

# IMPERIAL

## Technician Commitment Steering Group

Wednesday 4 June 2025

14.00 – 15.30

Hybrid - South Kensington Campus and MS Teams

### Minutes

Meeting #26

### Present:

Tim Venables	Institutional Lead for the Technician Commitment (Chair, TV)
Joel Abrahams	Biological Research Officer, Surgery & Cancer (JA)
Naweeda Ahmad	Learning and Talent Coordinator, Talent & Culture (NA) <i>Minutes</i>
Aneesha Bhumber	Teaching Laboratories Technician, Faculty of Medicine Centre (AB)
Paul Brown	Technical Operations Manager, Physics (PB)
Ailish Harikae	Learning & Talent Manager, Talent & Culture (AHR)
Allison Hunter	Head of Technical Operations, Life Sciences (AH)
Kenneth Keating	Head of Technical Operations and Safety, Bioengineering (KK)
Russell Stracey	RSM Workshop Supervisor, Materials (RS)
Dr Sharron Stubbs	Head of Infrastructure Operations, Faculty of Medicine Centre (SS)

### Apologies:

Ellen Pengelley	Director of ICT Business Operations, ICT (EP)
Rakesh Patel	Director of Maintenance, Property Division (RP)
Angela Williams	Learning and Development Officer, Property Division (AW)

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### Agreed Actions

- Conduct a survey of technicians at the 17 June event to gauge what type of events would be most welcomed by the community (NA, AHR)
  - Career Pathways Action Group findings to be shared at the 17 June event, and an update to be provided at the next Steering Group meeting (AHR, KK)
  - Award nominations to be retained as a standing item on the agenda (NA)
  - Interview questions for Steering Group members to be circulated for inclusion in the *Technicians' Network Newsletter* (NA)
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## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and apologies (TV)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Rakesh Patel, Ellen Pengelley, and Angela Williams.

### 2. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (TV)

*(Paper 1: Minutes – 30 April 2025)*

The minutes from the last meeting were agreed to be an accurate record of discussions.

### 3. Widening representation (TV)

The Chair reminded the Group that the Technician Commitment Peer Review process had flagged that Imperial's Steering Group was somewhat management heavy. A review of Technician Commitment governance structures at other universities had been undertaken by AHR and TV and indicated three main models: steering groups like Imperial's; steering groups with a wider range of levels represented; or more junior forums, with wide representation, reporting into a high-level steering group.

A discussion followed on widening representation at Imperial without increasing the administrative burden. Ideas included establishing working groups or 'Think Tanks' at different campuses, roadshows, or regular campus-based social events. AH and SS spoke about the Technical Staff Forum events that were held before Covid, which had been a good way to bring people together, and KK's White-City based technician socials were also referenced. AB spoke about her experience as co-Chair of Imperial 600, Imperial's LGBTQ+ network, where the focus had been on informal community-building in the first instance.

It was agreed that a survey of technicians would be carried out at the Summer Conference on 17 June to gauge what types of events would be most welcomed. **Action: AHR, NA.**

### 4. New tools for the technician community (AB)

As part of her 6-month secondment to the Learning and Talent Team, AB had developed two digital solutions for technical staff at Imperial, which she presented to the Steering Group:

1. An **Imperial Technicians MS Teams channel**, a one-stop-shop for technicians with the following features:
  - Discussion board for sharing day-to-day matters, enquiries and news
  - Professional development board for sharing opportunities
  - Sustainability tips, added at the request of technicians

Subscribers to the *Technicians' Network Newsletter* would automatically be added to the Teams channel by the end of June and additional, specialist channels could be developed over time.

2. The adaptation of **Imperial Profiles** for use by technical staff, so that they could be visible and searchable (internally and externally) if they wished to be, by their skills and disciplines. AB was also designing a workshop, to be delivered during the 2025/26 academic year, that would supported technicians to create an Imperial Profile.

A discussion on the tools followed. Steering Group members flagged that the Sustainability Hub and Viva Engage also provided channels for technicians to connect and share. AH mentioned that most Sustainability Hub users were technicians, but that use of the site had waned somewhat over time. In relation to Imperial Profiles, it was felt that a profile writing workshop would be helpful, as many technicians shied away from writing about themselves. The Chair encouraged Steering Group members to explore the new tools and to share any further feedback directly with AB.

## 5. Technicians' Network Summer Celebration (NA)

An update on planning for the Technicians' Summer Celebration 2025 was provided by NA. It was reported that the event would be held in the Stadium, Scale Space from 12.00- 15.00 on 17 June 2025. Articles and posts to promote the event had been shared across digital channels and a flyer had been created for colleagues to print and distribute. Registrations stood at 56, including delegates, organisers and speakers. The draft programme was shared, and ideas were discussed for possible speakers for the 'My Career Journey' item.

## 6. Career Pathways Action Group Update (AHR, KK)

### *Paper 2: Understanding & Mapping our Technical Workforce*

AHR and KK provided an update on the Career Pathways Action Group (CPAG), a national group convened by the Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy. AHR and KK were in a subgroup of CPAG focusing on mapping and understanding the technical workforce. They shared some initial findings from their analysis of data from Imperial on technical staff job families, job titles, grades and reporting lines. AHR flagged that inconsistencies in title/grade were widespread. Further lines of enquiry would be to map by specialism, contract type and line management responsibility. The Chair invited AHR and KK to speak about this topic in more detail at a future meeting. It was also agreed that the findings should be shared at the summer event on 17 June. **Action: AHR, KK**

## 7. Driving up internal award nominations (KK)

### *Paper 3: Award flyer*

KK told the Steering Group that he was on the review panel for the President's Award for Research Support and that disappointingly, only one technician had been nominated in 2025 in this category. He proposed that the Technician Commitment Steering Group could centrally coordinate a small number of group and individual nominations for technicians. KK had also designed an example flyer (Paper 3) that could be adapted to raise awareness of internal award schemes.

A discussion followed on how to increase award nominations. AHR mentioned that a number of Garden Party nominations were made centrally each year for technicians who had undertaken professional registration, gained a qualification or completed an apprenticeship. AHR and NA had also been more systematic in reaching out to the line managers of internal award recipients and encouraging them to nominate for national award programmes. It was acknowledged that a certain level of detail was required in an award nomination, and that this could be off-putting. AH felt that a workshop or resources on writing a nomination would be welcomed. It was agreed that awards should be kept as a standing item on the agenda. **Action: NA**

## 8. Update from the London and SE Institutional Leads (AH, SS)

Due to time constraints, AH and SS would share an update via email following the meeting.

## 9. Any Other Business (TV)

### **New monthly feature in the *Technicians' Network Newsletter***

NA proposed a new monthly feature in the *Technicians' Network Newsletter* that would profile members of the Technician Commitment Steering Group, to start in September 2025. This suggestion was welcomed, and NA said she would circulate a set of interview questions.

**Action: NA**

The Chair closed the meeting. **Next meeting: 15 October 2025, 14.00 – 15.30**