

The University of Dublin
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 4 October 2016

Present:

Professor John Boland, Dean of Research (DoR), Chair
Professor Martina Hennessy, Associate Dean of Research (ADoRMH)

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Professor Ruth Barton, Director of Research, School of Drama, Film and Music

Professor Stephen Minton, Director of Research, School of Education

Professor Sam Slote, Director of Research, School of English

Professor Micheál Ó Siochrú, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities

Professor Mark Bell, Director of Research, School of Law

Professor Fiona Newell, Director of Research, School of Psychology

Professor Gaia Narcisco, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Professor Trevor Spratt, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Professor Jacob Erickson, Director of Research, School of Religions, Theology and Ecumenics

Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science

Professor Emma Creagh, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Luiz Da Silva, Director of Research, School of Engineering

Professor Adrian Bracken, Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Sergey Frolov, Director of Research, School of Mathematics

Faculty of Health Sciences

Professor Helen Sheridan, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Director, Trinity Long Room Hub

Professor Mani Ramaswami, Director, TCIN

Professor Orla Sheils, Director, TTMI

Mr Shane Collins, President, Graduate Students Union

Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies

In attendance:

Dr Diarmuid O'Brien, Director of Trinity Research and Innovation

Ms Doris Alexander, Research Development Manager, Trinity Research and Innovation

Mr David O'Shea, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division

Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services

Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian, Library

Dr Oonagh Kinsman, Trinity Research and Innovation, Rapporteur to the Committee

Apologies:

Professor Lorraine Leeson, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
 Professor Doug Leith, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics
 Professor Jane Stout, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences
 Professor Martin Hegner, Director of Research, School of Physics
 Professor Gary Moran, Director of Research, School of Dentistry
 Professor Geralyn Hynes, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
 Professor Orla Hardiman, Director, TBSI

Not present:

Professor Peter Gallagher, Associate Dean of Research (ADoRPG)
 Professor Brian Lucey, Director of Research, School of Business
 Professor Roja Fazaeli, Director of School of Languages Literatures & Cultural Studies
 Professor Isabel Rozas, Director of Research, School of Chemistry
 Professor Seamus Donnelly, Director of Research, School of Medicine
 Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director, CRANN
 Mr Michael Cooke, Acting Chair, Trinity Research Staff Association

Actions arising / on-going:

Agenda Item	Owner	Action	Status
RS/14-15/78	Dean of Research	Feedback on the reconsideration of the sustainability of TRIs and their value to Schools	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/50	Dean of Research	Progression of the document on Measuring Research Productivity and Excellence	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/49	Dean of Research	Raise concerns with Research Career framework policy document with Mary Shire, University of Limerick as IUA VPDOR chair	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/57	Dean of Research	Seek information on number of PhD students paying EU and non-EU fees and the source of funding	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/62	Associate Dean of Research	Report to the Research Committee with policies on biobanking, data retention and stem cells	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/04	Directors of Research	All Overhead analysis and justification plans to be submitted by 1 November 2016	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/07	Dean of Research	The DoR to discuss further with the Research Ethics Policy Committee and draft a letter to the JREC to raise the issue of fees for ethical approval.	<i>In progress</i>

RS/16-17/01 Amendment to the minutes of the previous meeting

Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Director, Trinity Long Room Hub was present.

RS/16-17/02 Matters arising from the minutes

The Research Quality Metrics Productivity and Review working group assisted in the development of specific metrics for Ussher posts which were faculty specific. The Heads of Schools will meet with individual Ussher appointees to discuss these. The Faculty based general metrics will continue to be reviewed. Professor Helen Sheridan will take over as the Health Sciences faculty representative. The Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities commented that testing the criteria in his Faculty had raised a number of issues and that accessing data from RSS could be enhanced. The DoR commented that PI quantitative analytics under development would enable Schools to have a measure of relative activity. The criteria should be biased towards excellence (RS/15-16/63).

The Dean of Research annual report was circulated. New submissions of 1 or 2 items for inclusion per School should be submitted to the Deans office by 1 December 2016. For ease of collation, a template will be provided. Each item should tell a story that will be accessible. The report will be used to highlight interesting research activity to a wider public. The Library will also submit item(s). (RS/15-16/64)

ORCID IDs are now entrenched in all that we do and SFI is moving to include this in their application forms. No negative consequences have been noted. (RS/15-16/39).

RS/16-17/03 Update from the Dean of Research

The DoR reviewed the ranking for Trinity as designated by QS where we are now 98th in the world. He explained the background to the situation where Trinity was not ranked by THE in the current round but that a provisional ranking will be provided before the year end. The Director of the Long Room Hub requested clarification that the subject rankings calculated by THE for 2016 were still valid. The DoR confirmed this. He reiterated that to move up the rankings we need to continue to produce excellent scholarship and to attract world class people. However we have to be aware that with continued government cuts the staff /student ratio is decreasing. The Provost and the President of UCD were seeking a meeting with the Minister of Education and Skills as a matter of urgency.

Funding of €1.1 million was received from the Wellcome Trust for a 5 year Institutional Strategic Support Fund which required equivalent internal co-funding. The programme will fund a start-up seed funding for newly independent investigators including Ussher lecturers, an international collaboration stimulus programme and an interdisciplinary public engagement programme in Neurohumanities.

The majority of new Ussher Lecturers are now in post. These are the first tenure track posts and the DoR emphasised that we should give them the supports that they need to succeed. Their review for tenure will take place after 4 years.

An outline document on PRTL I has been obtained by the DoR. This focuses on human capital and infrastructure however no definite details

were provided. It is not clear if it will be run as a separate programme or be administered as additional funding to SFI and IRC. The Director of Trinity Research and Innovation had with UCD met with representatives from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to emphasise that there was a significant research activity outside of SFI centre and that they would not like to see SFI managing the programme. It is likely that the first tranche of funding will be small and may be focused on PhD programmes and that further funding tranches will become available at the end of 2018. There may be a period of consultation. It will be important to engage with the opposition parties to ensure that the important messages are being widely heard. The Director of the Long Rom Hub who is chair of the IRC confirmed that this was the level of detail currently in discussion. The HEA should be provided with infrastructural plans for the next 10 years which will identify the gaps. The Research Development Manager emphasised that in a recent interim review of Irish involvement in H2020 by Technopolis the ability to bid for European Commission research funding and to reach national targets is reliant on adequate infrastructure which cannot be funded from other sources. In response to a question on the extent of the funding it is thought to be in the range of €600-800 million over 5 years. The Director of Research for Histories and Humanities asked if other universities had similar views to UCD and TCD. This would be raised at IUA meetings.

Of the 4 SFI centre bids submitted at the first stage one (INNATE) has progressed to full proposal with a deadline in November. For the renewal of AMBER to be submitted next May the level of industry funding is being increased from 10% to 30%. We have been successful in 4 Strategic Partnerships but we have had no success in Spokes to date.

Trinity was visited by representatives of LERU (League of European Research Universities) in August. They were considering increasing the numbers of member universities from 20 to 22-23. We were evaluated favourably and will hear on November 18th if our membership has been agreed. This will help to position ourselves as the leading Irish university for research but will also give us a communication vehicle at Vice-Chancellor level and other levels to the leading research intensive universities in Europe. There will be a membership fee but significant policy discussions and membership of working groups should keep Trinity abreast of the European research landscape and provide an ability to influence policy.

RS/16-17/04 Review of SFI overheads

It is proposed by the DoR that a university-wide review of SFI overheads be undertaken at School, Institute or professional service division level. In the absence of full economic costs and insufficient level of overhead returns it is important for a review to be undertaken to provide maximum transparency and to ensure that research performing units can adequately deliver their research programmes. Full economic costs would give an overhead rate of approximately 60% while the actual overall rate recouped is 18%. The principles underpinning the review were detailed. A financial report detailing income, overheads and expenditure with detailed plans for both SFI and non-SFI overheads expenditure is requested to be submitted to the DoRs office by 1

November 2016. A panel will be established to review the information for i) non-academic services spend and /or need for overheads and ii) strategic use of overheads at School level. The DoR proposed that the current split of overheads be revised from 50% to cista communis and 50% to Schools pending outcome of the overheads review. Although the SFI overheads relate to research activity within the SFI remit, the Vice Provost will also be looking at the ABC process to ensure that we enable research capacity.

The Research Development Manager asked what SFI requirements were currently as in the past they specified that the overheads should not go back to SFI PIs directly but was intended to build institutional infrastructure and capacity, The Projects Accounting Manager informed that the current allocation on SFI overheads was made by the Indirect Cost planning group which is a subpanel of the Planning Group. A report on overhead spend is submitted to SFI annually. The Director of Research for Histories and Humanities asked if this review was specifically on SFI overheads or if this would affect other overhead policies. The DoR confirmed that this related to SFI overheads but would be the first phase of the proposed analysis and subsequent changes. The IUA are also suggesting a overall increase in overhead rate paid by the agencies however the likely push back from the agencies will be to reduce the total funding available for direct costs to compensate. The Director of Trinity Research and Innovation commented that the proposed change might force College to fund key services through the ABC process and not have them reliant on overhead streams.

Action: All Overhead analysis and justification plans to be submitted by 1 November 2016.

RS/16-17/05 Crowd Funding / Small scale giving for Research

The DoR wanted to raise this topic for discussion and mentioned some initiatives that Trinity had participated in and benefitted from (Eg the Ice Bucket Challenge for ALS research). Although our income from alumni is relatively small this vehicle might be attractive to them. It would also form a mechanism of engaging with the wider Irish Society. The Director Of TTMI said this theme was topical as the H2020 advisory group that she sits on has discussed the topic in relation to engaging the public to promote health research. The Director of Research for the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences confirmed that there were already plans for such initiatives in her School. This type of funding has the ability to attract SME funding as well as alumni and the general public. There may be plans for Trinity Monday to be more public focused. The Librarian also provide information on a funding initiative in New York for funding in the area of creative and performing arts and that such funding could add to funding provided by the foundation while engaging society.

RS/16-17/06 Trinity Research in Childhood Centre

Professor Trevor Spratt and Professor Eleanor Molloy presented their application to become a new Trinity Research Centre. It was proposed

that the existing Children's Research Centre which has been in existence in 1996 and the wider Children's Research Forum form a new centre to enable capacity building to produce research of international reach, to promote Trinity as a centre of excellence in this area and enable collaboration across disciplines and Schools. Prof Molloy also indicated that the existence of such a centre will aid applications to the HRB and the Wellcome Trust and communication with potential partners. She noted that at this time when the Children's Hospital is being planned it gives more visibility to Trinity researchers as UCD are a large player currently. It will also form a focus for other Research Institutes in Trinity to engage with this activity.

The Director of TTMI agreed with the proposal and that there would be useful links with this institute and would avoid duplication of contacts. The Director of The Long Room Hub suggested that there would also be additional interest from the Arts and Humanities and that the IRC was providing funding for cross disciplinary research which would be suited to researchers linked to this Centre. This cross disciplinary centre provides a unique selling point. Professor Spratt emphasised life course measures and how to intervene at an early age for best outcomes in later life. These approaches together with ageing research are changing perspectives in medical teaching. The ADoRMH supported the proposal, gave her views on how to best get Trinity involved in the children's hospital and that paediatric clinical trials and adolescent medicine are opportunities. The Director of Trinity Research and Innovation was interested in the possibilities of lobbying for space in the research centre allied to the Children's Hospital. He would provide a document from the IDA on the innovation corridor proposed in connection with the new hospital. The Librarian expressed support and noted that one new Usher position was in collaboration with the Library and was focused on children's literature

RS/16-17/07 AOB

The Director of Research for the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences requested that the issues of fees for ethical approval through the JREC process for clinical or non-clinical research that is likely to take place in Tallaght Hospital or St James's Hospital be discussed. The current fees were imposing a burden on students and staff in her School especially for those working on unfunded projects. For example a non-clinical trial fee is €635 with an amendment fee of €64. The Director of TTMI acknowledged that there was an administrative cost for the JREC and there was a significant volume of applications but that perhaps that a letter could be sent from the Dean's office emphasising the cost for unfunded student projects. These costs are usually an eligible cost for an HRB of H2020 funded project.

Action: The DoR to discuss further with the Research Ethics Policy Committee and draft a letter to the JREC to raise the issue of fees for ethical approval.

RS/16-17/08 ILSA position document on increased openness in animal research

The Irish Laboratory Animal Sciences Association position document on increased openness in animal research item was provided for noting under Section C. However the Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Director of Research, School of Psychology had reservations on some of the measures proposed and suggested that the Director of the Comparative Medicine Unit be asked to discuss further at a future Research Committee.

Action: Director of Comparative Medicine Unit to attend a future Research Committee to discuss the ILSA position document on increased openness in animal research.