Notes after 9 December SICSA AI Theme Kick-off meeting, Napier University Glassroom.

LSS: 15 Dec 2016.

This was a successful meeting with about 30 attendees, from nearly all the Universities in Scotland: possibly excepting UHI and Glasgow Caledonian. Rather a large number of people who registered did not attend, which perhaps suggests charging a small fee to discourage non-attendance, and thus enable more accurate estimation of numbers.

The preponderance of people came from the more "GOFAI"-like areas, and also from optimisation. Dialogue systems were particularly strongly represented. Most of the attendees were staff from Scottish Universities, although there were also a small number of PhD students. There were (perhaps surprisingly) few from the bio/neuro-computational modelling end. Partly, this was due to the overlap with the NIPS conference, though it may also reflect the make-up of the Scottish AI community.

The format of the meeting (short "pekka-kucha" presentations) worked well: it enabled attendees to get a good overview of the ongoing work in a large number of centres, and avoided long presentations. We had a short discussion about ways forward at the end of the meeting: There was no velar and urgent message that came from the meeting, but the attendees were clear that the meeting had been useful: further, they agreed that future meetings should have a specific focus (the general nature of the kick-off meeting was appropriate, but not appropriate for future meetings). Clearly, a focussed meeting would not be of interest to all the delegates, but would attract researchers (and PhD students) from specific communities.

Another message from the meeting was that we should be looking to get into direct contact with other related communities, including those outside of academia. Inside SICSA, obvious connections exist with the Data Science Theory themes, plus there are other linkages (at the applications end) probably with all the other themes. But perhaps it is more important to try to find linkages with groups outside of SICSA. Candidates include

- Technology innovation centres: specifically, the DataLab, and CENSIS. DataLab have (now) been in touch, as they too have identified such a linkage,
- RSE: they have AI interests, and collaboration with them (at any level) could be useful,
- Digital Health Institute: there is room for collaboration on decision support (perhaps including argumentation), augmented reality, data visualisation, amongst other areas,

In addition, there are companies and other organisations that are direct users of the technologies supported by AI. Some of the groups presenting already have clear link: it would be good for the AI theme to gather these together, and to represent the AI academic community to these other interested parties, with a

view to increasing collaboration. It would also be a good idea to invite appropriate people from these sectors to some future meetings.

On the more traditional Research Council side, two opportunities were identified. The first was the current call for Data Science from the EPSRC. The other was in Alan Bundy's presentation where he talked about the expected forthcoming EPSRC call on *Human-like computing*. This builds on workshops held in October 2016, and is about both hybrid systems that communicate effectively, end novel forms of computation that are based on human cognition.