The University of Dublin
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

11:00, Tuesday 12 January 2021 via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendees

Professor Andrew Bowie (Associate Dean of Research, Co-Chair)
Professor Lorraine Leeson (Associate Dean of Research, Co-Chair)
   Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
Professor Brian Lucey, Director of Research, School of Business
Professor Orla Flanagan, Director of Research, School of Creative Arts
Professor Ann Devitt, Director of Research, School of Education
Professor Aileen Douglas, Director of Research, School of English
Professor Daniel Geary, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Blanaid Clarke, Director of Research, School of Law
Professor Irene Walsh, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Professor Peter Stone, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
Professor Eoin O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Zohar Hadromi-Allouche, Director of Research, School of Religion
   Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science
Professor Ed Lavelle, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Gareth Bennett, Director of Research, School of Engineering
Professor Jane Farrar, Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Stefan Sint, Director of Research, School of Mathematics
Professor Marcus Collier, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of Research, School of Physics
   Faculty of Health Sciences
Professor Jeff O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science
Professor Louise Gallagher, Director of Research, School of Medicine
Professor Lidia Tajber, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Anne-Marie Brady, on behalf of Director of Research, School of Nursing & Midwifery
   Trinity Research Institutes
Professor Aideen Long, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute
Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of CRANN
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub
Professor Mani Ramaswami, Director of TCIN

Mr. Leonard Hobbs, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation
Gisele Scanlon, President, Graduate Students Union
Dr Darren Fayne, Trinity Research Staff Association

In attendance:
Dr Raquel Cabral Harper, Research Development Manager, Trinity Research & Innovation
Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist, Library
Dr Fiona Killard, Head of Strategic Research Development, Office of the Dean of Research
Ms Doris Alexander, Associate Director of European Engagement, Trinity Research & Innovation & Global Relations
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research

Apologies

Professor Clemens Ruthner, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies
Professor Redmond O'Connell, Director of Research, School of Psychology
Professor Kingston Mills, Director of TBSI

Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval	
A.1	**Minutes** Minutes of the meeting of December 12th were circulated in advance and accepted.
A.2	**Matters Arising from the Minutes** **RS/20-21/5 Policy on Good Research Practice** ADOR Leeson advised that it had been hoped to bring the policy to this meeting for final approval, but tight turnaround meant this was not possible. Policy was going back to REPC for final consideration, and would be brought to February meeting of Research Committee. **RS/19-20/15 Research Boost Funding** ADORs advised the committee that they were continuing to meet with the Provost regularly and had some positive discussions around this funding might be unfrozen and used in a co-ordinated way.
Section B - Items for Discussion Only	
B.1	**Update from Associate Deans of Research** Prof. Lorraine Leeson, Prof Andrew Bowie Congratulations were noted to academics who were recently awarded major grants: ○ 4 ERC Consolidator awardees • Stephen Dooley (School of Physics) • Marcus Collier (School of Natural Sciences) • Thomas Chadefaux (School of Social Sciences and Philosophy) • David O'Shaughnessy (School of English) ○ ERC Proof of Concept Grant recipient – Johnny Coleman. ○ ESRC-IRC UK-Ireland Social Sciences Networking Grants – Martine Smith, Joe Barry, Yekaterina Chzhen, and Fiona Newell. **RS/20-21/8** ADOR Bowie provided an update on the all-island funding strategy, including where potential funds might come from and thematic areas of focus. Advised that Trinity had appointed internal 'point people' on areas that had been mooted: • Infectious Diseases – Kingston Mills • Biodiversity – Yvonne Buckley • Cancer – Maeve Lowery • Social Sciences – Carol Newman Social Sciences would be folded into the other thematic areas. A draft document was submitted by the VPDORs group of the IUA to the department which outlined the universities' vision for how such a plan might work. **ACTION:** VPDORs document to be circulated to committee. **RS/20-21/9** Deputy Data Protection Officer for Research, Evelyn Fox, joined the meeting to provide a short update on Brexit-related issues for research data. The committee was advised that the UK won't be considered a 'third country' until 1st May 2021. EF noted that the European Commission was conducting analysis to determine whether the UK could be granted an 'adequacy decision' but this would take some time and was not guaranteed. Standard Contractual Clauses (which cannot be amended) were drafted by the Commission to be added to research contracts. EF noted that it will take some time to identify all Trinity contracts this will relate to as there is no central register of research contracts. DPO would conduct a data mapping exercise, but would also be communicating with the research community to discuss what is needed. EF took

	questions from the committee to clarify the types of research this would affect, ways to manage data, the implications for European agencies based in the UK, and the use of explicit consent. **ACTION:** Report on GDPR and genomic data to be circulated **ACTION:** EF to attend next meeting of Research Committee for more detailed discussion **RS/18-19/9** The committee was advised that the three-year IUA pilot scheme for access to Epigeum Research Integrity Training had concluded at the end of 2020. A 'grace period' to January 15th had been granted by Epigeum. Committee was advised that the IUA was negotiating a new access agreement and it was hoped that this would be in place soon. **RS/18-19/18** ADOR Leeson advised the committee that the updates to the Schedules relating to Research Misconduct had now passed through Council and Board. **RS/20-21/4** The committee was advised that the business case for the **research ethics management system** was being brought to CRG the following day. ADOR Leeson advised that the REPC had a vacancy for a representative from the Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science and asked the relevant members of the committee to forward any suggestions. ADOR Leeson and Doris Alexander updated the committee on the TORCH project, aligned with CHARM-EU. **RS/20-21/10** Committee was advised that the Library was in the process of making RSS and TARA **Plan S** compliant. Committee was advised that webinars and training were available and further guidance and resources would be online soon.
B.2	**School Spotlight: Trinity Business School** Prof. Brian Lucey Prof. Lucey provided an overview of the activities of the Trinity Business School. The school has 64 faculty, 100 adjunct faculty, 50 professional staff. School also has 9 postdoctoral researchers, 62 PhDs, and more than 2,600 FTE students. The school is ranked well by the main lists for its area such as the Financial Times and Eduniversal. It is also recognised by a number accreditation bodies, and is awaiting similar accreditation from others. The school has two research centres and is in the process of setting up more. A new strategic plan is also in development and will have a greater focus on the research activity in the school. BL noted that the school is very conscious of benchmarking its activity and tends to look at upper to mid-level UK universities for comparison.
B.3	**RS/19-20/1 University Rankings** Dr Fiona Killard Dr Killard noted that there are many myths and misconceptions about university rankings. FK advised the committee that there was very interesting data in the rankings every year but this tends to be overlooked by negative discussions of the overall ranking position which is demoralising for the academic community. The committee was shown some of this data to illustrate how Trinity academics across all faculties over-perform relative to the underfunded system in which the university must operate. FK noted that while rankings were a crude metric, they did contain data that could be

	used to lobby for increased funding if messaging was consistent. The committee noted that current academic staffing levels were unsustainable and would eventually lead to burnout unless the sector saw major changes soon. **ACTION:** Slides to be circulated to committee
B.3	**RS/20-21/7 TR&I Expansion Plan** Leonard Hobbs Before the presentation, the ADORs noted that at the previous meeting of the Committee the understanding had been that the plan would be presented to the Committee before going to other College venues for approval. ADORs advised that subsequent to that meeting the Provost advised them that the plan would be brought to Planning Committee and then to EOG before Christmas. The plan has now been approved by both. EOG approval is subject to Research Committee input. ADORs noted that the Provost had previously sought input from a group of researchers who were invited to critique an early version, but that this was the first formal presentation of the proposal to the Research Committee. Plan had also been discussed by Faculty Deans. ADORs noted that they were in ongoing conversation with the Provost about how the Research Committee needed to be included in the development of any plan. ADORs also noted that the plan and its implementation will be made a standing item on the Committee's agenda. Members of the committee voiced their unhappiness with the late circulation of the document noting that they had only received it late on Friday evening which left no time for it be considered in any detail. Committee members noted that they wanted to circulate the plan to their schools for comment and feedback. It was also noted that Trinity Research Institutes should be consulted. Committee also expressed concern that this would now be a 'pseudo consultation' and were doubtful that their feedback could be incorporated into a plan that had already been approved by EOG and the Planning Group, with some members requesting 'tracked changes' versions of future drafts to show where feedback was incorporated. LH noted that the plan had been through a 'comprehensive review process' and had been seen by a number of College groups. Members of the Committee suggested that this was insufficient and did not constitute a formal consultation process with the research community who would be most impacted by the implantation of such a plan. The Committee noted its discontent with the process, noting that the lack of consultation was disrespectful of a College committee. The Committee also noted that it was not in a position to approve any plan at this stage given that most were only seeing it for the first time. Members of the Committee also disagreed with the plan being rushed through at the end of the Provost's tenure. ADOR Bowie advised the Committee that the plan could be discussed and approval was not required at this meeting. LH provided the Committee with an overview of the contents of the plan, and took questions from the Committee afterwards. In response to a number of questions as to how the plan was to be funded or if a 'charge' would be placed on research grants, LH advised that a number of funding models were under consideration. LH confirmed that the possibility of allocating a portion of overheads had been examined and noted that a figure of 40% would be required to fund the plan. Committee members noted disagreement with any option that would include overheads.

	Prof. Sanvito noted that a plan to bring in more research funding would mean there would be more work to make research happen, and the people who do the research had not been considered to this point. Also noted that Centres drive a lot of the funding, contracts can often be a bottleneck, and felt that there was some imbalance in what was currently in the plan.

LH agreed that the Contracts Office is insufficiently resourced. Also noted that the plan as it stood did not take into account other college functions such as HR, Finance etc that would have to expand to cope with any increase in research activity.

Prof. Ramaswami reiterated that the goals of researchers should be driving some aspect of the plan. Noted the need for a group of agile support staff in research development who could respond to schools' and centres' needs.

LH noted that the next RPO programme would take a more flexible approach, would be managed centrally, and would send resources where they were needed.

Committee members reiterated the need to clarify how the plan would be funded. LH advised that he would be meeting Peter Reynolds to discuss funding options.

ADOR Bowie advised the Committee that the ADORs were happy to inform the Provost that the Committee needed time to consider the plan. Committee agreed to send feedback by January 22nd with a view to further discussion at the February meeting.

ACTION: Committee members to submit feedback by January 22nd. Further discussion at February meeting. |
Section C – Items for Noting	
C.1	**Items for Noting** • It was noted that the UK had agreed a deal to participate in Horizon Europe but had withdrawn from the Erasmus programme.
C.2	**Items for future discussion** • No items noted
C.3	**AOB** • No items raised