

**Teleconference of the  
Cochrane Steering Group  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Agenda**

1. Welcomes, apologies, declarations of interest, and approval of the agenda.
2. Game Changers Project Board Recommendation [RESTRICTED ACCESS].
3. Risk Management Assessment [RESTRICTED ACCESS].
4. Draft Policy Framework and Spokesperson Guidance [RESTRICTED ACCESS].
5. Formal resolution approving the Heads of Terms on Cochrane's new Headquarters at St Albans House, Haymarket, London [RESTRICTED ACCESS].
6. General Update [time permitting].
7. Any other business.

**Minutes of Cochrane's Steering Group (CSG)  
Teleconference - Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014  
(Approved 16 12 2014)**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<p><b>Present:</b> Lisa Bero (Co-Chair), Martin Burton, Rachel Churchill, Karin Dearness, Chris Eccleston, Cindy Farquhar (Co-Chair), Steve McDonald, Joerg Meerpohl, Mona Nasser, Holger Schünemann, Liz Stovold and Denise Thomson.</p> <p>Mark Wilson (Chief Executive Officer), David Tovey (Editor in Chief), Chris Champion (Senior Advisor to the CEO), Chris Mavergames (Head of IKMD, item 2 only), Lorna McAlley (Executive PA, minutes), Hugh Sutherland (Head of FCS, item 2 only), Julie Wood (Head of CEAD, item 4 only)</p>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcomes, Apologies, Declarations of Interest, and Approval of the Agenda</b></p> <p>Lisa welcomed everyone to the call. Apologies had been received from Alvaro Atallah, Anne Lyddiatt and Mingming Zhang. Steve McDonald and Rachel Churchill identified a declaration of interest regarding Item 2 (Game Changers) and would leave the teleconference for this item. The minutes from the CSG meetings in Hyderabad were approved. The agenda was approved.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Game Changers Project Board Recommendation.</b></p> <p>Lisa summarised the process that had led to the recommendation, presented to the CSG by the Game Changers Project Board, to fund <i>Project Transform: Transforming Cochrane Content Production</i> from Cochrane's strategic reserves, with implementation to begin immediately and planned to last for the next three years. Mark reminded the CSG that the Project Board had conducted an extensive and thorough technical assessment of Project transform and therefore its recommendation was for a binary decision of approval or rejection, as a fundamental reassessment of the project by the CSG was not required.</p> <p><i>Steve McDonald and Rachel Churchill left the teleconference for this item.</i></p> <p>The CSG recognised that <i>Project Transform</i> is, indeed, a transformative, ambitious, 'game-changing' proposal that if successful would have a profound effect on Cochrane's content production and provide a powerful platform for collaborators to work more efficiently and effectively together. In his technical assessment to the CSG David explained that the revolutionary nature of the proposed Game Changer project would address key issues Cochrane is facing, including: improving the efficiency of review production and study retrieval; making the organisation more inclusive; and making a step change in the way it recruits, trains and supports contributors. He thought it would be important and beneficial for Cochrane to be early adopters of these innovative ideas. The CSG was assured that the project could go ahead and would meet its promised deliverables even if matching funds were not obtained, but obviously not to the scale promised if those funds did not come through.</p> <p>Some CSG members' expressed concern about whether Cochrane contributors and groups could adjust to the changes <i>Project Transform</i> would bring and if existing work processes would be undermined. Chris Eccleston, as a member of the Game Changers Project Board, recognised these concerns and said that initially he had shared them but after engaging in detail with the project he was now fully supportive of it. He suggested, and others agreed, that explaining such a complex and innovative project in a way that can be quickly understood would be a significant challenge and that additional resources might be needed to support communication efforts to do this.</p> <p>The potential impact on new and existing methods, and the integration of the methods community was discussed. David explained that whilst the project may facilitate methods development it would not be leading work in this area. CSG members explored whether a phased approach to the project's three work</p>

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	<p>streams would be viable, and concluded that it would not as they are mutually dependent and need to be developed in a concurrent way. Some CSG members recognised the investment was more risky in terms of non delivery of the final outcomes because of the scale, ambition and complexity of the proposal but accepted that higher risk was in the nature of the Game Changers initiative and supported the project. The CSG recognised that the Project Board had conducted an extensive technical analysis and rigorous assessment of the proposal and thanked the Board for its work.</p> <p>The CSG voted to approve the recommendation as outlined in the proposal and to fund <i>Project Transform</i> at a cost of GBP 533,000 (plus additional Central Executive support funds) over three years. CSG members agreed that implementation of the project must involve clear communication of the project’s objectives and wide engagement with internal groups affected by it: particularly with Cochrane Review Groups.</p> <p>Mark reminded the CSG that a further paper from the Game Changers Project Board on future competitive funding rounds would be submitted in early 2015. Lisa thanked the Project Board for its work, and the CSG for its thorough consideration of the recommendation.</p>
	<p><b>DECISION: The CSG approved the recommendation to fund Transform Project Transform: Transforming Cochrane Content Production from Cochrane’s strategic reserves; with implementation beginning immediately and planned to last for the next three years.</b></p>
	<p><b>ACTION: Hugh to inform Julian Elliott that the CSG had approved the recommendation to fund Project Transform. Hugh to thank the Game Changer Project Board for their work.</b></p>
3.	<p><b>Risk Management Report.</b></p> <p><i>Steve McDonald and Rachel Churchill rejoined the teleconference.</i></p> <p>Lisa welcomed any comments from the CSG on the latest iteration of the <i>Risk Management Report</i> produced by Mark following discussion of an earlier draft by the CSG at its meeting in Hyderabad. Mark highlighted the changes made, including the introduction of additional risks identified by the CSG, improving the presentation to highlight the most important risks, and some added text.</p> <p>The CSG agreed to re-order the sections in the document and bring the external environment risks to the top of the report, as these were the most significant risks Cochrane faced. It agreed that the <i>Risk Management Report</i> should remain a governance and management tool and not be distributed more widely. The CSG will return to the <i>Report</i> on a regular basis to reconsider Cochrane’s risk profile and maintain it as a living document. The SMT will also reassess the <i>Report</i> on a quarterly basis. The CSG were asked to email any further edits to Mark after the teleconference; and the final version would be sent to CSG members by the end of the year.</p>
	<p><b>ACTION: CSG to email any specific feedback to Mark.</b></p>
4	<p><b>Draft Policy Framework and Spokesperson Guidance.</b></p> <p>Lisa explained that she and Cindy had invited Julie to discuss the draft policies (establishing a Policy Development Framework and Public Comment Policy) before the documents are circulated for broader consultation. Julie explained how they had been developed and the issues faced in drafting them. The CSG welcomed the drafts and members offered suggestions on additional clarifications and text. Julie thanked CSG members for their feedback and would adjust the draft before consulting with Group Executives and the wider Cochrane community.</p>
	<p><b>ACTION: CSG to provide any additional written feedback; then Julie will begin consultation with the wider Cochrane collaboration.</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Formal resolution approving the ‘Heads of Terms’ on Cochrane’s new Headquarters at St Albans House, Haymarket, London.</b></p>

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	<p>Mark gave the CSG an update on the move to a new Cochrane headquarters office in London. Agreement had been reached with the landlord for a five-year lease for one of the two rental properties mentioned at the last update in Hyderabad, in St Albans House, Haymarket, SW1. The new office increased total space available compared to the present offices in London and Oxford by over 50%, offered excellent working facilities, was well situated for Central Executive staff members and visitors, with very good transport links and local facilities. A formal resolution agreeing to the signing of a five-year contract as per the 'Heads of Terms' sent to CSG members was required by the landlord. Mark took the CSG through the main elements of the terms. The total cost of the office would rise because of the increase in space but the rental rate was very reasonable for central London, as the building would be demolished at the end of the five-year term in 2019-20. As a UK charity, Cochrane would also pay only one fifth of the business rates and could reclaim all of the VAT due. The contract start date would probably be 8<sup>th</sup> December, with six months' free rent; and staff are expecting to move in mid-January, subject to fit out and broadband connectivity being completed by then.</p>
	<p><b>DECISION: The CSG approved a resolution for Cochrane to sign the 'Heads of Terms' for the new office on the first floor of St Albans House, Haymarket, London, SW1 until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019.</b></p>
	<p><b>ACTION: Hugh Sutherland (Company Secretary) and Martin Burton (Treasurer) to sign the Heads of Terms document on behalf of the CSG.</b></p>
6.	<p><b>General Update (time permitting).</b> This item was not covered, due to time constraints, and because Mark had sent an update note prior to the meeting.</p>
7.	<p><b>Any Other Business.</b> None.</p>

**Time and date of next meeting: Tuesday 16 December 2014 at 21:00 (GMT), by teleconference.**

Item #	Decision/Action	Person(s) responsible	By when
2	<p><b>DECISION: The CSG approved the recommendation to fund <i>Project Transform: Transforming Cochrane Content Production</i> from Cochrane's strategic reserves; with implementation beginning immediately and planned to last for the next three years.</b></p>		
2	<p><b>ACTION: Hugh to inform Julian Elliott that the CSG had approved the recommendation to fund <i>Project Transform</i>. Hugh to thank the Game Changer Project Board for their work.</b></p>	HS	
3	<p><b>ACTION: CSG to email any specific feedback to Mark.</b></p>	CSG	
4	<p><b>ACTION: CSG to provide any additional written feedback; then Julie will begin consultation with the wider Cochrane collaboration.</b></p>	CSG/JW	
5	<p><b>DECISION: The CSG approved a resolution for Cochrane to sign the 'Heads of Terms' for the new office on the first floor of St Albans House, Haymarket, London, SW1 until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019.</b></p>		
5	<p><b>ACTION: Hugh Sutherland (Company Secretary) and Martin Burton (Treasurer) to sign the Heads of Terms document on behalf of the CSG.</b></p>	HS, MB	