

# **Research Committee**

## **Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2002**

**Present:** Michael Gibney (Dean of Research), Dermot Kelleher, Hilary Tovey, Deirdre Savage, Jim Sexton, Margaret O'Mahony, Clive Williams, John Fitzpatrick, Doris Alexander, John Dillon, Sheila Greene, David Dickson

**In attendance:** Janet Ball

**Apologies:** Elizabeth Drew, John Saeed

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies noted.

### **2. Minutes of meeting 5<sup>th</sup> April 2002**

Minutes approved and signed by Chairman.

### **3. Matters Arising**

#### **3.1 High Performance Computing**

For IITAC Phase 2 to proceed, it will require financing and €317,435 (IR£250,000) will be routed from the Finance Committee to the Research Committee for this purpose. This money will be held until a review of HPC is completed. It was decided that J Sexton will come back to the Research Committee with a document to suggest the form of this review and the parameters of the service described. It was suggested that the review should mimic the academic review. There is a budget associated with a review, and HPC think they can cover it. Anyone associated with HPC should be a part of the review which should be completed with the money in place by November-December 2002. As no suitable candidate for the Hitachi lectureship was found, there will be a rethink on what use the Hitachi money can be put to.

#### **3.2 Berkeley Fellows**

All those who were offered Berkeley Fellowships have accepted. The Chairman will circulate the Deans with this information.

#### **3.3 Good Research Practice**

The Chairman will ask the working groups to look at the submissions received and to make alterations as necessary. When this is completed, the whole should be given a coherent editorial style and brought to the Research Committee, and then to Board.

### **3.4 Research Information Database**

Nothing has been done, and a meeting needs to be organised.

### **3.5 Research Centres**

The Provost has asked that Centres which deal with policy be looked at and perhaps networked. This topic is on the Deans' agenda next Wednesday. After they have issued their reactions, the Chairman and the Senior Lecturer will put together a document.

### **3.6 External Nominees to the Research Committee**

As the Committee informed the HEA that there would be at least one external committee member, Prof. Damien Hannon, ex-Head of Research with the ESRI, and Matt Moran, IBEC, are proposed. Both should be invited to all meetings.

## **4. Maintenance Grant Process 2002**

In the document prepared by the Research Office, a statement should be added in the bullet points on whether the grant has been taken up and, if not, why not. The Chairman will meet Research Office staff to finalise the maintenance grant document next week.

It was pointed out that there is a mistaken perception in College that the maintenance grant is being abolished. A staff survey on the maintenance grant was suggested. All Committee members must contribute in the evaluation of this grant. It was agreed that there should be a coherent 5-year plan and that the annual reports should adhere to this or explain progression or change. The Committee must spell out exactly what it wants to see in a report.

## **5. Contract Research Staff**

It was suggested that a working party on contract research staff be set up, consisting of M Gibney, D Alexander, Brian Thornburg, Jane Grimson and Pat Daly. The information required includes: numbers and types of contract research staff, salaries, trends, legal issues, physical conditions, pensions, and the rights and privileges denied to contract workers in TCD.

Contract staff can now apply for research grants if they are paid by TCD as long as the head of department signs that he will pick up the tab if the contract staff member leaves before the end of the grant project. The contract must be long enough to cover the grant period or the grant must be such that it will pay for employment after the contract period to completion of the grant. An audit of contract staff is going on in relation to status of contract. The Research Committee requested that a copy of the terms of reference be provided to the working party. The issue of nomenclature and progression and salary scales should be covered. This is significant progress. It was pointed out that this is beneficial only if the grant awarding body will accept contract staff.

## **6. Outreach of Trinity Research**

J Sexton agreed to convene a group of Berkeley Fellows (two from Year One, three from Year Two and two from Year Three) and ask them what can be done. The Research Office will give him the relevant names. The onus will be put on the Fellows to find a way to make public presentations but, unless the Committee is sure that the event will be successful, it will not take place. Suggestions include written communication (Irish Times, books), a Berkeley website or television coverage. The Research and Innovation Services website will be improved and more evidence of TCD's expertise will be evident. It was suggested that the Provost stage lectures in the ballroom, spotlighting the Fellows. This could be used as a network opportunity. A Berkeley Gazette was mooted. Liaising with the Policy Studies Institute was also suggested.

## **7. Revision of Criteria for the Award of Berkeley Fellows and Start-up Grants**

M O'Mahony, C Williams, J Dillon, M Gibney and D Alexander will form a working group to work on revision of criteria.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Better lines of communication with the branch of the HEA which runs PRTLIs are required. It was suggested that Dr Eucharía Meehan be invited to talk to the Committee, especially about Cycle 4. She will be speaking to CHIU VPs for Research shortly, and M Gibney will put any questions the Committee has to her then. She will also be invited to lunch with the PRTLIs.

J Dillon and J Fitzpatrick have prepared a report on sabbatical leave, and this will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. The Research Office will gather all information currently available from previous meetings.

Hilary Tovey raised concerns relating to the evaluation of the postgraduate scholarships. She had received information that the evaluators were primarily international, and might not have an understanding of some of the projects. The Chairman asked her to contact him about these concerns and he will convey them to Mark Caball as a formal note from this Committee.

The next meeting will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College Green at 2 p.m. on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2002.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_