



Management Board Meeting, 15th September 2021

Held by Zoom videoconference

Minutes

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Marc Hütt, Ronny Pöpl, Thomas Hein and Christian Kerschner.

2. Minutes of the last Management Board Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, held by videoconference on July 1st, 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 forward the details of the GitHub account to the Consortium.

Invitations to GitHub are time limited and involve an authentication process. Once network members are ready to access GitHub, they should contact JK to arrange an invitation.

Action: TP to invite Deborah Priß to act as the EDI and Ethics Champion and Action: JK to seek clarification from the Project Officer about the EDI and Ethics Champion roles.

AP discussed this with Deborah and she will cover ethics and EDI issues as part of the ESR Representative role. She has discussed this with the rest of the ESRs. The Project Officer was contacted for clarification.

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

An email was sent out but can be resent if required. The data on the Portal forms a significant part of the Periodic Report so it is important that the secondment records are kept up to date.

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

This was done. Louise Bracken added the transdisciplinary survey questions into the document. This proforma will be discussed late in the meeting.

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

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

Both actions were completed. The accreditation is currently going through the final stage of approval.

4. Chair's Update

LT thanked Christian Kimmich, Christian Kerschner, Christina Prell and Brian Fath for organising the Brno Advanced Course and acknowledged the effort involved in ensuring that the event ran successfully in a hybrid format. Recordings of most of the sessions will be available on the website. If anyone would like links to any of the recordings before they have been edited, they can contact JK.

LT congratulated the consortium but particularly Venetia Voutsas and Marc Hütt, for the paper, written to fulfil Deliverable 1.1, that has been accepted by Royal Society Interface. She noted that ten ESRs and thirteen consortium academics across ten beneficiaries/partners contributed to the paper which is an outstanding achievement.

LT reminded the Board that both the new Advisory Board members, Sam Johnson and Lorien Jasny, have offered to give seminars. Thomas Hein will also deliver a seminar in December. She asked Board members to consider giving a seminar themselves or to suggest an external speaker to approach.

Action: All Board members to consider giving a seminar or to suggest external speakers.

5. Report from the Supervisory Board

AP reported that the Supervisory Board and additional PIs had met on September 8th to overview the progress of the network so far (Milestone 7). The review assessed the reports written by each ESR. As a result, there is now a clear picture of how the ESRs are progressing individually and how their work is linked with i-CONN goals. AP said that it was also apparent that the individual supervisors had a clear idea of their ESR's progress and were aware of what issues needed addressing.

6. Interim Review and Periodic Report

a) Interim Review Meeting

LT informed the Board that the Project Officer had told us that she and the Technical Expert will only attend the Review online which means that the consortium is no longer obliged to meet in Brussels. Any meeting venue will need to be equipped for hybrid delivery. The Board discussed the options but agreed that it would be desirable to meeting in person.

JK confirmed that any travel tickets already purchased for Brussels would be refunded from the i-CONN budget if the meeting venue changes.

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 in total)

Coordinator’s overview talk (45 minutes – 1 hour)

ESR presentations (10 minutes each)

It was agreed that members of the consortium could arrive from Tuesday afternoon/evening onwards and stay until Saturday morning.

Suggested timetable:

Tuesday 14th December: 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?)

Friday evening/Saturday: Depart

The Board discussed the proposed PowerPoint template for the ESR presentations and agreed that such a template should be used by all the ESRs.

DB explained that he has a Habilitation interview on Friday 17th December and will need to leave early.

Action: JK to contact the Project Officer to explain that DB can not attend for the complete duration of the Review Meeting.

Action: Pls to propose any amendments to the PowerPoint by mid-October.

Action: All Pls to ensure that their ESR(s) has a suitable and practiced talk before arriving in Brussels. The extended supervisory team for each ESR should see the PowerPoint in advance of the meeting.

Action: JK to poll the consortium for a choice of venue and book accommodation.

b) Periodic Report

LT explained that part of the Periodic Report, which is due to be submitted before November 29th, is constructed automatically from the information on the Portal. There is also a free-text section that must describe progress in each Work Package with reference to the deliverables, milestones and objectives described in the Grant Agreement. The ESRs will not be required to write an additional report but they may need to contribute information to each Work Package leader as required.

LT presented a chart that illustrates which ESRs are due to contribute to each deliverable. As well as being a useful tool for the WP leaders, this can also be used as a management tool for identifying potential conflicts in individual ESR's work loads. An individual ESR can be relieved of the expectation to contribute to a particular deliverable provided that all the deliverables are met overall. This chart can be reassessed as required throughout the duration of i-CONN but it would be sensible to get approval for any changes that can currently be foreseen at the Periodic Report stage.

The Project officer will also want evidence that the ESRs' Training Needs Assessments and Career Development Plans are up to date. The ESRs have already been sent links to templates for both assessments on Microsoft Forms.

Action: Pls to discuss the ESR/Work Package "Gantt" chart with their ESR(s) and to inform JK, before the end of October, if they consider that their ESR's contributions to Work Package deliverables need amending.

Action: JK to arrange a discussion with the WP Leaders to plan the Periodic Report.

Action: Pls to ensure that their ESRs complete their Training Needs Analysis and Career Development Plans by the end of October. JK to send a reminder to the ESRs.

Action: JK to send a summary of all the actions required for the Interim Review and the Periodic Report to the Pls.

7. Network & Training Events 2021

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

LT reported that this training, postponed from March due to illness, is currently being delivered in three short sessions (September 3rd – September 17th).

ii) Datathon

LT reported that all the ESRs are due to attend the Datathon in person apart from Deborah Priß who had a prior commitment. LT explained that Deborah was asked to justify her choice of activity in writing and this was considered and approved by the Training Board. Demian Battaglia explained that Deborah had contacted him to apologise for her absence and to ask if she could be involved in any activities that evolve from the Datathon.

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

February 1 -4th 2022.

Action: JK to contact the organisers to check progress

iv) Enterprise Skills and Workshop 2, delayed until June 2022

The workshop is entitled "A unified framework of methods and approaches in Connectivity Science" and we will also hold the Enterprise School at this time. We need to agree a date for this meeting as soon as possible

Action: JK to finalise a date.

v) Advanced Course 5, Novel approaches to collecting high resolution data, probably week starting March 28th, 2022.

LT reported that this meeting was in the process of being planned and will include a fieldwork day. AI confirmed that the fieldwork might require seeking permissions and this is a slow process. AI confirmed that he is in negotiation with hotels to select a venue and has been contacting speakers.

It was noted that for all future events it will be necessary to plan for the possibility of having to convert it to a hybrid event.

DB also noted that it is important to ensure there is no repetition or redundancy in the planned events and courses because the ESRs already have a heavy workload of their own PhD studies, the i-CONN activities and individual institutional requirements.

8. Deliverables and Milestones

LT explained that i-CONN is up to date with all deliverables and milestones.

Completed since the last Management Board meeting:

D4.6, Brno Training Course. Deliverable Report uploaded;

M7, Network-wide overview of initial results. Milestone uploaded.

Upcoming Deliverables:

D2.1, Report with description of existing methods (EUC) and the associated M5, Evaluation of common methods, **18th October 2021;**

In progress. The output of the Datathon and the projects that evolve from it will fulfil the Milestone.

M4, Populating the database with disciplinary data (AMU), **1st November 2021;**

D3.1, Report detailing potential for cross-disciplinary application of methods (MU) and associated M6, Evaluation of cross-disciplinary application of methods (MU), **1st December 2021;**

D1.2, Minimal Models, (JU), **1st December 2021;**

D3.2, Testing of theoretical SC-FC (MU), **1st February 2022;**

M9, Evaluation of 'minimal models' approach (JU), **1st February 2022.**

9. Dissemination – WP1, WP2, WP3.

JK clarified that only those publications involving ESR authors should be recorded on the Portal. Publications involving i-CONN academics and PIs only can be recorded on the i-CONN website and promoted on the i-CONN social media channels.

10. Outreach

LT reported that:

The ESRs (Julia, Shubham and Mel) are preparing the second newsletter for mid-October;

The ESRs actively tweeted (Marcel and Shubham currently responsible) during the Brno meeting;

There are currently ten posts on the ESRs' research journals (but Deborah has written four of them) and there has been nothing since the end of June. LT asked the PIs to encourage their ESRs to write regular posts. Given the lack of outreach and engagement opportunities due to the pandemic it is important to get these journals in regular use;

In the Dissemination and Exploitation plan we undertook to participate in an online European Research Night in each i-CONN country (or an equivalent event) this year. However, details about the Researcher Night came out at short notice and as the event is in late September it is too close to the Datathon.

Action: PIs to remind their ESRs to regularly post in their research journals.

11. Report from the Transdisciplinary Management Group

LT reported that the TMG would meet on September 16th and report to the next meeting of the Board. She asked if the Board had any comments on the Secondment Report template that now incorporates the Transdisciplinary Survey questions.

Action: JK to send out the Secondment report template to the ESRs once the TMG had also approved the template.

12. Future Funding

The Board noted that it would be good to discuss future funding at the December meeting of the consortium. Any funding opportunities should be highlighted on the Slack channel.

13. Exploitation

The Board noted that this item will remain on the agenda and will be an important discussion item in the future.

14. Risk Management

The Board noted the Risk Register. It was agreed that managing the effective running of the Advisory Board should be added as risk category.

Action: PIs were reminded to alert the Management team to any potential risk to the progress of the network as quickly as possible once a risk is identified.

Action: JK to add the Advisory Board as a Risk Category.

15. Date of next meeting

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

Action: JK to arrange a Doodle Poll.

16. Any Other Business

There was no other business.