

The University of Dublin
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 20 June 2005

- Present Ian Robertson (Dean of Research, DoR), Doris Alexander, John Fitzpatrick, Philip Lane, Ailbhe Ni Chasaide, Jane Ohlmeyer, Patrick Prendergast (Dean of Graduate Studies), Deirdre Savage, Ryan Sheridan (Pres of Graduate Studies)
- Apologies Mike Coey, Dermot Kelleher, Marina Lynch, John Murray (Senior Lecturer), John O'Hagan (Bursar)
- In attendance
(ex officio) Valerie Smith

RS/04-05/62 Minutes of meeting held on 19 May 2005

The Minutes were approved and signed.

SECTION A: Policy/Implementation

RS/04-05/63 Reorganisation in relation to research activities, particularly research centres – report from working group.

In relation to both large Research Centres and the proposed new Graduate schools, the main stumbling block is how to manage financial entities which exist between two or more schools. To whom the director of a Centre/Grad school should report is another issue linked to this. The new Bursar and Senior Lecturer to be appointed shortly will be central in any decision made on these issues. The issue will be revisited once these have been appointed in September.

SECTION B: Implementation Decisions

RS/04-05/64 Research Committee Funding – Research Capacity Building Scheme – evaluation scheme.

Strand two of this scheme was dealt with first. 25 applications were received, with a total €35,163 requested. It was agreed that most of these should be funded if they meet the eligibility criteria, subject to a reading by members of the Research Committee from those areas.

Strand one was then discussed. 38 applications were received, but over 200 different researchers were named in these proposals. A total of € 1,755,432.11 was requested. It was noted that, while account should be taken of the number of researchers mentioned in a proposal, the committee should bear in mind that in certain departments numbers were limited to those not applying

for strand two. Following some discussion, it was decided that a sub-group of the Research Committee should meet to consider the best way to deal with and evaluate this scheme. A meeting was set for 30 June. It is hoped that the sub-group will reach a decision on this scheme, to be circulated by e-mail to the committee by early July, with the results announced to applicants shortly after that.

The definition of 'research active' according to this scheme's guidelines was discussed, and this will be included as an agenda item on a Research Committee meeting next year.

Action: Dean of Research to chair sub-group meeting. Valerie Smith to send Strand 1 proposals to sub-group members. Valerie Smith also to send Strand 2 proposals to reviewers.

RS/04-05/65 Implementing the Research Element of the College's Strategic Plan

This document was last updated in June 2004, but is now quite out of date, following the many changes in college since then. Given the imminent appointment of new Directors of Schools, it would not make sense for the Research Committee to start setting new priorities. However, college is committed to the four strands outlined in the document, so work can begin on updating these.

A facilitator was named for each strand as follows:

Theme 1: Health Policy and Delivery: Prof. Dermot Kelleher (with support from Dr. David Lloyd – see AOB)

Theme 2: Meeting the Challenges of the Information Society: suggestions were made for appropriate candidates, and the Dean of Research will approach these to find someone willing to act as facilitator

Theme 3: Policy and international integration: Prof. Philip Lane

Theme 4: Contributing to a deeper understanding of culture and the creative arts in Ireland and the world: Prof. Jane Ohlmeyer

The Dean of Research will convene a general meeting on each strand, facilitated by the above-mentioned people, open to any staff working in the area. The next step will be to get together with the new Directors of Research in September, with the revised document being ready to go to board in October.

Action: DoR to contact candidate for theme 2 and to convene meetings, with the support of the facilitators.

Section C: Items for Noting

RS/04-05/66 Report back from Sub-Committees

Research Institutes & Schools Research Liaison Committee

John Fitzpatrick explained the difficulty of launching a call for recognition as a Trinity Research Centre. Firstly, the Research Directors are not yet in place, so the Research Institutes and Schools Research Liaison Committee cannot yet be formally set up, as it is supposed to include some of these Research

Directors. Secondly, the criteria for the three types of centre have not yet been approved by board. This issue will be revisited once these issues have been resolved.

AOB

Associate Director of Research

Dr. David Lloyd, Biochemistry, has been appointed as Associate Dean of Research, with particular responsibility for Innovation. He will Chair the Business and Industry Committee (it was agreed that the minutes of that sub-committee should be distributed to the Research Committee in the future). It was also agreed that he be invited to attend future Research Committee meetings, ex-officio.

Draft PRTL Document

The question was raised as to whether Trinity would be providing feedback to this document. The Dean stated that he and his equivalents in the other universities were happy with the document in the main. One comment was that forced cross-institutional collaboration is a bad idea. It was noted that there are more performance related criteria in the document. One committee member was concerned by the Chief Scientific Officer being given special status, with no equivalent on the non-science side. Some Committee members said that they might forward some written comments to the Dean before the submission deadline, but if not, then Trinity would not make an official response to the HEA.

IRCHSS

The IRCHSS has now changed its annual call to deal with one specific topic only each time, thus constraining those eligible to apply. The Dean of Research agreed to support a letter to the IRCHSS from Trinity researchers affected by this.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 2.00 p.m. on 22 September 2005.

Signed:

Date: