

Webex Meeting of UKFN Executive Committee (EC)

14:00, Friday 11 November 2016

MINUTES

1. The EC noted the aggregated data about the SIG proposals and the list of useful outputs (below).
2. The EC selected the SIGs to recommend to the Advisory Board (AB) following the process described below.
3. The final list of recommended SIGs was sent to the Advisory Board on Monday 14th November.

SIG proposals

The UKFN received 46 proposals for Special Interest Groups featuring wide coverage of UK institutions and a broad range of subjects. The proposed SIGs involved 60 institutions and named 998 researchers (with duplicates) and 75 companies/institutes. The funding requested was 109% of the total budget allocated for SIGs.

Representation by institution

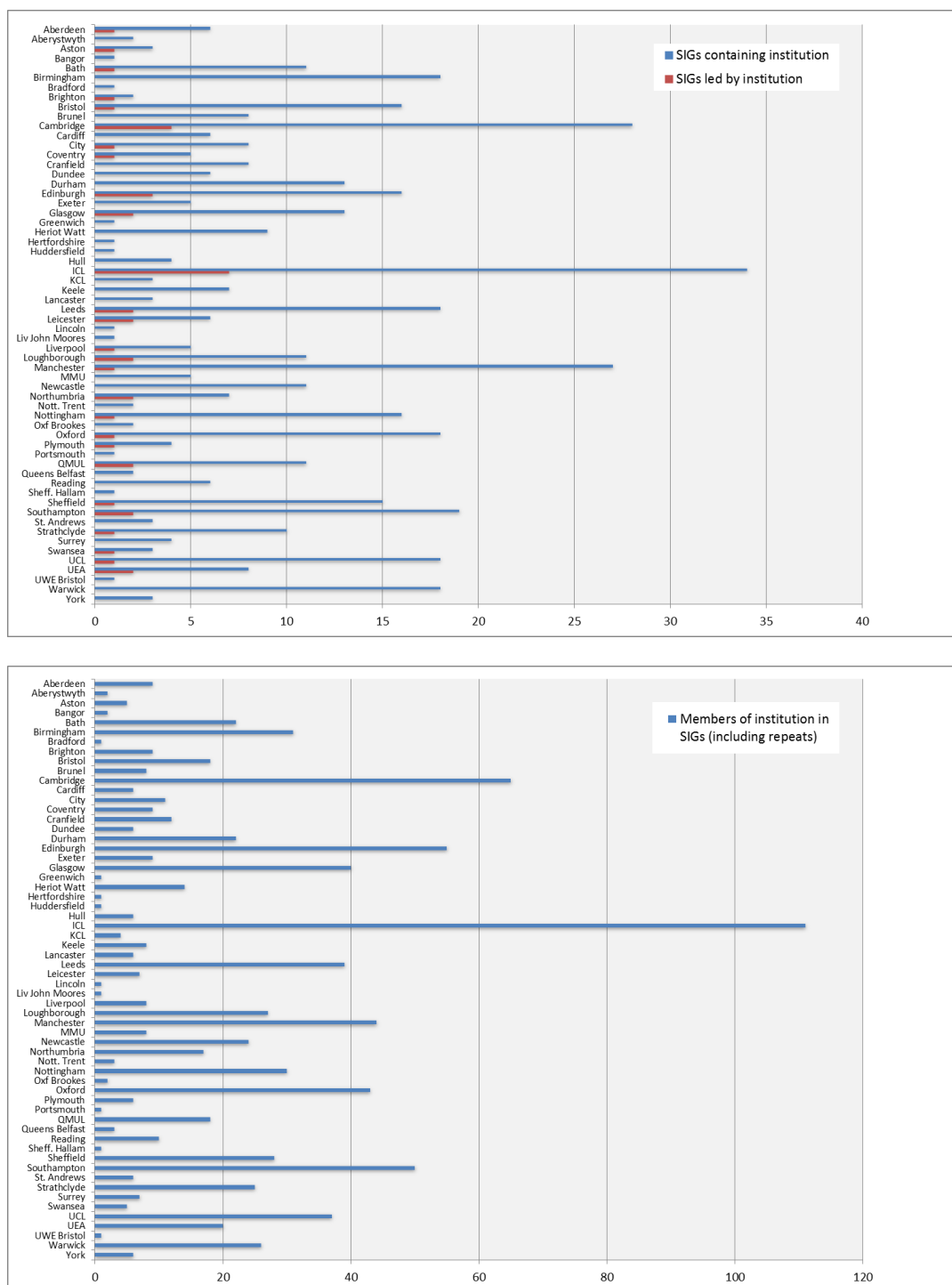


Figure 1 Upper: number of proposed SIGs containing at least one member of a given institution, and number of SIGs led by given institution. Lower: number of members of a given institution in SIGs, including repeats (so that data values on chart add up to 998).

Representation by subject area

Based on each SIG's description, a fraction was allocated to each subject area such that the total for each SIG was 1.0. The number of SIGs with a non-zero fraction was noted for each subject area; the fractions were also summed for each subject area.

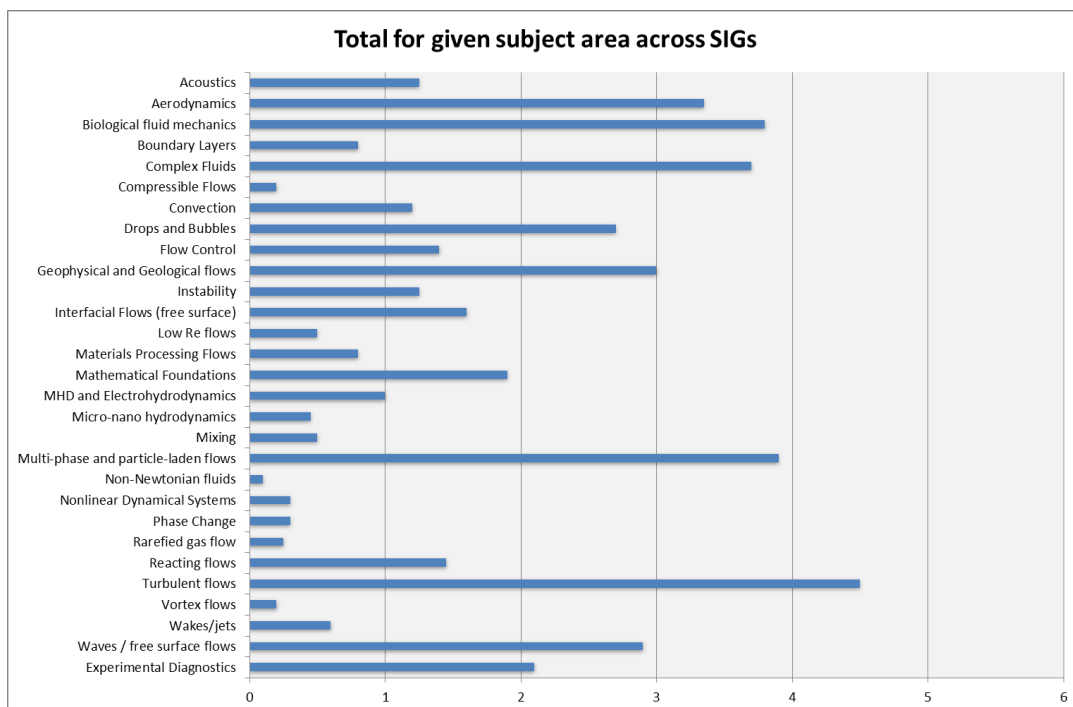
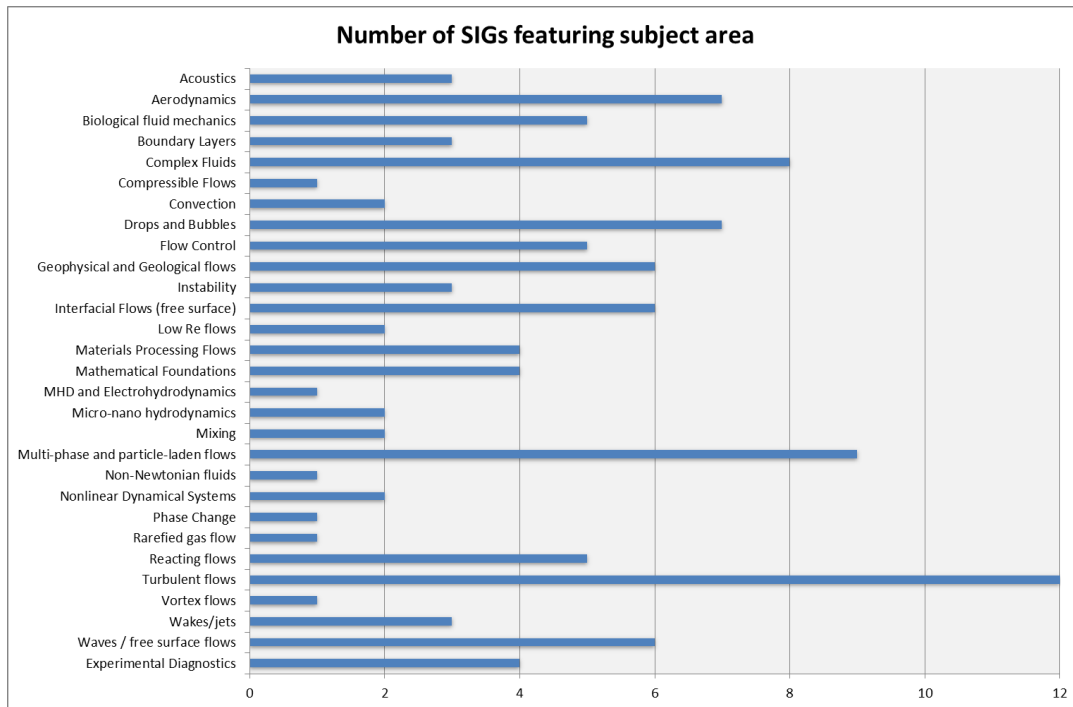


Figure 2 Upper: number of proposed SIGs featuring a given research area. Lower: total of fractions for each subject area across all SIGs (so that data values on chart add up to 46).

Activities and outputs proposed in SIGs

A list was compiled of the most promising activities and outputs that were proposed:

- DISTIL EXISTING KNOWLEDGE IN FIELD
 - create a state of the art document in SIG area
 - write a best practice document in SIG area
 - write a joint review article in SIG area
- PLAN GENERAL RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
 - develop research agenda and strategy
 - identify roadmap for collaborative research
 - identify similarities between different research projects in SIG area
- DEFINE RESEARCH CHALLENGES
 - identify core fluids challenges in domain
 - list of industrial challenges and schedule for solution
 - white paper on grand challenges
- IDENTIFY FUNDING NEEDS
 - identify collective needs for funding
 - identify key capital requirements
 - make recommendations to research councils and UKFN
- PLAN AND SUBMIT RESEARCH PROPOSALS
 - align focus groups for writing research proposals
 - write and submit a large scale research proposal
 - prepare a CDT proposal
- CREATE TRAINING RESOURCES
 - create and collate training resources, such as lecture notes and online tutorials
 - create teaching resources for sharing (lectures, table-top experiments)
 - create presentations and videos from workshops
- CREATE RESEARCH RESOURCES
 - set standard test problems and benchmarking workshops
 - create and maintain an open-access repository
 - disseminate open source solvers/data/expertise/algorithms/tools via UKFN website
- RAISE PROFILE OF RESEARCH AREA
 - create pedagogic videos in SIG area for UKFN website
 - create a web portal / website
 - organise international conference
- ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC
 - create public engagement videos of SIG area
 - create gallery of flow visualization in SIG area
 - perform outreach activities
- ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA
 - be a one-stop SIG for industry to contact
 - maintain an open database of companies interested in this area
 - compile a public directory of expertise
 - Generate a database of work in the research area
- HOLD TRAINING EVENTS
 - hold a 3 day training event in SIG area
 - hold summer schools and workshops

Process for SIG selection

Before the EC meeting

All proposals were reviewed by the PI (MJ) and the facilitator (ND) and allocated an initial score. (MJ did not score the SIG proposal on which he is named.) Then 18 or 19 proposals were allocated to each Co-I (NS, PL, AJ, BvW, ST) such that:

- each proposal was reviewed by two Co-Is and allocated another two scores;
- each Co-I had a representative sample of the proposed SIGs, based on the initial score;
- Co-Is did not review proposals on which they were named.

The three scores were added together and the proposed SIGs were ranked in that order. The cumulative budget commitment was calculated as a function of the number of SIGs awarded, assuming that they would be awarded in their rank order.

To check for differences between the scoring of the Co-Is, the average score given by each Co-I was calculated. The highest average score was 0.6 points above the lowest. Two Co-Is' average score was around 0.3 above the overall average and two Co-Is' average score was around 0.3 below the overall average. Any SIGs for which the Co-Is both marked high or low were flagged.

At the EC meeting

1. The PI reviewed the overall statistics and composition of proposals submitted to the first call. The EC agreed that the proposals showed a good spread across both institutions and subject area.
2. The EC considered the seven SIGs that were ranked 35= (which, if funded, would cause 100% of SIG funding to be committed) and agreed that the UKFN should not commit 100% of SIG funding in the first call. The EC agreed that the UKFN should issue a second call for SIG proposals with a deadline at the end of January. The EC agreed that the SIGs ranked 35= would all benefit by receiving feedback from the first call and being asked to resubmit for the second call.
3. The EC reviewed the five SIGs ranked 30= and agreed that they would also benefit by receiving feedback from the first call and being asked to resubmit for the second call.
4. The EC reviewed the ten SIGs ranked 20= and agreed that one should be funded as is, six should be funded with suggestions about areas in which the EC thought the SIG could be improved, and three should receive feedback from the first call and be asked to resubmit for the second call.
5. The EC reviewed two SIGs ranked 12= for which the reviewers' scores differed by at least 2. The EC agreed that both should be funded as is.
6. The EC agreed that the level of committed funding, £300,930 (63% of total), is appropriate and noted that this leaves £179,070 for the second round.
7. After the meeting, the PI and Facilitator produced charts of the spread of SIGs across institutions and subject areas and circulated them by email (see Annex). The EC agreed that there was no need to reconsider SIGs at the borderline at this stage. The EC agreed that there are some research areas that the UKFN would particularly like to see in the next round of SIGs and that, when giving feedback to unsuccessful SIG leaders, the PI would particularly encourage SIGs in those areas.

Annex: Recommended SIGs by institution and subject area

The following charts may be compared with the upper charts in Figures 1 and 2, respectively.

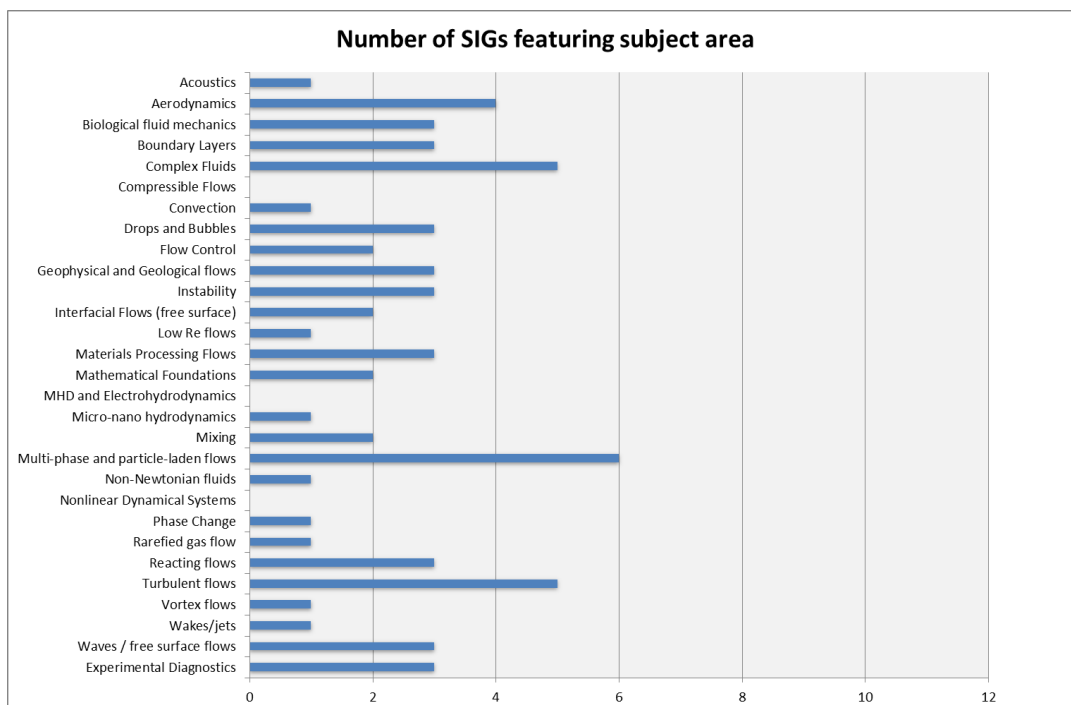
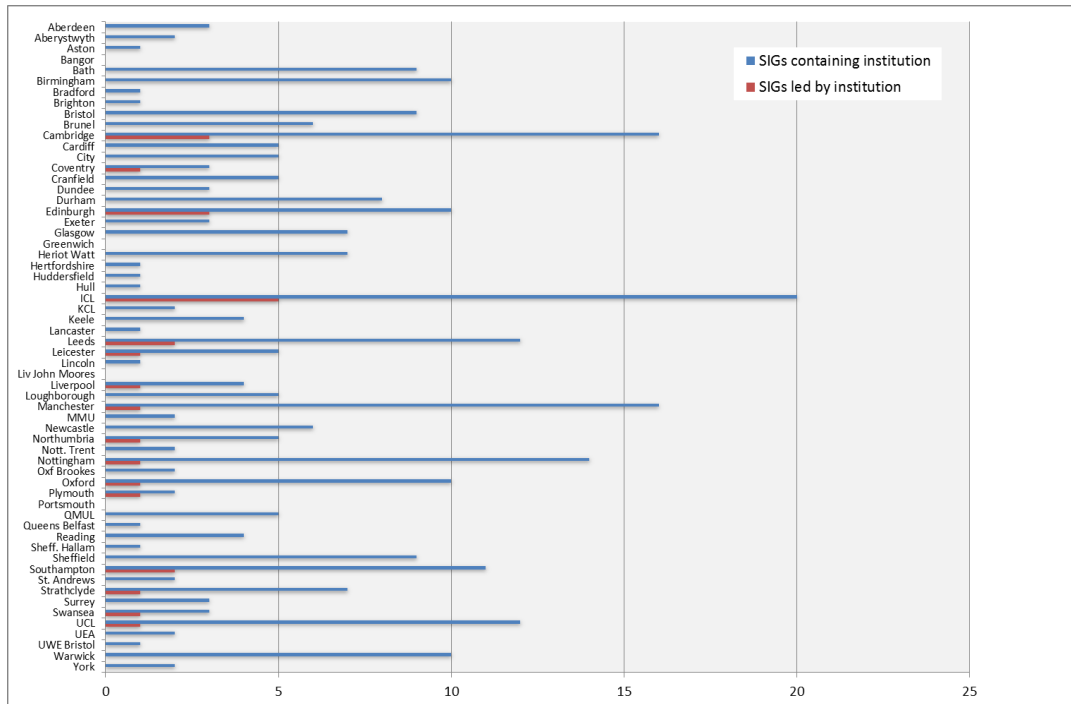


Figure A1 Upper: number of recommended SIGs containing at least one member of a given institution, and number of recommended SIGs led by given institution. Lower: number of recommended SIGs featuring a given research area.