

The University of Dublin  
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

11:00, 15 March 2022

via Zoom

MINUTES

*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 Clemens Ruthner, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies  
Professor Irene Walsh, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences  
Professor Redmond O'Connell, Director of Research, School of Psychology  
Professor Eburne 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 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 Marcus Collier, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences  
Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of Research, School of Physics  
Professor Hal Duncan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science  
Professor Sharon O'Donnell, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery  
Professor Kingston Mills, Director of TBSI  
Professor Aideen Long, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute  
Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of CRANN  
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub  
Mr. Leonard Hobbs, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation  
Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies  
Dr Darren Fayne, Trinity Research Staff Association  
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 for European Engagement, Trinity Global and TR&I  
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research

*Apologies:*

Prof. Lidia Tajber, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Prof. Deirdre Ahern, Director of Research, School of Law  
Prof. Declan O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Computer Science & Statistics  
Prof. Rhodri Cusack, Director, TCIN  
Prof. Dan Geary, Director of Research, School of Histories & Humanities

<b>Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval</b>	
<b>A.1</b>	<b>Minutes</b> Minutes for the meeting of February 15 <sup>th</sup> were circulated in advance and approved.
<b>A.2</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b> Any matters arising were to be addressed in the Dean of Research's update.

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Section B - Items for Discussion Only

<b>B.1</b>	<p><b>RS/21-22/10 Postgraduate Renewal Project</b> Prof. Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies Leona Coady, Programme Director, Postgraduate Renewal Programme</p> <p>DGS and Leona Coady presented the committee with an overview of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme. It was noted that the programme of renewal must be built from the bottom up, and had three core questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What constitutes a postgraduate student</li><li>2. Where should energies be focused in postgraduate activities</li><li>3. How can sustainability be built into everything</li></ol> <p>There was strong sense that postgrads can feel disconnected from the university and not part of a community. The consultation process highlighted several things that needed to be improved including the student life-cycle, student supports, and curriculum. Other issues were also identified around administrative milestones, supervision, funding, and difficulties for part-time students.</p> <p>The committee was given an overview of the project's timeline, the work packages involved, and the governance structure. It was noted that a paper would be brought to Council in May which would set out short-term goals for delivery in 2022/23.</p> <p>In response to questions from the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Researcher competencies were being examined in terms of the European Competencies Framework and also in line with national doctoral competencies through the IUA.</li><li>• A small budget was in place for the pre-consultation phase, but a full business case would have to be developed. Postgraduate activity is financially significant for the university and the intention was to have a finance team in place.</li><li>• Issues around non-EU fees differentials were being examined as were issues around the gap between SFI and IRC fee contributions versus the fees Trinity charges. DGS noted that a solution had to be found but it had to be a solution that would be sustainable.</li><li>• DGS confirmed that virtual thesis examination was still permitted once all involved were in agreement. Noted that guidelines had been brought to Council in this respect. The importance of the student's preference was stressed.</li><li>• In a discussion around graduate employability it was noted that needs would vary across disciplines and it was important for students to have opportunities rather than obligations.</li></ul>
<b>B.2</b>	<p><b>RS/21-22/14 Update on proposal to establish a Trinity Research Institute for the Social Sciences</b> Ronan Lyons, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy</p> <p>Ronan Lyons joined the meeting to present an update on the proposal to establish a Trinity Research Institute for the Social Sciences. It was noted that this would replace the existing TRiSS entity and the proposal had the support of all involved. The institute would become a single point of contact for policy makers and practitioners and was based on immediate financial viability. It was noted that the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences was happy for the existing TRiSS space to become the space for the new institute. It was also noted that TRiSS in its current format could not enable research to any significant degree or maximise impact.</p> <p>In discussion with the committee the following was noted:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The institute would offer research support to the social sciences but policy supports would be a service for all of Trinity.</li> <li>• Finances would come from core schools/members, would be banded by FTEs and increase accordingly. Desk rental would provide another source of income and the space would be refurbished to increase capacity. The possibility of external members was being explored but links would need to be very strong to justify this.</li> <li>• While grant capture would be an ambition for the institute it was not currently incorporated into the financial model. It was noted that there was no appetite from the core schools involved to develop a proposal that was dependent on overheads to be viable.</li> <li>• A current gap in the proposal was the identification of other similar institutes as benchmarks for activity. It was noted that the desire was to have the institute be a meaningful day-to-day presence for all involved.</li> <li>• The TIME research centre would be a member of the institute through its host school.</li> <li>• There was huge opportunity for the institute to work with other institutes and centres on research impact once the institute is established.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B.3</b></p>	<p><b>Update from Dean of Research</b> Dean of Research</p> <p><b>RS/20-21/2</b> The committee was advised that the HEA had provided Trinity with a supplemental top up for the costed extensions fund. Trinity was the only university to use its full allocation or to receive a top up. Supplemental fund would be distributed to researchers that had been deemed eligible for funding in the final round in May 2021. No new applications were possible.</p> <p><b>RS/21-22/3</b> Trinity had four redacted CRAs selected for review as part of the SFI pilot on state aid. Mary Tracey and Graham McMullin were the contact points. The committee was advised that an Academic Integrity Group had been established Council. Small sub-group to review research integrity would be established as part of this.</p> <p><b>RS/18-19/19</b> The draft NORF action plan would be published next week. ADOR Immo Warntjes would coordinate an internal consultation to include a townhall discussion.</p> <p><b>RS/20-21/8</b> Congratulations noted to 11 Trinity projects that received funding from the HEA's North-South programme. 10 further applications on the reserve list.</p> <p><b>64 applications, 11 funded:</b> Total awarded to TCD- €5,770,142</p> <p><b>Strand 1</b> – 8 funded applications (Anne Molloy, Bidisha Ghosh, Caroline Jagoe, Catherine Conlon, Danny Kelly, Elaine Moriarty, Eve Patten, Joanna McGouran) to a value of €689,475 (7 lead, 1 partner)</p> <p><b>Strand 2 &amp; 3</b> – 3 funded applications (Gaia Narciso, Lorraine O'Driscoll, Ed Lavelle,) to a value of €4,740,122 to TCD (2 lead, 1 partner); 1 funded application (Lorraine O'Driscoll) to a value of €340,545 (as partner).</p> <p>Other recent funding successes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SFI Frontiers for the Future awards:</b> Vinny Cahill/Ivana Dusparic (€998,170)</li> <li>• <b>SFI-IRC Pathways programme 2021:</b> Dania Movia - Trinity Translational Medicine Institute; (€425,000)</li> <li>• <b>US-Ireland R&amp;D Partnership Programme:</b> 3 Projects Funded; PIs Marco Ruffini, Paula Murphy and Graham Cross</li> <li>• <b>Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund:</b> Ann Devitt (€343,873), Ciaran Simms (€333,332), Deirdre Murray (€15,000)</li> <li>• <b>SEAI National Energy R&amp;D Funding:</b> Aonghus McNabola (€138,821), Breiffni Fitzgerald (€99,375), Bidisha Ghosh (€104,540), Brian Caulfield, (€611,653)</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Geological Survey of Ireland:</b> David Chew (€19,443) and Juan Diego Rodriguez-Blanco (€20,828)</li> <li>• <b>ERC Starting Grant:</b> Fiona Smyth (School of Education; grant coordinated through LRH)</li> <li>• <b>International Portfolio:</b> Alzheimer’s Association Research Grant - David Loane (\$150,000); Alzheimer’s Association Research Fellowship: Francesca Farina (\$140,000); BrightFocus Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship Program in Macular Degeneration Research: Lucia Celk (\$200,000); Epic MegaGrant Programme - Rachel McDonnell, (\$85,000).</li> </ul> <p><b>RS/21-22/15</b> DOR noted that following the invasion of Ukraine the Provost had established a Global Incident Response Unit in Trinity Global which would be led by the VP for Global Engagement. It was noted that the scale of the crisis meant that College wanted to coordinate a central response to ensure appropriate and adequate supports could be put in place.</p> <p>The committee discussed issues that might arise for research and researchers. Some members of the committee were anxious to move quickly and wanted schools to be able to move ahead with local plans while other members of the committee noted that there would be greater strength in a unified approach from College. It was noted that there would be significant issues around mental health and trauma supports, accommodation provision, admissions paperwork, language provision etc. The committee also noted the IUA’s statement of support for Ukraine.</p>
<b>B.4</b>	<p><b>RS/21-22/15 Global Incident Response Working Group</b> Prof. Emma Stokes, VP for Global Engagement</p> <p>VP for Global Engagement joined the meeting to provide the committee with an update on the Global Incident Response Unit. It was noted that a lot of queries were coming into Trinity Global and they were doing their best to keep on top of them. Another issue was to clarify the implications of ministerial statements for the university sector.</p> <p>The committee was advised that the GIRU aimed to harness efforts that would be sustainable. The importance of identifying best practice for displaced people who have experienced great trauma was essential as this would not be the same as someone voluntarily relocating to Ireland. VP Global also noted that decisions around student enrolments would likely be made at a sectoral level. It was also noted that Trinity had an obligation to support existing students and staff from Ukraine and Russia who were already here. Emphasised that the quickest response is not always the most effective and noted the importance of being guided by best practice and advice from organisations like the Red Cross and refugee agencies.</p>
<b>Section C – Items for Noting</b>	
<b>C.1</b>	<p><b>Items for Noting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No items for noting.</li> </ul>
<b>C.2</b>	<p><b>Items for future discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No items noted.</li> </ul>
<b>C.3</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No AOB.</li> </ul>