

**The University of Dublin
Trinity College**

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 29 January 2009

Present: Professor Shane Allwright (*Board member and Chair*), Dr James Callaghan (*Associate Director of Trinity Research & Innovation, ADoTRI and Secretary*), Dr David Lloyd (*Dean of Research, DoR*), Dr Karen Walshe (*Board member*), Mr Ronan Hodson (*President of the GSU – ex officio*), Prof. Carol O’Sullivan (*Dean of Graduate Studies*), Professor R Stalley (*Heads of School representative*), Prof. Patrick Prendergast (*Vice-Provost and CAO*), Prof. D PA Kelleher (*representative of College research community*), Prof. Patrick Honohan (*representative of College research community*), Prof. Margaret O’Mahony (*Bursar*)

In attendance: Ms Maria Treanor (*Research Development Office*), Ms Sarah Lardner (*Trinity Research & Innovation*), Ms Deirdre Savage (*Nominee of Treasurer*), Ms Doris Alexander (*Research Development Officer*); Ms Niamh Brennan (for RS/08-09/19), Ms Maura Horan (for RS/08-09/19).

RS/08-09/11 Minutes of 17 December 2008

Changes were incorporated and the minutes were approved and signed.

RS/08-09/12 Matters Arising from the Minutes

RS08-09/04 Social Sciences Review: the report and response from the Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences were sent to Council and Board.

RS/08-09/15 Research Ethics: Chair discussed the possible status of a College Research Ethics Committee with the Acting Secretary to the College, and was advised to proceed.

DoR is setting up a working group which will produce draft terms of reference. He will keep the Research Committee informed.

DoR will send information on the Research Ethics Board to the Working Group on Committees.

RS08-09/06 Entrepreneurial Activities and Promotion: CAO informed the Working Group on Senior Promotions about the outcome of the Research Committee discussions.

RS08-09/07 External Funding for Innovation: ADoTRI is progressing dialogue with external parties in relation to external funding for Innovation. He will also address any issues in relation to the College procurement process.

RS08-09/10 Any Other Business: the report from the Working Group on Research Careers will be presented at the next meeting of the Research Committee.

Action: Chair to invite Dr Deirdre Madden, chair of the UCC Research Ethics Board, to attend a future meeting of the Research Committee.

Action: Dean of Graduate Studies to provide url for on-line accreditation for research ethics in the US for circulation to the College Research Ethics Board.

Action: DoR to send information on the Research Ethics Board to the Working Group on Committees.

RS/08-09/13 Any Other Business

Prof. John McGilp wrote to the Committee with concerns about the Indirect Costs Policy approved by the Research Committee in June 2008 (RS/07-08/52). At the time, it was noted verbally that the mechanism for overheads from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) does not fall under this policy and requires instead a multi-annual plan. SFI Principal Investigators complete a survey every year, and are generally satisfied with the way the SFI mechanism for overheads meets their needs. DoR has replied to Prof. McGilp, and will clarify this with Board. He also noted that the circulation of the Indirect Costs Policy document via Faculty deans to all academics (RS/08-09/09) is in train.

Action: DoR to clarify with Board re. Indirect Costs Policy.

Section A: Policy Items

RS/08-09/14 College Research Strategy

The Committee recommended that the Strategic Plan should recognise costs and link with College's E-strategy.

The Committee discussed the process for developing the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. The CAO and Chief Operating Officer (COO) have been asked to design the process, and the CAO will then write the Strategic Plan. The initial planning group will be extended to include other expertise as needed. The first step is to establish strategic planning teams (SPTs) to each write a document outlining the strategies and training for their areas. Feedback and input from the academic community will then be sought via school committees. Each area then writes a derived operational plan. Areas include research, and knowledge transfer & innovation. The planning group will meet the DoR to receive feedback on the research element.

It was agreed that the College Community should have agreed, articulated themes. School strategic plans will be compatible with the overall plan for the College. As well as having measurable targets, evaluation should be built into the existing themes.

Action: Members to respond directly to Dr Caitriona Curtis, Secretary to the Strategic Planning Group, and copy Chair on any feedback re: draft review of the outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2003-08.

RS/08-09/15 Research Ethics Board

It was agreed that the Ethics Committee would be called the Research Ethics Board. They will set parameters and advise on policy for ethics and good research practice. Responsibility will be devolved to local committees to approve applications which are then sent to the Research Ethics Board for noting. DoR and the research ethics working group will draft the terms of reference and composition of the Research Ethics Board including the possibility of inviting participation from external experts if required. It was recommended that there would be representation from current ethics committees on the Research Ethics Board.

Action: DoR to convene Research Ethics Working Group.

RS/08-09/16 Update on Relationship between Research Centres/Institutes and Faculties/Schools (sub-committee)

The Committee agreed that there is still work to be done. Existing centres and institutes should be audited and a decision made about whether they should continue as they are. In addition, more information is needed on the relationship between Research Centres/Institutes and Faculties/Schools with regard to financial accounting and space allocation. A planning group will make recommendations to Executive Officers and Board.

Section B: Implementation Decisions

RS/08-09/17 Research Committee Sub-committees and Working Groups

It was noted that there are now four sub-committees and one working group reporting to the Research Committee.

Action: ADoTRI to convene a meeting of the Business and Industry Committee this term to review the current situation regarding campus companies.

Section C: Items for Noting

RS/08-09/18 Response to the Social Sciences External Review from Research Committee and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

The response was noted.

RS/08-09/19 Research Forum

The Chair welcomed the Directors of Research to the first Research Forum of the academic year.

PRTL15: The HEA has launched PRTL15. College received approximately 12 expressions of interest last year while waiting for the call to be announced. A decision will be made next week by the Provost, DoR, Dean of Graduate Studies, CAO and the three faculty deans. The funding available is €200 million for a capital strand and €100 million for a recurrent strand. Up to 10% of the total recurrent funding is available for new and emerging areas. To date, €800 million has been invested in PRTL1 and, in the current economic climate, this must be justified in terms of value for money. PRTL15 should therefore be aligned to national recovery. It should deliver the Government's Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI) over the five years 2010 to 2015 including the required increase in PhD numbers. There will be a two-stage application process and the first deadline is 02 April 2009. There is no cap on the number of programmes for which TCD may apply but they must be prioritised. Overinflated bids will not be entertained. There is an open infrastructure call and five capital programme opportunities for national shared facilities. These national shared facilities must be sustainable after PRTL1 funding ends. There is a requirement for 30% auditable matched funding for institutional bids over €8 million.

Research Communication: the Research Committee invited two speakers to present the work they do which helps College to increase its research profile.

Niamh Brennan presented the Research Support System (RSS) and how it can help the College community. The RSS is part of College's strategic plan. It is continually being updated and, by using it, every researcher in College has the ability to attract more citations. It can be used by researchers for creating an up-to-date CV or by both researchers and administrators to create current reports and graphs based on, for example, projects or publications. A new feature of the system is that researchers can sign up as individuals to research strands.

Maura Horan, Web Design Office, gave an overview of the latest website design for College research. Phase One of the research pages, which provides easy access to staff profiles and publications, is now complete. In addition, a webcam has been installed on the Biosciences site to illustrate the style of the design and building progress. The url will be posted on the hoarding.

A discussion followed regarding how best to demonstrate to the general public that a university can change the world, and what difference it can make apart from teaching students.

TCD is in the top 50 of the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) ranking but still needs to make up ground on citations.

Any Other Business:

Directors of Research do not currently have a forum for formal meetings. DoR will discuss with CAO to see if any other group in College is following up on this.

Action: Oonagh Kinsman to circulate the current list of PRTL15 expressions of interest to the Directors of Research.

Action: any further expressions of interest for PRTL15 to be sent as one- to two-page documents to DoR by Wednesday 04 February 2009.

Action: Slides from RSS and Web Design presentations, and THES methodology to be circulated to the Research Committee and Directors of Research.

Action: DoR to send reminder to College community regarding the use of 'Trinity College Dublin' in all publications.

Action: DoR and CAO to follow up on forum for Directors of Research.

Action: Draft minutes of Research Committee meetings to be circulated to Directors of Research.

The next meeting of the Research Committee will take place in the Board Room, No. 1 College, at 11.00 on Thursday 12 March 2009.

Signed:

Date: