UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 6th October 2009

Present: Professor Patrick Prendergast (Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer
              and Chair); Dr David Lloyd (Dean of Research and Deputy Chair);
              Professor Clive Williams (Dean of Engineering, Mathematics &
              Science); Dr James Callaghan (Associate Director of Trinity Research
              & Innovation); Professor Carol O'Sullivan (Dean of Graduate Studies);
              Professor Paul Holm; Professor Dermot Kelleher; Ms. Patricia
              Callaghan (Academic Secretary); Professor Shane Allwright; Mr.
              Ronan Hodson (President of the Graduate Students' Union); Dr Tony
              McElligott (Chair of the Trinity Research Staff Association).

Apologies: Professor Michael Marsh (Dean of Arts, Humanities & Social
              Sciences); Prof. Colm O'Morain (Dean of Health Sciences); Professor
              James Wickham; Professor Linda Doyle; Professor John Boland; Ms.
              Doris Alexander; Ms. Deirdre Savage.

In attendance: Ms Maria Treanor (Minute Secretary to the Committee)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly constituted Research
Committee, noting that the Research Committee is now an Academic Committee of
the University Council.

Section A

RS/09-10/01   **Minutes of 18 June 2009** were approved and signed.

RS/09-10/02   **Matters Arising from the Minutes**
                  RS/08-09/38: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed the
                  meeting that the Policy on Good Research Practice was approved by
                  Council at its meeting of the 30th September 2009.

                  RS/08-09/39: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed the
                  meeting that the bid for Institute Status by the Institute for
                  International Integration Studies (IIIS) was accepted by the Research
                  Committee pending clarification on some financial matters between
                  the IIIS Director and the Treasurer.

RS/09-10/03   **Intellectual Property Policy** A memorandum on the Status of the
                  Intellectual Property (IP) Policy and Campus Company Formation,
                  dated 1st October 2009, and a memorandum on the Proposed New
                  Approach to the Establishment of Campus Companies, dated 21st

August 2009, and on Campus Company Formation Process from August 2009 were circulated. The Dean of Research and the Dean of Engineering, Mathematics & Science withdrew for this item as they are both promoters of the campus company Codex. The Associate Director of Trinity Research & Innovation (ADTRI) spoke to the circulated document. He reported on his meeting with the Planning Group, a subgroup of Executive Officers, to discuss how the section of the extant IP policy that relates to campus company formation might be developed to encourage deal-flow rather than IP-capture *per se*. The Planning Group invited the ADTRI to revise the provision on Campus Company Formation to take account, where reasonable, of the difficulties experienced by those who wish to establish a campus company. The ADTRI informed the meeting that the revised policy on campus company formation will be piloted over the course of this academic year and reviewed at the end of this year.

In response to a query, the ADTRI noted that the new approach to campus company formation is based on four principles: (i) optimising the rate at which campus companies are formed, (ii) reducing real or perceived delays to forming a campus company, (iii) maximising the level of knowledge transfer, and (iv) ensuring a fair and reasonable return to College. In order to address this, anti-dilution conditions have been removed so as not to prohibit investment from Enterprise Ireland. He noted that many Venture Capitalists adopt a similar approach. College's share of equity is 5% under the revised policy. The ADTRI explained the principles of anti-dilution, noting that usually a threshold for investment is set. If investment into the company is less than this threshold (often called a 'trigger') then the protected equity stake does not reduce even though the stakes of other shareholders may reduce. If investment into the company exceeds the threshold then the protected equity stake will also reduce along with that of the equity stakes held by the other shareholders. Sometimes the protected equity stake may reduce at a different rate compared to the other equity stakes. The anti-dilution clauses are contained in the company's Shareholder's Agreement.

In response to a question on how, under the revised approach to the formation of campus companies, the College's equity stake could be protected, it was suggested that it could be linked into the assignment of IP to the company. Usually the approach adopted is to license the IP to the company rather than to assign ownership. It was also noted that once IP has been assigned to a company, the company is expected to pay all subsequent patenting and patent maintenance costs.

Under the new proposal, the amount of time founding Principal Investigators (PIs) spend on campus company activities is to be agreed with the Head of School. The Head of School communicates the agreed level of PI involvement in the formation of a campus company to the ADTRI. The ADTRI recommends approval of campus company status and notifies the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer, the Dean of Research, and the Chief Operating Officer. To avoid any conflict of interest, a pro-officer will be appointed in cases where relevant College officers are involved in the promotion of a campus company.

The meeting heard that for the calendar year 2009, three campus companies have already been approved and four more are in the final stages of approval. There is the potential for an additional three more companies to be approved before the end of the year, and it is expected that two more companies will be formed in the first quarter of 2010.

The Committee approved the implementation of the revised policy on the establishment of campus companies on a pilot basis, to be reviewed at the end of the academic year 2009/10.

RS/09-10/04   **Research Quality Metrics (RQM) for the Resource Planning Model (RPM) Metrics** A memorandum entitled *Research Quality Metrics (RQM)* was circulated with papers for the meeting. The Board minute (BD08-09/316) relating to this item was tabled.

The Dean of Research spoke to the circulated document. He informed the meeting that a working group examined the mechanisms by which the 30% allocation attributed to research might be made under the proposed Resource Planning Model (RPM). The research proxies employed under the current Academic Resource Allocation Model (ARAM) are linked to PhD completions and competitive research income. These measures do not directly consider quality of research output. The Board established a working group to examine mechanism by which the 30% allocation attributed to research might be made under the proposed new Resource Planning Model (RPM).

The RPM, as proposed to Board, has three principles. Principle 1 rewards and incentivises research participation by academic staff across College: each School is required to agree with the Faculty Dean its definition of 'active participation in research' working from the current Research Support System (RSS) definition of 'research-active'. Principle 2 encourages research quality and growth across College: each School agrees with the Faculty Dean a number of high-level quantifiable research quality objectives for the School as a whole. Principle 3 benchmarks performance against peer international units:

each School is required to nominate up to three peer comparator units. The Dean concluded by noting that, while Board had agreed the principles were innovative, it was felt that further work on developing RPM was required. The working group will report to Board again in Michaelmas term.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer invited the Research Committee to discuss the proposed model with a view to providing feedback to the working group.

It was agreed that research activity should be rewarded but that it was important to get the weightings correct. It was argued that there is typically a 10:1 difference between funding for Science and funding for Arts and Humanities. The meeting felt that it would be difficult to have measures that were both objective and standardised. It was further felt that the three proposed principles effectively constituted the UK research assessment exercise (RAE) but without the structures and funding to manage and monitor it. There was some discussion about measures employed in other countries, and it was felt the RAE would require considerable administrative overhead in addition to being very time-consuming and open to manipulation. There is a need to measure output as well as excellence. It was argued that principles 1 and 2 would reward lack of ambition. If these principles were to be adopted it would be necessary to have external input into the process to avoid subjectivity. One possibility is to continue with the current system which provides a direct measure of research activity, and to add a measure that assesses excellence. Peer-reviewed academic publications and the ability to attract external research funding are both indicators of success. In the discussion on defining 'research active' staff, the need to take account of differences across disciplines was noted. It was further noted by several committee members that benchmarking performance against peer international units may be valuable but is unworkable at the moment.

It was suggested that Principles 1 and 2 could effectively reward lack of ambition, and the meeting cautioned against depending solely on internal judgement when measuring research excellence. It was noted that Principle 3 may not be possible at this point in time.

Action: Chair to bring Committee's comments back to the working group.

RS/09-10/05   **TCD/UCD Innovation Alliance** A document entitled "*TCD/UCD Innovation Alliance*" which was submitted to the Taoiseach's Innovation Task Force was circulated. The Dean of Research spoke to the document and noted that the goal of the Innovation Alliance is to

deliver the Smart Economy and to boost job creation. The Dean explained that the Government-led Innovation Task Force was initially announced at the same time as the Innovation Alliance was launched in March 2009. The Innovation Alliance has three key elements: namely, (i) a new TCD/UCD Innovation Academy to mainstream innovation in 3rd and 4th level education; (ii) a new TCD/UCD Joint Venture in Enterprise Development; (iii) a joint strategy for research in key national sectors. A joint Oversight Board is charged with developing the Innovation Alliance, and this Board engages with the Government-led Innovation Task Force. Three working groups, concerned with education, research and business development, report to the Oversight Board. The Dean noted that TCD and UCD have collaborated across several areas in the past five years. He informed the meeting of progress to-date, noting in particular developments in respect of the Innovation Academy.

The Dean noted that TCD and UCD currently account for approximately 50% of Ireland's undergraduates in science, engineering and technology and also approximately 50% of Ireland's PhDs in science, engineering and technology. He drew the meeting's attention to the three Enterprise Corridors (North City to Airport, City to City-West, and TCD-UCD Corridor) planned for the city, including some hospital sites which could bring in anchor tenants in partnership with the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Ireland. The Dean highlighted some International innovation initiatives including city based innovations in Barcelona, San Francisco, Singapore, Japan, Amsterdam, and Imperial College, London.

The Committee discussed how the Innovation Alliance could help to advance the development of enterprise. It was noted that companies may not thrive if the support they need to scale and grow is not put in place. It was pointed out that there are only a few experts in Ireland who can advise on small and medium sized start-up companies. Unless the Innovation Alliance secured the support of a corporate stakeholder, it would be difficult for it to thrive and succeed. Although the Innovation Alliance is driven by both universities and government, it was suggested that corporate stakeholders would add more value and help to attract and develop additional small and medium enterprise. This is particularly important for the biotechnology and health sectors. It may be necessary to buy-in international experts to support the development of the Innovation Alliance. Some concern was expressed that the Innovation Alliance does not make adequate provision for the Arts and Humanities sector. The Dean of Research thanked the meeting for its comments and agreed to communicate these to the various groups involved in establishing the Innovation Alliance.

RS/09-10/06   **Annual Research Report to Council** A memorandum outlining the
content of the Annual Report of the Research & Innovation Office
2009/10 was circulated. The ADTRI speaking to this item, explained
that the outline was based on the 2008-09 Annual Report and Service
Plan submitted to the Chief Operating Officer. The 2008/09 Report
contained a summary of facts and figures on research income,
contracts and technology transfer.

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer informed the meeting that
an Annual Report on research and innovation activities of College
should be submitted to the Research Committee for comment before
submission to the University Council. He noted that undergraduate
and postgraduate activities are reported annually to Council through
the Senior Lecturer's Report and the Dean of Graduate Studies Report.
These Reports are compiled by the Offices that support the Senior
Lecturer and the Dean of Graduate Studies respectively. The Vice-
Provost/Chief Academic Officer invited the meeting's input on the
contents of the Research and Innovation Annual Report.

The meeting suggested that the Annual Report should include
statistical data and comparative analysis against previous years and, if
possible, other Irish universities, on research activity, innovation and
technology transfer. Information on publications, citations, rankings,
impact, research income and output can be sourced from the Research
Support System (RSS). Information on grant applications and
contracts should be included, as well as data on invention disclosures,
patents, licences, spin-out companies, and other activities relating to
technology transfer.

In terms of statistics on awards it was noted that TR&I has circulated
to the Planning Group recent statistics on awards from a number of
national and international sponsors including the two Irish Research
Councils, IRCSET and IRCHSS. This type of data should appear in the
report. It was also noted, however, that these records are currently
held in excel sheets and can only be compiled manually. The need for
a proper information system to support the activities of TR&I was
stressed. The planned implementation of a Research Proposal and
Award Management System (RPAMS), if approved, will alleviate the
current lack of comparative statistics and records in this area.

It was agreed that the TR&I will support the Dean of Research in
compiling the Research and Innovation Annual Report and a first
draft will be available for discussion at the next meeting of the
Research Committee.

Action: the Academic Secretary to advise the ADTRI on the format and content of the Research and Innovation Annual Report.

RS/09-10/07   **Research Committee Budget** The budget was deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.

Section B

RS/09-10/08   **FP7 Working Group** The minutes of the meeting of 21 May 2009 were noted.

RS/09-10/09   **Committee on Business and Industry** The draft minutes of the meeting of 31 March 2009 were noted. The Vice-Provost/chief Academic Officer informed the meeting that the Committee has been renamed the Knowledge Transfer & Innovation Committee.

RS/09-10/10   **Any Other Business** The Dean of Research noted that the Times Higher Education QS World University Rankings will be announced on 08 October 2009.

Section C

RS/09-10/11   **Research Committee Terms of Reference** The meeting noted the terms of reference.

RS/09-10/12   **Any Other Business** It was agreed that the following matters would be discussed at future meetings of the Research Committee: (i) sustainability, governance and funding of Trinity Research Institutes; (ii) governance and funding of College Centres, (iii) governance structures to support innovation; Research staff career structures.

Signed: ………………………….

Date: …………………………