Management Board Meeting, 1st July 2021, 10am (UTC + 1)

Held by Zoom videoconference

Minutes

Meeting attended by Laura Turnbull-Lloyd (Chair, i-CONN Co-ordinator), Vicky Papadopoulou Lesta, Thomas Hein, Christian Kimmich, Christina Prell, Marc Hütt, Tony Parsons (Chair of Supervisory Board), Jennifer King (Project Manager), John Wainwright (Training Manager, in attendance)

1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Minutes of the last Management Board Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, held by videoconference on May 4th, 2021, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

The following actions from the previous Management Board meeting were discussed:

Action: JK to set up a GitHub account.

A GitHub account has been set up. Log-in details will be circulated to the network.

Action: LT to approach another Board member.

LT reported that she recontacted Dr Lorien Jasny to enquire if she would now be able to join the Advisory Board. Dr Jasny accepted the invitation. She is an expert in social networks from the University of Exeter.

Action: JK to arrange Work Package Seminars.

A WP2 seminar was held in June and there is a WP3 seminar arranged for 30th September.

Action: JK to organise a meeting between the Advisory Board and the ESRs.

This has not been done yet.

Action: Durham Management team to draft a 'Final Dissemination and Exploitation Plan' and distribute to the Consortium for comment.

The Final Dissemination and Exploitation Plan was completed and uploaded to the REA Portal. LT thanked everyone who contributed.

Action: JK to forward the details of the GitHub account to the Consortium.

4. **Chair's Update**

LT explained that the Management Board agenda had expanded to include several new agenda items. These will remain as standing agenda items for the duration of i-CONN. Some items have been added as agreed in previous Management Board meetings and some items added as best practice.

The board discussed this and agreed the following:

i)   Both EDI and Ethics will be overviewed at each Supervisory Board meeting. The ESR representative will be invited to act as the EDI and Ethics Champion for the ESRs.

ii)   Although the Management Board manages risk as a matter of course at each meeting, in future Risk Management will be formally reviewed at each Management Board meeting.

Action: TP to invite Deborah Priß to act as the EDI and Ethics Champion.

Action: JK to seek clarification from the Project Officer about the EDI and Ethics Champion roles.

Secondment Reporting & Evidence

LT informed the Board that the completion of each secondment must be reported on the REA Portal. Unfortunately, this cannot be completed by the Project Manager but most be completed by each Beneficiary for their own ESR(s).

LT also reminded all PIs that we need to keep evidence of secondments – e.g., calendar entries, lists of meetings, screenshots of Zoom meetings, tickets etc. All ESRs should write a short report at the end of each secondment.

Action: JK to send out an email with instructions on how to record secondments on the   Portal.

Action: JK to prepare and distribute a proforma for the secondment report.

LT reported that the ESRs met with the Project Officer in early June. Under normal circumstances this meeting would have taken place in person at the Interim Review (originally due in late 2020). Because of the delay to the Interim Review due to the pandemic, the Project Officer requested a private Zoom meeting with the ESRs. In her feedback she wanted to emphasis that the ESRs' Career Development Plans should be re-assessed in the light of the impact of COVID. She also reported that the ESRs had several queries about the budget. As a result, JK has set up a Zoom meeting to talk to the ESRs on July 2nd. She will give a short presentation and record it and answer any questions.

Action: PIs to ensure that ESRs revisit their Career Development Plans over the summer/autumn.

5. **Report from the Supervisory Board**

TP reported that there had not been a Supervisory Board meeting since the last Management Board meeting.

JW reported that, after some initial difficulties, Durham University should be able to allocate credits to i-CONN activities and that the process will be completed over the summer. He explained that the process at Durham meant that the courses could only be presented in certain sizes (based on units of 50 hours/ 5 Durham Credits) Consequently i-CONN activities have been arranged in several clusters (Advanced Courses, Secondments, Network activities etc) that will attract 15 or 10 Durham credits (150 hours and 100 hours to complete respectively).

Action: JW to organise the next step of the accreditation process with the Head of Department.

Action: JK to send a document to PIs explaining the proposed credit structure.

6. **Interim Review:**

LT reminded the Board that the Interim Review will be held in Brussels on 16th and 17th December (probably on the Thursday afternoon and the Friday morning).

The REA provide the following structure for the meeting:

> Introduction (15 mins)
>
> Round table: Each PI or "Scientist in Charge" will present their research team and explain their role (30 mins)
>
> Coordinator's overview talk (45 minutes – 1 hour)
>
> ESR presentations (we can either chose talks (10 minutes each) or a poster session (2.5 hours as each ESR must interactively present their poster).

The Board agreed that the ESR presentations should be in the format of talks.

The Board agreed that there should be the opportunity for the ESRs to practice their talks (Wednesday afternoon) and that it would be also desirable for the PIs to meet to discuss future funding, the planned Special Issue and the i-CONN book. As it will not be possible for the ESRs to substantially restructure their talks after the practice suggestion, all PIs should make sure that they have approved the content of their ESR's talk before the meeting. The emphasis should be on their novel research results.

It was agreed that members of the consortium could arrive from Tuesday afternoon/evening onwards and if desired a meeting room could also be secured for Saturday morning.

Suggested timetable:

Tuesday 14th: arrival. Evening socialising/discussion

Wednesday 15th morning: Session for PIs to discuss progress.

Wednesday 15th afternoon: ESR talks

Thursday morning: PIs to discuss Book/Special issue. Time for ESRs to practice talks.

Thursday afternoon: Interim review

Friday morning: Interim Review

Friday afternoon: PI discussions (Future Funding?)

Saturday: More potential for PI discussion if needed.

Action: All PIs to ensure that their ESR(s) has a suitable and practiced talk before arriving in Brussels

Action: Durham Team to prepare a suggested structure for the talks for discussion.

Action: JK to book a conference hotel.

7. Network & Training Events 2021

i)   'Networks, Teams, Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Research Impact' training

This was postponed due to illness and will now be delivered in several short sessions.

ii)   Datathon

Although final confirmation has not been received it is likely that the Datathon will start on Monday 13th September and finish on Friday 17th September. Accommodation can be arranged for Sunday & Friday night if required. As the network has not yet met in person an invitation to this event will be extended to everyone. As the retained Research, Training and Network budget is largely unused the whole of the accommodation costs will be covered by the central budget. ESRs and network members will only have to meet their travel and any additional costs.

Action: JK/DB to send out information as soon as it is available.

Action: PIs to ask their ESR(s) to compete the Datathon dataset form (link available on the Datathon Slack channel).

iii)   Advanced Course 3 on Socio-ecological Systems & Network Analysis in Brno, scheduled for August 18th – 25th.

The Board decided that this meeting should go ahead in person as most of the ESRs should be free to travel to the Czech Republic under current regulations. It was noted that the UK ESRs might have to quarantine on both arrival and return if they wish to attend.

Action: JK to ask the ESRs if they are currently happy to travel to this meeting and whether they will be vaccinated by then (responses will be optional and confidential).

Action: JK to let the ESRs know that they can book their travel and to request that ESRs book their own room at the venue.

Action: JK to request that all attendees have a lateral flow/PCR test before traveling out of consideration to everyone else.

iv)   Advanced Course 4 – Connectivity in Environmental Sciences, Vienna, February 2022.

February 1 -4th 2022.

v)   Enterprise Skills and Workshop 2, due Jan 2022

The Enterprise Course will be postponed until a later date. The Board discussed the desirability of having a network workshop in January, given that the Interim Review is now happening in late December.

The Board disused the possibility of either adding a workshop to one of the other activities (e.g., Vienna) or postponing it until later in 2022. It was agreed that a meeting in June in Bremen would be optimal.

Action: JK to approach the PO about postponing the Bremen workshop.

vi)   Advanced Course 5 - Novel approaches to collecting high resolution data, March 2022.

8. Deliverables and Milestones

LT explained that i-CONN is up to date with all deliverables and milestones. The following items were discussed:

D1.1 (SC/FC correlations) – due 30th June.

MH reported that the manuscript had been submitted and the deliverable uploaded. The Board thanked Marc and Venetia for their work in producing this paper.

D2.1 Report with description of existing methods - now due 1st October.

VP reported that the preliminary meeting to discuss WP2 went well and that the ESRs were due to submit content for 12 July.

Action: VP/JK to arrange another WP2 meeting for late July

M4 'Populating the database with disciplinary data' - now due 1st November.

M5 Evaluation of common methods, due 1st August. Linked to D2.1.

M6 Evaluation of cross-disciplinary application of methods, linked to Deliverable 3.1

D3.1 Report detailing potential for cross-disciplinary application of methods – now due 1st December.

M7 Network-wide overview of initial results (Board meeting at the end of Brno meeting) - due 1st September.

The Board discussed this milestone and proposed that this overview should take place as part of the next Supervisory Board meeting (September). If necessary, additional PIs could be invited. The Work Packages should be used as a framework for looking at the results generated so far.

Action: JK to add to the Supervisory Board September agenda.

D1.2 Minimal Models - due 1ˢᵗ December

It was noted that this deliverable is due.

Action: JK to ask the Project Officer to note the delay to achieving the milestones due to their linking with Deliverables that have been formally extended.

9. **Dissemination – WP1, WP2, WP3.**

   LT reminded everyone that this would always be an agenda item for future meetings and requested that WP leaders report on the production of papers within their work package as this will become more relevant as i-CONN progresses.

   LT reminded everyone that i-CONN funding needs to be properly acknowledged in publications and asked that everyone keeps JK informed about publications so that they can be listed on the REA Portal and on the website.

10. **Outreach**

    LT reminded everyone that due to difficulties in fulfilling our Outreach commitments due to the pandemic everyone should aim to participate in this year's European Researcher Night (November).

    Action: All PIs to organise involvement in this year's European Researcher Night or similar event. JK to inform the Board about the Research Night as soon as details become available.

11. **Report from the Transdisciplinary Management Group**

    LT reported that the TMG met for the first time in June. The draft minutes will be distributed shortly. The TMG proposed that at the next Annual Network a professional video should be produced to showcase i-CONN research.

    The Board agreed that this proposal should be adopted.

    Action: Durham Management Team to arrange for a professional video producer from Durham University to attend the next Workshop and produce a video.

12. **Future Funding**

    A Slack channel for discussing future research possibilities and possible grant proposals has been set up on Slack. VP and MH have uploaded a document for discussion.

13. **Exploitation**

    LT explained that this agenda item would remain on the Management Board agenda for the duration of the network. As i-CONN research progresses there will be more need to oversee the maximum exploitation of i-CONN research.

14. **Risk Management**

LT said that although the Management Board already considers risk management at each meeting as required (for example, managing the impact of the pandemic) this will now be a formal agenda item and a risk register will be revisited at each meeting and formally reviewed.

Action: JK/LT/TP to produce a risk register.

LT explained to the Board that Louise Bracken is moving from Durham University to Northumbria University. ESR 15, Julia Costescu will remain at Durham University. LT will become Julia's principal supervisor and a second Durham supervisor is being approached. Louise will remain part of i-CONN and will continue to be part of the Supervisory Teams for Julia and Marcel.

15. Date of next meeting

A meeting will be held by videoconference in early September 2021.

Action: Project Manager to arrange a Doodle Poll.

16. Any Other Business

There was no other business.