



# OPTiMA

ARC TRAINING CENTRE IN  
OPTIMISATION TECHNOLOGIES  
INTEGRATED METHODOLOGIES  
AND APPLICATIONS

## MINUTES – OPTiMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**MON 8<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 13:00 – 15:00**

LOCATION: ZOOM

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

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Apologies: Rob Hyndman (RH), Adrian Pearce (AP)

### MINUTED ITEMS

1. Advisory committee membership

CH: The advisory committees need to be formed in the first six months from the Centre commencement

KSM: We should focus on completing the Strategic plan and the other plans so that the committees can build on them later. Let's plan to form the committee and have the first meeting before the end of March. **KSM** to follow up.

2. Centre Commencement

CH: OPTiMA officially commenced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September. The invoices and the purchasing orders are being raised and sent to the industry partners. We are also arranging the TR1F forms for the postdoc in CIS. The money will be released to the eligible PhDs as soon as possible.

CH: Monash finance has asked that a formal agreement be prepared for invoicing partner money between Monash and UoM. **CH** is preparing this and will follow up. CH will send it to the Exec for approval shortly.

3. Membership Update

PS: Ausnet has the project finalised, but they want to start later (March 2022). The project is about the planning and scheduling for charging vehicles.

KSM: Is the next step to start recruiting the students? **Mark Wallace** should draft a paragraph on the project, and we can send it to Ausnet and ensure that we have the proper understanding of the project.

**CH** will send MW the template for the project summary.

PS: Ausnet has said they can't support the student currently because they have too many other ongoing projects. But they will start in March.

KSM: Any ideas for new students?

PS: Not yet, but some students on the EOI list may be suitable.

PS: FFT student has started the project, and it is going well.

KSM: For Mecca, the student has started and is on the university scholarship. We are still waiting on a student for SEW project on the large-scale optimisation of the meters and monitoring devices. Are there any potential students?

**GT**: I will catch up with Mario Boley and decide on a strategy to find a student for this project. Current options are to readvertise or look into international students since borders are re-opening. **GT** to let CH know the next steps regarding advertising the project.

**CH** will work on creating separate advertisements for the AusNet and SEW projects.

KSM: The AGL student has an OPTIMA scholarship, waiting for the university scholarship. The Boeing student has a university scholarship, and his project with Boeing is going well. The Melbourne Water student is starting soon. The UoM SE Water student has also begun.

**CH** will check and update the project agreement status for all the projects.

KSM: Next, we need to understand the OPTIMA scholarship's IP. To be compliant with everything, we need to understand the lead agreement and student IP assigning over to the university.

PT: We need to look at the relationship between the industry and students. If the IP is signed over to the university, what are the students' rights? The student and the supervisors should sign a standard agreement.

KSM: Everyone needs to agree to confidentiality, assigning IP, and our responsibility to them – that the tasks they do are related to their PhD

PT: We need to clearly state that the industry partner cannot instruct them as their employees, and at the same time, the students do not have the rights of the employees.

KSM: To summarise, it is a general deed of agreement between the student and the university that covers the IP, confidentiality, OPTIMA's commitment as supervisors and their relationship with the industry partner.

**CH** to create this deed of agreement for the student and supervisor to sign.

KSM: the industry partners of Melbourne Water wanted to know about their requirement to attend meetings. It was discussed that they would be welcome to participate in the weekly meetings but are encouraged to attend the review meetings. All the details of all the meetings have been included in the agreement.

Possible new partners:

KSM: We are discussing with the Australian Bureau of Statistics and have identified a PhD topic identified and a possible supervisory team. Australian Bureau of Statistics

has \$70,000 available that they are discussing to transfer to OPTIMA from AMSI – leftover from an internship scheme. The issue is that they want to be an "Other Organisation" and not a "Partner Organisation" with OPTIMA. They want us to help train their employees, and they'll work with us to develop training modules. We will still have a project agreement but not sign the partnership agreement. It may be a stepping-stone to a partner organisation, but we are unsure if the ARC will accept this request. We are keen to do it to avoid bureaucracy.

CH: We are still waiting for the ARC to respond on this.

KSM: Melbourne Water will have a second project with one of their employees with a university scholarship. They wanted a three-way agreement between the University of Melbourne, OPTIMA, and Melbourne Water. KSM - will say no, as we need a separate project agreement between Melbourne Water and OPTIMA. This project is for an extra AUD 10,000.

**KSM** will follow up on AGL second project.

PT: CH has sent the partnership agreement to ProbeGroup for their perusal. PT is in discussion with the interested student for this project. He is optimistic the project will go ahead; there are no issues with finances for the industry partner.

**PT** will complete the template for the project agreement.

Partner Suggestions:

PT: An architecture firm zipgen.com wanted to research automated kitchen design but did not have the money to fund the bill for the scholarships.

KSM: It can be done now that extra ARC scholarships are available. **KSM** will follow up with them.

**PS**: We will have a conversation with the entire BD team on Monday and inform them what kind of projects we are looking for.

Software developer:

PS: I will advertise it as a senior software developer, and the easiest way to deal with the money is to have them enter as a Hew6 and then put up to a Hew7 later. We cannot just have them on Hew7 because we may not have the available finances to start at a higher increment.

KSM: Is it worth advertising it for a shorter time and mentioning that it may be extended, or should we advertise for the whole period?

PS: We have five years of funding so that it can be worked according to that.

**PS** to finalise the PD.

Centre Manager:

CH: I will be going overseas for three months and working from there. Will have meetings at 2-5 PM when needed like everyone else and then work within her time zone beyond that.

Als:

KSM has spoken with one applicant who needs some help with optimisation for her students. She would like them to be a part of the OPTIMA community. She will present her work to OPTIMA. She's confident that she can get DSTG to join as OPTIMA partners.

KSM: another candidate will be asked to give a seminar in November and then decide whether he is the right candidate for an AI. Ensure that the seminar is about his current optimisation work and not the programming aspect.

**CH to** send out an invitation for the November seminar.

#### 4. Strategic Plan

KSM: Strategic plans are all different, but we can structure our plan however we like as long as we communicate clearly. We have three Priorities: Research, Education and Training, and Legacy. They each have objectives and actions relating to how to achieve those objectives. It would be best to agree on the strategic priorities and the objectives first and then further draft the plan. Do the Strategic Priorities look good? EDI has been included in the Education and training, and Outreach has been included in the Legacy.

The Exec discussed the required changes to the strategic plan, and CH updated the spreadsheet. Keynotes are shown below:

The Exec agreed:

Transformation can be used as the term for strategic priority 3.

We are not teaching enough optimisation at the Undergraduate level, but we expect them to know it at PhD level. This can be included as the actions to achieve the objectives.

**CH and KSM** to add a recruitment objective and have UGRDs mentioned in action.

Actions for all objectives were suggested by the Exec and have been incorporated into the draft strategic plan.

**CH** to change the succession plan objective to: "Develop effective capacity building and succession planning within OPTIMA to provide ongoing leadership."

Research

Strategic Priority 1:

OBJ1.1: Blackbox optimisation model-based framework?

KSM: the actions listed are more research topics rather than actions. The action is to undertake a research program in integrating methodologies where these may be the outcomes of this with the research tools.

PT: We will be looking to create a toolkit or translations.

KSM: A separate document should be created later with a list of ongoing projects concerning this.

OBJ1.4: develop project agreement, post-project reviews – learn if it is a success story or learn why it wasn't

OBJ1.5: have students present their work to the scientific advisory committee for feedback and discussion on the topic, opportunity to attend international conferences.

**KSM and CH** will prepare the next draft of the strategic plan.

#### 5. Strategic Planning Meeting

CH: the agenda remains mostly the same; it is still going online. The CI introduction meetings can be held in an interview-style – which may be more engaging to watch, as it may be better to have the CIs being interviewed rather than just presenting for 5 minutes. A similar thing can be done with the industry partners. It can be spontaneous and a bit informal.

KSM: **PS and KSM** can do the interviews for the industry partner. And the other CIs can interview each other. For industry: Can have questions like what transformations they expect? How will it affect their company? What would be the benefits?

CH: Should we have them as a group according to their subject backgrounds? Because one-on-one can become boring.

PS: an interview with a team will not provide concrete information.

CH: Can have per CI interviews for 5 minutes and have some before the breakout room and some after.

KSM: We can have questions like the best optimisation problem you've worked on? We can have a list of guideline questions for people.

**CH** will update the agenda

CH: randomly assigned breakout rooms will also be a part of the program to have quick meeting groups.

CH: no longer having a PhD session

The Exec agrees to invite all Centre members to both days.

#### 6. 2022 – Executive Meeting Dates - postponed

#### 7. Outreach, E&T, EDI Plans

CH suggested sending the draft plans directly to the new committees once formed. The Exec agreed.

#### 8. Centre Launch Dates- postponed

#### 9. \*Industry Engagement- discussed in section 3.

#### 10. \*Update from Themes -none

11. \*Update from sub-committees -none

12. AOB-none

\*Standing Item

## ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

1	Terms of reference	-develop terms of reference and policies for the sub-committees Education and Training Plan Budget Plan Governance Plan Data Management Plan Outreach Plan Equity and diversity policy	CH E&T Comm CH CH CH Out Comm EDI Comm	31 Jan 2022 01 Dec 2021 01 Dec 2021 01 Dec 2021 31 Jan 2022 31 Jan 2022	In progress Pending Pending Pending In progress In progress
2	Scientific advisory committee membership	Plan for 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting in March 2022. 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	04 Dec 2021	Pending
3	Invoicing	CH to follow up with Mon regarding ARC invoicing and UoM regarding the return of strategic funds.	CH	ASAP	In progress
4	Industry committee membership	Plan for 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting in March 2022. Membership. Membership - Contact Natasha, Alexandra and Chris, Martin.	KSM	04 Dec 2021	Pending
5	Industry partners	Prepare a draft for the AusNet project agreement. Set up a meeting with ARC ITCS to discuss collaboration Speak to the Bureau of Meteorology regarding optimisation problems. ProbeGroup – follow up and complete the project agreement template. <b>zipgen.com</b> – contact regarding the project. <b>AGL</b> – follow up on the second project. AusNet and SE Water (Mon) – follow up. Brainstorming adding new partners- contact BD team at Monash	Mark Wallace CH PT PT/Mark Fackrell/ CH KSM CH/GT PS	04 Dec 2021 31 Jan 2022 31 Jan 2022 ASAP 04 Dec 2021 ASAP 04 Dec 2021	Pending Pending Pending In progress Pending In progress Pending
6	Strategic planning & meeting	Arrange interview questions Send new agenda. Contact industry and Cis Finalise SP as per comments in the minutes and send out for comment	KSM/PS/CH CH CH/KSM	ASAP ASAP ASAP	In progress In progress In progress

7	Recruitment	Software Eng. PD finalise	PS	ASAP	In progress
8	Student agreements	Send students an IP Agreement and create an OPTIMA agreement for the students.	CH/KSM/PT	ASAP	In progress
9	Als	Contact Kasun for the seminar	CH	ASAP	Completed
10	Add to future meetings	Financial incentives for associate investigators	CH	04 May 2022	Pending