

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*
Department of Biology

BIOLOGY OUTREACH COMMITTEE: 26 February 2010

Present: John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Board Link)
 Caroline Calvert (CNAP)
 Adrian Harrison (Departmental Outreach Organiser)
 Chris Kelly (Technical Representative)
 Richard Swinnerton (Undergraduate Representative)
 Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee and Academic staff representative)
 Jasper Green (Postgraduate Representative)
 Mark Coles (CII Representative)

Apologies for absence:

Chikako Barlow (Secretary)
 Thorunn Helgason (Academic Representative)
 Peter Lillford (Honorary Member)
 Sarah West (OPAL Contact)

		Action
10/01	<p>Welcomes</p> <p>JBP welcomed Mark Coles to the Committee as the CII representative.</p>	
10/02	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting (4 December 2009)</p> <p>JG requested a modification to 09/30 to note that his workshop was separate to that previously developed by Emma Rand. However, he will provide details of the workshop to Emma. Apart from the above, the rest of the minutes were accepted as a true record and will now be posted on the web with the above modification.</p>	<p>JG</p> <p>CB</p>
10/03	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>a) 09/25: Student volunteers for the OPAL hedgehog project</p> <p>ABH reported that he had not received any specific details from Sarah West but was hopeful that student volunteers could be provided if requested.</p> <p>b) 09/25: OPAL web link</p> <p>JBP reported that the link to the OPAL web site from our web site has still yet to be put in place but will now be progressed following CB's return.</p> <p>c) 09/28d: New outreach activity in Term 5 Scientific Skills</p>	<p>CB</p>

	<p>ABH and HMOL reported that this will be picked up when the next module call comes through, which is expected shortly. RS asked whether a similar option could be available to the Biochemists. While it was thought that the structure for the Biochemistry programme may preclude this, ABH will discuss with Set Chong. CK noted that it would be important to factor in the high level of support that would likely be required by the teams if they were actually running an outreach event.</p> <p>d) 09/28f: Return to school</p> <p>ABH reported the idea to encourage PhDs and UGs to return to their schools was awaiting CB's return. The first priority is to target our key feeder schools.</p> <p>e) 09/28g: New Post-graduate Representative</p> <p>JBP reported that four very strong applications for the post had been received. ABH and JBP will be meeting shortly to select the new representative.</p> <p>f) 09/31: BioLog and Case Studies</p> <p>JBP reported that he was working with James Chong to try to include something in the next edition. To encourage submission of case studies from within the whole Department, a section will be included in future editions for outreach case studies. Strategy Group had agreed to provide sponsorship to encourage submissions through offering a cash prize for articles published.</p> <p>g) 09/32: Events Log</p> <p>JBP reported that the events log had still to be removed from the web site but that this will now be progressed following CB's return.</p> <p>h) 09/33: Staff Workload Credits</p> <p>JBP reported that he and ABH had processed the data from the annual census to pull out the eligible requests for outreach activities. The most difficult thing had been to decide what was eligible. Discussions had then continued with the HoD to agree the level of credit and the following had been proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 credit for internal lecture • 1.5 credits for an external lecture • 1.5 credits for a half day workshop (internal or external) • 3 credits for a full day's workshop (internal or external) <p>The above was agreed by the Committee and the data will now be processed.</p>	<p>ABH/ HMOL</p> <p>ABH</p> <p>ABH</p> <p>JBP/ ABH</p> <p>JBP</p> <p>CB</p> <p>JBP</p>
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	<p>i) 09/39: CRB Checks</p> <p>ABH reported that, following the furore in the media, the new basis for the checks seem to be under review again. He will monitor the situation and bring back to the Committee when things are clearer.</p>	
10/04	<p>Previous Events Update</p> <p>No central events had been undertaken since the last meeting, reflecting the normal slack period in the run up to and after the Christmas period. However, JBP noted that £100 had been provided to the University Naturalists group to help with a bird ringing project. Pictures and words about the event had been promised. JG noted that he had undertaken a further bioinformatics session with teachers through the National Science Learning Centre.</p>	
10/05	<p>Next Major Events</p> <p>a) Festival of Science and Technology / Discover and Explore</p> <p>Input to the Festival of Science and Technology and Discovery and Explore centres around the Discovery and Explore the Brain event and the inputs to the general days at the NRM.</p> <p>CK reported that things were progressing well with the Discover and Explore the Brain event. It was being driven well by Eoin Cassels, Sarah Kendal and Thomas Brabbs but was requiring a high level of support from herself. The event will involve 4 sessions held over the 18+19 March. In each session there are 2 activities in Biology and 1 in Psychology. ABH reported that £600 sponsorship had been obtained from RCUK for this event.</p> <p>CII, CNAP and HMOL's group will be exhibiting at the general days in the NRM. HMOL's group will be there for all three days (11-13 March) with CII and CNAP present on Saturday 13 March.</p> <p>b) Next Central Events</p> <p>ABH reported that a healthy schedule of events were planned, mostly involving repeat visits. A summary of the schedule is attached as Appendix 1.</p> <p>c) Gatsby PhDs</p> <p>HMOL reported that she is involved with the annual Gatsby training meeting for their PhDs which will involve 'how to do outreach' sessions. She will report any interesting ideas at the next meeting.</p>	HMOL

10/06	<p>New Initiatives</p> <p>a) Darwin Events</p> <p>No update was available as TH was unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>b) HE National STEM Project</p> <p>ABH reported that TH had attended the regional meeting on the above at Bradford. He understood that the current project does not include biology and is focussing on physics and maths. TH will be keeping a watching brief</p> <p>c) Fresh Science e-CPD</p> <p>The recent BBSRC initiative to establish on-line contacts between practicing scientists and teachers was discussed. ABH will check with the BBSRC whether there has been any expression of interests from the Department. It was felt that this was an open call but this will be checked. If it is still open, it was felt that it would be worth circulating again (previous circulation had been by Hilary Jones in the Biology Bulletin).</p> <p>d) Essay Competition for Schools</p> <p>JBP outline a proposal from John Sparrow to invite A-level students to interview selected staff and write a press-style report. The idea was felt to be attractive and, after further discussion, the idea was developed into more of a media briefing event as this could be easier to manage in terms of staff time and student numbers. MC reported that he had previous experience of a similar event at NIMR where the prize had been to spend a day in their lab of choice. ABH will explore with a local school to see if they felt that this would be of interest. If so, a volunteer to lead the project will be identified.</p> <p>e) Askham Bryan Foundation Degree Input</p> <p>ABH reported that Askham Bryan had approached us to provide outreach input to their Foundation Degree. The contact was a previous student in the Department. Although it was not clear whether this was really outreach or curriculum input, Geoff Oxford had agreed to provide a small mammal trapping workshop.</p>	<p>TH</p> <p>ABH</p> <p>ABH/ JBP</p> <p>ABH</p>
10/07	<p>Science and Society</p> <p>It was noted that the group is trying to organise a repeat of the event held in November in collaboration with Science City York, possible dates being in June. Several members of the Outreach Committee should be able to attend the next meeting to obtain further</p>	

	<p>information. It was also noted that this was part of the Science and Society Group's efforts to drive the outreach agenda within the University. While this would be welcomed in many ways, it was agreed that it would be important that any central activities did not constrain the ability of individuals or departments to progress their own activities.</p>	
10/08	<p>Excellence Hubs</p> <p>ABH reported that he continues to provide input to various events on request. This is now being operated on a more ad hoc basis and no overall planning meeting had been organised this year.</p>	
10/09	<p>Biology Matters</p> <p>JBP reported that the editorial group now had the next edition ready to print. Included in the circulation will be a questionnaire and an invite for schools to enter a new essay competition that the team had designed. We had offered £100 for the competition which will involve two levels of a short essay on any scientific topic or an essay on Genes and Genomes. The best article from both will be published on the new web site that the team are setting up. If of sufficient quality, the best essay on Genes and Genomes will be published in the next edition of Biology Matters, which will be focussed on this topic. In response to a question, ABH confirmed that the new web site will be linked to the Outreach web site and that he would have editorial oversight of the content before release.</p> <p>It is hoped that a better response will be obtained by including the questionnaire with the magazine than with the retrospective questionnaire that was sent out last time. Only two responses had been obtained, although both were very positive.</p> <p>JBP noted that the content of Biology Matters had moved somewhat over the last two editions and now included very limited reference to the science being undertaken within the Department. He had discussed this with the editor who had noted that the need to refer to the Department's work had not been made clear when they took on the project. It was agreed that the science being undertaken within the Department should have a significant presence in the content and JBP will discuss further with the team.</p>	JBP
10/10	<p>Budget</p> <p>ABH reported that significant money remained in the running budget. It was agreed that ideas should be brought forward to the next meeting for new funding ideas.</p>	All
10/11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a) Institute for Effective Education</p>	

Appendix 1: Summary of Forthcoming Events

Date	Activity
15th -19th February	Science Week
15th -19th February	Work Experience Student
TBC, but before 1st April	Easingwold School Visit - Genetic Engineering / PCR
11th and 12th March	Discovery Days - NSLC
17th March	Matlock School - Bio and Chem day
18th and 19th March	Discover and Explore the Brain
23rd March	Silcoates School DNA Day
29th March	Science Trail At least 1 activity + space for other depts
30th and 31st March	Green apples year 10 residential - looking for one 1 hour session each day
8th and 9th April	HESS - Three sessions of 1 hour each
22nd April	King James School DNA Fingerprinting Day
29th June	X Hub Event - Locust Jump +
5th July	King James School Nerves and Hormones Day
9th July	Matlock School - Stomata practical and PI's demo + tour of dept
14th or 15th July	Great Wryley School visit - Genetic engineering / PCR Half day
20th to 22nd July	STEM Residential