



# Management Board Meeting, 19th October 2020, 1 pm (UTC + 1)

Held by Zoom video-conference

## Minutes

Attended by: Laura Turnbull-Lloyd (Chair, i-CONN Co-ordinator), Christian Kimmich, Andreas Ioannides, Vicky Papadopoulou Lesta, Demian Battaglia, Marc Hütt, Thomas Hein, Tony Parsons (Chair of Supervisory Board), Jennifer King (Project Manager), John Wainwright (Training Manager, in attendance)

### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Ronald Pöpl, Christian Kerschner & Christina Prell

### 2. Minutes of the last Management Board Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, held by video-conference on September 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 3. Matters Arising

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and briefly reported on the matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting:

***JK to update the secondment plans with actual months and years and distribute to the Network.***  
*Update: The secondment plan was updated and distributed to the PIs. The document was used to inform the modifications to the secondment plan that was later approved by the Supervisory Board and by the Project Officer.*

*It was noted that the consortium needs to continue to think ahead and consider whether the secondment plan for 2021 will also need amending.*

***LT/JW/JK to draft a secondment agreement that could be integrated in the Training Best Practice document.***  
*Update: A draft secondment agreement was distributed to the Board for discussion. The Chair requested that the Board read the document and send any comments by the end of October.*

**Action: All Members to read the draft secondment agreement and send any comments to JK by the end of October.**

**All Beneficiaries to complete a Researcher Declaration for each ESR within 20 days of the start of their contract.** Update: All Declarations have been made. Vinicius' start date was the 1<sup>st</sup> October due to recruitment policy at the University of Aix-Marseille, but he will still be able to complete a 36-month contract.

**JK to contact PIs directly for confirmation of Supervisory Teams for each ESR before the end of September.** Update: JK requested input and then prepared a document that combined the responses received with the original Supervisory Team plan in the Grant Agreement.

**JK to confirm a delayed Mid-Term Review meeting with the Project Officer.** Update: The delay to the Mid-Term Review was approved by the Supervisory Board and the decision relayed to the Project Officer.

The Chair explained that the following items had been proposed for discussion under Any Other Business:

- a) i-CONN Poster (Christian Kerschner)
- b) Discussion about the format and language of i-CONN PhD theses (Tony Parsons)

#### 4. Chair's Update

The Chair explained that as a result of a vulnerability identified in the WordPress platform Durham University's Computing and Information Services (CIS) Department had taken down the i-CONN website. CIS later reinstated all the websites hosted by the University but only re-instated versions dating from September 1<sup>st</sup>. This meant that work completed by both the i-CONN website designers and by the i-CONN management team has been lost and needs repeating.

The Chair proposed that the i-CONN website move to a new webhost. Once the website has been repaired and is hosted on a faster platform it will become a more useable and 'live' website.

It was agreed that the network needs a shared space for documents and resources but also an informal and flexible space for communication. It was agreed that Slack would be a suitable tool for communication. Slack will allow multiple channels of conversation within the network.

Demian Battaglia proseed that the network considers purchasing an i-CONN Zoom account rather than rely on hosting by Durham University. An i-CONN Zoom account could be linked to the website.

**Action: JK to establish Slack account for i-CONN and investigate the feasibility and cost of setting up an i-CONN Zoom account.**

#### 5. Supervisory Board

The Chair of the Supervisory Board presented the approved minutes of the last Supervisory Board held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020. He reported that the actions were either completed or in hand. The Chair invited any questions but none were asked.

## 6. Deliverables and Milestones

The Chair reported that the network is currently up-to-date with Milestones and Deliverables. Reports on Deliverables 4.1, and 4.2 (both relating to training delivered in September) were uploaded to the Participant Portal along with a Report on Milestone 3, the recruitment of the ESRs.

Louise Bracken is in charge of the upcoming deliverables (due on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020) dealing with the Transdisciplinary Management Group, a Transdisciplinary Protocol and the final communication strategy. LT and JK have a meeting with LB to discuss these deliverables later this week.

## 7. September Network Meeting and Training

The Coordinator reported that the September Training and Network Events had gone well and thanked the Project Manager for organising the events. Training feedback forms have been distributed to the ESRs and a report will be prepared that summarises the feedback.

## 8. Network & Training Events 2021

### a) Datathon

Demian Battaglia updated the MB on plans for the Datathon. Given the current uncertainties caused by the pandemic it is still difficult to be sure whether an in-person Datathon could be reliably organised for spring 2021.

DB proposed a hybrid approach with an online preliminary event in the New Year followed by an in-person event later in 2021, possibly the autumn.

The Board agreed that the general principle of a two-part Datathon is a good idea in any circumstances. As well as familiarising the ESRs with the data and tools, an online initial meeting would inform the planning of the later event. It was also agreed that preparatory work should begin straight away with the ESRs identifying and discussing datasets and having initial discussion with each other and later the network academics. This should allow the sensible formation of teams of ESRs which should be trans-disciplinary but which need to consider the viability of the cross-talk of data and tools between ESRs in each team.

It was noted that although a September Datathon would be feasible it is necessary to consider how this might fit around the Brno Advanced Course and Network Event which is also due for September. Although the Datathon could be as early as May, there is an increased risk of cancellation with this option. A date between May and October needs to be identified.

**Action: DB to discuss dates with the Datathon venue.**

**Action: DB to send slides from Datathon seminar to JK for distribution to the network.**

### b) Cyprus Training 2021

Vicky Papadopoulou updated the Board on the plans for the Advanced Course, Network Event and ESR training that are due to take place in Cyprus in March 2021. Most speakers have now confirmed. It may not be possible for EUC to host any of the meeting even if an in-person meeting in Cyprus is possible because institution rules currently are not allowing events on site. In that case it

would be necessary to use hotels. VP has been in discussion with several hotels but the current uncertainties make a booking difficult. She proposed that this decision be delayed until nearer the time.

The Chair suggested that the Board adopt the same decision-making process used for the September meetings and agree that a final decision will be made about whether to hold the meeting in-person or online approximately six weeks before the event. It was agreed that a decision would be made by January 22<sup>nd</sup>, although the situation will be reassessed in December and an earlier decision made if possible.

It was agreed that an online event would need to be reformatted to allow for optimal online delivery e.g. shorter days and spreading the events over a longer period.

#### c) Brno Advanced Course and Network Event

Christian Kimmich reported that he had held a preliminary discussion with Brian Fath about the delivery of this training. An in-person event is planned probably for early September.

**Action: Christian Kimmich to contact Brian Fath again and finalise some dates.**

#### 9. Progress Report and Mid-term Check

The Chair presented the draft progress report that had been circulated before the meeting along with the progress report template for information. The report has to follow the template guidelines. The Chair requested that any suggestions/amendments be sent to the Project Manager within the next week. The Final report has to be uploaded to the REA by the 31<sup>st</sup> October.

The Chair drew the attention of the Board to the items highlighted in the report – specifically

- have all ESRs been enrolled on PhD programmes?
- have all ESRs completed Career Development Plans?
- Is this the first time that either i-CONN beneficiaries/partners or individual network members have been involved in an ITN?
- are the Supervisory Teams correct?

**Action: All members to check the document and forward any comments or suggestion within the next week.**

**Action: All members to ensure that their ESRs complete CDPs**

**Action: All members to provide information about first-time participation in ITNs, to confirm that ESRs are enrolled in PhD programmes and to confirm that Supervisory teams are correct.**

#### 10. Date of next meeting

A meeting will be held by video-conference in mid-January 2021.

**Action: Project Manager to arrange a Doodle Poll.**

11. Any Other Business

The Chair reported that Christian Kerschner had intended to discuss the preparation of an i-CONN poster at the meeting but was unable to attend. However, in response to this intention the Chair proposed that items such as logos and images be made accessible to all on the website once the private section of the website has been re-established.

Tony Parsons raised the issue of the format and language of i-CONN theses as the subject had been raised by the ESRs at the 'Windsor' training event. In particular, whether all i-CONN PhD theses should be in English and whether we should advocate submission of a thesis by presenting a collation of papers rather than a traditional thesis.

The Chair emphasised that there would not be an imposed top-down decision. However, it was agreed that it would be useful to discuss this further and the Project Manager will collate opinions for inclusion in a policy document for discussion at the next Management Board meeting.

**Action: JK to collate information about PhD thesis format and language.**