

**The University of Dublin  
Trinity College**

**RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**11:00, 10 May 2022 via Zoom**

**MINUTES**

*In attendance*

Professor Wolfgang Schmitt, Dean of Research (Chair)  
Professor Brian Broderick (Associate Dean of Research)  
Professor Immo Warntjes (Associate Dean of Research)  
Professor Maria Brenner, 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 Redmond O'Connell, Director of Research, School of Psychology  
Professor Zohar Hadromi-Allouche, Director of Research, School of Religion  
Professor Ed Lavelle, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology  
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 Hal Duncan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science  
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 Aideen Long, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute  
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub  
Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of CRANN  
Professor Kingston Mills, Director of TBSI  
Professor Rhodri Cusack, Director of TCIN  
Mr. Leonard Hobbs, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation  
Dr Darren Fayne, Trinity Research Staff Association

Ms Elaine Sharkey, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division  
Ms Siobhán O'Shea, Senior HR Specialist, Human Resources  
Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services  
Dr Raquel Harper, Head of Research Development, Trinity Research & Innovation  
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*

Professor Eurne Garcia Iriarte, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy  
Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics  
Professor Irene Walsh, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences  
Professor Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies

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<b>Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval</b>	
<b>A.1</b>	<p><b>Minutes</b> Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated in advance and approved.</p>
<b>A.2</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b> Any matters arising were to be addressed during the Dean’s update</p>
<b>A.3</b>	<p><b>RS/21-22/17 Policy, Practice and Regulations on Intellectual Property</b> Leonard Hobbs</p> <p>Samantha Williams and Gordon Elliott joined the meeting for this item. An updated draft of the policy was circulated to the committee in advance. Leonard Hobbs presented an overview of proposed changes and noted that the draft had been presented to Planning Group and would be presented to EOG and Board as well. It was noted that this was a very important policy for College, and it needed to incentivise staff and student innovation activities. Policy is reviewed every three years and proposed changes during this review were mostly minor. The most notable proposed changes were as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving the return to College for supporting and fostering TCD Campus Company formation through clarification of expected increased levels of equity stakes in TCD Campus Companies. Proposed Trinity Equity allocation in TCD Campus Companies wording to change from an expected allocation of “no less than 5%” to “no less than 10%.”</li> <li>2. Balancing the sharing of Equity Proceeds (financial sums accruing to TCD from the sale of Equity) which are currently retained by TCD Central Funds to provide an allocation of Equity Proceeds (33.3%) to be shared with associated TCD School(s).</li> <li>3. Ensuring adherence and consistency with the most up to date regulatory guidelines including TCD Policies, national policy and best practice in areas including: Conflicts of Interest; Data Protection; Open source software; Consultancy.</li> </ol> <p>Some members of the committee noted reservations with the proposal to move from 5% to 10% suggesting that this could be a disincentive in certain areas. LH acknowledged that there was some nervousness around the proposed increase but experience over recent years suggested that it could be achieved without disincentivising investors. It was noted that most other universities had higher percentages. LH noted that some wording could be created that allowed flexibility so that a deal would not fail over the percentage stake.</p> <p>The committee was in agreement to allocate a portion of equity proceeds to schools but noted concern that these funds could be used to plug gaps in budgets that were not related to research. Some members of the committee suggested that there be a condition attached to these funds that schools must allocate them to research activities.</p> <p>It was noted to the committee that it was important to have a policy to point to during negotiations with investors hence the proposal to raise the percentage but if it became evident that the figure was problematic then the policy could be reviewed.</p> <p>There was some discussion around the distribution of equity proceeds to schools with some members of the committee noting that this would create a problem for research</p>

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	<p>institutes who might have housed the PI, funding, support etc but the proceeds would still go to the school. It was noted to the committee that institute involvement could be recognised in the letter of approval at spinout stage. Some members of the committee suggested noting the support of institutes to give an indication of what share they might be entitled to. However, it was noted that this share could change over time and significant change could take place between initial spinout and eventual sale.</p> <p>It was noted to the committee that innovation supports in Trinity were agile and flexible in facilitating spinouts. If it was found that the policy was not working as intended the review every three years allowed for changes to be made. It was also noted that the policy was a publicly available document that potential investors could read and it therefore must clearly set out Trinity’s approach.</p> <p>The Dean of Research and the committee noted general approval for the proposed changes and noted the suggestion that the position of institutes within the process could be strengthened.</p>
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**Section B - Items for Discussion Only**

<b>B.1</b>	<p><b>Update from Dean of Research</b> Dean of Research</p> <p>It was noted that a number of Directors of Research would be stepping down from their roles. Thanks were noted to John Divers, Irene Walsh, and Thorri Gunnlaugsson.</p> <p>DOR presented updates in relation to recent activity.</p> <p>It was noted that Minister Simon Harris had announced ‘Funding the Future’ which aimed to reduce student costs, improve staff – student ratios, and provide a further €307 million to universities. DOR noted cautious optimism but also noted that the budget later in the year would show how feasible the proposals were. It was noted that the announcement acknowledged how underfunded the third level sector was.</p> <p><b>RS/18-19/19</b> The NORF action plan was published and discussed at the last committee meeting. ADOR Immo Warntjes organised a townhall discussion for college. DOR noted that working groups would need to be convened to address the opportunities and challenges that arise from NORF and how Trinity could handle these. IW noted that the consultation phase had closed and feedback had been returned to the NORF coordinator. DOR noted concerns with IT infrastructures that would be needed to support developments in this area.</p> <p><b>RS/19-20/5</b> DOR noted that College was in the process of recruiting for a Head of Clinical Sponsorship Oversight. A QRAMS role had also been created to support clinical trials and related clinical research and would be advertised soon. Both positions would serve the entire College community. DOR noted thanks to LH and team for highlighting to college how essential these roles were. DOR noted that funding for the QRAMS role was split across DOR, Faculty of Health Sciences and the School of Medicine. DOR noted the importance of these roles being available to everyone in College, not solely the CRF. DOR also confirmed the reporting lines for both roles would be to DOR and FHS. DOR also noted that the cost of these roles would have to be factored into future grant proposals.</p>
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	<p>DOR noted the establishment of an Academic Integrity working group which was an initiative of Council. DOR also noted that he expected a smaller subgroup focused specifically on research integrity might need to be convened.</p> <p><b>RS/21-22/6</b> DOR noted that discussion of export controls/dual use had come up in LERU, IUA. EU updated regulations around export controls in May 2021, guidelines were extremely complex. National legislation may need to change in response. Any changes may have an impact on how research outputs are published and disseminated. IUA undertaking an exercise around export controls with a view to developing training and guidance.</p> <p>It was noted to the committee that the IRC had recently changed the procedure for contracts for postdoctoral and postgraduate fellowships. Contracts had previously been returned in bulk by the Contracts Office but IRC now requested individual awardees return their own contracts which was causing administrative problems. If contracts are not returned by the individual the IRC considers the award not to have been taken up and funds would not be disbursed to college. Elaine Sharkey noted that the research projects team in Finance had not been made aware of this change initially but was now in conversation with Contracts Office and Camilla Kelly. ES noted that the general view at the moment was that the IRC's stance was incorrect as the contractual agreement was between the agency and the university. ES noted that at least 80 contracts a year have to be returned which would be impossible to manage if left to the awardee. DOR noted his willingness to support any overtures to the IRC and also noted the lack of oversight in the process as a result of this change. ES noted that it was unfair to put this responsibility on students.</p> <p>It was noted that UK ERC grantholders were no longer supported by the European Commission unless the award was moved to an EU host institution. The impact of this would probably be less pronounced in light of the UK government's announcement that ERC awards would be matched by UK funding. In the event that there were queries from grantholders looking to move it was noted that the Research Development Office and the Office of the Dean of Research were keen to support schools through this process provided schools were willing to host a candidate.</p> <p><b>RS/19-20/3</b> In relation to the guidance for postdoc teaching it was noted that there was now agreement with HR around the wording that could be included in contracts. It was noted that a guidance document had been developed which would be circulated to Heads of Schools for feedback.</p>
<b>Section C – Items for Noting</b>	
<p><b>C.1</b></p>	<p><b>Items for Noting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RS/20-21/4 Memo from Research Ethics Policy Committee</li> </ul> <p>A memo from the REPC providing an update on progress with the new REAMS project was circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting. DOR noted that Gabrielle McKee, Maria Brenner, and Penny Storey had done fantastic work to bring the project to this point. The memo proposed that schools delay the first meeting of ethics committees in September to facilitate the launch of the new system. The School of Nursing &amp; Midwifery noted concerns with this delay citing possible delays to research projects. Maria Brenner noted that intense engagement had taken place over the last year with nearly 70 meetings held across all schools and faculties to identify and address as many possible issues as early as possible. It was noted that the contractual</p>

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	agreement with Vidatum provided for ongoing technical support and a dedicated administrator for the system would be appointed in the Office of the Dean of Research.
<b>C.2</b>	<b>Items for future discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was noted that a number of research-related policies were due to be updated and a small sub-group of the committee might be convened to review these and make recommendations.</li></ul>
<b>C.3</b>	<b>AOB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was noted that work on the Annual Report would begin over the summer months and a draft would be brought to the committee in the new academic year.</li><li>• The committee was advised that as this was the last meeting of the year and per the Terms of Reference a survey would be circulated to members to review the performance of the committee.</li></ul> <p>DOR informed the committee that Maria Brenner would be stepping down from her role as Associate Dean of Research and taking up a new position in UCD. DOR noted sincere thanks to MB for the vital, fantastic work she had done over the last year and wished her the best in her new role.</p> <p>DOR also noted thanks to the committee for its work over the last year.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned.</p>