**Introducing a New Membership Grade: Research Member by Stephen Dance**

Looking back at the articles covering the history of the Institute of Acoustics it is obvious that when the institute was formed there was interest from manufacturers, consultants, environment health officers and academics. In recent years the institute has moved more towards industry and consultancy. In 2014 the Research Coordination Committee under Professor Horoshenkov moved towards creating the UK Acoustics Network (UKAN) to provide a forum to link industry with academia. In 2017 this led to a successful EPSRC grant bid which was followed by more success in 2021 with UKAN+. UKAN now has 1800 members split 50:50 between academia and industry, approximately half are also members of the Institute of Acoustics. Currently, UKAN membership is free for all and you can apply at www.acoustics.ac.uk. The long term plan being to combine UKAN and the IOA to form a forum for all with an interest in acoustics related science.

In 2022, again thanks to the work Research Coordination Committee, the idea arose of creating a new membership grade which would be attractive to potential members who were early in their academic career. This would provide a new pathway between Student and Associate Membership that would allow in time full corporate status. This idea was formally put forward at the IOA AGM in August 2022.

In 2023 the Membership committee created an simplified application form which covered all non-taught students i.e. MRes, MPhil, PhD and EngD programmes for students in a field directly associated with acoustics. As with the Associate Membership status a 5 year limit was deemed to be appropriate. This of course prohibits part-time PhD or EngD students but of course their main job could be in acoustics and hence AMIOA or MIOA would still be open to them. Hence, it was decided to recommend to Council that the Research Member grade as a specific subset of the Associate Membership grade. The key difference being that all communication be by electronic means to be more sustainable, as well as to lower operational costs, thus allowing the fee to be significantly reduced compared to that of those with AMIOA status.

The application form is now live, and the applications are being reviewed at the Membership committee. It is hoped that with the right promotion e.g. Art of Being a Consultant and Art of Being an Acoustician meetings, the support of the Early Career group, as well as through UKAN this new grade will in time provide a new revenue stream to the Institute, but more importantly create a conduit where once again industry and academia are working together to benefit the acoustics community. To apply you just need a thesis title, a proposer, and an academic email address.

Now to the benefits of being a Research Member:

Membership Certificate (electronic copy)

Membership number

Reduced Fee currently set at £30

Attend at Meetings/Conference at the Student fee price.

Free Access to Acoustic Bulletins (PDF)

Free Access to I-INCE Journal – Noise Control Engineering Journal

Free Access to Acta Acustica / Acustica Journal

Free Access to I-INCE Proceedings (1972 onwards)

All other benefits an AMIOA member would receive.

Picture: UKAN members at the recent UKAN annual conference, University of Sheffield