OR54: MAKING AN IMPACT (“THE PRACTITIONERS’ STREAM”)

Analytics? Data-mining? Process engineering? Decision support? Or just knocking up a spreadsheet to help somebody work out what’s going on? Whatever you call it, if your day-job requires you to solve problems in organisations – in-house or external - the OR54 practitioners’ stream is for you. If previous years’ practitioners days are anything to go by, you will come away buzzing with ideas for improving practice, and enthused by new possibilities.

This year we have a very full one-day stream on the 5th September, with two conference Plenaries – the President’s Medal and an address by Jason Field on Security - which will be of direct interest to practitioners, plus interactive sessions which have been popular and successful at previous conferences. As a further incentive, the stream will end with a drinks reception (to be confirmed) and the conference banquet (definite)!

**Speed Networking**

No matter what the event it can be hard to meet others working in similar fields to you. There are always old contacts to catch up with and revisit. Yet, now, more than ever your network of contacts is vital to helping you succeed – whether that is developing new opportunities or learning about communities of practice. So, come along and start the MAI day really positively at the speed networking session. This structured, fun and focused session is specifically designed to help you meet as many people as possible in a series of short face to face meetings.

Whether from an independent consultancy, large company or academia, come and develop links with others working in OR. At each face to face meeting both people will each have 2 minutes to present themselves – talking about, for example, why they are at the conference, what areas of OR they specialise in or are interested in, what makes their work interesting. At the end of the meeting, you move onto the next one. In 60 minutes you will meet about 10 new contacts. The initial meeting will let you know how much you have in common – the real value comes from following up the initial meeting and there is plenty of time at the conference to do so, maybe over coffee during the day or at the banquet?

**Facilitated Workshops on ‘Hot’ Topics in OR Practice**

Following positive feedback from previous conferences we are running two sessions to explore issues of immediate interest and importance. The topics will include:

1. **Technique tasters** - whistle-stop tours of 2 or 3 techniques - what they can be used for, benefits (and limitations), worked examples, and handouts signposting more information (e.g. accessible books & journal articles, websites, software - to buy, download, trial - training courses).

2. **Professional & personal development** - creative ways to improve yourself, or your team, with or without a training budget - bring and share ideas, and put together your own development plans

3. **Networking for introverts** - share tips, discuss difficulties, devise strategies for building a better network - and have a go at putting some of them into practice

4. **Speaking without words** - communicating with colleagues and clients through effective diagrams and pictures
5. **Build your own pub!** have a go at building & running your own (simulated) pub where the drinkers make their own decisions...- in teams, run as a competition

6. **Selling OR** - how can we promote the use of OR amongst our potential clients, whether in-house or external? What are the barriers to using OR and how can they be overcome?

7. **Ethical dilemmas in OR** – ever been tempted to keep quiet about a mistake you’ve found in your numbers? or to go along with a forceful client instead of challenging them? This is a repeat of the workshop that received the highest satisfaction rating at last year’s conference

**Practitioner – Academic Collaboration: Maximising the Impact of academic research**

The aim of this session is to explore how practitioners can get the most value out of OR research and help academics to maximise the real world impact of their work. Many practitioners are keen to utilise the latest developments to improve their effectiveness but face all sorts of barriers, real and perceived. From the academic point of view, it is well known that the next REF will include impact as a key criterion, and much discussion has been held about this; but do academics and practitioners have the same interpretation of ‘impact’?

Prof Sally Brailsford will chair this interactive session, which will commence with brief introductory comments from a distinguished panel, comprising two experienced practitioners (Sean Jones, NATS and Tony O’Connor, GORS); and two senior academics (Prof Mike Pidd, Lancaster, and Prof Stewart Robinson, Loughborough), who will briefly present their personal perspectives and give some innovative suggestions for how these barriers may be overcome. A general discussion will follow.

RK/JCR 13/06/12
OR54: WEDNESDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER

MAKING AN IMPACT (“THE PRACTITIONERS’ STREAM”)

Is it your day-job to solve problems in organisations - as an external consultant or an employee? Do the concepts and logic of a mathematical, scientific or O.R. background form an integral part of your mindset? If so, whatever your job title, the OR54 practitioners’ stream is aimed at you. Specifically, it is aimed at helping you exchange ideas and expertise with other people in the same position, building networks, and debating issues of immediate relevance to practice.

08.20-08.30 Introduction and welcome

08.30-9.30 Speed networking (facilitated by Sophie Carr)

09.30 – 10.30 Jason Field Conference Plenary

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

1100-1215 Facilitated Workshops on ‘hot’ topics in OR practice I (coordinated by Kate Swatridge & Ruth Kaufman)

Choose from: Technique tasters; Professional & personal development; Networking for introverts; Speaking without words; Build your own pub!; Selling OR; Ethical dilemmas in OR

12.15 – 13.15 Lunch

1315-14.45 President’s Medal

This is a conference Plenary session, showcasing three high quality case studies which have made a real difference.

14.45-1615 Facilitated Workshops on ‘hot’ topics in OR practice II (as above)

1615-1630 Tea

1630-1745 Practitioner – Academic Collaboration: Maximising Research Impact (chaired by Sally Brailsford)

Practitioners Sean Jones (NATS) & Tony O’Connor (GORS) and academics Prof Stewart Robinson (Loughborough) & Prof Mike Pidd (Lancaster) give brief personal perspectives, followed by a general discussion.

1745 Review of the Day

1800 Drinks reception sponsored by SIMUL8 Corporation

(JCR 12th June 2012)