

The UK Acoustics Network Newsletter

May 2020

Dear Members

Despite unsettling times UKAN continues to operate and grow. UKAN has 996 members (31 May 2020). This is a 60% increase since a year ago (621 members).

We would like to remind you to check your personal profiles to keep our [Directory web page](#) up-to-date.

Events

May has been a month busy with a range of webinars. We are particularly grateful to Comsol and Mathworks (Matlab) for arranging a series of successful webinars with a focus on acoustics. These specific events have been attended by over 400 people. Generally, each UKAN webinar is attended online by 20-100 people. We would like to remind you that recordings and slide presentations from these and other webinar events are available in our [Google Drive folder](#).

BBC Radio 4 broadcast a nice programme on musical acoustics called an "An Instrumental Case" - *Why do instruments sound different?* If you missed it, it's available to download [here](#). Enjoy and share it.

June will also be busy with webinars on a range of topics. Please check the [Events page](#) of our website. Do come forward with your ideas for additional webinar topics by writing directly to the UKAN SIG Leaders [here](#) or at info@acoustics.ac.uk.

Training: Grant Writing Workshops

Elaine Massung, a writer, proofreader/editor, and former portfolio manager from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), is providing one-to-one sessions to give our members

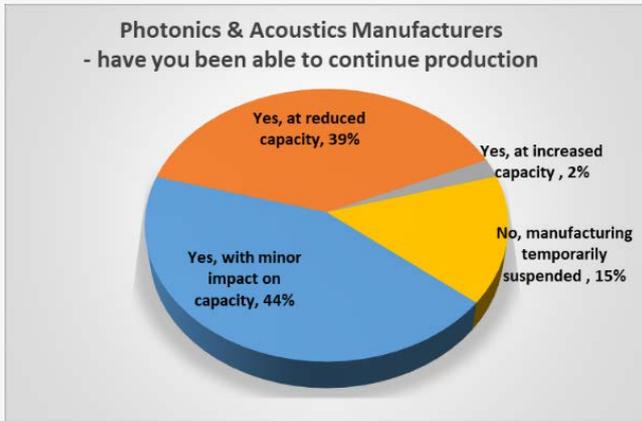
in-depth feedback on current or past written work, such as grant proposals, journal or conference papers, and dissertations. The feedback will provide suggestions regarding the clarity of the language, the flow of the document, and potential improvements. These sessions will take place remotely and last for one hour.

Elaine suggested a few session slots when she is available to provide this service to our members. The timetable for these sessions and instructions on how to get in touch with her and submit your work for her comments can be found [here](#).

We would like to remind our members that UKAN on the 1st of June UKAN will run a Research Fellowship grant writing workshop. The link to the Attendance Form is [here](#). It is not too late to join in.

Impact of Covid-19 on UK Acoustics industry

UKAN and Institute of Acoustics commissioned a survey on the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on the UK acoustics industry. This survey was carried out by John Lincoln. The provisional report with the results of this survey is available [here](#). Based on 200 responses this report suggests that 85% of manufacturing organisations have been able to continue production, with half of these organisation reporting only a minor impact on capacity. The impact has been more severe among those providing high value services, particularly in acoustics where one third of firms report more than a 50% drop in short-term turnover. Figure below provides a breakdown of responses to one of the questions from this survey.



Request for UKAN grant extension

UKAN has requested the EPSRC to permit a 6-month non-cost extension for the Network to continue after the official end of this grant in November 2020. This request is related to a delay in a range of our activities due to the COVID-19 situation and to cover the period of disruption. We are now in the process of negotiating with the EPSRC the terms and conditions for such an extension.

Running UKRI grants in acoustics

UKAN and Institute of Acoustics have completed their usual survey of UK Research and Innovation grants related to acoustics which are running as per May 2020. A Google Sheets copy of this document can be found [here](#). It is based on the data provided by the [UKRI gateway](#). We would like to ask our members to go through this document and to let us know if anything is missing or incorrect. It is an editable document which you are welcome to update yourself.

Quiet Project

The Quiet Project is the acoustic community's response to circumstance created by Covid-19. It

has brought together through the Institute of Acoustics, the Association of Noise Consultants and UKAN. It is coordinated by KSG Acoustics and Stephen Dance of London South Bank University.

As we all know, the Covid-19 lockdown has created unprecedented environmental sound conditions around the globe as aircraft are grounded, the use of cars, buses and trains sharply decrease, workplaces remain closed, and communities stay at home. These conditions have created a new kind of sound environment never experienced before.

The Quiet Project is a community lead response at this vital time to capture the sound of the Covid-19 lockdown and phased release. The primary aim is to record environmental sound levels and observations across the UK during lockdown and to repeat these observations at six monthly intervals as the UK recovers.

The study utilises existing networks of acoustics professionals including private companies, public organisations and academics to gather the data and soundscape observations in location where express permission has been granted. The measurements are carried out from major infrastructure projects to create the largest possible database such as HS2 and Thames Tideway. The new database will map the changing sound levels across the country, illustrating the impact of lockdown on the external sound environment. It will be used to inform other crucial studies, which include identifying and validating improved transport noise models such as required by future CRN/CRTN standards.

With the kind support instrumentation companies such as ANV Measurement System, Cirrus Research, Campbell Associates, and Acoustic1 equipment is

being distributed to those who wish to take part and have experience of the particular kit in question. UKAN is providing the funding to cover the shipping costs. Measurements should cover a 2-week period with daily weather observations and soundscape thoughts and feelings.

The project website www.thequietproject.co.uk is where to sign up and upload your measurements and observations. In the first month 50 locations have been measured. For more information contact Stephen Dance dances@lsbu.ac.uk.

Lab in a Box

With the need for the lockdown to continue, UKAN has time and resources to support remote outreach to influencing future acousticians. There are a number of UKAN members, including Richard Craster of Imperial College and Stephen Dance of London Southbank University who are fans of 'Lab in A Box'. This kit can enable classrooms to gain access to specialist science equipment. Some examples can be found [here from Pfyzer](#) and [here from Lancaster University](#) (see photo below). A great demo of the wave superposition in paddling pool can be found [here](#).



These kits can be highly useful during the lockdown and after its end because teachers are under pressure

to create innovative teaching tools to work with a mix of on-line- face to face students in small groups. We would like to ask UKAN volunteer members to come up with ideas to support teachers and to trigger curiosity about acoustics. UKAN can support the development of bespoke kits. Some ideas suggested by Stephen Dance include a tuning fork, music box and metronome. Sounds produced by these kits can be recorded and used in various experiments with a range of existing apps including FFT, octave band analysis, noise dose, weighting networks, time weightings, and statistical noise levels.

Postponement of UKAN Summer School 2020

The Covid-19 situation is likely to affect adversely all our summer public events including UKAN Summer School which was originally planned for August 2020 at Gregynog Hall in Wales. Simone Graetzer has successfully negotiated with Gregynog Hall a postponement of this event without financial penalty until 11-16 April 2021. In addition to these dates, she has asked Gregynog Hall to hold 1-7 August 2021 for UKAN until the end of January 2021, should we obtain UKAN Plus funding. It is a good time to think about the focus for the August 2021 Summer School and we would like to hear your ideas for this event.

Do write to us with your stories to include in the June newsletter at info@acoustics.ac.uk

Stay safe

Kirill Horoshenkov and Richard Craster