



# OPTiMA

ARC TRAINING CENTRE IN  
OPTIMISATION TECHNOLOGIES  
INTEGRATED METHODOLOGIES  
AND APPLICATIONS

## MINUTES – OPTiMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FRI 1<sup>st</sup> October 10:00 – 12:00

LOCATION: ZOOM

Attendees: Kate Smith-Miles (Chair -KSM), Peter Stuckey (PS), Doreen Thomas (DT), Peter Taylor (PT), Andreas Ernst (AE), Guido Tack (GT), Rob Hyndman (RH), Charlotte Hurry (CH- Minutes), Shreya Arora (SA- Minutes)

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Apologies: Adrian Pearce (AP), Peter Stuckey (PS)

### MINUTED ITEMS

- 1.1. Move next meeting. CH to ask about a new date
2. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING
  - 2.1. Outreach TOR – Updates

CH: The edits were made as per the last meeting. The EXEC agreed to the changes.
  - 2.2. 12-MONTH INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

CH: The ARC proposed using methods like working online to meet the criteria. We must strategically, for example, the number of hours a student meets with the industry partner per week.

DT: Have an online one-hour meeting with their supervisor and partner.

KSM: The ARC mentioned that the purpose of this is to ensure the students are industry-ready. Overall, the ARC will have to be flexible, but we will provide all efforts to ensure the students get that richer experience within the industry.

CH: CH to create a survey for the students throughout the year to see what kind of engagement they've had.

KSM: We could also have a checklist at annual progress discussions with industry partners to improve student engagement. Some things to include would be: PhDs do the employee training. CH to add this to the schedule.
3. CENTRE COMMENCEMENT

CH: We have all the signatures except UCC, and they're not responding to emails. They need to remove themselves for now or sign the document for OPTiMA to commence. If they agree to remove themselves, the Centre will have commenced last week, and if they decide to sign, the Centre will commence next week after the signature is received. The ARC will also need to be informed after all the signatures are in.

KSM: All we need is an email from them saying they're dropping off for now and will join after the commencement. KSM will send Barry an email and confirm that they can be removed until the Centre commencement.

CH: Once the Centre commences: we need to create the equity and diversity policy in the first six months. A committee has to be formed; once the Centre commences, CH will call for applicants. CH shared the other policies and plans that must be created within six months.

#### 4. CENTRE BUDGET

CH: Monash wanted to be invoiced quarterly according to the proposed expenditure of the strategic initiatives. It would be preferable to invoice them once a year for their share (\$24,000 in 2021) of the industry component. Yearly invoicing is written in the partner agreement. They will retain cash contributions from new partners throughout the year and be invoiced next October for the second instalment. The EXEC agrees. CH will email Monash to confirm

CH: The budget has been edited since we've had partners drop out. CH shared the budget and showed where the values had been adjusted to match current cash contributions. Once new partners come on board, these figures will be readjusted. The EXEC agrees.

#### 5. KPIs

CH: We should aim to have a lower target so that we do not over-commit. The ARC can let us know if we are too low.

KSM: have a target of one high-quality paper per CI in the whole year. This is a reasonable target if you are actively overseeing projects, which hopefully all CIs will have eventually. A target for the number of joint co-authored papers would also be a good thing to have. CH to update the targets and send to ARC.

#### Output: Total number of research outputs

KSM: Remove joint publications as a separate category; instead, have it under total research outputs.

PT: ARC wants to see collaboration within the Centre, so they have it as a separate category.

RH: Should we have patents?

KSM: Some agreements involve having IPs where the industry partners own the commercial side of the project. The industry partners could patent some of the projects that are related to their industry. We can have a patent as a success story, but it will not be with us instead of the industry partners in their field of application.

AE: We wouldn't expect many patents, given the area of research.

KSM: We should include it because several project agreements talk about providing commercialising rights while maintaining project IP for the general purpose to publish.

PT, AE: A target of 0 is reasonable. We will record it but will not have a target for it.

KSM: It is not in our control if the industry partners do not want to patent, but our goal should be to research that our industry partners at least want to patent. We can keep the patents as one each for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years.

KSM: We can host our students' conferences, so the number of conference presentations should increase. Edit "Publications in Q1 journals" to "Publications in high-quality journals", and we can define high quality. Adding an extra category of "Publications in high-quality conferences."

AE/KSM: Conference presentation should be changed to "Conference papers". And 50% should be the target for publications in high-quality conferences. Speaking at a conference should be changed to "Conference Presentation". Publications in high-quality conferences should be all 50%, meaning 50% of the numbers in Conference papers.

PT: conferences are affected by COVID; since there are smaller conferences, the number of conference papers should be lower in 2022.

GT, AE: the computer science conferences were not affected as much, making it easier to publish during COVID.

The EXEC agrees on the numbers for this section

#### Joint Research Outputs

KSM: Not all papers will relate to industry problems; papers will be released with optimisation problems. But if there is an industry involved, it will be a joint paper.

PT: This may not just be what gets published in academic journals but also trade journals.

KSM: Change the numbers for industry co-authored papers to one in 2024, 3 in 2025, 6 in 2026. This is dependent on when the PhDs start finishing their papers. Journal articles will not be included because they would be included in the section above.

#### Number of visits

PT/DT: Fellow visitors should be changed to industry visitors

KSM: International visitors represent international academics, which can be online; National visitors represent national academic and then industry visitors.

KSM: Increase international visitor numbers.

PT: At QUT, industry people from the tax department came in to interact and conduct research. Something like this could be counted as industry visits.

KSM: The new Melbourne Water student (from the industry) will join OPTIMA and do the new Melbourne Water project. This will be counted as an industry visitor.

#### Number of government/industry briefing

PT: This was somewhat hard to satisfy. The briefing is a very vague term; collaboration would be more apt.

KSM: This would be a scenario where an industry or a professional body invites someone from OPTIMA to talk about optimisation or a specific case study. Meeting with industries could also count. Therefore the number can be quite large, specifically for the industry/business/end users category.

AE: reduce the numbers for the government division because we won't be working around that region.

RH: do at least one or two a year for government departments.

PT: Would it be called a briefing?

DT, KSM: it is a general-purpose term that could mean a meeting.

KSM: There would not be much of a difference between an NGO and an industry. They could be not for profit, but they still come in as end-users. So, they can be removed and included in the row above.

AE: Should professional organisations and bodies also be included?

KSM: Not necessarily. This could be more like the SAC, math society or any growth centres.

All executives agree on the numbers for this category.

#### Number of talks given by OPTIMA (Public)

KSM: We do not need the row for conferences in this category as it was already counted earlier. PT: they aren't exactly open to the public either unless you have a lecture. Seminar series numbers are good. Change public lectures number.

#### Education and Training

AE: It seems more about OPTIMA sending the students to train rather than hosting the training ourselves.

PT: Students constantly need training for many things, and the executives are experienced in this department, so it wouldn't be hard to do talks on this.

KSM, CH: It cannot be the training from the university. It either must be provided by OPTIMA or other outside resources.

KSM: That would be part of the soft skills department. An example of Industry-focused training could be promoting a seminar by Melbourne Energy. We can gather Coursera like courses for the students and plan for other courses ourselves for optimisation training.

AE: This should peak in years 2 and 3 of the Centre because most students don't want to be distracted from their thesis towards the end.

AE: Do we want to have another category for the workshops that we host. It is different from saying that we will send them to a course somewhere; it has a lot more impact when we organise something.

KSM: "OPTIMA run workshops" should be a category added onto here to report how many we are offering ourselves.

### Placements

KSM: It is challenging because most teams are not on-site, and many plan to remain that way. We have ten students that are obliged to have placements, so that number should end at 10 for the targets. It is flexible when the students want to do this, so a growing trend in target numbers is good. It does not have to be just ten students; the others can also do it if they want.

CH: Ten should be in the middle because they will finish their PhDs towards the end, so the highest numbers will likely be by 2023 or 2024.

CH: ARC has said that online counts as well.

KSM: Put in what we feel is correct for now, but once we have the students enrolled, we will get a better idea of when and how the placements will occur.

### Gender Equity

RH: The percentage of women is too low. There should be more.

AE: 50% is hard to achieve in the maths department

KSM: The final target will be 50%, and the percentage should be increasing over the years to reach this value.

ECRs can start with 30%, and we can count AIs in this section. The last column should be ending at 50% as well and starting at 35%. Falling short is fine as long as we are showing us working towards it.

DT, KSM: We won't have an opportunity to change the MCRs as much, and we won't exactly have a strategic replacement.

KSM, PT: It's okay if we don't achieve it, but it should show us trying to reach that goal.

### Optima personal management

KSM: Postdoc researcher should be changed.

DT: Changed to 12, 20, 20, 20, 12 (by year)

The number of masters students – will be masters by research. KSM has one masters student working in that under her and will have one every year.

**KSM and CH** will go over it to match the number of PhD and master's students with the plan.

### Nature of commentaries

KSM: does not think we will have many media releases. We could delete it because we don't require it.

DT: have them as 0 instead of removing the category.

KSM: Instead of media releases, change the working to Media stories, including even the talks and everything. The other categories are all good.

### Outreach

KSM: I don't know what they look like yet, but it would be increasing. The targets all look achievable.

### Funding secured (line 49)

DT: can we include the extra university scholarships within this?

KSM: any additional money that comes through can be included in this column. The initial cohort is \$200,000 a year with the current partners.

CH: We would be getting more money in the middle rather than the last year

KSM: It was decided to be around 20K, 60K, 80K, 80K, 80K. The last two years should not taper off because we are not going to decline new projects.

6. AIs  
CH shared the AI nomination spreadsheet.

KSM: CIs Nominated AIs will be invited, except for NAME REMOVED (it seems like he works in forecasting only, but his new work is on optimisation). We need feedback from RH if NAME REMOVED meets the criteria for AI.

Also, RH needs to ask NAME REMOVED if he wants to be an AI.

KSM: Arindam Pal does not have much on optimisation. KSM: ask him to give a seminar on optimisation and see what his response is.

KSM will meet with NAME REMOVED to talk about her research and decide. KSM will also follow up with NAME REMOVED about the AI opportunity.

The EXEC agreed to all other AIs.

CH to contact successful AIs.

#### 7. STRATEGIC PLAN

CH: needs feedback on the content.

KSM: the structure seems to be a bit unclear. Needs work on the strategic priority specifically. Strategic Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4 are good. 5 (succession planning) comes under the legacy strategy so that they can be combined. Their priorities should all be of the same weightage.

DT: We should only aim to have 3-4 strategic priorities.

KSM: 7 should be objectives but not a priority. We need to have a hierarchical build to the strategic plan.

CH and KSM discuss the strategic plan.

#### 8. STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

CH: we will move it entirely online

KSM: There is no point in having anything face-to-face in December when many PhD students and postdocs haven't started. Postpone the face to face once all the postdocs have started, which would be early next year. Hopefully, COVID will also not be an issue by then. CH to update the agenda.

#### 9. EDUCATION AND TRAINING TOR

CH shared the TOR. It is similar to the outreach TOR.

KSM: Maybe not have it as policy but rather a plan. CH to prepare a draft plan to share with the Exec. Everything else in the TOR is good. CH to make edits.

#### 10. INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT (SI\*)

KSM: What's happening with Ausnet?

CH: They came back on, but they haven't been partnered yet

KSM: Could we have a spreadsheet with the partner, project, student and CI information. CH to work on this.

#### 11. UPDATE FROM THEMES (SI\*)

#### 12. UPDATE FROM SUB-COMMITTEES (SI\*)

#### 13. AOB

The meeting concluded at 12:01

## ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1	Terms of reference	-develop terms of reference and policies for the sub-committees	CH		
		Education and Training- make updates	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		Budget Plan	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		Governance Plan	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		Data Management Plan	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
2	Scientific advisory committee membership	Membership– Contact Leonie Walsh; Michael Grogan or Katie O'Connell; Francis or Roma Sharp; Bronwyn Fox or Simon; Heather St. John; Heather's equivalent at Monash	KSM	05 Nov 2021	Pending
3	PhD students	Create survey for industry engagement	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
4	Industry committee membership	Membership - Contact Natasha, Alexandra and Chris, Martin.	KSM	05 Nov 2021	Pending
5	Partners	An email regarding industry partner engagement.	CH	asap	Pending
		Set up a meeting with ARC ITTCS to discuss collaboration	CH	December	Pending
		Speak to the Bureau of Meteorology regarding optimisation problems.	PT	December	Pending
		Create spreadsheet for all projects	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		Create survey for industry partners at one-year milestone	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		UCC-email regarding start date	KSM	ASAP	Completed
6	November meeting	Change date	CH	ASAP	Completed
7	EDI committee	Call out for members	CH	ASAP	Pending

8	Finance	Ask Monash if we can invoice one yearly for the partner contribution	CH	ASAP	Completed
9	Strategic Plan	Refine	CH/KSM	05 Nov 2021	Pending
10	KPIs	Update targets and send to ARC	CH	ASAP	Completed
11	Strategic planning meeting	Book dates, update the program, send the registration link and send the strategic plan document. Ask CIs for their contribution. Plan for an online event.	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
12	Als	Contact the following nominees to give a seminar: Arindam Pal, Ellie Hajizadeh, Malin Premaratne	KSM	05 Nov 2021	Pending
		Contact successful nominees . Also, contact RH regarding	CH	05 Nov 2021	Pending
13	Add to future meetings	Financial incentives for associate investigators	CH	04 Feb 2022	Pending
		Call out for committee membership	CH	03 Dec 2021	Pending
		Brainstorming adding new partners	CH	04 Feb 2022	Pending

\*Standing Item