

**RCE North East / NECTER Quarterly General Meeting: Tuesday 17th January; 3.45-5.00;
Armstrong Building (2.48), Newcastle University.**

Present

Caspar Hewett, NECTER (CH); Lucy Latham, Newcastle University (LL); Oliver Moss, Northumbria University (OM); Edward Byers, Newcastle University (EB); Dolan Conway, RIBA (NE) (DC); Aidan Doyle, Newcastle University (AD); Ian Ground, North East Centre for Lifelong Learning (IG); Sharon Paterson, Teesside University (SP); Deborah Johnson, Newcastle College (DJ); Rachael Little, Newcastle College/SCENE (RL); Graeme Lloyd, Tanfield School (GL); Barbara Sturm, Newcastle University (BS); Carla-Leanne Washbourne, Newcastle University (CW).

Apologies

Samantha Boyes is away until mid April; Bill Colwell; Sara Crawshaw; Colm Doyle no longer has the level of contact with schools that was useful to the RCE - remove from list; Heather Ging; Terence Harbinson - Has Senior Leadership Team meeting; Bob Hull; Douglas Hunter has another meeting; Rich Hurst doesn't think he'll be able to get involved with NECTER this year as he needs to focus on Durham related work; Shruti Jain; Munmun KC; Elisa Lopez-Capel Has STEM meeting; Krista McKinzey has another meeting; Oscar Watson – something came up at last minute; Paul Younger is in London;

Report on recent activities – CH

- CH (NECTER): At the last meeting a legal constitution had been agreed. A number of signatures had already been added to the tabled document with others to follow.
- CH (NECTER): A conversation had been undertaken with Professor Keith Shaw (Northumbria University) about the possible hosting of the RCE by the University's School of Arts and Social Sciences; as well as about possible 'cash' support for its activities and/or 'core' operations. It was proposed that someone from Northumbria University be asked to act as chair of the committee should Northumbria University accept the role of host.
- CH (NECTER) A ~£12K funding application had been submitted to Research Councils UK (RCUK). If successful, this would see NECTER organise (probably in October '12) a series of 'public' events under the auspices of RCUK's 'Energy' theme.
- (CH) 'Top up' funding for a programme of film-making training for NEETs has been obtained from Dulverton Trust through The Great Debate (<http://www.thegreatdebate.org.uk/>) which will sustain the programme until April 2012. Further funding is being sought to continue the programme beyond that.
- *With regard to the more general matters of funding and (NECTER) sustainability, it was agreed that in addition to seeking out funding peculiar to NECTER 'events' and project specific activities, every effort should be made to secure 'core' funding to ensure critical mass is maintained.*

Project reports – project leaders

- IG (Centre for Lifelong Learning) It was reported that 400-500 people had been successfully recruited to the Centre's latest portfolio of accredited courses. Further enrollees (~200) were being actively sought out.

- (DC) A collaborative relationship involving RIBA (NE), Aimhigher (an organisation charged with encouraging progression into HE) and various schools was reported on. The Aimhigher contact point (Maggie Stewart) was put forward as a possible member of the NECTER steering committee.
- (GL) Speaking on behalf of Tanfield School, GL reiterated his commitment to NECTER and reminded committee members of the School's particular interest in 'science and engineering' opportunities. Indeed, an interest was expressed in the aforementioned Aimhigher-RIBA (NE) initiative.
- (RL) Together with a school in Ghana (a country hosting its own RCE: http://www.ias.unu.edu/resource_centre/RCE%20Ghana.pdf), a collaboration oriented around climate change was being developed. SCENE (<http://rcenortheast.eu/Projects.html>), meanwhile, was also reported as 'ongoing'.
- (CW) Members were alerted to the activities of Engineers without Borders (<http://www.ewb-uk.org/>), an "international development organisation that removes barriers to development through engineering....[and provides]....opportunities for young people to learn about technology's role in tackling poverty".
- (EB) A brief update on the activities of Cinema Politica (<http://www.cinemapolitica.org/Newcastle>) was provided. Although its first 12-month programme was drawing to a close, sufficient funds had been located (principally through donations) to cover ~50% of the subscription for the coming year. Forthcoming events include: 16th Feb (TBC); 28th Feb (The Experimental Eskimos); and 22nd March (Sharkwater).
- (SP) The activities of Teesside University's School of Arts & Media were outlined. With a significant 'outreach' programme already in train, it was suggested that that a short body of 'showcase text' might be assembled for publication on the NECTER website.
- (AD) A visit from the American movie director, Michael Wadleigh, was reported as being potentially forthcoming. Further details would be circulated in due course.
- (BS) Attending her first NECTER meeting, BS briefly outlined her previous experience of STEM outreach and detailed her interest in issues of energy, in particular. Possible opportunities available through the Nuffield Foundation's 'Science Bursaries' initiative (<http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/science-bursaries-schools-and-colleges>) were also reflected upon briefly.
- (LL) A series of emerging collaborations with local Primary Schools were discussed. Funding was being sought out to formalise and strengthen this programme.

Review project applications for submission to UNU – all

Academy of Possible Futures proposal

- Comments included: "Looks great but what is Aquaponics?" (Paul Ruane); "looks totally positive and deserves support" (David Ridley); " bit of a catch all.... a flag of convenient money black hole. Throwing some of the right words together – and the neolog appears to be Transformative Education instead of Sustainability ... I will oppose this on the grounds of an apparent paucity of sincerity ... How does this offer anything new?" (Aidan Doyle); "it seems to have all the right keywords, although it seems to be more a proposal than a project (Jaime A)
- The Committee agreed that a 'revise and resubmit' decision should be relayed to the applicant.

The Beatitudes Art Exhibition proposal

- Comments included: "I think it should be recognised since the underlying themes of the beatitudes are peace, justice, poverty and service, values we would all like to have espoused throughout communities. The use of art to express these themes is an excellent idea and could be genuinely

transformative in bringing the themes I have mentioned above to an audience. The only recommendation I would have is that the partnership of schools not only displays their work in Durham cathedral but also shares it with local communities in such places as libraries, townhall etc” (Terence Harbinson).

- The fact that the project appeared to straddle just one educational sector was also judged to be inconsistent with NECTER principles. The extent to which it was genuinely ‘transformative’ was also queried.
- AD strongly supported the application and offered to write some text explaining better the project’s relation to EfSD and to circulate for further consideration.

CH reminded the committee that there was a commitment in the constitution for members to review project applications quarterly and to send those projects agreed by the members to the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNUIAS) for ratification as RCE projects within four weeks of the committee meeting at which it was recognised. With that in mind he requested that any actions required related to the above two projects be carried out promptly.

CH asked members to note that he had circulated a request asking that any projects previously recognised by RCE North East but not yet ratified by UNUIAS be forwarded to him so that they could be sent as a batch along with any agreed at the current meeting. So far the only such project he had was the Climate Change Schools Project. To his knowledge the only projects officially recognised by UNUIAS were the first batch of seven projects sent in 2008: the great northern debate; Sustainable Migrant Community Cultures in the North East; Outdoor Laboratory; Global Community Gardens; Plant Biology Masterclass; Textures and Growth; North East Student Conference on ‘Sustainability’.

Report on funding applications completed/funding received/Proposals for Funding

- Discussions around funding had been folded into the ‘Report on recent activities’ agenda item.

Planning for 2012

Reminder of dates of forthcoming General Meetings:

As agreed at the October 2011 General Meeting, forthcoming Quarterly General Meetings are tabled for 17 April 2012, 17 July 2012 and 17 October 2012 (AGM) – time and venue to be arranged.

AOB

There was no other business.

END