The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 08 March 2007

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

RS/06-07/25 Minutes of meeting held on 14 December 2006 and Extraordinary meeting held on 07 February 2007

The Minutes were approved and signed.

RS/06-07/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes

It was noted that the date of the next Research Committee meeting clashes with the proposed date for the PRTLI interview and will need to be rearranged.

RS/06-07/15: ARAM – Research Proxies
A minute from the Heads of Schools meeting in relation to this issue should be circulated for noting to the Research Committee. The Research Proxy document by fellows has not yet been circulated to non-Fellows for comment.

Action: J Ohlmeyer to ensure Minute from Heads is circulated to Research Committee.
Action: A Donnelly to contact Fellows re. Research Proxy document and its circulation to non-Fellows.

RS/06-07/18: TCIN
The TCIN application to be a Research Institute is still on hold until the full financial model for managing the institute is available.

RS/06-07/21: Terms of Reference for the Research Committee
This item is still being worked on. Comments have been received from the Secretary's office in relation to the current draft.

Section A: Policy/Implementation Issues

RS/06-07/27 ARAM – Research Proxies

The Committee has not identified a possible viable third proxy measure but is eager to consider any options presented from the research community. In the meantime, the current output measures should be used. If not supported by research proxies, the Committee feels that there should be some strategic funding available to ensure that high-quality research which fits within the College research strategic plan is resourced. This could be at either new faculty or College level.

RS/06-07/28 Trinity Centre for Health Sciences

At the request of the Dean of Research, the Research Centres and Schools Liaison Committee evaluated the proposed structures outlined in the Institute of Molecular Medicine (IMM) Governance Document. Their comments were submitted to the Research Committee. The Research Committee requested that these be forwarded to the School of Medicine for comment and response and that consideration be given to how the proposed structure fits into the TCD Institutes Policy. The Committee noted the request of the Research Centres and Liaison Committee for additional information on the relationship of the IMM to the School or Schools and for a financial plan, and that the information is submitted on the template developed by the Committee. It was agreed that further consideration of this document should be held in abeyance pending an assessment of the impact that the introduction of the Academic Medical Centre may have on the structure needed for IMM, and pending the assessment of the additional information requested.

Action: D Kelleher to be alerted to above decision.

Section B: Implementation Decisions

RS/06-07/29 Research Centres and Schools Liaison Committee

In autumn 2006, the Research Centres and Schools Liaison Committee issued a general call for research groupings that wished to be considered for status as a Trinity Research Centre (TRC) under the new College guidelines. At the same time, the Committee also called for currently approved centres to submit information on their governance structures and financial arrangements, in particular in relation to the Schools that support them. It is planned that these Centres will come under review in three years' time, and that Centres may submit information in two years' time in order to ensure that any issues identified by the Liaison Committee can be addressed before the formal review comes due. The memo circulated at the meeting outlined a number of outcomes of the Liaison Committee's approval process, including recommendations for two new TRCs. It was noted that not all centres responded to the call. Amongst the issues identified was the potential need for a provisional or deferred accreditation, the possible overlap of themes between centres, and a lack of clarity around financial arrangements. Feedback on decisions made has been carried out. It was indicated that perhaps there should be a revision of the form to be filled in by applicants to provide an opportunity for Centres to demonstrate how they integrate with the College/School strategic plan. An additional issue that emerged was the lack of clarity as to what constitutes a 'consortium', and how such consortia would be integrated with centres/institutes/research groupings. In considering whether the developments of centres should be encouraged in certain areas where perhaps they do not exist at present, the Committee felt that this might be a role undertaken at the new faculty organisational level.

Following a brief discussion of the proposed criteria for a TRC outlined in the memo, it was agreed that the use of the phase 'scholarly excellence' be replaced by the more inclusive phrase 'scholarly outputs and activities'.

The Research Committee engaged in a brief discussion about its own composition and role in light of the new faculty structure. The Committee members agreed that both the Committee's role and composition in the future should be aligned to the new faculty structure.

The Research Centres and Schools Liaison Committee Memo together with its outcomes and recommendations were approved by the Research Committee. The Research Committee's thanks to the Research Centres and Schools Liaison Committee was noted.

Action Point: J Ohlmeyer's College webpages will be changed to reflect what has been approved by the Liaison Committee and Research Committee. The wording on the form as indicated above is to be changed.

RS/06-07/30 HEA PRTLI: Implementation Issues and Application

The Committee was advised that the PRTLI application is being prepared and is expected to go to the printer by Wednesday 14 March 2007 for submission on Friday 16 March 2007. The DoR relayed to the members present the areas which would form part of the College's bid and also indicated what the HEA assessment process would entail. J Ohlmyer, on behalf of the Research Committee, thanked the Research Office team for their work in supporting the development of the PRTLI application. The DoR concurred and added his thanks to D Lloyd for the very significant efforts and workload he had undertaken on behalf of the College in preparing the proposal.

RS/06-07/31 EU Framework Programme 7

The EU Framework Programme 7 was launched on 22 December 2006, and the first deadlines are expected in April/May 2007. An FP7 internal website has now been launched which provides salary scales, templates, sample letters of intent as well as general information useful when putting together an application to FP7. A meeting of Heads of Schools was convened early in 2007 to start disseminating information. An FP7 working group (WG) has been set up that is identifying potential impediments that researchers may encounter in preparing their FP7 applications and identifying solutions in advance to these issues. It is hoped that this will facilitate research faculty in preparing their applications to the programme. A meeting with St James's Hospital to discuss how to facilitate hospital researchers participating in the FP7 programme through TCD has taken place, and the FP7 WG is developing a draft MoU for discussion with the Hospital that it is hoped will address all of the issues that have been identified.

RS/06-07/32 Research Committee Work Programme

Members were asked to consider the work programme of the Research Committee for the remainder of the year and to indicate any topics they felt should be included in the work plan for the Committee over and above what is on the agenda at present.

RS/06-07/33 Business and Industry Committee

The DoRaI provided a report to the Research Committee on the innovation activities of the Research and Innovation Office. The report to the Committee included an overview and analysis of the period

2003-2006, along with an update on the current year's activities. The report also addressed the need to manage the College's intellectual property across the research continuum, from the early stages of a nascent research project (where agreements are often negotiated that obligate future inventions from publicly-funded research e.g. Material Transfer Agreements, equipment purchase contracts), to the identification of a novel innovation, to its successful commercialisation. The complexities of structuring and managing the intellectual property in large public/private research collaborations such as the SFI-funded CSETs or the emerging IDA-funded industry collaborations was discussed.

The DoRaI requested approval of the proposed membership of the task force to develop updated Terms of Reference for the Business and Industry Committee. The Committee approved the membership with two additions: Business School (John Murray); and School of Engineering (Darina Murray). A functioning Business and Industry Committee is expected to be in place by July 2007.

Action: DoRaI to ask John Murray and Darina Murray to join the task force as indicated above.

RS/06-07/34 SFI

(i) OIP

D Alexander presented an overview of the latest situation in relation to the OIP. The Committee members were advised of the amounts requested from SFI versus the amounts obtained, and the reasons for the variance. D Alexander noted to the Committee members that SFI was now intending to provide overhead in advance in line with direct cost claims but that expenditure was still expected to be on an institutional basis only. Letters of allocation are being sent to the various areas in College in receipt of OIP moneys.

An Overhead Working Group has been established to deal with all aspects of overheads not just SFI. The first meeting of this group is to be held in two weeks' time.

The members of the Research Committee took the opportunity to formally welcome the appointment of Professor Frank Gannon as the new Director General of Science Foundation Ireland, and to wish him every success in his tenure.

(ii) CSET Competition

Trinity made three full bids – immunology, business and neuroscience – in the CSET competition for a mid-January 2007 deadline. The

College was also involved in two other bids, one with NUIG as lead in Systems Biology, and one with DCU as lead in the ICT area.

RS/06-07/35 College Policy on the Distribution of OIP Funds

The Dean of Research circulated a copy of the statement on OIP policy which he presented to Board. He noted that this may be superceded by any proposals that the new working party on overheads develops.

RS/06-07/36 Service Contracts and Contract Research Activity

A small working group met to discuss how to deal with service contracts and contract research activity. Their recommendations are outlined in a memorandum to the Research Committee. The DoRaI provided a briefing on the output from this group and in particular on the proposed revised definition of research to be adopted by the College. The definition is the OECD definition of research, and this will provide a mechanism to assess whether contracts submitted are to be categorised as research contracts or service contracts based on the scope of research to be conducted. Interpretative power will be given to the Research and Innovation Office in the first instance, with appeal to the Dean of Research. The document as a whole together with the OECD definition and the recommended implementation was approved by the Committee members.

RS/06-07/37 Research in the Arts and Humanities

The DoR briefed Committee members on the report from the External Reviewers concerning research in the Arts and Humanities. It places College in the top 50 in the world in this field of research. In response to how we should now deal with the recommendations contained in the report, it was decided that J Ohlmeyer should produce a draft action plan for the College (to come back to the Committee in May 2007). Before the report from the reviewers is put on the web, it was decided that Board should be asked to note the report (a covering note from DoR and J Ohlmeyer should be provided). This report and its recommendations will be critical for the Long Room Hub and its consideration as an institute within the College.

In addition, P Lane is to bring to the next Research Committee meeting a proposal for a review of Research in the Social Sciences and Business studies area which could perhaps take place in December 2007.

Action: J Ohlmeyer to produce a draft action plan for the College re. recommendations in the report on research in the Arts and Humanities.
Action: DoR and J Ohlmeyer will send a copy of the reviewers' report to Board.

Action: P Lane will bring to the next Research Committee meeting a proposal for a review of Research in the Social Sciences and Business Studies area.

RS/06-07/38 Research Committee Funding Schemes

D Alexander presented the document on Research Committee Funding schemes, and pointed out that the Start-up Fund for New Lecturers has always been run regardless of the scale of budget available. It was decided that whilst the Research Committee still has not been advised of its budgetary allocation for the academic year 2006/07, it would proceed to advertise the Start-up Scheme using last year's criteria and funding limits. In this way it is hoped that applications can be received and evaluated and, once the budget is known, the allocation of funding to the successful applicants could occur quickly. The Committee agreed to wait to see what its budgetary allocation would be before committing itself to funding any other schemes.

Action: The Start Up scheme is to be launched as soon as possible.

RS/06-07/39 Contract Negotiation

The DoRaI briefed the Committee on the Research Contracts Administration Memo which involves a proposal to establish a Research Contracts Division in Research and Innovation (R&IS). This memo was previously presented to the Finance Committee seeking its endorsement to proceed with the interim arrangements outlined in the memo and with implementing the proposal contained therein, subject to available budget relief to R&IS. It was noted that Finance Committee approval had been received.

RS/06-07/40 Sick Leave Policy for Researchers

D Alexander asked the Research Committee to consider the document circulated to the Personnel and Appointments Committee (PAC) from the Staff Relations Officer proposing amendments to the College's regulations governing sick leave. The Committee members noted that PAC had requested that the matter of the application of the sick leave regulations to research staff be referred to the Research Committee. Whilst the Research Committee agreed in principle to creating equality in the system, its members specifically requested further information on how this would be funded. A discussion followed about job title labels in College. The Committee noted that the definition of job title labels within the College was still an issue and asked that the Dean of Graduate Studies be asked to update the Research Committee in that regard at its next meeting.

Action: D Alexander to query PAC as to how the Sick Leave Regulations would be funded.

Action: Dean of Graduate Studies to update the Research Committee on the issues associated with the development of job title labels in the College.

The next meeting of the Research Committee was due to take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 11.00 on 12 April 2007. However due to an HEA PRTLI-related event, this date will be changed and members notified accordingly.

Signed: …….

Date: …….