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## News from Head of School

### BCS/IET Accreditation Visit This Week

As you know, the BCS/IET Accreditation is taking place on Wednesday 16th & Thursday 17th November. The Faculty Periodic Review of UG & PGT Programmes is scheduled alongside the accreditation on Thursday 17th November and there may be a follow-up meeting on 30th November. The External BCS, IET & Faculty Panel members will be located primarily in the Atlas meeting room and IT401 areas, and will be interviewing academic staff (you will be informed by Jennie if you're involved) and groups of students throughout the period that they are in the School. This is the culmination of over a year's-worth of preparation of data and paperwork, so we wish the team all the very best for the events.

### Feedback from Lunch

The suggestions collected from the main sessions of the Away Day are being used to construct a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of a strategic plan that will be circulated to staff in due course. In the meantime here is a selection of the suggestions made at lunchtime.

It was thought that within 20 years computing would become ubiquitous and invisible. The School might transform into a Facebook- or Second Life-like virtual entity.

Encouraging a greater sense of community via collective scholarship was popular, using cross-group seminars and informal events. Many School-wide social activities were suggested, some healthy (softball team, trampolines, bouncy castle in the quad), some less so (Donuts at the same time each week, Friday night pub meet, all staff start smoking). The environment could be changed to create more serendipitous meetings (whiteboards and comfy seating in every corridor, better use of the tea room and a School cat).

It was thought that changing the environment could also make the school more inspiring, by brighter, colour coded corridors and better signposting, by posters celebrating recent achievements rather than history, by developing departmental apps such as a Kilburn Building map (where the heck am I?) and a Marauders map (where the heck is the Head of School?). More inspired suggestions included a life-sized giraffe on the 1st floor and human-size pneumatic tubes.

The Head of School was presented with increasingly ambitious objectives: get rid of the mice, fix the heating system, build a new building, reorganise HR, and a grand challenge: "make a rock so big even I can't lift it". Once these have been achieved another Away Day will be organised.

### EPSRC Fellowships

EPSRC now have no deadline for fellowship applications, which can now be made at any time. Faculty is concerned that this may mean fewer applications and has created an internal deadline of the end of December for expressions of interest. Faculty will not be selecting candidates, nor will this process prevent anybody from applying directly to EPSRC. Information on the range of EPSRC fellowships and the application process can be found here:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/fellows/Pages/default.aspx>

In ICT EPSRC are not inviting postdoctoral fellowship applications but applications from early-career and established researchers are invited, the areas in which these are available are described here:

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ourportfolio/themes/ict/introduction/Pages/workingtogether.aspx>

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## Events

### Computer Science and the Water Industry

15 Nov 11

Time: 15:00 Tuesday 15th November

Place: Frank Adams Seminar Room, Alan Turing Building

#### Computer Science and the Water Industry?

Prof. Joby Boxall. Chair of Water Infrastructure Engineering

Pennine Water Group, Dept. Civil and Structural Engineering, University of Sheffield  
The water industry is justifiably accused of being Data Rich but Information Poor (DRIP). There is a significant challenge to turn such data into information, or even into knowledge and ultimately wisdom. This state represents an ideal application for the field of computer science, applying latest tools and techniques to help the water industry deliver continued low cost and sustainable services. This talk will present details of some of the challenges and opportunities arising from the area of potable water supply and present some examples of how tools and techniques arising from computer science fields have started to be applied. Examples will likely include Bayesian statistical techniques for predicting pipe failure, a hybrid ANN/FIS system for burst/lead detection, Monte Carlo simulation coupled with GA search and optimisation techniques and 1D hydraulic modelling application. These topics are potential starting points for joint research projects involving the application of computer science.

Water supply and waste disposal are fundamental to society. The systems used to supply these services, in particular the pipe networks, are extremely complex with high levels of uncertainty. There are approaching 330,000km of water supply pipes in England and Wales and a similar length of sewer pipes. These pipes are connected in extremely complex networks including various ancillaries and control structure, comprising a variety of material and ages and are in a variety of different conditions. This fundamental infrastructure is buried and taken for granted, until it fails. The complexities and uncertainties of water systems present a range of challenges for engineers and scientists, to ensure the continued provision of sustainable service at least cost. There is a wealth of data available on these systems ranging from static asset data, discrete observations and continuous monitoring. It is hoped that this talk will stimulate thinking and ideas regarding where challenges and issues arise from the water sector that may be addressed by application of computing science.

### Faculty of EPS Open Meeting

23 Nov 11

All members of staff in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences are invited to attend a Faculty Open Meeting with Professor Colin Bailey, the Vice-President & Dean on **Wednesday 23 November, 2 - 3pm** in **Room J17, Renold Building**.

At the meeting Colin will give an update on the Faculty's Annual Performance Review (APR), outlining the Faculty's key achievements over the last 12 months and key goals for the next year. The remainder of the meeting will be given over to an open question and answer session on any matters of interest. **There is no need to submit questions in advance of the meeting.**

**You do not need to reply to this invitation. All are welcome.** Seats will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

**RCUK Digital Economy Theme: Invitation to apply to participate in Sub-theme Workshops and Networks** **30 Nov 11**

**Call type:** Call for participants

Invitation to apply to participate in workshops to develop research challenges and research networks

**The Digital Economy Theme**

The Research Councils Digital Economy (DE) Theme is supporting research to rapidly realise the transformational impact of digital technologies on aspects of community life, cultural experiences, future society, and the economy.

EPSRC leads the DE Theme on behalf of the partner research councils AHRC, ESRC and MRC, bringing together a unique community of researchers from diverse disciplines including computer science, engineering, social science, the arts and medical research; a combination of research and skills that coupled with user-led design will deliver impact.

**Digital Economy Sub-themes**

The DE Theme has formed four 'sub-themes' to describe the research we support (further described at the end of this document):

- **Communities and Culture** - As people interact more and more over the web, what might 'community and culture' mean within a digital society?
- **Sustainable Society** - Digital technologies can be used to make services more sustainable and enhance current systems (economic, environmental and social), in a way that is accessible, affordable, bespoke and popular.
- **IT as a Utility** - To realise the digital economy, digital infrastructure should be so simple, accessible and reliable it is invisible to the consumer.
- **New Economic Models** - New business models in a digital economy will create a more flexible, dynamic, resilient and individual-centred economy for the UK.

We now wish to further develop these sub-themes, and so are seeking applications from interested researchers and users to attend a number of one-day workshops, to explore the opportunities and associated research challenges in these sub-themes and also to create a longer term network of researchers and users around the sub-themes.

**Closing date:** 12:00 on 30 November 2011

**Issue date:** 01 November 2011

[Further details](#)

**ERC Information Day**

**14<sup>th</sup> December 11**

The ERC National Contact Point will be holding one of their national information and proposal writing events for Advanced Investigator Grants and Synergy Grants here in Manchester on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

The event is open to anyone including those outside the University. These sessions have proved very popular in the past, so if you are interested in attending, please register at:

[http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/events/Pages/1111\\_adv\\_syn\\_grants\\_events.aspx](http://www.ukro.ac.uk/erc/events/Pages/1111_adv_syn_grants_events.aspx)

Further information is also available at the above URL. The event is open to academic and administrative staff and there is no limit on the number of attendees from one institution.

## Funding Opportunities

### Erasmus Funding to undertake Training/Teaching in Europe 2011/2012

Erasmus offers a funded opportunity both for academic and non-academic staff to teach, train or work in one of 33 participating countries in Europe. You could get to know first-hand the workings of another European educational system, deliver a course with European colleagues and/or discover best practices to bring back to your role in Manchester.

There are 2 strands of staff mobility:

- . Teacher Mobility (for academic staff only)
- . Staff Training (for non-academic or academic staff)

**Teacher Mobility (TM):** The Teacher Mobility strand provides funding to teach from 5 hours to 6 weeks at another European University (a minimum duration of 5 working days is recommended). This teaching must take place at a university holding an Erasmus Charter.

**Staff Training Mobility (ST) -** The Staff Training Mobility strand provides funding for staff to acquire training at another European institution of Higher Education (holding an Erasmus University Charter) or at a European enterprise. ALL staff are eligible to apply. The purpose of the mobility should be to allow the participant to learn by sharing good practice, and to acquire practical skills and knowledge that they can apply to their current position at The University of Manchester. Training may include: a short secondment, job-shadowing, study visits, language training, seminars, workshops, courses. The training period should be from 5 working days to 6 weeks. Please note that this funding is not intended to support conference attendance.

The staff mobility scheme is now open for applications. For an application form and further details, e-mail [stephanie.nixon@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:stephanie.nixon@manchester.ac.uk).

Applications cannot be considered after 1 February 2012. Applications will be processed in order of receipt. Placements must be completed by 31 July 2012.

### Digital Economy Travel Grants

The UK-US Collaboration Development Award programme has a funding opportunity for small travel grants, with a focus on the digital economy. The programme is run by the UK Science & Innovation Network with support from the UK's Research Councils. The goal is to establish long-term collaborations between UK and US research groups and institutions. They will be looking for 1) excellent science and 2) a clear commitment and vision for long-term collaboration.

For more information on the UK's Digital Economy Programme, please visit <http://www.rcukdigitaleconomy.org.uk/>.

If you have any further questions about the UK-US Collaboration Development Awards, please contact ([nicholas.hooper@fco.gov.uk](mailto:nicholas.hooper@fco.gov.uk)).