

ISIS User Committee Minutes

Friday 10 June 2022, 10:00 – 13.00

The Cosener's House, Abingdon and via Zoom

Present

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Committee Chair</i> | <i>Emma Barney</i> |
| IUG1 Crystallography | Karen Johnston (Durham) |
| | Michael Hayward (Oxford) |
| IUG2 Liquids & amorphous | Emma Barney (Nottingham) |
| IUG5 Molecular Spectroscopy | Alexander O'Malley (Bath) |
| | Maria Paula Marques (Coimbra, Portugal) |
| IUG7 Engineering | Richard Moat (Open University) |
| IUG8 SANS | Wuge Briscoe (Bristol) |
| | Steve Parnell (Delft, The Netherlands) |
| IUG9 Reflectometry | Richard Campbell (Manchester) |
| | Tom Arnold (ESS, Sweden) |

Present from ISIS:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Emma Gozzard | ISIS User Programme Manager |
| Hannah Griffin | ISIS Computing Division Head (from 11.00) |
| Philip King | ISIS Spectroscopy and Support Division Head |
| Sean Langridge | ISIS Diffraction Division Head |
| Matt North | ISIS Instrumentation Division Head |
| Steve Wakefield | Head, ISIS Operations & ISIS Experimental Operations Division Head |

Apologies:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| IUG 2 Disordered Materials | Gosia Swadzba-Kwasny (Queens University Belfast) |
| IUG4 Excitations | Christ Stock (Edinburgh) |
| | David Boldrin (Glasgow) |
| IUG6 Muons | Lucy Clark (Liverpool) |
| | Joseph Wright (UEA) |
| IUG7 Engineering | Mahmoud Mostafavi (Bristol) |
| Roger Eccleston | ISIS Director |

1. Welcome and introductions

Those present introduced themselves.

2. Minutes and actions

The previous minutes were approved by the Committee

Actions from the previous meeting with comments:

| Action from previous meeting and status | Status | Responsible | Meeting action added |
|--|--|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Consider review of archaeometry proposal assessment. | Done. A separate Cultural Heritage FAP will be formed from December 2022 to review archaeometry proposals from Ines, muons, lmat and other instruments. | Sean Langridge | Dec 2018 |
| Philip King to invite Toby Perring, ISIS Scientific Programme Manager, to next IUC to update on software strategy. | Done. Toby will be speaking at this meeting | Philip King | June 2019 |
| IUC to be given a chance to comment on the 'data gateway' during its development. | Ongoing – this will come to IUC when it has progressed a little further | Hannah Griffin | Dec 2019 |
| Consider relaunching user twinning scheme | Ongoing – to be done before the next meeting | Philip / Emma | Dec 2020 |
| Issue of significance of facility time in REF to be raised with Mark Thomson | Done. User bank statements will continue to be issued We will continue to campaign for the value of facility time to be better appreciated in REF. We would also like to understand how facility time has been represented in the REF through case studies and publications. | Robert | Dec 2020 |
| Check on ISIS communication regarding consumables rules. | Done. Web page info has been updated. PIs also get a message about consumables when their experiment is accepted. | Emma G | Jan 2022 |
| Give feedback at the next IUC meeting on Mol Spec user meeting hybrid format. | Done. 60/78 attendees will be in person. Due to happen at Cosener's shortly. | Alex O'Malley | Jan 2022 |
| Can user data be added to an ISIS DOI | Done. Possible in principle, but further work would be needed to define what is required. New action: a page on the ISIS website is needed giving good practice with regard to data management (Philip) | Hannah | Jan 2022 |
| Look at options for users to see their previous proposals. | Done. New proposal system may allow this. User portal is ultimate aim to allow users to view their proposals, reports, etc. | Emma G | Jan 2022 |
| Process for consumable chemical purchases akin to ILL; Richard will contact Steve about this. | Done. This has been explored. There is a different (much larger) volume of consumable purchases for ISIS compared with ILL, and so there are bigger resource implications. | 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. | Done. Community were emailed for comments prior to this meeting; this will continue to happen before IUC meetings. | Emma G | Jan 2022 |
| ISIS to progress User Charter | Ongoing | Philip / Emma G | Jan 2022 |
| ISIS to plan to use a greater range of channels for communications with the community | Done. Social media channels are being better integrated with emails and web updates. | Philip | Jan 2022 |
| IUC comments to be included in next facility development studentship call | Done. Call documents have been reviewed and revised. | Philip | Jan 2022 |
| Check that Ridgeway reception are communicating about R22 breakfasts | Done. | Emma G | Jan 2022 |

3. ISIS Update

Steve Wakefield gave an update on latest news from ISIS, including:

- Details of recent running post long shutdown.
- Updates on the progress of the ISIS long shutdown including linac tank 4 replacement and TS1 refurbishment.
- Upcoming cycle dates and how they have been affected by a delay to the TS1 refurbishment project.
- Details of the latest proposal round – 780 proposals received, 2nd highest ever.
- Descriptions of instrument upgrades that have taken place during the shutdown.
- International partnership development and visits from some key stakeholders
- The ISIS budget for the current year, including the effects of electricity cost increases.
- Updates on the ISIS-2 and Endeavour projects

4. Comments and reports from the user groups.

Crystallography

Users are satisfied with TS2 Wish running. Users want beamtime!

Disordered materials

Users noted that the MCR do not always give out updates at times they say.

Action: Steve to raise this at an upcoming crew away-day

User friendliness of data analysis and control systems was noted to be an issue.

Sample can provision can be an issue

Action: Sample can provision will be looked at following this comment at (Steve)

Food in the evenings – can users know what evening meals are at lunchtimes

Action: Emma G will raise this with the soft facilities manager.

Vending machines can be out of stock at weekends

Action: Emma G will raise this.

There was overall praise for beamline scientists.

Excitations

(No reps present)

One comment raised the issue of the transfer of large files

Action: Hannah to provide advice on methods of large file transfer to / from ISIS.

Molecular Spectroscopy

A question was raised regarding additional support for simulations and modelling. This to be brought up in the scientific computing section later.

Student training – esp for data analysis in specific areas – would be welcomed. Videos online would make a big difference – can we video the practical training course or neutron school? The idea of user twinning for data analysis was suggested.

Action: Philip to raise videoing of training courses, and include data analysis in relaunch of twinning.

An issue of failure of liquid helium or nitrogen supplies at weekends was raised – ISIS is aware of an issue in this area and we are working with site supply to sort this out.

An issue of Eduroam availability in some parts of the experimental halls was raised.

Action: Hannah to look into the issue.

Muons

(No muon reps present)

A muon ‘jamboree’ was run in December – a set of three different user meetings. The International Muon Conference is going ahead in Parma this year.

The issue of lack of beamtime for students over the past two years was raised. In addition to the support for student travel that’s currently being offered by ISIS, we could relax the 3-person limit on experiment attendance temporarily, to allow more PhD students to attend.

Action: Emma – relaxation of 3-person limit and publicising this.

Engineering

There were not many responses from engineering community users. It seems that, from FAPs, there’s an increase in new groups using the technique which may affect the feedback response level.

SANS

Also note issues regarding Eduroam availability in the halls.

Xpress time was felt to be very useful and well-run

Reflectometry

ISIS ran a training school on reflectometry analysis – this was very well received.

Very good lab setup for biosciences, but some issues were noted regarding equipment. There is now a new lab manager in place at ISIS who has started recently and who will be able to look at such issues.

5. ISIS Scientific Computing Strategy Update

Toby Perring introduced the ISIS scientific computing strategy:

- An overview of the vision for the strategy and how it relates to the overall ISIS facility strategy.
- Guiding principles for the strategy
- Details of what has been done so far, including development of the Mantid governance and workshops with all the science groups to define priorities and projects. A Research Software Engineering team has been created in ISIS, with members working on specific projects but sharing knowledge and support.
- Collaborative projects with the STFC Scientific Computing Department were described.
- Machine learning investigations were also described.

- Infrastructure, including the Data Analysis as a Service (DAaaS) facility.
- Next steps for development of the strategy, including development of links to other facilities.

There was discussion around IDaaS and how projects can be retrieved once created. There was discussion on publicity for ISIS and how to ensure users are aware of IDaaS and how to use it

Action: Hannah to consider whether any further publicity is needed.

6. NMSUM feedback

As noted above, students would like more training in data analysis. Training regarding communicating research impact from research programmes would also be welcome.

There was discussion regarding raising the profile of the IUC – for example, having IUC members chairing discussion sessions at NMSUM

Visibility of the IoP / RSC Neutron scattering group was also discussed, and joint meetings with other user groups from other countries.

Action Philip to note NMSUM comments and NSG visibility

A calendar for user community meetings was discussed, and having IUC members attend these to gather feedback.

Action: Emma to explore user meeting calendar.

A generic email address for IUC was discussed (or one for each user group)

Action: Emma to explore generic email addresses.

7. AOB

IUC Sharepoint site was discussed

Action: Emma G – set up IUC sharepoint site

8. Dates of next meetings

9 December 2022, then 9 June 2023

There was a strong preference for in-person meetings.

Actions from this meeting

| Action | Status | Responsible | Meeting action added |
|---|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| IUC to be given a chance to comment on the 'data gateway' during its development. | Ongoing – this will come to IUC when it has progressed a little further | Hannah Griffin | Dec 2019 |
| Consider relaunching user twinning scheme (including data analysis) | Ongoing | Philip / Emma G | Dec 2020 |
| Add a page to the ISIS website on data management good practice. | New action | Philip | June 2022 |
| ISIS to progress User Charter | Ongoing | Philip / Emma G | Jan 2022 |
| Crew to be asked to give updates on ISIS status at stated times | New action | Steve W | June 2022 |
| Sample can issue to be looked into | New action | Steve W | June 2022 |
| Can users know what evening meals will be at lunchtime | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |
| Vending machine stocking at weekends | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |
| Advice on methods of large file transfer | New action | Hannah | June 2022 |

ISIS Neutron and
Muon Source

| | | | |
|--|-------------------|--------|-----------|
| Explore videoing of training courses | New action | Philip | June 2022 |
| Eduroam signal in experimental halls | New action | Hannah | June 2022 |
| Relaxation of 3-person limit for experiments | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |
| Is further publicity for IDaaS needed? | New action | Hannah | June 2022 |
| IUC visibility at NMSUM and NSG visibility | New action | Philip | June 2022 |
| User meeting calendar | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |
| Generic user group email addresses | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |
| IUC Sharepoint site | New action | Emma G | June 2022 |