

The University of Dublin
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 27 October 2005

Present Ian Robertson (Dean of Research, DoR), Doris Alexander, Nigel Biggar, Alison Donnelly Colm Kearney (Senior Lecturer), Dermot Kelleher, Jane Ohlmeyer, Patrick Prendergast (Dean of Graduate Studies), Deirdre Savage, Ryan Sheridan (Pres of Graduate Studies), Clive Williams (Bursar),

Apologies Mike Coey, Philip Lane, Marina Lynch, David Lloyd, Brian Sweeney

In attendance

(ex officio) Oonagh Kinsman

RS/05-06/01 Minutes of meeting held on 20 June 2005

The Minutes were approved and signed.

RS/05-06/02 Matters arising

Action from RS/04-05/64 on the Research Capacity Building Scheme: Strand 1 and Strand 2 proposals were reviewed by a sub-group. For Strand 2, €33,663 was allocated for 25 applicants. For Strand 2, 38 proposals were submitted for a total of €1.7million. After evaluation, total funding of €788,000 for 27 proposals was agreed. All applicants had been informed by letter of the outcome.

Action from RS/04-05/65 on Implementation of the Research Element of the College's strategic plan: This has been delayed following the rollout of the schools strategic plans. The process for this term included designating 4 strand facilitators, 3 of whom are on the Research Committee. Strand leaders are: Strand 1 Health Policy and Delivery- Dermot Kelleher assisted by David Lloyd; Strand 2 Meeting the Challenges of the Information Society - Jane Grimson; Strand 3 Policy and International Integration- Philip Lane; Strand 4 Contributing to a deeper understanding of Culture and the Creative Arts in Ireland and the world -Jane Ohlmeyer. Jane Grimson will be asked to attend the Research Committee. Three of the strands have held open meetings to discuss the strategy and the fourth (Strand 1) open meeting is being held on 27 October. A fifth strand has been proposed by the Schools of Engineering and Natural Sciences entitled 'Energy, Environment and Transport'. The Dean will meet with the Directors of Research of Schools before the end of November and requests that as many as possible of the Research Committee attend. He will also liaise with John Fitzpatrick in relation to the establishment of the Research Centres and Liaison Committee to be a subcommittee of the Research Committee. By the end of this term a process for setting and reviewing strategy will be in place including approval of new

research strands. An implementation strategy will be required but the academic reorganization in College has delayed this process. The Dean will devolve to the Strand leaders the timelines for implementation. Concern was expressed that external research applications require a statement to confirm that the proposal is within the remit of the College's research strategy. It was suggested that the College's overall strategy which includes a section on research could be used as could the more detailed temporary operational document. It was recommended that the Health Strand leader proceed to get consultation on that strand and to present plans at the next Research Committee meeting and then publish it. It is unlikely that the total new strategic plan will be complete this term. Procedures for the future should take into account the alignment of School's strategic plans with College's strategic plan but there is acknowledgement that new ideas may be generated from the new structures. The School's plans should be synchronised by December. It is also acknowledged that each Strand has to position itself nationally and that external pressures eg PRTL calls may influence future alignments.

Action: The Dean will invite Jane Grimson to attend the Research Committee. The Dean will invite a member of the Research Committee to attend a meeting with the Directors of Research for Schools.

SECTION A: Policy/Implementation

RS/05-06/03 Reorganisation of Research and Innovation Services.

The committee reviewed the Report on the Future Structure of Research and Innovation Services in Trinity College Dublin and its recommendations. The Dean acknowledged that work of Research and Innovation Services had increased in all areas. For example the research income to the College tripled over the 4 year period prior to 2005 and the annual patent filings quadrupled from 2001 to 2004. It was also recognized that Government demands a return on investment in research in the form of commercialization activity. The Executive Officers approved the recommendations and the Committee was also asked for any comments.

Through SFI OIP funding staffing had already been increased and some organizational changes had been implemented. The establishment of a new post of Director of Entrepreneurship and a new Director of Research and Innovation was discussed in detail. The present Director has expressed an interest in the Director of Entrepreneurship. The proposed additional cost to the College was an additional senior administrative or professorial salary for 3 years until such time as the salary of Director of Entrepreneurship would be taken over by a proposed semi-commercial entity similar to ISIS in Oxford. All supported the recommendations except Ryan Sheridan who did not support the new post and the associated 3 year funding proposed to be paid from the Research Committee budget citing the pressing need of greater funding for various research projects and initiatives ongoing or proposed within College. Dermot Kelleher emphasised that appropriate protection of

I.P. and technology transfer was vital, that this area has been under-resourced and that if staff continue to be overstretched, the capacity for College to capitalise on discoveries is significantly reduced. The Senior Lecturer supported the report, indicating the College was 20-25 years behind, He identified that existing benefits in this area could be readily identified, that College had fewer posts in Research and Innovation Services than other equivalent organizations and that without additional resource we may not be able to fulfil contractual obligations. The Dean of Graduate Studies also supported the recommendations but requested clarity on the potential overlap areas between the two Directors. The Research Accounting Manager also supported the increase in resource and commented that growth is continuing, and that there are financial risks of overlooking contractual obligations. It was noted that plans must be in place before any further growth in research rather than after as 'after' implies a risk to College. The Dean of Research emphasised that he could not adequately carry out his role and the future developments without this post. All present supported the report but the dissent from Ryan Sheridan on the proposed three year funding commitment from the Research Committee budget for a new post was noted.

RS/05-06/04 Setting up subcommittee of the Research Committee: Research Centres and Schools Research Liaison Committee.

The establishment of this subcommittee was approved. Jane Ohlmeyer agreed to chair this subcommittee and the secretariat will be provided by Jennifer Edmond in Research and Innovation Services. This committee will accredit or approve centres, and distinguish centres from groups. Members of the Research Committee will be co-opted as required. Terms of reference and process for approving research grouping will be drafted.

Action: Jane Ohlmeyer and Jennifer Edmond to draft terms of reference, draft process for approving research groups and set up subcommittee.

RS/05-06/05 The place of research groupings in TCD.

There was a perceived need to rationalise College's research groupings which varied from 1-2 people to potentially 100 people. The report prepared by the Research committee was provided. The 3 categories proposed are :

1. Research Groups – These are small research clusters within or between schools, and may be represented in the Calendar and on a School web site.
2. Research Centres- These are mid size, have their own space and administration and will be represented on the College web site. They will headline strategic priorities of College and will be approved by subcommittee as in RS/05-06/05 above..
3. Research Institutes- These are large, may be SFI or PRTL funded. They will need Research Committee and Board approval.

RS/05-06/06 Governance and Financing of Research Institutes.

The framework was nearly complete but the document 'Clarifications regarding the governance and financing of TCD research Institutes' is still being considered by a working group. This document will be added as an Appendix to 2003 Board approved governance document 'Governance of Trinity Research Institutes'. This Appendix takes into account the new school structure and financial environment. The contribution of Research Institutes to teaching and postgraduate supervision affiliated with Schools will be updated and added to Section 6 of this document.

Action: Dean Of Graduate Studies to send Oonagh Kinsman a summary of teaching and postgraduate supervision in the context of Research Institutes.

SECTION B: Implementation Decisions

Section C: Items for Noting

AOB

RS/05-06/07 SFI Walton Visitor Awards.

The Research committee will be consulted by email as the timelines for submission do not allow review at the next meeting.

RS/05-06/07 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Research Committee will be updated to show the revised constitution

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The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 11.30am. on 8 December 2005.

Signed:

Date: