

Physics Computing Meeting

26th March 2021

Minutes

Present:	David Colling (Chair)	Ruth McLachlan
	Brian Appleby	Daniel Mortlock
	Graham Axel	Ellen Pengelly
	Richard Bantges	Arttu Rajantie
	James Dunbar	Spencer Sherwin
	Simon Fayer	Andy Thomas
	Noah Fitch	Luke White
	Jarvist Frost	Dan Whitehouse
	Robert Kingham	Gayle Baldwin (minutes)
Apologies	Stuart Mangles	

1. News and Welcome

- 1.1. DC welcomed the committee and remarked on the changes since the last meeting in February 2019

2. Introductions

- 2.1. The committee members introduced themselves.

3. Research Computing Services – Spencer Sherwin

- 3.1. SS remarked that FoNs is the only faculty to establish research computing committees. He discussed capital expenditure and investment including upgrades increasing research data capacity from 69k cores to 87cores, storage expansion from 11PB to 13PB and GPU capacity by adding 80 x /rtx6000 (see slides). SS encouraged any feedback as this will help inform next year's investments and decisions. Comments include SPAT's main usage of RCS is CX2 with past issues about cost effective available storage on RDS. For every project there is a natural 2TB free point of use with charges above that. Feedback relating to rates of charges would be useful. The current choices are central money verses project-based money for different communities. Committee members discussed live data and how much is being used, the speed of the Archer 2 that how AMD nodes seem slow for electronic structure calculations. Node for node Archer 2 is roughly the same speed at Archer 1.
- 3.2. SS provided a summary of the Academic Leadership Team and the areas that require strengthening - data strategy, user engagement and a more unified approach to RSE across college. Members were asked to review the white paper (circulated via teams chat). There was an update on the recruitment status for the Head of Research Computing Services and Research Software Engineers and other items relating to decision making on commercial software, secure data processing and hosting of research nodes outside of RCS HPC system. Richard Bantges said there is regular engagement with ICT concerning the hosting of Naz

boxes, how they are used and the security within the college network.

- 3.3. DC raised the hosting and sharing of research data and commented on a survey relating to this. SS suggested the committee send him any relevant questions to include in the survey. SS left the meeting.

4. News from ICT – Ellen Pengelly

- 4.1. EP discussed the basic changes around the delivery of projects and the new process for ICT engagement that is more customer led. The two main lines of communication are ServiceNow Request – standard service request via ASK and the option to approach the Product Owners who are: Michele Barritt - Finance and HR, Adrian Thomas – Student Lifecycle, Neil Young – Campus and Commercial, Andrew McLean – Research and Brendan Whitfield – Cross Functional). If you are unsure you can contact EP who will feed your question/request on to the Triage Team. The idea of this service is for open dialogue and building relationships. If ServiceNow is not responding to your ticket, please approach Mylene Cannon or Lee Davenport.

5. Teaching Discussion

- 5.1. Machine renewal: LW received requests for teaching labs and the computing suites.
- 5.2. JF said his MRes student made good use of Jupiter notebooks but they were not always accessible. This is a useful tool that might require more powerful service in terms of uptime.
Action: EP to follow up on JF's feedback. AR's students use Mathematica for their projects. Does the College have the facility available for those working remotely to use Mathematica on different systems? **Action: EP to check if Mathematica is accessible on different systems.**

6. AOB

- 6.1. RB posted a message on chat regarding the rollout of Zoom license. JD's post meeting note – ICT are rolling over 17,000 accounts across college dept by dept. Everyone who already has a Zoom account associated with their Imperial email address remains with their current instance for now. The ICT team will announce detailed instructions on how to migrate when the rollover reaches Physics Department.

Actions for 26.03.21

Action 1: EP to check that Jupiter Notebooks is able to meet high user demand

Action 2: EP to ascertain if Mathematica is accessible on different systems