

Research Committee
Minutes of 6th February 2004

Present: Michael Gibney (Dean of Research), Doris Alexander, Michael Coey, John Dillon, Dermot Kelleher, Dermot McAleese, Margaret O'Mahony, John Saeed, Jim Sexton

In Attendance: Donal Lyons, Valerie Smith, Maria Treanor

Apologies: David Dickson, Sheila Greene, Deirdre Savage

Not Present: Michael Dowling, Clive Williams

1. Minutes of the meeting of 05 December 03

Item 6 was re-worded and the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2. Matters Arising

Good Research Practice (Whistle-blowing & Investigation of Allegations of Malpractice)

A new section will be added to the staff form, whereby new staff members will be asked to sign a statement that they have understood the good research practice process and how allegations of malpractice are handled. The same will apply to enrolling students. The Research Office will liaise with J Saeed, Dean of Graduate Studies.

College Computer Subnets

In relation to their current policy on subnets in College, IS Services will now only allow subnets to exist under licence. If problems arise, and the user has acted in accordance with the licence agreement, they will be covered for any resulting damage. Those who take out licences are responsible for the cost of firewalls and professional staff to run the subnets.

Implementation of the Research Element of the Strategic Plan

Almost 60 Expressions of Interest have been received. The facilitators will attempt to group the EoIs and ask each group to submit a revised version under a broad banner. Arts & Culture have already amalgamated their interests into about four or five

strands. It is hoped to reduce the total number of areas to approximately 10.

M Gibney will arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

FP6

This was deferred to the next meeting.

3. Research Information Database

Donal Lyons gave a presentation of the Research Information System. In Phase 1, which is ready to go live, academics will be able to input information into the sections dealing with their CVs, research interests and publications. Phase 2 will go live in sub-phases, and will be at the level of research teams and projects. It is possible to have different access levels for different categories of user.

The Staff Secretary has advised that the database be taken through an IFUT process as a means of obtaining their support and standardising the promotions procedure to include information from a researcher's profile. From next year, publications for inclusion in the Calendar will be submitted directly to the database. Some 25,000 articles and 55,000 keywords have been purchased from ISI and will be used to help populate the publications section of each person's profile. The publications' list, which has been purchased from ISI, will be updated regularly, and the upload date is noted on the web page.

It was agreed that information on students supervised should also be provided, including the title of the thesis supervised. All research students should have a profile on the system.

Niamh Brennan, Library, has been seconded to this project for one year. As well as populating the database, she will be giving presentations and workshops on the system, to encourage use and population of the system.

The Committee agreed that D. Lyons and the team have done a great job. D Lyons will circulate his presentation to the Committee, and asked that any thoughts or comments be e-mailed to him.

M Gibney has written to InfoEd to assure them that Trinity College Dublin is very supportive of the RIS but does need feedback faster if progress is to be made.

The Provost will launch the TCD RIS before the European launch in May 2004.

4. Research Overheads on FP6 Grants

The Finance Committee has made a decision to keep two-thirds of the 20% research overheads received from the European Commission, and give the remaining one-third to departments.

M Gibney will write to the Finance Committee with a list of costs, which could be used as legitimate indicators of what department overheads can be used for. He will seek the Finance Committee's acceptance of the document.

Principal Investigators should be required to put the annual audit fee on the management side of the proposal form. This issue should be cleared up to ensure that people are not paying the audit fee on both sides of the balance sheet (direct costs and indirect costs). M Gibney will write to the Treasurer to ask for clarification.

5. Research Budget 2003/2004

There is approximately €360,000 available for the Research Committee. There are approximately 31 potential start-ups this year.

The start-up funding will be capped at €5,000 per applicant for this year. The wording will have to be changed to recognise the fact that this is probably not enough to cover the costs of a whole project. It could be termed funding 'towards' the completion of an eligible project. Applicants will be permitted to apply for funding jointly. Applicants will also be given a strict deadline for expenditure and reporting, and the funding will go back to the Research Committee if conditions are not met.

The remaining funding will be a Research Contingency Fund, which Heads of Departments may apply for through the Deans. This call will be put out before the Senior Lecturer's call for applications from the Emergency Fund closes. M. Gibney will meet with the Senior Lecturer to ensure duplicate funding does not occur.

There will be no individual Maintenance Grants or Berkeley Fellowships awarded this year.

6. CHIU Policy document

The CHIU Policy document has been approved by the Heads of Universities. One of the problems identified is the lack of career paths for researchers. College may run a workshop in June 2004, and could include the people in Europe who run advanced training / graduate schools on the invitation list.

Maria Kelly will be invited to the next meeting to clarify recent changes in the law with regard to the appointment of staff and pension / redundancy provision.

7. Expanding the College's Research Budget

As D Savage was not present, it was agreed that further discussion would be deferred until the next meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Increasing Research Income

The Provost has requested ideas on how to increase the College's research income. M Gibney will prepare a half-page briefing document and will ask a small group (D Alexander, M O'Mahony, J Sexton, J Dillon and two people not on the Research Committee) for ideas. He will report back to the Provost within one month.

Research Magazine

It has not been possible to develop a research magazine in College due to a lack of resources. However, Eoin O'Neill, Innovation Services, has almost completed editing a sixteen-chapter book written by 16 people in College who use mathematics in their research. It was suggested that a similar book could be produced this year, perhaps in the field of Materials Science. This could also be a possible formula to bring the Berkeley Fellows together.

Governance

It has been suggested that College Committees should be chaired by a member of the Board. The Committee was not in agreement with this as there are some issues, such as personality and enthusiasm for the work of the Committee, which need to be taken into account.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 2 p.m. on Friday 5th March 2004.

Signed: _____

Date: _____