The University of Dublin
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

11:00, 5 December 2023
Boardroom, Trinity Business School
MINUTES

In Attendance
Professor Sinéad Ryan, Dean of Research (Chair)
Professor Brian Broderick (Associate Dean of Research)
Professor Padraic Fallon (Associate Dean of Research)
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 Jane Ohlmeyer, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities
Professor Mark Bell, Director of Research, School of Law
Professor Claire Gillan, Director of Research, School of Psychology
Professor Edurne Garcia Iriarte, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Professor Benjamin Wold, Director of Research, School of Religion, Theology and Peace Studies
Professor Mathias Senge, Director of Research, School of Chemistry
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 Sarah Doyle, Director of Research, School of Medicine
Professor Sharon O'Donnell, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Anne-Marie Healy, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Professor Rhodri Cusack, Director of TCIN
Dr Michelle Olmstead, Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer
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 Elaine Sharkey, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division
Ms Siobhán O'Shea, Senior HR Specialist, Human Resources
Ms Doris Alexander, Associate Director - European Engagement, Trinity Research
Ms Mary Tracey, Executive Director, Trinity Innovation & Enterprise
Dr Gordon Elliott, Senior Patents & Licensing Manager, Trinity Innovation & Enterprise
Mr Michael Reilly, Procurement, Financial Services Division
Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services
Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist, Library
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research

Apologies
Prof. Nathan Hill, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Prof. Immo Warntjes, Associate Dean of Research
Prof. Mary Cosgrove, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies
Prof. Catherine Welch, Director of Research, School of Business
Prof. Eve Patten, Director, Trinity Long Room Hub
Prof. Martine Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies

	Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval
A.1	**Minutes** Minutes for last meeting in November were approved as circulated.
A.2	**Matters Arising from the Minutes** DOR noted that a memo from the Irish Universities Association re changes to state aid rules was circulated to the committee. It was confirmed that Trinity Innovation & Enterprise and the Research Development Office were aware of the implications of the changes. **RS/23-24/6** Siobhán O'Shea provided a brief update to the committee on the Researcher Recruitment Project. As noted at the last meeting, comments were taken until Nov 30. HR was aware of a number of issues that would need to be worked through. SO'S confirmed to the committee that the policy would not be submitted for approval until those issues were resolved. The committee was advised that HR's request for additional staff resource to fully implement the proposal was not approved. In discussion with the committee the following was noted: • There were some issues around advertising posts, speed of processing, and derogations. The committee was advised that a project team in HR would look at these and seek clarification if needed. • Solutions were being sought to facilitate flexibility to move researchers between projects and groups. The committee was advised that any potential solution would need to work for researchers and within the policy. It was noted that this could take some time to resolve. • The committee was advised that there would not be much progress before January, with a fuller update likely in February. It was noted that the approval process for the policy would be EOG, People and Culture, and Board. • SO'S noted thanks to the committee for their input. It was noted that HR would now be responding to queries from Heads of School, Deans etc. and would continue to work to ensure the policy works for everyone. • It was confirmed that the draft policy would come back to the committee for review and comment before being submitted for formal approval.
A.3	**RS/23-24/11 Dean of Research Annual Report 2022/23** Dean of Research A draft of the Dean of Research's Annual Report for 2022/23 was circulated to the committee for approval. It was noted that at this stage some small additions to content could still be permitted, such as some further detail for certain schools and centres in the highlights section. However, the overall content of the report would not be revised beyond being reformatted for wider circulation and publication on the web. The committee approved the draft report.
A.4	**RS/23-24/12 Research Committee membership** Dean of Research A memo was circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting requesting approval of a number of updates to the membership of the committee. These updates

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were required in light of structural and staffing changes, and to ensure that the committee and statutes are in alignment.

The updated membership proposed to the committee was as follows:

(1) The Research Committee shall consist of:
    (a) The Dean of Research,
    (b) The Associate Deans of Research,
    (c) The Dean of Graduate Studies,
    (d) The Directors of Research in each of the Schools,
    (e) The Directors of the Trinity Research Institutes,
    (f) A representative of postgraduate students,
    (g) The Chairperson of the Trinity Research Staff Association,
    (h) The Senior Dean
    (i) The Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer.

(2) Two representatives from Trinity Innovation and Enterprise, The Head of Research, The Librarian and College Archivist, the Head of Academic Services, Innovation and Digital Platforms (IT Services), the Research Development Manager, the Research Accounting Manager, the Associate Director - European Engagement, and a representative from HR and Procurement are permitted to attend meetings of the Research Committee.

(3) The Chairperson of the Research Committee shall be the Dean of Research.

(4) The Research Strategy Officer will act as Secretary to the Research Committee.

The committee approved the updated membership as outlined above.

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Section B - Items for Discussion Only

B.1	**Update from the Dean of Research** Dean of Research The Dean noted that it was nice to be able to share good news with the committee as congratulations were noted to the following researchers for recent achievements: - **Climate+** research centre was formally announced by Minister Harris. Prof. Yvonne Buckley would be the PI for the centre. The new €41.3 million research centre will be the home of research, innovation, and policy development across the interlinked challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and water degradation on the islands of Ireland and Britain. The Climate+ Co-Centre, which will initially be funded over six years by Science Foundation Ireland, Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, and the Environment & Rural Affairs and UK Research & Innovation, will receive more than 30% co-funding from 29 industry partners. Climate+ will formally commence activities on January 1st 2024. - Prof. Kate Maguire and Prof. Michael Monaghan won ERC Consolidator Grants. Kate's project will work to better understand how and why stars explode, and Michael's project will create a new cardiac patch to regenerate heart muscle. - Dr Nollaig Bourke, School of Medicine and Trinity Translational Medicine Institute (TTMI) has been awarded a Wellcome Career Development Award (CDA). Her project – which investigates why anti-viral immune responses can decline with age - will run for 8 years (2023-2032) and is valued at €2 million. - Prof. Anna Davies won the Irish Research Council Impact Award for her longstanding commitment to world-class research that focuses on facilitating action for a more sustainable society.

- Seven Trinity researchers and staff received IRC Research Ally Awards. The Research Ally awards recognise the recipients' role in supporting and sustaining the research community, and how they help to foster a positive academic culture based on equality, inclusivity, and respect. Earlier this year, postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, academic and research active staff were invited to nominate the mentors, supervisors, research officers and technical support staff who support their work and careers. Recipients from Trinity are:
    - Dr David O'Regan, Associate Professor, School of Physics
    - Professor Jane Stout, Vice President for Biodiversity and Climate Action
    - Dr Kristin Hadfield, Associate Professor, School of Psychology
    - Dr Gavin McManus, Microscopy Manager, School of Biochemistry and Immunology
    - Mr Michael Reilly, Category Manager, Department of Mechanical, Manufacturing and Biomedical Engineering
    - Ms Olive Donnelly, School Manager, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy
    - Dr Simon Carroll, Chief Technical Officer, Trinity Centre for Bioengineering
- Prof. Anne Marie Healy from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences won the SFI Mentorship Award for 2023. The award recognises Professor Healy's commitment to over thirty years mentoring both students and graduate researchers working in the fields of formulation science and drug delivery.

It was noted that Trinity hosted the LERU Rectors Assembly on November 17 and 18 at which it was announced that ETH Zurich would be joining LERU from 1 January 2024. Topics discussed at the assembly included the impact of AI on research and innovation (R&I) and higher education, the next Framework Programme for R&I (FP10), EU elections, and LERU strategy among others.

DOR noted that the European Research Council had recently issued a statement on the use of Artificial Intelligence in developing grant proposals. It was noted that the ERC did not prohibit the use of generative AI but emphasised that authors still bore full authorship responsibility for the content of proposals. The full text of the statement would be circulated to the committee.

RS/20-21/4 The committee was advised REAMS V2 was now operational and was being constantly monitored to ensure operationality. It was noted that all 23 RECs have either already had training or have arranged training. The committee was advised that delays with the DPO were being worked on. It was noted that the REAMS team wanted to ensure that the system was fully operation for staff before expanding it to undergraduates.

RS/22-23/10 In discussion among the committee it was noted that legislation on the new research funding agency was expected to go to Cabinet before Christmas. It was noted that there would still be the opportunity to make changes although DFHERIS was suggesting otherwise. The committee expected to have concerns with the legislation when it is eventually released for consultation. It was noted that the proposal to include an AHSS council as part of the agency had been successfully rejected by the academic community.

	It was expected that the timeframe for consultation would be very short. It was noted that the agency cannot be formally established until the legislation is passed.
B.2	**Spotlight - School of Histories & Humanities** Prof. Jane Ohlmeyer Prof. Jane Ohlmeyer presented the committee with an overview of research activity in the School of Histories & Humanities. During the presentation, the following was noted: - The school was small compared to international comparators, but was still recognised as a very international and well-networked school. - The book/monograph was the primary research output for the field. In 2022/23 researchers from the school published more than 25 books or collections of essays as well as peer-reviewed journal articles. It was noted that moves towards open access was causing some issues; the open access fee for one book is more than €10,000. - The Library was the school's "laboratory" and they were very excited about the new study space that would be created as part of the Library redevelopment project. The Trinity Long Room Hub had been transformation for the school, with excellent support from the RPO there, as well as the Research Development Office, helping many colleagues to secure grants. - The school was very research intensive but was also education intensive and was committed to small group teaching. - Practical research supports were in place for staff with a sabbatical rota ensuring that every 5th term was a research term with no teaching. Researchers could use this time to write a book, article, prepare a grant proposal etc. - There was also an informal mentoring system in the form of regular conversations or "chats" with colleagues to help develop individual research plans. - The school was inherently interdisciplinary and also has close collaborations with Computer Sciences, Environmental Humanities and Digital Humanities. - Major research projects from the school include the Virtual Treasury of Ireland, the Colonial Legacies project, and From That Small Island: The Story of the Irish (a 4-part documentary which would be broadcast in approx. 40 different countries). In discussion with the committee, the following was noted: - The sabbatical rota is very protected within the school. Colleagues are aware of how it works and plan teaching in other terms in order to protect their sabbatical time. - Mentoring chats were not documented. It had been found that not documenting them made them more transparent and productive. - The school was not against the idea of 'cohort' education for postgraduates, but the core of the school's discipline was based on individual researchers. Common skills-based training was welcomed, but recruiting around general areas rather than the specific original thinking that is required of the individual researcher would be contrary to how the discipline operates.
	Section C – Items for Noting
C.1	**Items for Noting** No items for noting.
C.2	**Items for future discussion**

	- The committee was informed that the Policy on Good Research Practice was under review by REPC and would hopefully be ready to come to the Research Committee for approval at January's meeting. - The Knowledge Security Taskforce would provide an update to the committee in either January or February. - DOR noted that further discussion on a research culture initiative would be tabled to the committee in the new year.
C.3	**AOB** The DOR noted thanks noted to Dr Darren Fayne, TRSA rep, as this was his last meeting, and wished him the best of luck in his new role at DCU. DOR noted thanks to committee for the really constructive discussions so far this year and wished everyone a happy holidays.