



Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council

STRATEGIC ADVISORY TEAM

SUMMARY OF *EPSRC E-INFRASTRUCTURE SAT* MEETING NOTES AND DISCUSSION ITEMS: 22nd June 2015 *Imperial College London, London*

Attendees:

Spencer Sherwin (ICSTM), Chair
Roy Johnston (Birmingham)
Steven Kenny (Loughborough)
Mike Payne (Cambridge)
Clare Gryce (UCL)
Leigh Lapworth (Rolls-Royce)
Jos Martin (Mathworks)

Apologies:

Neil Chue Hong (Edinburgh)

EPSRC Staff:

Susan Morrell
Eddie Clarke
Iain Larmour
Louise Tillman

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed new and current participants to the meeting and led a round table of introductions.

2. Minutes and Actions Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without revision. Any highlighted actions were confirmed as completed.

3. EPSRC Update

EPSRC gave an update on RCUK and EPSRC plans for Big Data, plus plans for the Spending Review and Delivery Plan. This was followed by a group discussion and Q&A.

- The group discussed what ‘big data’ means to different communities and it was recognised that research communities generate and work with different sizes of data sets.
- The group recognised that new initiatives, such as the Turing Institute, would need to build links into these research communities to avoid gaps.

4. Software

The group discussed the rationale and key factors for a software audit and how this should be carried out. The following points were made in discussion:

- It was essential that best practice software management becomes embedded in EPSRC grant activities, and is properly assessed and valued in peer review. The group felt that REF needed to recognise the scientific impacts of software in research.
- The group agreed that some form of ‘accreditation’ for software would be useful to set a benchmark in best practice. The e-Infrastructure Leadership Council had discussed this issue and had written some proposals for the way forward. The SAT group felt that this would be a good starting point to pilot the development of an accreditation framework.
- The SAT recognised that both the metrics of ‘software quality’ and the choice of which codes to use in the pilot were not straightforward, and that whoever undertook the pilot would need to consult.

5. HPC Strategy Discussion

The SAT group discussed future HPC strategy. Points made during the discussions include:

- The development of the science case will need to include both ‘bottom up’ information gathering, and expert synthesis and validation to bring it together. To strengthen the case, we should aim for 5-10 case studies showing the future breakthroughs that a capability HPC system could enable.
- It will be important to engage with the other SATs when developing the case.
- Any UK strategy needs to be set in the international context.
- The SAT highlighted sources of case studies and evidence, for instance, IDC reports; PRACE; the REF case studies; the consortia; HPC-SIG and the regional centres; outputs from the ARCHER benefits realisation metrics.

6. Delivery Planning Session

The SAT discussed the draft Infrastructure section for the Delivery Plan, and offered their comments. These, along with the comments from the Equipment and Capital SAT, will be incorporated into the final draft document.

7. AOB

The next meeting was provisionally arranged for September 2015.