The University of Dublin
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE
MINUTES

11:00, 15 February 2022 via Zoom

In attendance:
Professor Wolfgang Schmitt, Dean of Research (Chair)
Professor Maria Brenner (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Brian Broderick (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Immo Warntjes (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Joseph Roche, 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 Deirdre Ahern, Director of Research, School of Law
Professor Irene Walsh, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Professor Redmond O'Connell, Director of Research, School of Psychology
Professor Edurne Garcia Iriarte, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Zohar Hadromi-Allouche, Director of Research, School of Religion
Professor Ed Lavelle, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Professor Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Director of Research, School of Chemistry
Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Gareth Bennett, Director of Research, School of Engineering
Professor Marta Martins, Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Sergey Mozgovoy, Director of Research, School of Mathematics
Professor Hal Duncan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science
Professor Ursula Fearon, Director of Research, School of Medicine
Professor Sharon O'Donnell, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Lidia Tajber, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Kingston Mills, Director of Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute
Professor Aideen Long, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub
Professor Rhodri Cusack, Director of Trinity College Institute of Neuroscience
Mr. Leonard Hobbs, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation
Gisèle Scanlon, President, Graduate Students Union
Dr Darren Fayne, Trinity Research Staff Association

In attendance:
Dr Fiona Killard, Head of Strategic Research Development, Office of the Dean of Research
Dr Raquel Cabral Harper, Head of Research Development, Trinity Research & Innovation
Ms Elaine Sharkey, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division
Ms Siobhan O'Shea, Senior HR Specialist, Human Resources
Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services
Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist, Library
Ms Doris Alexander, Associate Director of European Engagement, Trinity Global
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research

Apologies:
Prof. Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies
Professor John Divers, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

	Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval
A.1	**Minutes** Minutes from the meeting of January 18th were circulated in advance. An amendment was noted for item B.2 which was incorporated and minutes were then approved.
A.2	**Matters Arising from the Minutes** Any matters would be dealt with in the Dean's update.
	Section B - Items for Discussion Only
B.1	**RS/21-22/12 Virtual Trinity Library** Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist Helen Shenton presented an overview of the Virtual Trinity Library project to the committee. The project will unlock Trinity's extensive unique and distinct collections, making them accessible and visible through advanced technology, and create a new Irish research entity and a digital library for the world. It was noted that the project will facilitate international collaboration, encourage philanthropic donations of content and collections, contribute to a new universal digital entity, encourage technological advances, and create new positions. The committee noted that this was a wonderful project. It was also noted that there were currently significant issues in Trinity around a sustainable digital base for research projects. It was noted that building digital preservation, data management, and presentation should be factored into projects from the outset but this does not happen on a consistent basis due to funding constraints. Members of the committee noted that this was a common problem at a national level and that the committee could advocate for a sustainable solution at a sectoral level. It was noted that different types of material needed to be preserved; some material should be available and open, but other data needed to be preserved and closed. It was noted that there are different approaches to long-term preservation and that good models do exist elsewhere. The committee was reminded that Research IT works with PIs where possible to pool funding so that researchers can have access to the infrastructures they need. It was noted that greater awareness was needed around the importance of building digital aspects into grant applications from the beginning. The committee also noted that digital preservation was a core research infrastructure that should be appropriately resourced.
B.2	**Update from Dean of Research** Dean of Research **RS/21-22/13** The DOR noted that government had proposed the establishment of a public-private initiative to create 1,000 PhD studentships over the next 10 years. It was noted that the timeline to have this scheme up and running was extremely tight and that while Trinity generally welcomed schemes of this kind, clarity was still needed around timelines, retention, and administration. **RS/18-19/19** It was noted that funding for NORF had been announced. DFHERIS and HEA allocated €1.725million to the Digital Repository of Ireland to work closely with NORF to implement an open research ecosystem. It was noted that the National Action Plan was still under review, and the consultation phase had moved again. Draft was

expected to be shared at the end of February, consultation throughout March, with a view to publication in April. It was noted that the funding was for this calendar year but could be carried over if unspent.

RS/21-22/3 Following on from an audit of state aid by the European Court of Auditors SFI had wanted to conduct an audit of specific projects. The IUA and universities rejected this approach and had instead agreed to collaborate with SFI in a pilot project about reviewing SFI's checklist for state aid issues. DOR advised the committee that this issue was resolved for the moment until the pilot is concluded.

It was noted that DFHERIS was running two national consultations: on a National Research Classification System, and on the International Education, Research and Innovation Strategy. Members of the committee noted concern at how research had apparently been included in the international strategy consultation as an afterthought.

RS/19-20/5 DOR advised the committee that under EU and university legislation the governance of Clinical Trials must be overseen by a Head of Clinical Sponsorship Oversight. Committee was advised that this position was currently vacant and that the Office of the Dean of Research had commenced recruitment so that grant applications can proceed. It was also noted that a Quality and Regulatory Affairs Manager would be appointed. In response to questions from the committee the DOR advised that reporting lines had yet to be confirmed for the QRAMS post but that the HCSO would report to the Dean of Research.

The committee was advised that the Royal Irish Academy had opened a call for memberships of its multidisciplinary committees.

RS/19-20/3 DOR and ADOR Immo Warntjes met with Mary Leahy in relation to postdoc teaching issue. HR committee was generally positive about the addition of a clause to contracts. DOR and ADOR Warntjes would provide a short guidance document to be circulated to schools. It was noted that a more longterm approach would be helpful for postdocs but the committee was generally pleased to see this issue progressed. DOR noted that the committee would be advised when it was ok to proceed with the new arrangement. Siobhan O'Shea noted that HR was happy to work with DOR and the committee on this and other issues.

Congratulations were noted to researchers who had recently received funding:
- **ERC Proof of Concept Awards**: Valeria Nicolosi (Chemistry); Tríona Lally (Engineering); Anna Davies (Natural Sciences); John Goold (Physics); Matthew Campbell (Genetics & Microbiology)
- **IRC New Foundations**: Louise Doyle (Nursing & Midwifery); Bronagh Catibusic (Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences); Daniela Tropea (Medicine); Orla Gilheaney (Linguistic, Speech & Communication Sciences); Rachel Hoare (Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies); Michael Morris (CRANN); Oran Doyle (Law); Pádraic Whyte (English); Kristin Hadfield (Psychology).

	Section C – Items for Noting
C.1	**Items for Noting** • **RS/20-21/4** Memo from Research Ethics Policy Committee (encl) A memo from the REPC was circulated to the committee with an update on the REAMS project. It was noted that the project was progressing well. Committee noted concern

	with any imposition of a college-wide service level agreement on timelines for processing applications. It was also noted that it was difficult to get people to volunteer for these committees and the work can be quite onerous. Concerns were also noted around any kind of monitoring that might happen as a result of the new system.
C.2	**Items for future discussion** • **RS/21-22/10** Postgraduate Renewal Project The committee was advised that the Dean of Graduate Studies would present an overview of the Postgraduate Renewal Project at the next meeting.
C.3	**AOB** No other business.