

## ISIS Neutron & Muon Source User Committee

Friday 14 January 2022, online via Zoom, 10:00 – 13:00.

### **Present:**

- IUG1 Crystallography
  - Karen Johnston (Durham)
  - Michael Hayward (Oxford)
- IUG2 Disordered Materials
  - Emma Barney (Nottingham)
  - Gosia Swadzba-Kwasny (Queens University Belfast)
- IUG4 Excitations
  - Chris Stock (Edinburgh)
  - David Boldrin (Glasgow)
- IUG5 Molecular Spectroscopy
  - Roberto Senesi (Rome)
  - Alexander O'Malley (Bath)
- IUG 6 Muons
  - Joseph Wright (UEA)
- IUG7 Engineering
  - Richard Moat (Open University)
- IUG8 SANS
  - Wuge Briscoe (Bristol)
- IUG9 Reflectometry
  - Richard Campbell (Manchester)

Roger Eccleston – ISIS Director

Sean Langridge – ISIS Diffraction & Materials Division Head

Philip King – ISIS Spectroscopy & Support Division Head

Steve Wakefield – representing ISIS Experiment Operations Division

Emma Gozzard – User Programme Manager

Hannah Griffin – Computing Division Head

Matt North – Experimental Operations Division Head

### **Apologies:**

IUG 6 Muons: Lucy Clark (Liverpool)

Zoe Bowden – Head of ISIS Operations

The meeting opened with introductions by all present.

### **1. Minutes from the Dec 2020 IUC meeting**

The minutes were approved.

## 2. Actions arising from Dec 2020 meetings

Action from previous meeting and status	Status	Responsible	Meeting action added
Consider review of archaeometry proposal assessment.	A small group has produced an analysis of proposals in this area. In general, cultural heritage proposals do well across the instrument suite; the exception is Engin-x where they don't do as well as engineering proposals. ISIS now has a new engineering group leader in post – we will consult with him and come back to the IUC.  Ongoing.	Sean Langridge	Dec 2018
Philip King to invite Toby Perring, ISIS Scientific Programme Manager, to next IUC to update on software strategy.	Ongoing	Philip King	June 2019
IUC to be given a chance to comment on the 'data gateway' during its development.	Ongoing	Hannah Griffin	Dec 2019
Chance for PIs to update proposals carried forward beyond the long shutdown to be added in	Done.	Philip	Dec 2020
Shutdown community newsletters to be produced every 3 months	Done.	Philip	Dec 2020
Timeline of proposal calls, cycles, etc, to be put online	Done.	Philip	Dec 2020
Users to be informed as soon as possible of the next proposal deadline	Done.	Philip	Dec 2020
Calendar invites for proposal round deadline and one month before to be sent to users.	Calendar invites aren't planned. We will publicise deadlines as early as possible and repeat the notifications.	Andrew	Dec 2020
Clarity on science areas for Endeavour user meetings	Done. User meeting were held online in July 2021	Sean / Philip	Dec 2020
User web pages on ISIS website to be revamped, taking into account IUC comments.	Done.	Philip	Dec 2020
Consider relaunching user twinning scheme	Ongoing – for after Covid	Philip	Dec 2020
Beta version of new proposal system to come to IUC when ready	Done.	Hannah	Dec 2020
Issue of significance of facility time in REF to be raised with Mark Thomson	Ongoing.	Robert	Dec 2020
REF in-kind values to be passed to Wuge for Bristol Chemistry and Gosia for QUB Chemistry	Done	Andrew	Dec 2020

### 3. Update from ISIS

Roger gave an introduction to a new articulation of the ISIS strategy. This takes into account changing UK and international environments. ISIS has been through a process of feedback and review of the strategy over recent weeks to produce the current, overarching document on a single page with five priorities under mission and vision statements. The next step will be to translate these into clear objectives and responsibilities and quarterly reviews. There was discussion on the dissemination plan for the document: it will go to the ISIS Science Advisory Board imminently; IUC comments are welcome; Roger will present it to the STFC Executive Board in April.

Steve Wakefield gave an update on ISIS operations, including a look at the last run cycle beam availability. He then presented an update on shutdown work: replacement of one of the tanks in the linear accelerator; first target station refurbishment; replacement of the proton beam collimator downstream of the muon production target; other target work. There was news regarding the recovery work following the deuteration lab fire – the deuteration lab isn't currently available whilst it is stripped out and refurbished.

Sean Langridge gave an update on the Endeavour Programme – the current status of the instrument projects, the Programme setup and the progression of the business case through its scrutiny process before funding release.

### 4. Comments and reports from user groups

#### ***UG1 - Crystallography:***

It was considered that remote working for experiments is not ideal, but ISIS staff have gone above and beyond to get it to work during recent run cycles – lots of good data were produced during Covid running. Users would like to be present – but a big thank you to instrument scientists for all their work.

#### ***UG2 – Disordered Materials:***

There was a good set of proposals for Nimrod in the recent FAP meeting. Development of analysis software was good to see, as a number of proposals will stretch current capabilities. The DM user group meeting was to be held physically in Feb – it will now be a half day online with a science meeting to be run in the summer. Work on the front end of Sandals is progressing and benefits will be seen when it comes back.

#### ***UG4 - Excitations:***

The work done by instrument scientists to make the remote working happen well is very much appreciated. IDaaAS has been reliable and this has made a real difference to being remote.

David mentioned that there has been an impression given in an ISIS communication that consumables rules are changing (which they aren't): Emma G to check on this.

**Action: Emma G to check on ISIS communication regarding consumables rules.**

#### ***UG5 – Molecular Spectroscopy:***

A Molecular Spectroscopy science meeting was held online at end of October, with 60+ attending per day. The next science meeting will be held at Coseners as a hybrid meeting – the theme will combine neutron data with that from other techniques. A new IUC member is needed as Roberto stands down. A comment was reported from an ISIS user presenting at the UK Catalysis Conference: 'ISIS is the best place in the world to study catalysis with neutrons'.

Feedback on the hybrid user meeting would be good.

**Action: Alex to give feedback at the next IUC meeting on Mol Spec user meeting format.**

There was a question as to whether additional, user data can be added to an ISIS DOI – Hannah to check.

**Action: Hannah to check on adding user data to an experiment DOI.**

**UG6 - Muons:**

Remote access has been popular with muon users. Even with users back physically, it is a useful feature for when users are at Ridgeway House or if some of the team can't come for the experiment. New instrument scientists for muons are being recruited to help with the additional workload of the RIKEN facility.

**UG7 - Engineering:**

There was discussion regarding communication mechanisms for user meetings – see notes under item 6.

**UG8 – SANS:**

- ISIS training schools were felt to be very good and very useful to the user group.
- It was noted that facility time is often under-appreciated by universities as they don't see any cash or overheads. REF case studies can demonstrate facility impact – there was a suggestion that we could collect these to use as examples.
- A bid has been put in by the RSC / SCI joint colloids group to host a European colloid meeting in 2025, and they may seek support from ISIS as a partner for this.
- It was felt to be difficult for users to access previous proposals. A new portal will (eventually) be designed to enable this, but this won't happen quickly.

**Action: Emma to look at options for users to see previous proposals.**

**UG9 - Reflectometry:**

Support from instrument scientists was amazing during running under Covid conditions; e.g. going beyond the call of duty for a tricky experiment that was carried out with users not present. Covid measures were felt to be good and pragmatic, enabling science to be done. So thanks and praise to the staff.

There was a question regarding a deuteration strategy and whether ISIS or ESS might pick up protein deuteration and other things currently done at the ILL.

There was a question about buying chemicals – ISIS asks the user to buy them and will then reimburse; ILL order on behalf of the user, avoiding the need for the user to be involved in fund transfers. Can ISIS put a similar system in place?

**Action: Steve Wakefield to have a look at consumable chemical purchases; Richard will contact Steve about this.**

There was discussion about how best IUC reps could get comments from their community. For the next meeting ISIS offered to send emails on behalf of IUC reps to relevant ISIS users.

**Action: Emma to look at a process for us to email the community on behalf of IUC reps well in advance of the next meeting.**

## 5. ISIS running and users: remote experiments, user charter

Remote running of experiments (without users present) was discussed. ISIS had successfully run three cycles with users largely remote, but this had put a lot of stress on staff, and benefits of users being present such as training and partnership development had been missed. ISIS was therefore intending to go back to users needing to be present for experiments once Covid allows this.

There was general IUC agreement for this policy. IUC reps raised a number of reasons why users being present for experiments was beneficial: users like to be involved in sample preparation, particularly for more complex work; students miss out on training and are keen to come back to physical operations; it can be nice to come for an experiment and have time focusing on science away from normal work. It was recognised that maintaining some level of remote access is beneficial – in cases where a member of the team is unable to travel for whatever reason – but the consensus was supportive of users needing to be physically present.

The idea of a User Charter was discussed, to set out user rights and responsibilities, based on the current Oak Ridge User Charter. There was general agreement that a charter of this sort would be useful, to help new users know both the expectations on them and the level of support they can expect to receive, to help students know what is expected, and to act as a reference in case of rare instances of poor behaviour.

Specific comments included setting out clearly examples of inappropriate behaviour e.g. overuse of alcohol; paper co-authorship for inst. scis., data analysis by the user team; including the escalation process for cases of grievance; and communication of the charter to PIs.

**Action: ISIS to progress User Charter – Philip / Emma G.**

## 6. Communications with the user community

A paper was presented to enable discussion on ISIS' communications with the user community, specifically around the long shutdown progress, Endeavour and the ESS. It was suggested that multiple channels be used for communications of key information (email; Twitter; LinkedIn); that we make sure it's clear that the message / email is from ISIS; and that we try to get feedback on which channel users heard information through.

**Action: ISIS to plan to use a greater range of channels for communications with the community: Philip.**

## 7. New proposal system

The idea of the new proposal system was presented by Panda Rushwood, along with the timescale for roll-out and discussion on the best way to do the roll out. Flagging of new questions was suggested, along with giving users as much notice as possible that a new system will be in place and allowing exploration of the system early on.

## 8. Student support

Aspects of ISIS' student support were discussed, including facility development studentships and the student travel support currently available.

Specific comments on the facility development studentship process included:

- Examples and information on where to find matching funding to be included on the studentship pages
- Getting the studentship call out as soon as possible, noting that getting confirmation of matching funding for the application can be difficult
- ISIS could give examples of what makes a good proposal, including aspects such as the student development plan.

**Action: The comments above to be included in this year's studentship call – Philip.**

## 9. AoB

Cooked breakfasts are currently available for users in R22.

**Action: Emma G to check that Ridgeway reception are communicating this.**

## 10. Date and format of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Friday 10 June 2022.

There was discussion regarding the meeting format, with some preferring face-to-face and others hybrid. The suggestion of one in-person meeting and one online meeting per year was made.

## 11. Summary of actions arising and ongoing:

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Consider review of archaeometry proposal assessment.	A small group has produced an analysis of proposals in this area. In general, cultural heritage proposals do well across the instrument suite; the exception is Engin-x where they don't do as well as engineering proposals. ISIS now has a new engineering group leader in post – we will consult with him and come back to the IUC.  Ongoing	Sean Langridge	Dec 2018
Philip King to invite Toby Perring, ISIS Scientific Programme Manager, to next IUC to update on software strategy.	Ongoing	Philip King	June 2019
IUC to be given a chance to comment on the 'data gateway' during its development.	Ongoing	Hannah Griffin	Dec 2019
Consider relaunching user twinning scheme	Ongoing – for after Covid	Philip	Dec 2020
Issue of significance of facility time in REF to be raised with Mark Thomson	Ongoing	Robert	Dec 2020
Check on ISIS communication regarding consumables rules.	New action	Emma G	Jan 2022
Give feedback at the next IUC meeting on Mol Spec user meeting hybrid format.	New action	Alex O'Malley	Jan 2022
Can user data be added to an ISIS DOI	New action	Hannah	Jan 2022
Look at options for users to see their previous proposals.	New action	Emma G	Jan 2022
Process for consumable chemical purchases akin to ILL; Richard will contact Steve about this.	New action	Steve W; Richard Campbell	Jan 2022
Look at a process for ISIS to email the community on behalf of IUC reps well in advance of the next meeting.	New action	Emma G	Jan 2022
ISIS to progress User Charter	New action	Philip / Emma G	Jan 2022
ISIS to plan to use a greater range of channels for communications with the community	New action	Philip	Jan 2022
IUC comments to be included in next facility development studentship call	New action	Philip	Jan 2022
Check that Ridgeway reception are communicating about R22 breakfasts	New action	Emma G	Jan 2022