

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL
RUTHERFORD APPLETON LABORATORY

COMPUTING DIVISION

DISTRIBUTED INTERACTIVE COMPUTING NOTE 861
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IKBS ad hoc Steering Group 28 July 1983 W P Sharpe
Coordinator's Report 22 July 1983

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(see next page)

1. AGENDA ITEMS

1.1 Infrastructure

- (a) Dr Thomas will be able to give an up to date report on the current state of proposals to buy VAXs and R machines, and the outcome of a meeting on 21 July with GEC to discuss management of the development effort. See the note on infrastructure that was drafted as the basis for the discussions with GEC. The SG is invited to comment on the proposed management structure.
- (b) A strategy for fulfilling the balance of the IKBS infrastructure requirement needs to be defined. Dr Mamdani has asked for guidance in resubmitting his grant application that included a VAX11/750.

1.2 AGIKBS

A focus for the development of hardware and software infrastructure is required to supersede SIGAI. A new Advisory Group is suggested, with membership down from both the academic and industrial sectors. It is suggested the SERC should set up this group. The SG is invited to comment on its membership and terms of reference. Dr Sleep has proposed an urgent requirement for developments of hardware and software environments that should be discussed and monitored by such a group.

1.3 Show-Me/Marketing and Awareness

- (a) d'Agapayeff has submitted proposals in this area. See DIC Note 858.
- (b) Dr Fox has suggested that he would be willing to run a seminar on 'The Comparison of AI Languages'.

1.4 Short Term Developments/DPs

The Alvey Directorate is intending to issue Announcements of Opportunity to solicit proposals for specific projects. Recommendations on priorities and definition of projects is urgently required.

A number of contacts have already been made with respect to IKBS workstation developments.

1.5 Research Themes

- (a) In those areas where there is not already activity it is proposed that a 2 day theme workshop be run to assess the state of the art. A proposal from Dr Alan Bundy for a workshop on Intelligent Front Ends has been received. The SG is invited to approve expenditure of up to £2500K for this workshop from the coordination budget and to make recommendations on workshops for the other themes.
- (b) A meeting was held with Professor C Campbell, see DIC Note 860. WPS suggested his proposals would most likely come under Intelligent Database theme and committed to supplying some statement of the strategy in this area by September.

- (c) Within the SERC IEC forward look there is a line for the support of work on novel computer architectures. A policy statement for this line has been drafted by Professor Kowalski and Mr Newey. The SG is invited to endorse this statement. WPS has discussed with the DCS Coordinator a strategy for promoting the DSA theme between IKBS and DCS. It is suggested:
- (i) that it would be counter productive to divert the current small number of high quality construction projects already supported by DCS.
 - (ii) there is scope for industrial participation in prototyping and advanced development.
 - (iii) that Dr Sleep be invited to run a series of meetings with the relevant academics that would define the research results that could form the basis of such collaborations with a view to recommending Announcements of Opportunity for demonstrator projects at the earliest date. These announcements would allow scope for industrial market analysis to define the particular projects to be promoted.

1.6 General Research

Dr Thomas has advised that with the prospect of a major change in the role of the CCSC it would not be appropriate to draft a CCSC policy statement on IKBS for the autumn policy meeting.

1.7 Architecture Study Report

- (a) Approval from SERC and DTI for publication has been obtained. SPL are producing it in three sections - Vol I, Vol I annexes, Vol II. Printing is expected to take up to 3 weeks because of summer holidays. 600 copies of Vol I and 500 of Vol II are being made.

The circulation will be the same as that used for the IKBS Project Survey (ie. edited RARM list) plus people who have asked for copies. Other names are requested.

These announcements would allow scope for industrial market analysis to define the particular projects to be promoted.

- (b) Mr Oakley has asked WPS to draft a covering letter. Comments are invited on the draft. A copy has been sent to Mr Oakley and Mr Hotchkiss.
- (c) Mr Oakley has suggested that a summary of the report suitable for very wide distribution should be produced. Dr Stenning has said he would be willing to produce a first draft but not within the next few weeks. Decisions on the target audience and general content of the summary are invited.

1.8 Guidance for FE institutions

Dr Sleep has written to WPS of urgent requirements for action in this area (see letter).

1.9 Recommendations to Alvey Directorate

In the light of decisions on the foregoing items a revision is required of the actions suggested by WPS at a recent meeting with Mr Oakley (see DIC 859).

2. GENERAL REPORT

2.1 Research Grants

Feedback on a rejected application has been given to Coombs.

A Panel visit has been made to Baker to discuss a deferred application.

Discussions on forthcoming applications have been held with Roberts (Leeds).

2.2 Infrastructure

Dr Fox and WPS are actively investigating the possibilities for access to the ICRF DEC20. Dr Bodmer has agreed in principle and details are under discussion.

2.3 Finance

A financial report has been prepared for the meeting of expenditure against the coordination budget.

2.4 Coordinator's Diary

August IJCAI
 Ms A Brooking, Polytechnic of South Bank