

**The University of Dublin
Trinity College**

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

**11:00, 14 November 2023
Boardroom, Trinity Business School**

MINUTES

In attendance:

Professor Sinéad Ryan, Dean of Research (Chair)
Professor Brian Broderick (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Immo Warntjes (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Catherine Welch, Director of Research, Trinity Business School
Professor Nicholas Johnson, Director of Research, School of Creative Arts
Professor Joseph Roche, Director of Research, School of Education
Professor Pádraic Whyte, Director of Research, School of English
Professor Mary Cosgrove, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies
Professor Mark Bell, Director of Research, School of Law
Professor Edurne Garcia Iriarte, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Marco Ruffini, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics
Professor Michael Monaghan, Director of Research, School of Engineering
Professor Frank Wellmer, Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology
Professor Andrei Parnachev, Director of Research, School of Mathematics
Professor Yvonne Buckley, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences
Professor Ortwin Hess, Director of Research, School of Physics
Professor Hal Duncan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science
Professor Sarah Doyle, Director of Research, School of Medicine
Professor Sharon O'Donnell, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Aideen Long, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub
Professor Rhodri Cusack, Director of TCIN
Professor Eoin O'Sullivan, Senior Dean
Dr Darren Fayne, Trinity Research Staff Association

In attendance:

Dr Sally Smith, Head of Research, Trinity Research
Dr Raquel Harper, Head of Research Development, Research Development Office
Ms Siobhán O'Shea, Senior HR Specialist, Human Resources
Dr Gordon Elliott, Senior Patents & Licensing Manager, Trinity Innovation & Enterprise
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research

Apologies:

Prof. Padraic Fallon, Associate Dean of Research
Prof. Jane Ohlmeyer, Director of Research, School of Histories & Humanities
Prof. Nathan Hill, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Prof. Claire Gillan, Director of Research, School of Psychology
Prof. Ed Lavelle, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
Prof. Anne-Marie Healy, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Prof. Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies
Ms Elaine Sharkey, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division
Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services
Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist

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Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval	
A.1	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Minutes for the last meeting in October were circulated in advance and were approved by the committee.</p>
A.2	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>RS/23-24/7 DOR advised committee that it was hoped a date for an update re export controls would be confirmed by the Secretary’s Office soon.</p> <p>DOR advised committee that correspondence would be issued to the committee in relation to budgets for buyouts in ERC proposals.</p> <p>RS/23-24/9 DOR advised that the first draft of the new HEA System Performance Framework was still in development. Updates would come to the committee once feedback is received from the HEA.</p> <p>RS/23-24/6 Siobhán O’Shea provided a brief update to the committee in relation to the researcher recruitment project. The committee was advised that no additional resource had been approved for the proposal. The impact of this would be that the majority of the process would continue to be handled at a local level rather than being centralised through HR. SOS noted HR’s disappointment with this decision. SOS noted that meetings with a number of schools had been arranged to discuss the policy. It was also noted that in order for the policy to progress through the approvals process in a timely fashion that feedback would be taken until the end of the month. In discussion with the committee the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy and process were on the College risk register and Trinity was required to action it as part of commitments to the EU Charter and Athena Swan. • Members of the committee noted difficulties with linking to job advertisements on the vacancies website. • Members of the committee asked if there was a possibility that resource could be made available in the future to support the process, or if anything could be done to avoid delays in advertising posts. SOS noted that HR had a number of resource issues that needed to be met. <p>ACTION: Circulate memo re budgeting for buyout in ERC proposals</p>
Section B - Items for Discussion Only	
B.1	<p>Update from the Dean of Research Dean of Research</p> <p>DOR noted that universities have to demonstrate compliance with all state aid regulations. The committee was advised that new conditions were in place for institutions engaging in research with industry etc. The rate of funding for fully funded collaborative projects had increased to 65.7% effective from October 1st. The committee was advised that the RDO and Trinity Innovation were aware of the changes. A memo had been issued by the IUA and would be circulated to the committee.</p>

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	<p>ACTION: Circulate IUA memo to committee</p> <p>DOR advised committee that the Irish government was due to submit an application for membership of CERN that day which would go to the CERN council for discussion in December. DOR noted that while the research mission at CERN is in fundamental research and may have a narrow remit in particle physics, there was a huge opportunity for research in engineering, computing and other disciplines. As a country, Ireland will be able to send primary and secondary school teachers to CERN for training and outreach, with significant opportunities for students to engage as well.</p> <p>DOR noted that the SFI centres call was ongoing, with some members of the committee involved in proposals.</p> <p>Congratulations were noted to researchers who had recently secured funding and awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seven researchers across Trinity’s three faculties received funding from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) the Irish Research Council (IRC) under the pathway programme. The awards enable postdoctoral researchers to conduct independent research for a four–year period and provide funding for a postgraduate student who will be primarily supervised by the awardee. A specific focus of the programme is to increase the representation of female researchers in the higher education system. Trinity’s award-winning researchers are: Kiva Brennan and Claire Healy from the faculty of health sciences (HS), Nicola Palladino and Boris Kayachev from the faculty of arts, humanity and social sciences (AHSS), and Bharathi Konkena, Laetitia Chauve and Daniel Wigger, faculty of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).• Trinity St James’s Cancer Institute (TSJCI) announced the inaugural recipients of a new programme to enable exceptional academic cancer clinicians to dedicate protected time to focus on advanced research and clinical trials to improve treatments and outcomes for cancer patients in Ireland. The first two awardees under the Joly Cancer Leadership Programme are Dr Nina Orfali, Consultant Haematologist, and Mr Michael Kelly, Consultant Colorectal Surgeon.• Congratulations were also noted to all the recipients of Trinity Innovation Awards which were announced last week.
B.2	<p>RS/18-19/19 Update on Open Scholarship/NORF Prof. Immo Warntjes and Dr Sally Smith</p> <p>Associate Dean of Research, Prof. Immo Warntjes, provided the committee with an update on Open Scholarship developments and Trinity’s involvement with NORF actions and projects. Trinity is leading 3 of the 4 projects that were funded in the most recent round of NORF Actions. Each of the actions was worth approximately €250k and would help Trinity build some capacity in those areas. It was noted that the budget for NORF actions was not guaranteed and has to be secured every year even though there is a workplan until 2030.</p> <p>In discussion with the committee, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TARA and RSS meet the requirement for outputs to be considered open access.• “Open” does not mean that something has to be open to the public, but that it should be available to other researchers in the field.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trinity continues to lobby that funding should not always be connected to actions, but that institutions should be given lump sums to make better progress towards open access targets. • A National Open Access Monitor was in place to track how compliant institutions are with the goal of 100% open access by 2030. • It was noted that Trinity is also a partner on other projects - although not part of the funded group. The School of Creative Arts was part of the consulting group on a project and had held a workshop at the Trinity Long Room Hub around creative arts practice and rights etc.
<p>B.3</p>	<p>Education, Research and Innovation: EU updates and relevance at national level Doris Alexander</p> <p>The committee received a briefing from Doris Alexander on recent updates from the EU including in relation to Horizon Europe, the ERA Policy Agenda, CoARA, the Digital Decade, and the European Strategy for Universities.</p> <p>In discussion with the committee the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that education was considered a national competence so the EU could not dictate legislation, whereas research and innovation was a shared competence. • Ireland had a target for Horizon Europe drawdown but did not have a target for Erasmus+. • Trinity had a knowledge security taskforce which would be making recommendations to the Provost in that regard. • Members of the committee noted in regard to the ERA Policy Agenda that Ireland was committed to 17 of the 20 actions, but that research infrastructures was not one of the 17. It was noted that DFHERIS had recognised that certain actions were proceeding but did not believe it required extra commitment. It was noted that there were a large number of actions and member states had been advised to only sign on to as many as they could commit resources to. • There was some discussion about communication between DETE and DFHERIS regarding research and innovation and knowledge valorisation. It was suggested that knowledge valorisation sat more with Enterprise Ireland. <p>ACTION: Circulate slides to committee.</p>
<p>B.4</p>	<p>Spotlight - School of Natural Sciences Prof. Yvonne Buckley</p> <p>DOR noted that interest had been expressed at the induction session in September in the committee facilitating opportunities for Directors of Research and members of the committee to share updates and experiences. A regular “spotlight” slot would now be part of the agenda for each meeting going forward.</p> <p>Prof. Yvonne Buckley presented the committee with an overview of research activity in the School of Natural Sciences. During the presentation the following was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A research report had just been completed which was the first step in developing a research strategy for the school. • The school conducts a wide range of research in such areas as energy policy, rocks, diamonds, new materials, discovery of new species, work on the living world, animals, plants, fungi and microbes, and that the school’s research

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	<p>themes did not align with the traditional disciplines but cut across all of them. The school also conducts important discovery-based science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school holds some very important historic and contemporary collections that provide material for research as well as being of historical interest themselves. • There had been a very rapid growth in research funding coming to the school with a large proportion coming from the EU and SFI. A diversity of disciplines and themes enabled the school to tap into a wide range of funding streams. • Prof. Buckley noted that she had worked in a number of countries but that the Irish funding landscape was one of the most complex and tended to be reactive rather than being strategic. • A number of research-related issues were raised during the presentation including the increasing importance of digital infrastructure. It was noted that Trinity’s physical infrastructure and facilities were far below what was needed to enable its world-class researchers to reach their full potential. The ongoing lack of post-award support was also noted. The possible need for a college-wide human research ethics committee similar to the AREC was noted. <p>In discussion with the committee, it was noted that while the school had rapidly expanded its research income, there was capacity to increase this further with new members of staff joining the school and the possible reorientation away from smaller contracts that require a lot of work towards larger, more collaborative projects. The challenges related to infrastructure were echoed by many members of the committee. It was noted that Zoology had lost space with the construction of the E3 Learning Foundry and had been waiting several years for this to be resolved.</p>
Section C – Items for Noting	
C.1	<p>Items for Noting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee noted the memo received from the REPC in relation to the launch of REAMS version 2. It was noted that the REAMS Administrator was working with all RECs to identify any applications impacted by the switch from version 1 to version 2.
C.2	<p>Items for future discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee was advised that Institutional Review Implementation Plan would need to be discussed at a future meeting.
C.3	AOB