

Meeting Note of RCUK Digital Economy Programme Advisory Board 26 28th – 29th June 2016, Edinburgh

Attendees

Chair: Hazel Hall, Edinburgh Napier University
Alan Brown, University of Surrey
Mike Chantler, Heriot-Watt University
Ian Hargreaves, Cardiff University
Siân John, Symantec Corporation
Paul Nightingale, University of Sussex
Mark Plumbley, University of Surrey
Clare Reddington, Watershed
m.c. schraefel, University of Southampton
Chris Speed, University of Edinburgh
Gabriel Straub, Tesco
John Baird, EPSRC, lead for the RCUK Digital Economy Theme
Claire Tansley, EPSRC
Tracy Keys, EPSRC
Bruce Jackson, ESRC
Thomas Trehella, AHRC
Stephen Browning, InnovateUK

Apologies

Natalia Davie, BIS
Andrew Hudson-Smith, University College London
Matt Jones, Swansea University
Jerome Ma, EPSRC
Wendy Mars, CISCO
Ruth Slade, EPSRC

Introduction

At this 1.5-day meeting in Edinburgh, the Digital Economy (DE) Programme Advisory Board (PAB) discussed Theme plans, EPSRC's Balancing Capability strategy, community building, funding mechanisms for early careers researchers including first grants and finally user engagement. The meeting was held at the Edinburgh College of Art and was hosted by Chris Speed, who provided a tour of the department's studio and coordinated various demonstrations from the department's multidisciplinary researchers.

1. Welcome to the meeting

Hazel Hall (Chair of the DE PAB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those present to introduce themselves.

2. Matters arising, theme update

PAB members were invited to raise any points or ask any questions prompted by the minutes. The PAB was then updated on the progress against the action log. John Baird then gave a brief summary of each item in the update paper (PAB 26-1). PAB members were invited to raise any points or ask any questions prompted by these items.

There was a brief discussion about future funding models for the DE Theme, in the light of the Delivery Plan target to spend around 60% of the EPSRC budget on 'community-led' activities. Call timelines were discussed and it was advised that fostering a new multidisciplinary community requires a deadline of no earlier than 3 months from launch of call. The SAT refresh was discussed, with the advice that diversity guidance should feature at the top of the webpage. ESRC's scoping review on 'Ways of being in a digital age' was discussed and noted to be a valuable activity that could provide learning points for other Research Councils. The PAB was updated on AHRC's call for a Creative Economy Champion and on Innovate UK's future activities.

3. Digital Economy Theme Plans

The purpose of this session was to ensure that the meeting participants were updated on progress now that the EPSRC (in common with all the Research Councils) had published their Delivery Plans. The PAB was asked for their advice on where the DE Theme could contribute activities which could demonstrate intermediary benefits to the Connected Nation and the three other EPSRC Outcomes, as well as the evolution of the Digital Economy Theme for the next two financial years. John Baird presented meeting paper 26-2.

The session sought advice on the strategic evolution of the DE theme over the next Delivery Plan period, taking into account advice from EPSRC's Council, the content of the Delivery Plan and initial Theme plans, as well as the support of community-generated activities. The PAB advised on activities to consider over the course of this delivery plan, with prioritisation in terms of short term (2017-18), medium term (2018-19) and long term (2019-21).

4. Balancing Capability

The aim of this item was to update the PAB on the progress made with EPSRC's Balancing Capability strategy and to ask for PAB advice on the EPSRC Research Areas most likely to intersect with the Digital Economy portfolio during the next the Delivery Plan. This was done with a view to generating a list of Research Areas that the PAB wished to discuss further, either at the September ICT SAT meeting (which a sub-set of PAB members would attend) or offline via email.

In order to help the PAB to make this decision, the theme plans outlined in paper 26-3 were presented to two different break-out groups who were asked to suggest associated research areas. These research areas were then analysed for overlap and frequency. The research areas of most

importance and overlap, and thus that warranted discussion either offline or at the September ICT SAT meeting, were agreed. Finally, the PAB was updated on the ICT Theme's progress with identifying grow, maintain and reduce areas. Three PAB members volunteered to represent DE at the upcoming ICT SAT meeting for a discussion on Balancing Capability.

5. Digital Economy Network+s and Future Community Building

The PAB had been asked to read and absorb paper 26-4 and the associated report. These contained a review that EPSRC have undertaken of the four DE Network+ grants. The aim was to capture lessons learnt, and to understand what is needed to support community-building in Digital Economy research going forward.

The PAB advice was supportive that community building in DE should continue through whichever mechanism was deemed most appropriate. It was agreed that there were several learning points to be distilled from the review, and these should be made available to the community.

6. Early Career Researchers

During this item, EPSRC aimed to both seek advice and to update the PAB on various aspects of early career researcher support. The group were joined on Skype by Alison Wall, Associate Director responsible for Building Leadership at EPSRC. The PAB was updated on the DE Team's work to further advertise Fellowships and were made aware of the CRUCIBLE scheme being run at the DE CHERISH Centre (the Next Stage Digital Economy Hub in Swansea). The remainder and majority of the session revolved around First Grants and items that it would be advisable to include in an Early Career support package.

7. User Engagement

This item was designed to both update the PAB on EPSRC's user engagement strategy and to set the scene for a longer item at the PAB meeting in November. John presented paper 26-6. This included information on the developing EPSRC business engagement strategy, and asked how we can facilitate engagement in Digital Economy research in particular. The PAB provided advice on what it would be appropriate to discuss at the next meeting.

8. Wrap up

John closed the meeting by thanking the PAB members for their input. Hazel thanked everyone for attending and stated that the next PAB meeting would be on 2nd November at the University of Surrey. Additionally, it was confirmed that three PAB members would attend the ICT SAT meeting on 15th September to discuss Balancing Capability.

Final meeting Agenda

28th June

	Time	Agenda item	
1	12:00	<u>Lunch</u>	
2	13:30	<u>Welcome</u>	Hazel Hall
3	13:35	<u>Matters arising, Theme Update</u>	John Baird
4	14:35	<u>Digital Economy Theme Plans</u>	John Baird
	15:30	<u>Coffee/tea and tour</u>	
5	16:45	<u>Digital Economy Theme Plans</u>	John Baird
	17:30	<u>Close</u>	

29th June

	Time	Agenda item	
6	09:00	<u>Welcome back</u>	Hazel Hall
7	09:10	<u>Balancing Capability</u>	Tracy Keys
8	10:10	<u>Networks+</u>	Claire Tansley
	11:10	<u>Coffee/tea</u>	
9	11:30	<u>Early Careers</u>	Tracy Keys
	12:30	<u>Lunch</u>	
10	13:30	<u>User engagement</u>	John Baird
11	14:30	<u>Wrap up</u>	John Baird
	14:45	<u>Close</u>	

Meeting Papers

Paper	Title	Agenda Item
PAB 25 Minutes	Minutes from PAB 25	3
PAB 26-1	Update on Digital Economy Activities	3
PAB 26-2	DE Budgets, confirmed activities, possible future operations	4&5
PAB 26-3	Balancing Capability	7
PAB 26-4	Networks+	8
PAB 26-5	Early Careers	9
PAB 26-6	User Engagement	10

Supporting Papers

Paper	Title
Actions Log	On-going actions log for DE PAB
PAB ToR	Terms of Reference for DE PAB
PAB Bios	Biographies of PAB members

