

The University of Dublin  
Trinity College

**Draft Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 14 December 2006**

- Present Ian Robertson (Dean of Research, DoR), Alison Donnelly, Jane Ohlmeyer, Clive Williams (Bursar), Martin Mullins (Director of Research and Innovation, DoRaI), Ruth Palileo, Dermot Kelleher, Philip Lane
- Apologies Colm Kearney (Senior Lecturer), Amanda Piesse, Doris Alexander, Patrick Prendergast (Dean of Graduate Studies), Brian Sweeney, David Lloyd (Associate Dean of Research, ADoR)
- In attendance Grace Dempsey (Treasurer), John Donegan, Maria Treanor

**RS/06-07/13 Minutes of meeting held on 19 October 2006**

The Minutes were approved and signed.

**RS/06-07/14 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

RS/06-07/03: The DoR welcomed new Committee members Dermot Kelleher and Philip Lane.

RS/06-07/08: The Business and Industry Committee was put into abeyance pending the appointment of a restructured committee. The DoRaI is collecting information from other institutions and from the Trinity Foundation. The strategy committee tasked with developing new terms of reference for the Business and Industry Committee will include the ADoR; the DoRaI; Nick Sparrow, Trinity Foundation; and the Bursar. The final list of members and terms of reference will be approved by the Research Committee. Any issues which arise in the interim will be brought directly to the Research Committee.

RS/06-07/09: The DoR is presenting the FEC model to Heads of School next week. It was noted that the Research Office presentations on EU Framework Programme 7 have been welcomed by academics in Arts and Humanities, and that this should be rolled out for other Schools.

## **Section B: Implementation Decisions**

### **RS/06-07/15 ARAM – Research Proxies**

The College Fellows set up a committee to look at whether the basis for 30% of the core budget allocated according to research activity could be amended to include output as well as input measures. When ARAM was agreed by Board, it was understood that the Research Committee would review research proxies.

The Fellows have circulated a research proxies discussion document to non-Fellows for comment. It was agreed that the Research Committee should frame and circulate its own response to the document.

Two issues were discussed: is allocating 30% of the budget a reward for fourth-level activity / quality; and, is funding given to schools / centres which do not participate in fourth-level activity? It was noted that there is a correlation between research grant income and quality publications. If the overall system is working, local arrangements could be made for special cases. Also, different schools could be given different tags e.g. percentage of research-active staff. Measures would be used to support Trinity's move into fourth-level education.

The Committee has not been presented with a possible viable third proxy measure but is eager to consider options from the research community. In the meantime, the current output measures should be used. The criteria for a definition of research must be clarified by a working party, and presented to the Committee. If not supported by research proxies, there should be some strategic funding to ensure high-quality research which fits with the College plan. This could be at either new faculty or College level.

### **RS/06-07/16 EU Framework Programme 7**

The EU Framework Programme 7 will be launched on 22 December 2006, and the first deadlines are expected in March / April 2007. A presentation of the FEC model and its implications will be made to Heads of Schools. A group is also being set up to look at FP7 and address issues as they arise. The costing system must be addressed early so that applicants can plan ahead. A meeting of Heads of Schools will be convened early in 2007 to start disseminating information, and the Treasurer will circulate a paper to the Heads of Schools.

*Action: A meeting of Heads of Schools will be convened early in 2007 to start disseminating information.*

*Action: The Treasurer will circulate a paper to the Heads of Schools.*

**RS/06-07/17 SFI**

(i) OIP

SFI has moved from giving overheads on individual grants to requiring the university to apply for a 30% annual overhead. SFI recently advised the College that it would have to pay back some of the 2006 overhead. The Treasurer and DoRaI called in an external consultant who concluded that TCD had followed the correct procedures. The IUA then wrote to SFI, and this led to a meeting with the Director General. As a result, it was agreed that SFI will continue to pay the annual overhead, and will also pay overheads on smaller grants. It was noted that the financial impact for the College is not yet known, and that there is a huge administrative burden.

The OIP working group will meet again in 2007 but the scope of their work should be widened to include all overheads. The DoR, Treasurer and DoRaI will make suggestions about membership and terms of reference for the overhead working group. They will bring a memo to the next Research Committee meeting.

The DoR will circulate a discussion document on College policy on the distribution of OIP funds. This will be discussed at the next meeting with a view to getting a statement of Research Committee policy.

(ii) CSET Competition

Trinity is making three bids – immunology, business and neuroscience – in the CSET competition for a mid-January 2007 deadline. The College is also involved in a systems biology CSET bid. UCG is bidding for a CSET in cancer and would expect to enter a 50/50 partnership with Dermot Kelleher, School of Medicine.

The DoR and DoRaI have met with each of the CSET leaders. The business CSET, led by John Murray and Mairead Brady, is not a strategic pillar but one of the four enabling strands in business and innovation. It is important therefore that this CSET indicate that it is closely linked to the College's strategic priority of globalisation and that it has clear links with the flagship globalisation Institute, IIS.

One of the conditions for a CSET bid is a 20% commitment from industry. The IDA are very enthusiastic and may consider IDA industrial collaboration with unsuccessful CSET bidders. All

applications are considered individually but it is unlikely that all will get through to the full application stage at the end of January 2007.

The DoR, Bursar and DoRaI will meet to consider space and strategic implications.

(iii) Conflicts of Interest Policy

Negotiation of agreements in the US is totally different from Europe. With US federal funding, pre-obligation of inventions is prohibited. In Europe, the funding imperative is at a national, regional and local level, and focuses on stimulating job-creation. In US top-tier universities, faculty with equity cannot take part in research sponsored by the company in which they hold equity.

SFI has circulated a policy document to other funding agencies which will be tabled at the next IUA meeting. It is based on the way conflict of interest is viewed in the US. For example, it would require universities to set up the equivalent of a Freedom of Information office to collect conflict of interest statements from university staff and set in place processes to manage or eliminate such conflicts. It is proposed that this would be auditable and a condition of future grant funding. The policy ought to reflect how government funding operates in Ireland.

The College already has a good research practice document but will have to set up a conflict of interest committee, and membership should include the Secretary. This will be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

*Action: The DoR, Treasurer and DoRaI will make suggestions about membership and terms of reference for the Overhead Working Group, and will bring a memo to the next Committee meeting.*

*Action: The DoR will circulate a discussion document on College policy on the distribution of OIP funds.*

*Action: The DoR, Bursar and DoRaI will meet to consider space and strategic implications of the CSET bids.*

**RS/06-07/18 TCIN**

The TCIN application to become a TCD institute is on hold until the full financial model for managing the institute is available.

**RS/06-07/19 HEA PRTL1**

The call for PRTL14 is now expected in January 2007.

**RS/06-07/20 Service Contracts and Contract Research Activity**

A small working group met to discuss how to deal with service contracts. They agreed that clear guidelines are needed, and have reviewed various definitions of research. They will circulate the OECD guidelines before the next meeting. A draft memo will be reviewed by the strategy group and will be brought to next meeting. It was noted that one of the issues for College is that no one currently looks at the risks and exposures of services contracts.

*Action: The strategy group will circulate the OECD guidelines before the next meeting, and will bring a draft memo to next meeting.*

**RS/06-07/21 Terms of Reference for the Research Committee**

The DoRaI will send the Research Committee draft terms of reference to the College Secretary for his input. Members will consider any issues for the next meeting.

*Action: The DoRaI will send the Research Committee draft terms of reference to the College Secretary for his input.*

*Action: Members will consider any issues for the next meeting.*

**RS/06-07/22 Clusters**

This item is on hold until the Research Committee terms of reference have been agreed.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 11.00 on Thursday 15 February 2007.

Signed: .....

Date: .....