- MC proposed that external advisors who can sit on a Blizard external advisory board should be the same group of people, subject to availability.
- WA informed the committee that he has emailed Prof. Menna Clatworthy to confirm her participation in the Blizard research day event. DS proposed another colleague, Prof. Michael Levin, Professor of Paediatrics and International Child Health at the Imperial College London, in case Prof. Clatworthy is not available.

Part 2: Agenda Items

4. Draft CP&I Strategy document

- WA informed the members about the strategy and objectives of the Commercial Partnerships & Innovation Committee (CP&I). WA also highlighted the Business Development Team and the very useful support they can offer to academics with projects that include industrial partners (excluding pure research proposals that fall under the JRMO remit).
- MC proposed to name Silvia Marino as Deputy to represent the Blizard in the CP&I committee.

Part 3: Standing Items

5. PGR Report

- The committee required further details about the Staff/Student Liaison Committee before proceeding ahead with the nomination of one PhD student for each Centre (KL).

6. Grant Report

- CDO presented figures of the grants report for December 2022.
- WA commented informing the committee that we are doing better than 2021 and 2022 at the same period in terms of applications with a higher total value. However, we are still down in terms of total value awarded. Also, colleagues are still not applying for the maximum pot of funding.
- MC suggested to include a comparison with 2019 in the monthly grants report due to the covid period falling under 2020 (CDO).
- WA proposed to ask grant holders if they would accept to share their grants with applicants. The objective would be to create a portfolio of grants and contact details of grant holders to help future applicants, and especially ECRs with little or no experience in research funding. NM suggested that all the collected information could be available on the staff zone section of the website.
- MC also put forward a proposition to generate a standard text about core facilities that could be used by applicants in their research proposals (NM and Claire Cox).
- MC highlighted other potential funding sources like European funding streams, and especially the European Research Council (ERC). She informed the committee that Helen Rowe (Immunobiology) had one ERC Starting Grant and could help in promoting this scheme and advising colleagues willing to apply for this EU funding stream.

7. Overspend on grants

- None reported

8. Honorary Staff Appointments

- Five applications were submitted for review and approval. No objections or issues were raised so the committee approved the five applications.
- MC proposed the committee that all the applications for Honorary Professor titles should be screened before they go forward.

9. Recruitments in progress

- WA informed the committee about three candidates in Immunobiology who, for any reason, didn't come. The Blizzard is aiming at the right people but to make them come to the institute is not as straightforward.
- MC will meet with the Centre Leads to discuss the recruitment strategy. MC asked WA if posts in Immunobiology are clinical and if they possibly cannot be. WA informs that the Clinical Prof/Reader Advanced Liver Disease post can potentially be open to non-clinical candidates. MC suggested to start with clinical applicants with a laboratory programme.
- MC proposed a Professor level and not a Reader for the Infectious Diseases post in Immunobiology.

10. Fellowships / Major Grant Initiatives

- WA updated the committee on the Blizzard's MRC Centre application. There is another project in the pipelines that has recently come up in addition to the multi-morbidity project. WA indicated that only one application can go forward as there is a cap on this scheme applied by the MRC.

- MC informed the committee that she plans to meet with the Centre Research Leads to discuss priorities for the Barts Charity bids in order to set up a list of the Blizard's priorities. MC proposed that CRLs come to this meeting with some ideas of priorities from each Centre. WA and CDO will send out an email to the CRLs and set up the meeting before the next BRC.
- MC suggested that most senior academics should involve more junior scientists as co-investigators in their grant applications. MC asked the Research Leads to pass on the message within their respective Centre.

Part 4: Other business

11. Any other business

- An update on the equipment log spreadsheet will be presented in the next BRC meeting (NM).

Date of the next meeting: 13 February 2023

DRAFT

Outstanding action list

Meeting date	Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Outcome
11/11/22	5	Write the Blizard's own archives policy after reading the faculty's policy and inform staff on what they should be doing.	BRC	Next meeting	Ongoing
10/10/22	3	Suggest external advisors who can sit on a Blizard external advisory board.	BRC	Next meeting	Ongoing
10/10/22	3	Organise a 'Blizard Day' event to take place in the next few months to celebrate achievements and the latest research, education updates and new innovations.	NM/CDO	Next meeting	Ongoing
11/11/22	10	Present update on recruitments in progress at every BRC meeting.	NM	Next meeting	Ongoing