

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 12 January 2006

Present Ian Robertson (Dean of Research, DoR), Doris Alexander, Nigel Biggar, Dermot Kelleher, Jane Ohlmeyer, Ryan Sheridan (President of the Graduate Students' Union), Clive Williams (Bursar), Marina Lynch, Mike Coey, Philip Lane, Grace Dempsey (Treasurer), Brian Sweeney, Colm Kearney (Senior Lecturer)

Apologies Patrick Prendergast (Dean of Graduate Studies), Alison Donnelly

In attendance

(ex officio) David Lloyd (Associate Dean of Research, ADoR), Khurshid Ahmad, Maria Treanor, Jennifer Edmond

RS/05-06/14 Minutes of meeting held on 08 December 2005

The Minutes were approved and signed.

RS/05-06/15 Matters Arising from the Minutes

RS/04-05/65: The Dean of Research welcomed Ahmad Khurshid, Computer Science Research Director. He will attend future Research Committee as the strand facilitator for "Meeting the Challenges of the Information Society".

RS/05-10/05: As part of the research strategy review, school plans are being submitted to Jennifer Edmond for extraction of commonalities. It is hoped that the culture strand will have its implementation strategy in place by May / June 2006, the globalisation strand by July 2006, and the ICT strand by September 2006. Following on from the Biosciences review in College, a revised proposal for a strategic plan for Biosciences will be brought to the next meeting of the Research Committee.

RS/05-10/06: A meeting took place with the Audit Committee regarding separate legal entities in the context of inter-institutional collaboration in research, and some amendments have been suggested.

RS/05-10/12: The SFI Walton Visitor Award Scheme cannot be expanded but SFI is prepared to consider further funding. A letter has gone from the College to SFI asking them to allow each third-level institution to propose more than five applicants. SFI have indicated that they may consider 'supplement' applications for such visitors if SFI Principal Investigators propose them but, for this year, SFI cannot change the Walton application process.

Action: The Associate Dean of Research will bring a revised proposal for a strategic plan for Biosciences to the next meeting of the Research Committee.

SECTION A: Policy/Implementation

RS/05-06/16 Review of the Research Element of the TCD Strategic Plan

Dermot Kelleher presented a review of the health strand research element of the TCD Strategic Plan. The two main areas, strategic healthcare and quality of life, were discussed from the perspective of what they have in common with other strands, and how research centres can liaise with other strand leaders for better representation and interdisciplinarity.

A discussion followed on whether policy should be an enabling horizontal strand in the College's research strategy. It was suggested that health policy should be a horizontal area and a joined-up College research plan was proposed, with the Dean of Research to take responsibility for defining pillars. It was agreed to wait until the next committee meeting before publishing the health strand.

Some elements of global health specified in the health strategy plan overlap with those specified in globalisation. The Associate Dean of Research, Philip Lane and Dermot Kelleher will meet to discuss the above.

It was agreed that the health plan implementation was approved but agreement was required on further steps to be taken and in particular in the context of the broader College plan. It may be possible to have a version of this health implementation plan where 'policy' becomes a horizontal element. In addition, a report on what has been achieved and a review of the current status will be required at a later stage. It was suggested that a new administrator to assist the strand leader could facilitate that process. The committee agreed that something tangible must be done to help the strand co-ordinators regarding implementation of the plan. For example, administrative support, outreach programme, communication plan.

Action: The Associate Dean of Research, Philip Lane and Dermot Kelleher will meet before the next meeting of the Research Committee to discuss the steps which need to be taken regarding policy as an enabling horizontal strand in the College's research strategy.

RS/05-06/17 Research Groupings

As discussed under RS/05-06/16 above, the Research Centres will consider liaising with research strand leaders for better representation and interdisciplinarity.

Action: Jane Ohlmeyer will circulate information to Research Centres to begin a dialogue.

SECTION B: Implementation Decisions

RS/05-06/18 Membership of Business and Industry Sub-committee of Research Committee

It was agreed that the Business & Industry Committee (BIC) needs to be reconstituted and the terms of reference reviewed. It was recognised that a balanced skillbase was needed. BIC members on the Research Committee will consult with Eoin O'Neill and Margaret Woods, and bring draft terms of reference and procedures to a future meeting.

Action: Research Committee members on the Business & Industry Committee will bring draft terms of reference and procedures to a future meeting.

RS/05-06/19 OIP Funding 2006

The Research Office is looking at how the 2005 OIP expenditure was used throughout College. It was noted that the preparation of plans associated with the OIP is an extraordinary burden across College, and runs counter to individual research accounts generating their own overhead income. In addition, other sponsors, such as Enterprise Ireland, may require the equivalent of an OIP for their schemes in future.

RS/05-06/20 Liberty

The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources wish to create a centre for technology transfer located in a national hub. College is the preferred candidate to manage this if it can satisfy certain conditions. It will have to put in place an implementation group and recruit an external CEO (to be in place by July 2006). This process will start in February 2006. People employed by the company will work on-site but will belong to a TCD faculty. Work will be at the post-lab and pre-spinout stage.

RS/05-06/21 HEA PRTL14

The HEA has advised that the next PRTL1 call will be in late January or early February 2006. It will be a two-stage call with a fast turnaround and a heavy focus on sustainability. The budget is expected to be approximately €17 million.

RS/05-06/22 Strategic Planning

Discussed under RS/05-06/16 above.

RS/05-06/23 BioSciences Review

The review is a strong endorsement for College's strategic research prioritising. It suggests that when funding is allocated for the new building, it should be built quickly.

RS/05-06/24 Renaming of and Plans for Enterprise Centre

The Enterprise Centre is a valuable campus resource which is not being used to the full as a campus facility. The committee agreed that it should be renamed 'Trinity Technology and Enterprise Campus' and that a working group should meet to consider operation and management issues.

Action: The Associate Dean of Research, the Bursar, the Director of Buildings and the Treasurer's representative will form a working group to consider operation and management issues.

Action: The Associate Dean of Research will send a memo to Board regarding renaming the Enterprise Centre.

RS/05-06/25 Establishment of CRANN as a Trinity Research Institute

The CRANN proposal was resubmitted to the committee. They discussed some of the issues which might arise and noted their concerns that the budget, which is at a very preliminary stage, needs more work. They recommended that the CRANN proposal be sent to Board for approval: "The Research Committee recommends to the College Board that we recognise CRANN as a TCD research institute and will be the reporting line from CRANN to the College Board".

Action: The Dean of Research will send the CRANN proposal to Board for approval.

Section C: Items for Noting

AOB

RS/05-06/26 Research Committee Budget

It is likely that the Research Committee will be made aware of its budget by the end of February 2006. No funding is available from the Research Committee account for contract renewal until the budget has been allocated.

Action: The Dean of Research, Doris Alexander and the Treasurer will meet to discuss the Research Committee budget before the next meeting.

Signed:

Date: