

The University of Dublin  
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011

Present: Dr David Lloyd (*Dean of Research and Chair*)  
Dr James Callaghan (*Associate Director of Trinity Research & Innovation, ADTRI, and Secretary*)  
Professor Veronica Campbell (*Dean of Graduate Studies*)  
Professor Jane Ohlmeyer (*Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities*)  
Dr Andrew Finlay (*Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy*)  
Dr Suzanne Cahill (*Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy*)  
Dr Norbert Hintersteiner (*Director of Research, School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics*)  
Dr Ed Lavelle (*Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology*)  
Professor Yurii G'oukko (*Director of Research, School of Chemistry*)  
Dr Carl Vogel (*Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics*)  
Professor Anil Kokaram (*Director of Research, School of Engineering*)  
Professor Seamus Martin (*Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology*)  
Dr Conor Houghton (*Director of Research, School of Mathematics*)  
Professor Celia Holland (*Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences*)  
Professor Derek Sullivan (*Director of Research, School of Dental Science*)  
Professor Pdraic Fallon (*Director of Research, School of Medicine*)  
Professor Catherine Comiskey (*Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery*)  
Professor John Boland (*Director of Research, CRANN*)  
Professor Louis Brennan (*Director of Research, IIS*)  
Prof. Shane O'Mara (*Director of Research, TCIN*)  
Professor Poul Holm (*Director of Research, Trinity Long Room Hub*)  
Dearbhail Lawless (*President of the Graduate Students' Union*)  
Dr John Walsh (*Chair, Trinity Research Staff Association*)

In attendance: Dr Patrick Geoghegan (*Associate Dean of Research, ADoR*)  
Ms Doris Alexander (*Research Development Officer*)  
Ms Deirdre Savage (*Nominee of Treasurer*)  
Dr Camilla Kelly (*Research Development Office & Minute Secretary to the Committee*)  
Niamh Brennan (*TCD Library*) for item RS/10-11/29

Apologies: Professor Malcolm MacLachlan (*Director of Research, School of Psychology*)  
Professor Ailbhe Ni Chasaide (*Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences*)

Not present: Professor Igor Shvets (*Director of Research, School of Physics*)  
Dr Carsten Ehrhardt (*Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences*)  
Professor Frank Barry (*Director of Research, School of Business*)  
Professor Kevin Rockett (*Director of Research, School of Drama, Film & Music*)  
Dr Aidan Seery (*Director of Research, School of Education*)  
Dr Crawford Gribben (*Director of Research, School of English*)  
Dr Clemens Ruthner (*Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies*)  
Dr Caoimhin MacMaolain (*Director of Research, School of Law*)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the reconstituted Research Committee. The Committee agreed the agenda.

## Section A

### RS/10-11/24 Minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2010

The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed subject to the following amendments.

Item RS/10-11/19: Research Funding Projections. The Nominee of the Treasurer suggested the following revisions to the minutes, page 3, paragraph 2:

Replace the sentence: "It shows that there was a €50 million drop in funding over one year"

with

"The College experienced a significant reduction in the value of research contracts signed in 2010 (€53.5M) compared with 2009 (€103.3m) - a reduction of 47%."

Remove the sentence: "College has gone from a situation where one third of income was research derived to a situation where it is now only one sixth"

This was agreed by members.

### RS/10-11/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Item RS/10-11/01: Research Centres. This item is on the agenda for this meeting.

Item RS/10-11/19: Research Funding Projections. In addressing the query surrounding the eligibility of academic fees under Framework Programmes, the Nominee of the Treasurer informed the meeting

that with respect to the main FP7 funding programmes, whilst the situation is a little unclear, the National Contact Point had previously advised that academic fees are eligible. TCD has yet to encounter a Framework 7 audit. However, provided that the academic fee can be linked directly to the individual charged to the grant, the Commission should be satisfied. Doris Alexander added that both fees and stipends can be costed into FP7 grant proposals, except for Marie Curie applications. The Research Accounting Manager explained that there is no facility under this particular Programme (i.e. Marie Curie Programme) to claim academic/tuition fees as a separate eligible cost category. Therefore the sector had been advised to exclude these costs. The IUA have also reiterated that the Marie Curie Fellow cannot be charged for the academic/tuition fees.

The meeting asked for suggestions as to how to treat Marie Curie grants. It was suggested that perhaps these grants could be used to top up College Awards, which can be used for fees. Alternatively, under the rules of the Marie Curie Programme, a Fellow should only be paid by way of a contract of employment (rather than a student stipend/fee arrangement) - this does not preclude the Fellow undertaking to self fund a PhD from their award, as a member of staff.

The discussion explored the concept of non-EU fee support within EU programmes, this was deemed a rare occurrence in the system at present.

With respect to funding agency shortfalls for academic fees, the meeting was informed that there cannot be any fee waivers put in place. It has now been left with the Schools to make the decision as to whether the School or student will cover the shortfall. For the School, it might be that they can use a portion of their overheads to make up these shortfalls. The Dean of Graduate Studies advised that students on local authority grants currently meet their own fee shortfalls.

The Dean of Graduate Studies, with reference to the minutes of the last meeting, pointed out that the Graduate Studies Committee is not the appropriate forum to handle this issue, as this committee only deals with academic matters.

One of the Committee asked why TCD's fees are so high relative to other universities and given the economic situation. The comment was made that having such high fee levels is a disincentive to student recruitment.

The Chair summarized by stating that currently there is no easy solution to the problem of fee shortfalls. The Chair concluded by informing the meeting that there is an upcoming meeting with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Pro-Vice Provost to discuss this matter and that the outcome will be reported back to this Committee.

*Action: The Chair to report back to the Committee on the outcome of the meeting to discuss the issue of the funding agency shortfalls for student fees.*

Item RS/10-11/20: National Research Prioritisation Exercise. This item is on the agenda for this meeting.

Item RS/10-11/21: Implementation of research elements of the College Strategic Plan. It was noted by the Chair that there are now a total of 17 proposed areas/themes to which Schools can chose to map. The first meeting of the proposed champions of these 17 themes will take place on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

In relation to research supports, a subgroup of the Committee will convene week of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011, chaired by the ADoR, to discuss ideas for freeing up time in the Research Development Office, so that it can provide support for the implementation of College's Strategic Plan.

*Action: The Chair and ADoR to report back to the Committee on the theme champions meeting and the subgroup meeting, respectively.*

#### **RS/10-11/26 Trinity Research Centres**

The Committee noted a document from the ADoR, outlining a new policy and application form for the formation of a recognized Trinity Research Centre, which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

The ADoR began by noting that this document marks the end of process that has been ongoing since March 2010. An initial report was submitted to the Committee in June 2010. Following this report, the ADoR convened a meeting of directors of the existing research centres, and aspiring research centres. Another report was submitted to the Research Committee in October 2010.

The ADoR stated that his findings indicated a high level of inconsistency across College. If the proposed criteria for centre formation were applied to existing centres, many would close down.

Centre directors also indicated a level of dissatisfaction with the old process for centre formation - once the centre was set up, there was no oversight process in place to monitor progress (or lack of progress) of the centre. The old documents were also unclear in terms of governance.

The document circulated with papers for this meeting attempts to address these 3 issues. Each centre director will be expected to submit an annual report to the DoR. Only those centres that meet the new criteria will be listed in the College calendar. The document also sets out the process for becoming a centre.

The Chair indicated his support for the formation of centres and invited comments from the meeting. The proposal makes it much easier to become a centre. But once formed, the centre must provide evidence that it continues to meet the criteria in order to maintain centre status.

One of the Committee asked if the proposed research areas/themes could eventually become centres. The Chair responded by stating that it was a possibility, but this was not the motivation behind advancing thematic areas.

Another Committee member asked what a grouping would gain by becoming an officially recognized centre. In response, the Chair commented that the main gains would be enhanced visibility and official recognition by College.

The meeting suggested that it was important that outputs from the centres be monitored, and that criteria for formation and maintenance of centre status should be very clear. It was also noted that centres with overlapping interests might be problematic.

The ADoR responded by noting that it would be impossible to define criteria exactly, as outputs are very different from centre to centre, dependant on the main activity of the centre. The annual reports should describe the centre's activity, and will not be written to a fixed template. It was also suggested by the meeting that these annual reports be published on the appropriate website - it will ensure that these reports have the right level of importance attached to them. The ADoR noted that it might not be appropriate to publish the full reports for the first year, i.e. until the Committee has had time to monitor the new process for a period of time. A summary of the report would suffice.

The Chair agreed that there should be close oversight of centres going forward, and suggested that the summary document on existing centres, as submitted to the Committee in June 2010, be circulated to the current Committee members.

The meeting asked whether the words 'research centre' had to be in centre name? In reply, the Chair commented that going forward, any new centre should have 'centre' in its name.

The question of Trinity Research Institutes was raised in the context of procedures for formation and monitoring. The Chair agreed that it was most likely time to revisit these processes.

It was agreed that the Research Committee would take on oversight of centres. It was also proposed that centre directors be invited to a Research Committee meeting on an annual basis.

Doris Alexander asked for clarification in relation to contract lengths for proposed directors of centres. The new document is not clear as to whether the person in question should have 3 years to run on contract, or should just have a 3 year contract. In reply, the ADoR stated that it would not matter, if the Head of School in question was supportive of the centre formation.

The Chair concluded the discussion by thanking the ADoR for all his efforts. The Committee approved the proposal, subject to the minor changes proposed and agreed at the meeting.

*Action: ADoR to circulate the summary document on existing centres, as submitted to the Committee in June 2010, to the current Committee members.*

#### **RS/10-11/27 Research Prioritisation Exercise**

The DoR noted that this item follows on from item RS/10-11/20 and RS/10-11/20 of the meeting that took place on the 1/12/2010.

In advance of the meeting, members were asked to consult their copies of "Proposals for Implementation of College Strategic Plan 2009-2014 Knowledge Generation and Transfer" &

"Establishing Priority Areas of Focus for Irish Research", both of which had been circulated for meeting of the 1/12/2010.

The Chair led the discussion of this item by noting that the Forfás forum for prioritization is an industry-led group, with limited university representation. The forum will take input from the various national funding agencies and HEIs and then decide on a course of action.

The Chair explained that he has already met with Forfás about the prioritization exercise, discussing among other things, the process by which the universities will feed into this exercise. The idea was proposed that information would be collected in relation to areas of research that were funded in the past by the different agencies, and map this to Thomson Reuters subject areas. The Chair noted that these cover approximately 60% of actual research areas. The Chair also pointed out that any reports put together on such a basis would not recognize emerging areas of research. As a compromise, the Chair proposed that College would put forward research areas of critical mass.

The Forfás questionnaire / information template was discussed and agreement reached on how best to populate it within the constraints of available information / current information systems. It was agreed that the approach discussed would give an effective flavor of what TCD is doing from a research perspective.

The meeting asked how other Universities are responding to the questionnaire. The Chair replied that they are responding in much the same manner as TCD.

One of the Committee pointed out that much of the information that Forfás is requesting has already been supplied in one form or another.

Another member noted that this steering group was put together by Forfás on foot of the prevailing economic situation and public opinion.

The Chair commented that as the largest research institute in the country, TCD influence would be important in the context of this prioritization exercise.

The Committee agreed that it was important that TCD engage in this exercise.

In relation to the Forfás questionnaire, the Chair indicated that the level of detail required was unfeasible. For example, with respect to industrial interaction: there are currently over 400 companies linked to TCD in one form or another. Some of these companies have more than one link. These interactions would have to be described in detail.

The Chair concluded the discussion by informing the Committee that the thematic mapping exercise is nearly complete. Data are already available on School income. The Chair will compose a cover

report that will summarize and tie in both sets of data. In the interim, there may be a request that Schools check the relevant numbers in this report. The draft numbers should be ready during the week of the 21<sup>st</sup> and will be circulated to the various Schools.

*Action: Chair to circulate mapping and income numbers to Schools for verification.*

#### **RS/10-11/28 Any Other Urgent Business**

The Chair provided the meeting with an update on PRTL15. The HEA issued a letter of offer in December 2010. College received its first payment, €3M, on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2011. College is still waiting on a notification relating to the monies for graduate programs; until that occurs, the graduate programs cannot commence.

### **Section B**

#### **RS/10-11/29 Open Access Publication Policy - Implementation**

The Committee noted documents, circulated in advance of the meeting, from Niamh Brennan, TCD Library. Ms Brennan gave a short presentation to the Committee outlining how the policy (which can be viewed at

[https://www.tcd.ie/research\\_innovation/assets/TCD%20Open%20Access%20Policy.pdf](https://www.tcd.ie/research_innovation/assets/TCD%20Open%20Access%20Policy.pdf).) should be implemented.

Ms Brennan began by explaining that under the Open Access policy, authors give TCD nonexclusive permission to disseminate their journal articles and other scholarly publications for open access through TARA, Trinity's Access to Research Archive.

TCD's Open Access policy is the first such policy adopted by an Irish University. TCD's resolution is similar to those adopted by the universities of Harvard, Stanford, and MIT, but differs from those policies in that it does not require faculty members to retain copyright to their publications. Instead, it works within the boundaries of scholarly publishers' copyright policies (up to 95% of these publishers allow authors to make some version of their papers freely accessible).

The new policy was approved unanimously at the Research Committee meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and took immediate effect.

Major research funders such as the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the Wellcome Trust, the European Research Council and all UK research funding councils have mandated Open Access, as have almost all Irish Funders.

Under the new Open Access policy, potentially thousands of papers published by TCD faculty each year will be added to TARA and made freely available on the web and accessible through search engines such as Google.

Research shows that Open Access can result in an increase in citations of up to 250% (the % varies from subject area to area). In Computer Science, this number rises to over 300%. Citations play an important part in international rankings - for example, 32.5% of the THS rankings are based on citations.

One of the Committee members asked about books and monographs. Ms Brennan responded that, yes, these items could be added to TARA, provided the publisher has given permission.

Another member raised the issue of PhD theses and the potential problem arising from attempts to publish data featured in a PhD thesis i.e. would a journal take the view that the data was previously published if the thesis goes online via TARA.

The Chair suggested that it might be a good idea to show the impact of Open Access by uploading a paper that is currently not cited and following its citation rate over a six month period.

The Chair concluded by asking the meeting to forward any queries or suggestions to Ms Brennan.

**RS/10-11/30 Innovation Alliance IP Policy**

In advance of the meeting, members were asked to consult their copies of "Proposals for Implementation of College Strategic Plan 2009-2014 Knowledge Generation and Transfer" which had been circulated for meeting of the 1/12/2010. The ADTRI gave a short presentation on the proposed Innovation Alliance IP Policy, as outlined in Appendix 2 of the above document.

The Chair noted that it is vital to have such a clear policy in place as it shows that TCD is an industry friendly research-led institution.

The Committee endorsed the policy.

**Section C**

**RS/10-11/31 Items for Discussion at Future Meetings**

- (i) review of Good Research Practice policy (as per BD/09-10/51) Oct 2010
- (ii) annual review of Research Committee and its terms of reference
- (iii) commitments against the Research Committee Budget
- (iv) research metrics
- (v) Trinity Research Institutes - formation and oversight

Signed: .....

Date: .....