

# LASSIE-ITN Plenary Members Group Meeting

14<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Nyholm Room, Department of Chemistry, University College London

## Minutes

### Attendance

Present:

HWU: Martin McCoustra (MMc), Mark Collings (MC)

AU: Liv Hornekær (LH), John Thrower (JT)

OBSParis: Jean Louis Lemaire (JLL)

INAF: Elisabetta Palumbo (MEP)

Leiden: Harold Linnartz (HL)

Chalmers: Dinko Chakarov (DC)

UCL: Wendy Brown (WB), Serena Viti (SV)

OU: Nigel Mason (NM)

QUB: Tom Field (TF)

SU: Helen Fraser (HF)

Graphic Science: Ben Johnson (BJ)

Apologies received from: Helmut Zacharias, Steve Price, Ewine van Dishoeck, Tom Millar, Cornelia Jäger, Gunnar Nyman, David Field, Peter Hatton, Christian Bradley, Timothy Lee.

With the numbers present, it was decided to have a single meeting with everyone taking part in the discussions of the TCG, OPG and RCG.

### TCG (Chaired by LH)

- Career Development Plan (CDP)
  - Drafts of the Career CDP document and questionnaire have been distributed on the TCG email list.
  - The CDP will be web based and be confidential, with administrative access limited to the TCG Chair (LH) and LASSIE Coordinator (MMc).
  - Questionnaires are to be completed within 6 months of the start and 6 months of completion of the post.
  - Additional tick boxes to indicate that some issues are not yet applicable need to be added to the questionnaire form for arriving researchers.
  - HF suggests that Institutions could be “twinned” avoid any situation where confidential data of any researchers is reviewed by their supervisor.
  - TF suggests averaging of confidential data so that a public profile can be generated.
  - It is suggested that the confidential aspects of the CDP and questionnaire can be attached below a public web profile, and that this should be technically quite easy. However, the system should temporarily be operated on paper to ensure that the system is working.
- Training courses.
  - Training courses available should be advertised on the website.

- Summer School 2011: Astrochemistry with ALMA
  - To take place in Bologna, June 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.
  - Will combine lectures and practicals on interferometry, what can be done with ALMA, technical issues, so that non-specialists can use ALMA (users receive data already reduced).
- Leiden astrochemistry lectures: Network researchers have been invited to attend Ewine van Dishoeck's series of postgraduate lectures in astrochemistry, May 17<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> 2011. These are considered to be sufficiently valuable and important to make it compulsory for ESRs and ERs to attend.
  - Since the lectures and associated practical tasks are dispersed over a 2 week period, video conferencing was discussed as a means of reducing time wasted in travel and or staying in Leiden, but rejected.
  - Instead, making this a wide reaching training event with lectures/activities in other training areas such as outreach and presentation of laboratory data to astronomers (*i.e.*, "selling" the results) the results to astronomers, presentations from commercial partners to assist with the choice of industrial placements, scientific presentations from PIs, social events.
    - PIs should make an appearance at this event.
    - Coordination of the event by NM, LH, HL, BJ, MMc, MC.
    - Outreach training could make use of the Stars 'r' Us! exhibit, and be focussed toward the Brussels outreach event (see below), with researchers dividing into groups to work on associated material such as websites and podcasts.
    - Inviting the Project Officer to some parts of the event should be considered.
- Expenses incurred by researchers in attending all of these training events should be charged to category D. Expenses incurred in organising the events can be charged to category E.
- Extension of the training system in astrochemistry beyond the LASSIE network might be possible through the Erasmus Mundus programme, more likely at the PhD level than at MSc level.
- TCG will consider creating a certificate of some sort to recognise the efforts and achievements of ESRs in the training programme. Training courses will need to have credits awarded, with conversion to various other systems calculated.
- Training courses need to be assessed (to at least pass/fail level) to ensure that they satisfy the requirements of institutions' own training schemes, so that ESRs do not end up have to repeat training.
- Researchers are required to keep timesheets and logs of training that they undertake.
- Researchers are to be encouraged to join their appropriate national academic bodies.
- NM commented on the possibility of some difficulties in fitting researcher placements around multiple training tasks. The TCG will look at issues relating to placements over the next 6 months.
- HL reiterated the primary importance of getting research done by the network, and warned of the possibility of students getting distracted by ticking off training tasks.

### **OPG (Chaired by NM)**

- LASSIE website is operational – ongoing work to develop and maintain it.
- A plan has been laid down for outreach training, as described above.
- An opportunity exists to take part in an outreach event as part of the International Year of Chemistry, in Brussels, June 2011, with LASSIE potentially contributing an astrochemistry zone.
  - The dates are not finalised, but June 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, or June 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> are possibilities. These both have some clash with the summer school in Bologna.
  - NM reports that a budget for the contribution to this event must be prepared in the very near future.
  - MMc reports that there is potentially some funding available to revamp the ‘Stars ‘r’ Us!’ exhibit for the Edinburgh Science Festival which could then also be used for outreach events such as this.
  - SUPA and IoP are other potential sources of funding.
  - The ‘Stars ‘r’ Us!’ exhibit should be used during outreach training events.
- MC showed an idea for the LASSIE logo, based around the Canis Major Constellation above atoms in a surface. BJ agreed to develop this idea further.
- There was some discussion of whether the email distribution lists are working properly; perhaps spam filters are causing problems.

### **RCG (Chaired by HL)**

- A delay between doing LASSIE funded research and publication of papers based on this research is inevitable and normal. Furthermore, publications based on LASSIE funded research will appear long after the LASSIE funding has been terminated. Therefore, to maximise the profile of the LASSIE network, the LASSIE acknowledgement should be added to papers by network members, even if based on research that predates the LASSIE funding.
- For LASSIE to have legacy, collaborations between network members and with external contacts are essential. Research visits at the PI level, and seminars/lectures will encourage such collaborations. The COST Action – The Chemical Cosmos can provide funding for such visits. Joint publications are particularly favourable to demonstrate the integrated research activity of the network.
- Lodging publications on the astro-ph preprints archive (<http://uk.arXiv.org>) will help with uptake of research results by the astronomy community and can boost citation rates.
- Interaction with other networks, *e.g.* Dutch Astrochemistry Network, COST Action – The Chemical Cosmos, Eurogenesis, Boundary C, to be investigated and encouraged.
- Communication to be enhanced by distribution of a regular newsletter, including information on publications, seminars, events, appointments etc. Such a newsletter provides a means of distributing pdf copies of papers, particularly as some institutions do not have access to many journals where LASSIE publications are likely to appear, *e.g.* ApJ, A&A, MNRAS. Templates for such newsletters exist at OU.
- Research related material to be added to the LASSIE website:

- List of publications including links to journal sites where papers can be downloaded. Direct download access should not be provided for copyright reasons.
- A short description of each researcher's project to be included in addition to the researcher biography.
- The newsletter can be fed into the news section of the website, and be used as an archive.

### **PMG (Chaired by MMc)**

1. Minutes of meeting 29<sup>th</sup> March accepted.
2. International Advisory and Assessment Committee.
 

Due to the absence of Tim Lee, as a representative of the IAAC, the discussion of the role of the IAAC will be deferred until a future meeting.
3. Consortium Agreement
  - 3.1. Both UCL and QUB are charging Postgraduate Student Fees to ESRs. At this stage, the other British institutions do not appear to applying fees. A shortfall in the UCL and QUB category D budgets is expected.
 

MC suggests that any redistribution of Category D funds throughout the network, which is allowable under the Marie-Curie ITN rules, is agreed and documented in the Consortium Agreement. There was no agreement to this suggestion.

NM suggests that commercial sponsorship of PhD places be investigated.

NM suggests that any funds released due to favourable exchange rates can be put toward covering the tuition fees.
  - 3.2. Status: most institutions have agreed to sign the Consortium Agreement in the most recently distributed draft. Where disagreement exists, this is mostly due to the fact that the structure of the Consortium Agreement does not fit with template recommended by the Cordis website. However, the Consortium Agreement was drafted to act more as an addendum to the existing Grant Agreement than as a stand alone document, hence the recommended template was considered to be unnecessarily
  - 3.3. Aim to have the Consortium Agreement distributed to the legal representatives of each institution by Nov 15<sup>th</sup>, with PIs copied into the message, with the document to be signed by Dec 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. TCG report covered above.
5. OPG report covered above
6. RCG report covered above.
7. Website – covered in the OPG meeting section above
8. Events and Meetings 2011
  - 8.1. Stars 'r' Us! discussed in OPG meeting section above.
  - 8.2. Summer School discussed above TCG meeting section above.
  - 8.3. Astrosurf: This meeting will be held in August at HWU, in conjunction with the meeting of WorkGroup 2 of COST Action. There is a need to avoid clashing with ECOSS (22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> August) and an astronomy meeting at UCL (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> September).
  - 8.4. The 2011 YAM will be held in Paris, alongside a management meeting.
  - 8.5. IAU: attendance of ESRs and ERs at IAU to be strongly encouraged, and to count towards training portfolio.

- 8.6. Astrophysical Chemistry Group meeting: Meeting of the ApChem Group of the RAS and RSC will take place in Eindhoven, Jan 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Attendance by non members is welcomed.
9. Upcoming reports  
Committee members were reminded that the first Progress Report to the REA is due on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011, and that the associated internal reports are required by 16<sup>th</sup> February. A template for these internal reports will be developed at HWU.
10. AOB: No other matters raised
11. Date and venue of next meeting.  
The next PMG meeting will be held at UCL, in the week starting February 14<sup>th</sup> 2011, to coincide with the deadline for internal reports to be included in the Progress Report to the REA. MC to determine which day of the week is preferred via a Doodle.

## **ACTIONS**

- TCG to finalise the questionnaire and CDP forms, and begin operation of the CDP system.
- HWU to send a reminder that all (3 year) ESR positions must be filled by February 1<sup>st</sup>, otherwise funding is lost to the project.
- MC to circulate the presentations from the Project Coordinators meeting and draw up some guidelines on categories of expenditure.
- MC to send a copy of the draft logo design to BJ, who will develop the idea further.
- MC to check on the operation of email distribution lists.
- NM to confirm dates for the outreach event in Brussels.
- MC to contact Beverly at OU, regarding templates for a newsletter.
- MC to request short description of research projects from ESRs and ERs.
- MMc to contact the REA to ask for a formal response to the issue of fees charged for PhD students at some institutions.
- NM to investigate commercial sponsorship to cover unbudgeted student fees.
- HWU to create template for internal reports.
- MC to arrange Doodle agreement for next meeting.