

Advanced Materials 2: Project Management Board

Minutes and Actions

2 pm – 4 pm Monday 30th November 2009

Room C512, Department of Chemistry, University of Warwick

In Attendance

Members:

Dave Haddleton - PI, UoW (*Chair*)

Julie Macpherson - PI, UoW

Advisors:

Emma Melia - AM2 Project Manager

Zoe Lethbridge - AM2 Project Manager

Invited Attendees:

James Bowen – Facilities Manager, School of Chemical Engineering, UoB

Massimo Peruffo – Facilities Manager, UoW

Apologies

Mike Adams - PI, UoB

Jon Preece - PI, UoB

1. AM2 Financial Position

a. ERDF spend by 30th November 2009

The project has successfully met its financial profile for the end of November (an ERDF deadline for AWM). It has been agreed that the November claim will be delivered to AWM by 5pm on Thursday 3rd December 2009.

b. Underspend strategy

i. Progress on agreed items

All orders for items at UoW have been placed. Some single source agreement forms still need to be completed at UoB Chemical Engineering. It was highlighted that any orders that are not invoiced before the end of 2009 would be subject to the increased VAT rate. UoB Chemistry expenditure totals are not finalised so no orders are to be placed until a final total has been agreed. It has been decided that these orders would be placed in 2010 so the extra VAT will be incurred.

Actions: *Emma Melia/Zoe Lethbridge* to calculate totals needed from relevant academics to top up expenditure at UoW
James Bowen to complete single source agreement forms
Jon Preece/Stuart Arkless to follow up outstanding equipment totals in UoB Chemistry

ii. Refurbishment underspend strategy

There is an underspend at UoB of ~£15k in Chemistry and ~£50k in Chemical Engineering. AWM have agreed that a case should be put forwards to utilize the Chemistry underspend for corridor refurbishment and security access. No estates costs have been identified to make use of the Chemical Engineering underspend; this was discussed with AWM and they will consider

a strategy for equipment add-ons as before. The limits for tendering (£25k) need to be taken into account. There was no refurbishment underspend at UoW.

Action: *James Bowen to suggest possible equipment add-ons and discuss with Jon Preece the possibility of IR equipment joint between Chemistry and Chemical Engineering.*

c. Salary underspend

There is a salary underspend of approximately £11k for the period 31st August – 30th November 2009 due to the lack of a Business Engagement Manager. There is further underspend due to:

- Project staff member salaries being below the upper limit of salary bands;
- The delay in start dates compared to the original financial profile for the UoW Facilities Manager and the Business Engagement Manager and;
- The UoB Facilities Managers timesheets supporting less than 50% FTE in certain months.

AWM have confirmed that we cannot convert this money to another category, or use it for additional salaries (appointing a short term Facilities Manager for example). This money will therefore be lost to the Project. The Project Manager will submit a final summary of the salary position to AWM after the Business Engagement Manager has started.

2. Outputs

a. Performance to date

b. Position for 09/10 and 10/11

The outputs in the Project Management Plan for this year and the coming years were highlighted:

Two Business Assists are required for this year, which may be achievable but is considered a risk. This was discussed with AWM, and due to the failure to appoint a BEM until now they will probably allow us to roll these over to next year if necessary. [Note: A Business Assist is 12 hours of work for a company charged at FEC. The company needs to complete an evidence form for us and needs to be in the West Midlands. If the company is outside the region, we can only count this as levered revenue.] One company can be counted on more than one project, so it was suggested that we should work with AM1 to try to develop Business Assists with companies they have successfully worked with. It was suggested that we could advertise services such as NMR, GPC or mass spectrometry to achieve this target.

We are ahead of our target for Jobs Created and Skills Development for this year. It was mentioned that if we are over-achieving we should keep claiming outputs and so start working on the targets for future years. Emma Melia asked if the jobs created output (53) seemed achievable in future years as one of the other Projects had expressed concerns over their target. As we can count PDRAs for this output it was felt that there should be no problems with this. A letter has been drafted for PIs to sign to confirm that a PDRA position created will make use of the AM2 equipment and contribute towards the Project's objectives.

One business created output is needed (2010/11), which requires a company such as a spin-out to be created and have been trading for 12 months before being claimed. It was thought that this was achievable from UoW.

Graduates into employment in the region was highlighted as an output which is easier to achieve than to track, for example if an undergraduate went on to work with a company in the West Midlands we might not know about it. A PhD student who stayed on as a PDRA or went to work for a spin-out in the region would count as long as their contract was at least 12 months.

A target of £2.3M for levered revenue for this year was thought to be achievable. A concise form of acknowledgement for the project funding for grant proposals where space is short has been put together and will be circulated. Katherine Branch is encouraging PIs to include this at UoW. It was suggested that Sam Hall could also encourage academics at UoW to mention the project in proposals as she currently checks and signs FR14 forms. Academics other than custodians may also be submitting proposals and should be met with on a regular basis (e.g. Andy Clark, Peter Scott at UoW).

Targets for publications and presentations have already been met. If a student gives a talk at an external conference we can count this.

We are awaiting a clear definition of a workshop form AWM. It may be possible for us to claim the away day in this category, however it was thought that this will be mainly involve events run by the BEM where representatives from companies meet to discuss specific research areas.

Actions: *Emma Melia/Zoe Lethbridge to circulate short acknowledgement*
Emma Melia/Zoe Lethbridge to ask Sam Hall about checking for AM2
acknowledgement on proposals
Julie Macpherson to send copies of talks given by students at conferences to PM

3. FEC and accounting

a. Costings for equipment usage

All UoW costings have been approved by custodians. A document containing all this information is being put together; this still requires some input from custodians regarding descriptions and applications of equipment. It was emphasised that this document is confidential and will not be circulated to potential users.

UoB costings have been calculated but still need to be approved by custodians.

There are four different hourly rates: major facility FEC manned and unmanned (for commercial users), and small facility FEC manned and unmanned (for regional HEIs, this does not include depreciation and estates costs). A small number of items have had certain consumables removed from the costings which would be bought separately by users.

The rates for instruments attached to the electron microscopes were higher than expected, due to inclusion of costing for microscopes themselves. It was thought that these may need to be revised.

Actions: *Zoe Lethbridge to create web page with password access for academic leads to access documents such as costing list*
Emma Melia/Zoe Lethbridge to send breakdown of SEM costing to Julie Macpherson

b. UoB and UoW approach

Costings for similar equipment were compared at both institutions. The importance of consistency in this area was highlighted. There is some discrepancy due to the different approaches the two institutions use for calculating the % time that equipment is used for. Finance team representatives from UoB and UoW are to meet to discuss this.

Actions: *Emma Melia to send UoB Chemical Engineering costings to James Bowen*
Zoe Lethbridge to set up finance meeting between UoB and UoW

c. Accounting for income

Maintenance accounts are to be created for groups of equipment at UoW Chemistry which can be used to charge consumables to. These would be maintained by external income and/or internal users. The system will be trialed in UoW Chemistry and rolled out if successful.

Actions: *Zoe Lethbridge/Emma Melia to meet Julie Macpherson and Dave Haddleton to agree on groupings of equipment for maintenance accounts*

4. Launch event – Jan 2010

An AM2 launch event for stakeholders was discussed, to be held in January or February 2010. The format would include talks from key academics and a tour of facilities, followed by a drinks reception with posters. It was felt that this needed to be a single event at one site; UoW was suggested as equipment installation is slightly ahead. A Wednesday afternoon was thought to be ideal, in the physics lecture theatre and foyer. Potential dates are 27th January, 3rd, 10th or 17th February. Suggestions for invitations were: AWM cluster managers and board, EPSRC representatives, Warwick Ventures and Alta Innovations, Warwick Business School representatives.

Actions: *Zoe Lethbridge to confirm date and circulate suggested agenda
All to add any further suggestions for invitations*

5. Website

No further developments were reported.

6. AOB

Business Engagement Manager

Louise Ottignon formally finishes today (30th November 2009) but will continue to work occasional days until the end of the year to finish off ongoing work. This salary has been funded through RSS/HEIF money. A candidate has been offered the job of BEM and aims to start on 7th December 2009, subject to HR negotiations. Emma and Zoe have met with the candidate and discussed the project, emphasising the importance of the Business Assist outputs.

Actions: *Julie Macpherson to contact Louise to clarify situation regarding Cranfield discussions
Emma Melia/Zoe Lethbridge to arrange for transfer of telephone and laptop to new BEM
Zoe Lethbridge to attend meeting with new candidate, Louise Ottignon and Peter Hedges*

Photographs

David Cooper (Marketing) has arranged for professional photographers to visit both institutions to take pictures of people and equipment for AM1 and AM2. The dates for this are 15th (UoW) and 16th December (UoB)

Actions: *Academic leads to send suggestions of equipment/people for photographing to Zoe Lethbridge*

SCIRA fellows

An away day was held for the SCIRA fellows where a representative was selected (Allan Walton, a.walton@bham.ac.uk) as a point of contacting the group. It was felt important that arrangements and conditions for the fellows should be consistent across both institutions.