COMP516 Practical 10
(non-assessed)
24 November 2008

This is the final COMP516 practical. This document can be found at

> http://www.csc.liv.ac.uk/~ullrich/COMP516/notes/practical10.pdf

You have recently been given a proposal for a Computer Science Research Project for which funding is sought from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC; http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/).

During this practical session your task is to work out a ballpark figure for the amount of money this project will cost. A spreadsheet might be useful in doing so.

To do so, you will need to gather the following information during the practical session:

1. The project asks for support for one highly-experienced post-doctoral research assistant (RA). The intention is for the RA to start in August 2006 on a three year contract. He will be paid at spine point 36 on the university pay scale. You can find the pay scale at

   > http://www.liv.ac.uk/hr/salary_scales/index.htm

   To simplify your computation of the overall salary cost for the RA, assume that (s)he stays on spine point 36 throughout the project and only receives salary increases in August 2007 and August 2008 (use the October 2008 salary here).

   In addition, the University will ask for 46% of the total salary as 'indirect costs' of the project.

2. The project also asks for support for one PhD student. This includes maintenance support and payment of fees at Home/EU level. You find the amount of maintenance support at

   > http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/PostgraduateTraining/MinimumPayments.htm

   Again, the University will ask for 46% of the maintenance support as 'indirect costs' of the project.

   For fees see

   > http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/money/fees.htm

3. The proposal lists a number of conferences where the results of the project might be presented throughout its course: IJCAR, CADE, IJCAI, KR, AAAI, LICS. The project asks for travel and subsistance support to attend some of those conferences. The last KR took place in September 2008. Use

   > http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/~kr2008/registration.html

as a starting point to work out the cost of attending that conference. Take into account: (a) travel from Liverpool to Sydney, Australia, (b) accommodation (single room) in the Vibe Goulburn Street (twin room) for 6 nights, (c) conference fees (assume 'early bird' registration). Assume that each of the four people on the project would like to participate in one such conference each year over the three years of the project. In addition, assume that each of the four should have access to a further £1,500 for travel over the project duration. This will allow you to estimate the total amount of travel support required for the project.

4. The equipment costs include two high-performance PCs, two business laptops, and two networkable PostScript laser printers. Estimate the cost of those using internet sources of your choice. Note that it is not your interest to minimize these costs, nor to exaggerate them unnecessarily.

   In addition, assume a consumables budget of £1,300 for the whole project.

5. Compute the total of items 1 to 4. Finally, check how much support the project has been granted by the EPSRC. You can do so by checking the grant support for each of the two principal investigators at

$$\texttt{http://gow.epsrc.ac.uk/PersonSearch.aspx}$$

   (Do not worry if the total you have computed differs by up to £25,000 from the grant support indicated on the EPSRC website.)

Final remark:
This research proposal has been put forwarded and funded before the introduction of 'full economic costing', a new model for the funding of research projects. For current proposals not only have the salaries of staff and student employed by a project to be accounted for, but also the salaries of the principle investigators (on a pro-rata basis). In addition, the calculation of 'indirect costs' and the calculation of total funding provided by the EPSRC as a percentage of requested funding has changed.