

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 16 September 2004

Present Ian Robertson (Dean of Research), Doris Alexander, Michael Coey, Ryan Sheridan, Philip Lane, Marina Lynch, John O'Hagan, Jane Ohlmeyer, Patrick Prendergast

Apologies John Fitzpatrick, Deirdre Savage, Ailbhe Ni Chasaide, Dermot Kelleher

In attendance

(ex officio) Maria Treanor

SECTION A

**RES/04-05/01 Minutes** The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2004 were approved and signed.

SECTION B

**RS/04-05/02 Role of Research Committee** The role of the Research Committee is one of policy-making versus routine decisions. Although constrained by the number of researchers allowed as members, the committee can make important decisions.

**RS/04-05/03 SFI Annual Overheads Investment Plan** The deadline for the SFI Annual Overheads Investment Plan (AOIP) is 01 November 2004. In the costed plan, the first of its kind, the College must make its case for requesting funding for items which would have fallen within the conventional 30% SFI overhead contribution. As and from 01 January 05, no overheads will be provided on SFI grants obtained or in existence other than those bid for in the College's AOIP. All items must be justified and all costs claimed must be justified against auditable and quantifiable expenditure. There are potential benefits for College, but also a difficulty in recovering the costs of hosting research because of the auditability requirements.

**RS/04-05/04 Research Measurement (CIRCA)** The Research Committee has commissioned a report on research measurement from CIRCA and a preliminary report has been produced.

The Dean of Research is a member of the Resource Allocation Committee. They are aiming, in the short-term to compare departments using a proxy metric which is readily-available and incontrovertible (funding, postgraduate numbers). Some of the problems associated with this are that grants received by institutes and centres are

seen as income taken away from departments, and comparing funding across discipline areas is not comparing like with like. These issues need to be addressed. Publication output will not be measured initially. The Resource Allocation Committee is confident that the comparison will give a true picture of research in College. In addition, by using reliable figures now, research gets a high weighting immediately in the TCD resource model. The Research Committee supports the use of the proxy measures for research and agreed to support a review of research measurement after a year when other correlates may be added.

The Committee will discuss the allocation of resources at a later date under the headings research / teaching indices and units of assessment.

**RS/04-05/05 College Research Strategy** Another priority for the Research Committee is to review the four areas of the College Research Strategy in light of restructuring in College.

**RS/04-05/06 Dublin Molecular Medicine Centre** The Dublin Molecular Medicine Centre was started by UCD and TCD. As a result of HEA PRTL I Cycle 3, they were joined by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. Possible changes to the governance of DMMC will be discussed by the Research Committee at a later date.

#### SECTION C

**RS/04-05/07 SFI Young Investigator Awards** Of the five candidates put forward by College for the SFI Young Investigator Awards, one has been shortlisted.

**RS/04-05/08 Research Centres and College Restructuring** The Centre for Contemporary Irish History (CCIH) and the Hamilton Mathematics Institute have both been approved by the Research Committee and a memo sent to Council and Board noting this approval.

Summaries of all College Research Centres approved by the Research Committee will be made publicly-available on the Research and Innovation Services website.

It was agreed that Research Centres should have an administrative “home” and be integrated into existing College structures. This has already been noted in the HEA PRTL I assessment and will be discussed by the Committee at a later date.

**RS/04-05/09 Intellectual Property** Intellectual Property (IP) will be given priority for discussion by the Committee. The IP document went to Board but some issues must be addressed before it can be approved by Board.

**RS/04-05/10 Research Information System** The Research Committee funds part of the replacement salary costs for one member of the library staff working on the Research Information System, and is committed to funding a person to enter data into the Research Information Database. The details of approximately 100 College staff are already on the database, and the aim is to have the data for all researchers and academic staff in College on the database in the next year.

- RS/04-05/11**    **OECD Report** The recommendations of the OECD Review of National Policies for Education: Review of Higher Education in Ireland Examiners' Report (13 September 2004) include doubling the number of PhD students in five years; merging SFI, HEA and IRCHSS; changing governance of universities by, for example, electing external Provosts / Presidents. Similar changes are already taking place in the University of Denmark.
- RS/04-05/12**    **Research and Innovation Services** Research in College has doubled in the last three years but, although the Research Office now has a more important role, it has not expanded. The resourcing and structure of Research and Innovation Services is one of the Provost's priorities. The Research Office must have the resources to become more proactive. This could be easier with, for example, a Research Officer in each faculty.
- The Research budget must be a priority for the Committee. It pays the salaries of the Technology Transfer Manager and the person entering data in the Research Information Database. It also pays for the replacement costs of Niamh Brennan's salary while she is on secondment overseeing the Research Information System. In the past, it was used for Start-up Funds for New Lecturers, Maintenance Grants and Berkeley Fellowships. Approximately €50k is uncommitted from this year's budget. Previous budgets were larger but the idea is that the Research Committee should eventually be able to sustain itself. This will be discussed at future committee meetings.
- RS/04-05/13**    **HEA PRTLI** HEA PRTLI assessment and the Cycle 4 call for proposals will be discussed at a later date.
- RS/04-05/14**    **College Restructuring** The restructuring in College is critical and more information is required.
- RS/04-05/15**    **Trinity Centre for High Performance Computing** The Trinity Centre for High Performance Computing (TCHPC) is a research centre. Following the SFI call for a national HPC centre, there is a possibility of Trinity being part of a jointly-owned entity which will provide HPC services to the HPC community in Ireland. There is a possibility that part of the IITAC core computer budget will be combined with the SFI budget, and that the supercomputer centre will be located off-campus.
- RS/04-05/16**    **Links between Research and Graduate Studies** One of the reasons why the Dean of Graduate Studies was invited to join the Research Committee was in order to strengthen the links between Research and Graduate Studies.
- RS/04-05/17**    **Quorum** The quorum for the Research Committee is seven.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 11.30 a.m. on Thursday 21 October 2004.

Signed: .....

Date: .....