Management Board Meeting, May 5th, 2022.

Minutes of the Meeting

Present: Laura Turnbull-Lloyd (Chair, i-CONN Co-ordinator), Vicky Papadopoulou Lesta, Christian Kimmich, Andy Ioannides, Marc Hütt, Tony Parsons (Chair of Supervisory Board), John Wainwright (Training Manager, in attendance), Jennifer King (Project Manager).

1. ### Apologies

   Apologies were received from Ronald Pöppl, Christina Prell and Thomas Hein.

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

   The minutes of the last meeting, held by Zoom on 19th November 2021, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. ### Matters Arising

   All the matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting are covered in later agenda items.

4. ### Chair's Update

   The Chair:

   a) Thanked Ronald Pöppl, Thomas Hein, Louise Bracken, John Perez and Sonia Recinos for organising the Vienna Advanced Course and thanked Marc Hütt and Tony Parsons for supporting the course.
   b) Thanked Andy, Ioannides, Rebecca Hodge and Chris Karittevlis for organising the Cyprus Advanced Course.
   c) Reported that both courses were attended by all ESRs.
   d) Thanked everyone for contributing to the Periodic Report and Interim Review process which went well. The REA have released the second tranche of i-CONN funding which means that they have approved our Periodic Report and Interim Review.
   e) Reminded everyone to keep JK updated with potential changes (e.g., to secondments and deliverables) and to update the Portal as secondments are completed by their ESR. We are through a major hurdle with the Periodic Report but we still need to keep the REA satisfied.

f) Initiated a discussion about when PIs expect their ESR(s) to complete their PhD. An extension to i-CONN would be useful as most ESRs will still be working on completing their thesis at the end of September 2023.

Action: JK to contact all PIs to get a formal statement about whether their institution will allow them to spend unused i-CONN funds after the grant has terminated.

5. Report from the Supervisory Board

TP reported that the Supervisory Board met in March 2022 and discussed the feedback that we received via email on the Interim Review meeting and Periodic Report.

The points that the REA asked us to address before releasing the second tranche of funding and the recommendations for the remaining period of i-CONN are summarised here:

Future Recommendations:

a) More efforts should be dedicated to exploitation. Strong collaboration with the non-academic partners needs to be assured to facilitate further advancement and applied potential.
b) It is recommended to extend the soft-skills training into project writing and provide the ESRs with the understanding of the funding possibilities at national and European level after their completion of the PhDs. *Note: we are planning to do this at the 2023 Annual workshop (currently January 2023).*
c) IPR issues will need to be addressed in the second part of the project duration. *Note: we are arranging training in IPR.*
d) In addition, wider networking, which was mostly hampered by the pandemic, needs to be strengthened in the remaining period of the project duration.

The Periodic report was rejected until the following amendments were made:

a) A section on ethics was added to the Periodic Report. The original ethics statement (that the External Expert possibly hadn't seen) was added with a short update.
b) Secondments: a table was added indicating for each completed secondment whether it was a remote or face to face secondment.
c) We provided further evidence to prove the eligibility of one ESR.
d) Deliverables D5.1, D5.2, D5.9 and D7.1 were put into the same format as the later deliverable reports and some were expanded.

TP also reported that the Board approved changes to two secondments and received feedback from the ESR Representative. The ESRs were confused about expenses at i-CONN events and this has been clarified.

6. Financial Report 202/21

This was noted.

It was agreed that the accommodation costs for everyone at the Enterprise School and Annual Workshop in Bremen should be met from the retained Research, Training and Networking (RTN) budget.

The Chair clarified that this budget can be used for a range of activities as well as training and could also be used for open access publication fees. Currently there is expected to be an underspend of £38k in this budget. If it is not used it will be returned to the Beneficiaries. It could also be used for activities such as additional training and a Datathon 2.

7. **Deliverables and Milestones**

Completed since the last Management Board meeting:

D3.1 Cross-disciplinary applications of methods (and associated milestone. M6)

D4.7 Advanced Course in Vienna

D4.8 Advanced Course in Cyprus

Upcoming/Overdue Deliverables:

D1.2, Minimal Models, (JU), and associated M9, Evaluation of 'minimal models' approach (JU), delay granted until to **April 1st, 2022**

In order to include material that has arisen from secondments an extension is needed until 1st September 2022

D2.2 Connectivity methods across disciplines (EUC) **1st June 2022**

An extension will be requested. VP to decide a date.

D3.2, Testing of theoretical SC-FC (MU), delay granted until **1st December 2022**

Action: JK to ask for two extensions to deliverable dates

8. **Report from TMG**

The TMG met in March and planned the Transdisciplinary session for the Annual Workshop in June. The ESRs will be asked to produce a 3 minute 'TEDx' style presentation that will be filmed. The expectation is that these short films will be put on the website as part of our outreach activities. A professional audio-visual technician from Durham University will travel to Bremen to film the videos and the ESRs have been given guidance and training. There will be an opportunity for a practice run after the Enterprise School.

There will be a round-table discussion about secondments as part of the transdisciplinary session.

The Board discussed whether it was desirable to ask the ESRs to prepare a poster about transdisciplinary activities (e.g., work arising out of secondments). Even if optional this is a lot of work on top of the two talks that they need to prepare two oral presentations. However, the general principle of the posters is good and will be included in the 2023 Annual Workshop.

9. Network & Training Events 2022

a) **Bremen:** There will be an intense Enterprise School for the ESRs 14th – 16th June inclusive. On Friday 17th there will be a chance for the ESRs to practice their TEDx style talks ready for the Workshop. The workshop will follow on 20th – 22nd June inclusive and a 'Future Funding' discussion on 19th June.

The Annual workshop is entitled "A unified framework of methods and approaches in Connectivity Science".

It was noted that we have now delivered all the planned Advanced Courses.

b) **Annual Workshop**, January 2023 with 'Dealing with the Media Course'.

It was agreed that this meeting should be organised by the Durham team and located in the UK. It will be held in January 2023.

Action: JK to contact PIs about dates.

10. Dissemination – WP1, WP2, WP3.

No updates at present.

The Chair reminded everyone to make sure that JK is informed about publications.

11. Exploitation

It was noted that this will be an increasingly important consideration for i-CONN during the remainder of the grant. Any activities should be reported to JK,

12. Outreach

The ESRs are preparing for the third newsletter and the i-CONN Twitter is fairly active.

All ESRs except one have now posted a research diary entry. Only four ESRs have published more than once and only one is using the diary page as planned.

The Board discussed the possibility of producing a book about networks aimed at a more general audience. The material for the book could also be linked to exhibition materials.

Participation in this year's Researcher Night ("MSCA and Citizens") is also a possibility.

Action: JK to investigate Researcher Night 2022
Action: AP to talk to a publisher.

13. Data Management Plan

It was noted that we are not yet storing data centrally (apart from the data that was used for the Datathon). However, as the ESRs are currently engaged generating data it was agreed that the DMP should be revisited later in the year.

14. Future Funding Opportunities

It was noted that several funding suggestions had been proposed but it was agreed that the timing of the call for draft proposals was difficult for many people.

It was noted that pursuing future ITN funding would require commitment from an EU-based i-CONN partner to lead the process for each ITN, and that securing seed corn funding is instrumental in providing opportunity for such proposals to be developed.

Future funding will be discussed before and during the Bremen workshop.

15. Risk Management

The Risk Management document was noted and no new risks identified.

16. Date of next meeting

Late September 2022

Action: JK to send out Doodle Poll

17. Any Other Business

It was noted that several ESRs would benefit from Input-Output Analysis training.

Action: JK and JW to discuss with CKi and CKe.