The University of Dublin
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 5th November 2013

Present: Professor Vinny Cahill, Dean of Research (DoR) and Chair
Dr Diarmuid O'Brien, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation (TR&I) and Secretary
Professor Derek Sullivan, Associate Dean of Research (ADoR)
Professor Martin Adams, Director of Research, School of Drama, Film & Music
Professor Colette Murphy, Director of Research, School of Education
Professor Blanaid Clarke, Director of Research, School of Law
Professor Ailbhe Ni Chasaide, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Science
Professor Malcolm MacLachlan, Director of Research, School of Psychology
Professor David Tombs, DOR, School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics
Professor Daniela Zisterer, DOR, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Carl Vogel, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Frank Boland, Director of Research, School of Engineering
Professor Mike Peardon, Director of Research, School of Mathematics
Professor Gary Moran, Director of Research, School of Dental Science
Professor Yuri Volkov, Director of Research, School of Medicine
Professor Gabrielle McKee, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Lorraine O'Driscoll, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Louis Brennan, Director of Research, IIIS
Professor Aideen Long, Dean of Graduate Studies
Dermot Frost, Acting Chair, Trinity Research Staff Association (TRSA)
Ryan Kenny, President, Graduate Students Union

In attendance: Ms Doris Alexander, Research Development Manager, Trinity Research & Innovation
Mr David O'Shea, Acting Research Acc. Manager, Treasurer's Office
Dr Camilla Kelly, Research Projects Officer, Trinity Research & Innovation and Minute Secretary to the Committee
Professor Eileen Drew, Director of WiSER, for Item RS/13-14/20
Maura Horan, College Web Office, for Item RS/13-14/21
Beibhinn Coman, Marketing Manager, & Bernard Mallee, Director of Communications and Marketing, for Item RS/13-14/22

Apologies: Professor Paul Coughlan, Director of Research, School of Business
Professor Clemens Ruthner, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Professor Gaia Narciso, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Professor Seamus Martin, DOR, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of Research, CRANN
Professor Andrew Jackson, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Shane O'Mara, Director of Research, TCIN

Not present: Professor Aileen Douglas, Director of Research, School of English
Professor John Horne, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Robert Gilligan, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Georg S. Duesberg, Director of Research, School of Chemistry
Professor Martin Hegner, Director of Research, School of Physics
Professor Luke O'Neill, Director of Research, Trinity Biosciences Institute (TBSI)
Professor Juergen Barkhoff, Director of Research, Trinity Long Room Hub
Mr John Murphy, Director of Information Systems Services

RS/13-14/14 Introduction

The Dean of Research welcomed everyone to the second meeting of this academic year.

RS/13-14/15 Minutes of 8^h October 2013

The minutes of the meeting were approved by the Committee.

RS/13-14/16 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Item RS/13-14/05 Introduction of the New Director of Trinity Research & Innovation (TR&I): The DoR noted that the re-launch of TR&I is progressing, and that the 'Office of Corporate Partnership and Knowledge Exchange' is now the favoured option for its new name.   The other option, 'Trinity Connect', remains under consideration.

College is currently advertising for a Civic Engagement Officer, who will be based in TR&I going forward. The post will assist in leading the development of Civic Engagement in Trinity and furthering the institutional engagement policy. The successful applicant will be expected to promote, organise, deliver and develop a range of programmes aimed at supporting volunteering activity among Trinity staff and students and developing and strengthening links with community and non-governmental organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

Item RS/13-14/06 Innovation and Entrepreneurship (I&E) Strategy: The DoR informed the Committee that he has spoken to Professor Nick McDonald (Centre for Innovative Human Systems) and he and his colleague Professor Sam Cromie from the centre will join the I&E Working Group.

Item RS/13-14/08 Research Ethics Policy Committee (REC): Feedback from members on the composition of the School RECs is on-going. The DoR noted that the final version of the criteria for Level 1 and Level 2 RECS should come to the Research Committee for approval.

Item RS/13-14/10 HEA Compact: The DoR noted that no further input on the criteria has been forthcoming from the Committee, adding that suggestions are still welcome. College is looking to devise a small number of performance indicators that it can absolutely deliver on.A member of the Committee noted that there was disquiet among staff in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) regarding these KPIs. The DoR responded that he would be happy to convene a meeting with the AHSS Directors of Research to discuss the issue. The DoR commented that there is also a conversation to be had in relation to wider KPIs that can be used in College.

Item RS/12-14/11 Dean of Research Annual Report 2012-2013:   It was noted that only one School report has been received to date. The DoR requested that other Schools and TRIs submit their contributions by the next Research Committee meeting (3rd December).

Action: DoR to convene a meeting of AHSS Directors of Research to discuss the performance metrics for the HEA Compact.

Action: Schools and TRIs to submit their contributions to the DoR report by the next Research Committee meeting (3rd December).

RS/13-14/17   DoR Update

The DoR informed the Committee that the process of selecting candidates for SFI's Career Development Award and Starting Investigator Research Grant (SIRG) has concluded, noting that the schemes were more than 5 times over-subscribed. Five candidates have been selected for each scheme.

The DoR noted that the proposals submitted for the internal selection process were of an excellent standard,. Based on the obvious quality of our staff it was noted that the College must redouble its efforts to support early stage researchers.

The Director of Research for the School of Medicine noted the School's dissatisfaction with the procedures as outlined by SFI.   The schemes attracted many eligible, high-calibre candidates, who are now deprived of the opportunity to submit a proposal to SFI. The DoR added that the fact that all HEIs were treated equally i.e., invited to submit a maximum of 5 applications per scheme, was also very unsatisfactory. Dean committed to to communicating these issues to SFI in writing.

Action: DoR to communicate the Committee's concerns regarding the CDA and SIRG processes to SFI in writing.

One of the Committee asked for clarification on the internal selection process. The DoR responded that the applicants' CVs were given the most weighting, followed by the research proposals, and finally the level of School support, noting that some Schools had provided rankings of their own applicants. The final decision as to which applicants were successful was made by the Faculty Deans under the chairmanship of the DoR. No applications were excluded due to lack of fit with SFI's remit; in fact none were found to be outside the remit. Submissions to SFI will take place mid-December.

RS/13-14/18   Review of Policy on Research Centres

The Committee noted the draft Terms of Reference, which were circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Associate Dean of Research (ADoR) spoke briefly to the document. There are currently 36 Trinity Research Centres in College, with 4-5 new centres approved each year. Policies for the approval of research centres were last reviewed three years ago and new policies have recently been approved for the oversight of Trinity Research Institutes. Since there is now a requirement for Research Centres to be reviewed as part of the College-wide quality review process it is now appropriate to review the definition and formation of Research Centres as well as suitable quality review criteria for all existing and new Centres. A Working Group will be convened to review policies relating to Research Centres and to identify new criteria for their review. The ADoR is now seeking representation from the Directors of Research along with representative Directors of Research Centres.

The Committee approved the document.

Action: Interested Directors of Research to contact the ADoR

RS/13-14/19   Reconstitution of the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Committee (KTIC)

The Committee noted and approved the draft Terms of Reference, which were circulated in advance of the meeting.

The Director of Trinity Research & Innovation (TR&I) spoke briefly to the document. The thinking behind this memo is to get the KTIC functioning again; it was last operational in 2009. Membership should include both internal and external representatives, and should feature members with a wide range of perspectives.

The Committee approved the document.

RS/13-14/20 Any Other Business

The Committee noted and approved a copy of an application from the Migration and Employment Research Centre for recognition as a Trinity Research Centre.

RS/13-14/21 Update on WiSER

Professor Eileen Drew, Director of the Centre for Women in Science & Engineering Research (WiSER), gave a brief presentation on WiSER.

WiSER was launched at TCD in 2006 to address the under-representation of women in science, engineering and technology (SET) careers. Its activities include mentoring, academic writing groups, and Springboard Personal & Professional Development.

Professor Drew also described the INTEGER (Institutional Transformation for Effecting Gender Equality in Research) Project, an FP7-funded project, in which TCD is a partner, that aims to develop and implement Gender Action Plans in order for research and higher education institutions to create sustainable transformational change to improve the career progression of women scientific researchers.

Gender issues and differences highlighted by a Trinity Research Staff Association survey in 2006 were also outlined.

Professor Drew touched on the WiSER proposal for an Early-Career Research Development Centre, dedicated to providing support and development opportunities for early-career research staff at TCD. The DoR later added that a proposal has been submitted to HEA.

One of the Committee noted that the College needed better policies in relation to covering maternity leave costs for researchers – this should not be covered by PIs. Another added that Ireland is many years behind the Nordic countries in terms of parental leave. Professor Drew agreed and suggested that TCD could take the lead and become a best-practice institution.

The Acting Chair of the Trinity Research Staff Association noted that funding of backfill positions for maternity leave is now on the Human Resources Committee's agenda.

Another member noted that the criteria for promotion are the same for all staff regardless of their work activities, that it seems unfair that research is paramount. For example, staff running professional courses should not be judged in the same way as a research-active member of staff.   College-wide workload distributions need to be examined.

In response, the DoR noted that College does have a policy on work-load distribution models to be implemented at School level.

Another of the Committee added that there are very few family friendly practices in College – for example funding to allow parents

to bring children to conferences; and the fact that Reading Week does not coincide with the school mid-term break.

The DoR concluded by thanking Professor Drew for her presentation.

RS/13-14/22   **College Research Web Site**
Maura Horan from the College Web Office gave a brief presentation on and demonstration of the new College Research Website, which is scheduled to go live soon.

In addition to the new layout and content, the site also features an enhanced search facility.   The web pages will also automatically resize to fit the end-user's device. Details of staff are drawn from the Research Support System (RSS).

One of the Committee asked whether assistance would be available for Schools to develop their own research web pages. In response, Ms Horan noted that the Web Office would be happy to advise, and hopes at some stage to develop a template for each School to use.

Another member asked whether the link between the RSS and the Research web pages is dynamic? In reply, Ms Horan stated that updates occur overnight.

It was agreed that the new web pages were a great improvement on the existing site.

The DoR concluded by thanking Ms Horan for her presentation.

RS/13-14/23   **Trinity Brand Project Update**
Bernard Mallee, Director of Communications and Marketing and Beibhinn Coman, Marketing Manager gave a brief presentation on the Trinity Brand project.

The project ultimately is an examination of what *Trinity* is and what it represents. Why is it important to examine the brand? Currently there are many different identities around College – different seals, different crests etc.   Different courses, departments, Schools, research centres and Institutes, support services etc. have very different visual identities. The branding project aims to establish a clear, consistent identity.

The project has appointed brand and research partners, and a major consultation plan is in train.   The branding exercise will help define College's values and messaging, establish a defined positioning in the global higher education landscape, and give College a competitive edge.

The DoR concluded by thanking Ms Coman and Mr Mallee for their presentation.

RS/13-14/24 Any Other Business

One of the Committee noted that there are a number of issues around Horizon 2020 that should be addressed, including that of potential applicants who are not permanent staff. In response, the DoR noted that a policy to address issues around contract staff was approved in 2011 – "Broadening Participation in FP7"

It was also suggested that applicants should be able to include additional remuneration as a cost within the award and this should be made available for staff as an incentive to apply for more non-exchequer funding. It was noted that this is currently against public sector pay policy.

The DoR noted that the request for nominations for upcoming European Research Council calls was on-going.   The first deadline will be for the Starting Grants, in March 2014.   College is trying to identify a cohort of staff that will be competitive for this call and identify the supports need to assist the applicants. A request was re-iterated to each School and TRI to identify and encourage potential ERC applicants.