

The University of Dublin  
Trinity College

Minutes of Research Committee Meeting, 24 January 2017

Present:

Professor John Boland, Dean of Research (DoR)

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Professor Ruth Barton, Director of Research, School of Drama, Film and Music

Professor Stephen Minton, Director of Research, School of Education

Professor Micheál Ó Siochrú, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities

Professor Roja Fazaeli, Director of School of Languages Literatures & Cultural Studies

Professor Mark Bell, Director of Research, School of Law

Professor Lorraine Leeson, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences

Professor Ruth Byrne, Director of Research, School of Psychology

Professor Gaia Narcisco, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Professor Trevor Spratt, Director of Research, School of Social Work and Social Policy

Professor Jacob Erickson, Director of Research, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Ecumenics

Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science

Professor Emma Creagh, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry and Immunology

Professor Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Director of Research, School of Chemistry

Professor Doug Leith, Director of Research, School of Computer Science and Statistics

Professor Adrian Bracken, Director of Research, School of Genetics and Microbiology

Professor Jane Stout, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences

Faculty of Health Sciences

Professor Gary Moran, Director of Research, School of Dentistry

Professor Geralyn Hynes, Director of Research, School of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor Carsten Ehrhardt, substituting for Director of Research School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Orla Hardiman, Director, TBSI

Professor Orla Sheils, Director, TTMI

Mr Shane Collins, President, Graduate Students Union

Dr Fiona Killard, Head of Strategic Projects (for item RS/16-17/23)

Ms Aoife Crawford, Equality Officer (for item RS/16-17/24)

In attendance:

Dr Diarmuid O'Brien, Chief Innovation and Enterprise Officer

Mr David O'Shea, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division  
 Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian, Library  
 Dr Oonagh Kinsman, Trinity Research and Innovation, Secretary to the Committee

Apologies:

Professor Martina Hennessy, Associate Dean of Research (ADoRMH),  
 Professor Helen Sheridan, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences  
 Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Director, Trinity Long Room Hub  
 Ms Doris Alexander, Research Development Manager, Trinity Research and Innovation

Not present:

Professor Peter Gallagher, Associate Dean of Research (ADoRPG)  
 Professor Brian Lucey, Director of Research, School of Business  
 Professor Sam Slote, Director of Research, School of English  
 Professor Luiz Da Silva, Director of Research, School of Engineering  
 Professor Sergey Frolov, Director of Research, School of Mathematics  
 Professor Martin Hegner, Director of Research, School of Physics  
 Professor Seamus Donnelly, Director of Research, School of Medicine  
 Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director, CRANN  
 Professor Mani Ramaswami, Director, TCIN  
 Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies  
 Mr Michael Cooke, Acting Chair, Trinity Research Staff Association  
 Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services

Actions arising / on-going:

Agenda Item	Owner	Action	Status
RS/15-16/63	Dean of Research and review working group	Progression in implementing Measuring Research Productivity and Excellence	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/49	Dean of Research	Feedback on progress with Research Career Framework policy from Tony McMahon	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/57	Dean of Research	Seek information on number of PhD students paying EU and non-EU fees and the source of funding	<i>In progress</i>
RS/15-16/62	Associate Dean of Research	Report to the Research Committee with policies on bio-banking, data retention and stem cells	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/04	Directors of Research	All Overhead analysis and justification plans to be submitted by 1 December 2016	In progress
RS/16-17/10	Dean of Research	Feedback any information on SFI research integrity audits	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/12	Dean of Research	Comparative Medicine Unit to provide a summary of planned activity for increased openness and information on similar activities planned in other Irish universities.	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/13	Dean of Research	PIQA tool: A beta version will be trialled in one School from each faculty	<i>In progress</i>

RS/16-17/19	Dean of Research	Revised THE ranking for Trinity to be discussed	<i>Q1 2017</i>
RS/16-17/20	Dean of Research and President of Graduate Students Union	Consider postgraduate representative forum as a mechanism to raise research concerns in the Dail	<i>In progress</i>
RS/16-17/23	Dean of Research	Provide details of internal programmes to promote visiting academics and external ERC applications on internal web	<i>In progress</i>

### RS/16-17/21 Matters arising from the minutes

The Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities was not happy with the committee process in relation to the PIQA tool but the DoR had consulted with the chair of the meeting and others and had already revised the minutes accordingly. The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science were not involved in the pilot. Schools in other Faculties were carrying out the pilot evaluation of the tool. (RS/16-17/13).

The Trinity LERU representatives on the various committees has been identified and the team will travel to Leuven to meet other committee leads and equivalent representatives from the University of Copenhagen. This ongoing activity will help to raise our game and review practices with the best European universities. (RS/16-17/16).

The Librarian reported that the updated Library web site with guidance on research data management had been well received. Trinity was recruiting a one year strategic post for a research data management librarian. The LERU Roadmap for Research Data forms a good starting point for institutionally addressing this subject. Members of staff had attended a workshop on the 16 Jan on FAIR data stewardship, at which there was a call from Sandra Collins (National Librarian of Ireland) that librarians take a leadership role in curating large data sets as they have the relevant skills, background, expertise etc. The Librarian will circulate a note from Library attendees at the FAIR meeting. (RS/16-17/17).

The Career Framework had not been signed off by TCD and the DoR had no further updates. (RS/15-16/49).

The excellence metrics for the Faculty of Health Sciences need to be finalised and the Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science do not have agreed metrics across the Faculty. The DoR requested that these faculties update him on progress and timescales. The Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences were implementing their agreed metrics with checks that the data was accurate and correct. (RS/15-16/63).

Number of PhD students, corresponding PhD fees with the source of funding is not an easy metric to track in College but work is being done to analyse the data from various sources. (RS/15-16/57).

Professor Orla Sheils reported that a working group including member of the School of Law are reviewing bio-banking and data retention. An update will be ready for the next meeting. (RS/15-16/62)

The DOR reported that the deadline had passed for submissions to the semi-annual Dean of Research's report. Late submissions will be held over to the next edition. A separate report will focus on 1916 related outputs (RS/15-16/64).

Overhead analysis was moving to phase 1 with meetings with representatives from the non-academic professional service divisions. Returns had been made from 14 Schools but these did not include those in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. It was confirmed that Heads of Schools were tasked with making these returns and the Directors of Research may contribute to the discussions in their Schools. Clarification was needed that the analysis of all overheads from all Schools was part of the process although the distribution of SFI overheads were a primary concern. (RS/16-17/04).

Potential research integrity audits by SFI were still a concern. It is not clear what they are looking for and a meeting with SFI to discuss further has been proposed. (RS/16-17/10)

THE ranking review has produced preliminary data and they are in progress with the analysis for this year. When data has been finalised it will be brought to the Research Committee. (RS/16-17/19)

The DoR will meet with the President of the Graduate Students union to discuss the postgraduate representative forum to enable research issues to be raised with politicians. (RS/16-17/20)

#### **RS/16-17/22 Update from the Dean of Research**

Trinity has started the gap analysis for the HR Strategy for Researchers Excellence in Research (HRS4R) which will investigate internal policies and practices in comparison to the principles of the European Charter and Code with a view to achieving the award of the HR Excellence in Research logo. Inclusion of this European benchmark will support our researchers in their proposals to attract international funding. Internal consultation is underway and this committee will be briefed in the future.

Dr Diarmuid O'Brien took up the post as Chief Innovation & Enterprise Officer on 1 January 2017. He outlined the new role and will be responsible for the Innovation Academy, LaunchBox and Launchpad, providing a focus for entrepreneurial activity, maximizing leverage from companies, developing an innovation focus at the Trinity Technology Enterprise Campus, with potential to develop 150,000 sq m, and increase visibility for these activities. The DoR commented that there were space constraints on the central campus and that no decisions had been made on existing academic activity in TTEC. Dr O'Brien outlined possibilities of sources of funding for the development. 40% of the space would be available for academic purposes while the remaining non-academic space should be mission aligned.

### **RS/16-17/23 Update on internal programmes to promote visiting academics and external ERC applications**

Dr Fiona Killard presented mechanisms for deepening research engagement with the aim of attracting and motivating research excellence. The International Collaboration Stimulus Programme funded by the Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund will support short visits with a focus on the UK and India relating to biomedicine. The AHSS ERC teaching buy-out initiative is available but has not had many applicants. The Trinity Visiting Academics programme is targeted at very senior academics with strategic importance in any area of research. The Recruiting Outstanding Academics Programme aims to recruit internationally leading researchers / scholars where funding is sought to cover the costs of the appointment. These initiatives complement other strategic opportunities including faculty based initiatives. The DoR asked for suggestions to better help Schools take up these opportunities. The Director of Research for School of Genetics and Microbiology suggested that the presentation should be on the internal web so that he could circulate this link within his School.

Action: The presentations will be placed on the internal web for better visibility.

### **RS/16-17/24 HEA Gender Equality Review**

Ms Aoife Crawford discussed the gender equality proposals in the HEA documentation, the consultation process and the implementation plan. The recommendations from the HEA are wide and far reaching. We need to incorporate the recommendations into our existing processes and tailor them to our own context. For example one key recommendation is that Irish funding agencies will require institutions to gain an Athena Swan Silver certification to enable applications to be received in 2023. We currently have Bronze status and reaching Silver will be challenging. Gender data needs to be disaggregated from current statistics. For example the gender of applicants for funding will need to be reported. Gender dimension of research topics and personnel will need to be considered and training and support given for Irish funding applications.

Professor Micheál Ó Siochrú, Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities, commented that Schools apply for Athena Swan evaluation and he had participated in the process for his School and that supports will be needed at a School level to increase from Bronze to Silver. He also asked that training be given for the gender aspects of current IRC post-doctoral and post-graduate applications. Dr Diarmuid O'Brien asked what were the risk factors and focus points for the processes to become Silver. Ms Crawford confirmed that the processes were challenging and that only 13 UK institutions had achieved Silver status. Our existing Bronze status will be reviewed again in 2019. Analysis of outputs from a gender perspective had not yet been tackled although ORCID IDs might assist. There was concern from some committee members that the HEA was living in a bubble and were unaware of resources needed for implementation of initiatives.

## **RS/16-17/25 Proposed new method of strategic hires**

The DoR presented a paper that had been discussed and approved at Council. It outlined the problems that have been encountered with recruitment of SFI Targeted Professors and external ERC candidates, that it was a protracted process, that we have lost good candidates and our reputation suffered if negotiations did not have a successful conclusion. It was noted that these potential hires were not funded through the ABC process. The proposed new approach provided altered processes to identify funding for the package, a Sub-Committee on Remuneration mandated by the Board to oversee the negotiations and make offers and a new Talent Acquisitions Working Group to support and manage a strategic hiring campaign.

The Director of Research, School of Law commented that with discretionary offers of higher salaries, there should be efforts made to ensure that the gender pay gap is not exacerbated. The Director of Research, School of Histories and Humanities commented that strategic recruitment may form part of a Schools strategic plan and how would the more top down approach work. The DoR confirmed that the new committee would give greater visibility across College for existing strategic hiring plans. The Director of Research, School of Psychology was concerned that the process also referred to filling of vacant established chairs and that consideration of internal candidates and required external advertising should continue and that Schools should be part of the process including the interview. The DoR commented that for recruitment of an ERC candidate where no interview takes place as part of the evaluation process, Trinity would carry out due diligence including an interview. He also commented on the plans for sustainability for posts that are time limited should be mapped to existing School plans. The Director of Research, School of History and Humanities asked if the potential of high level of remuneration would cause any problems down the line or potential for external criticism. The DoR confirmed that the Talent Acquisition Working Group which is chaired by the Provost will report regularly to Board. He confirmed that the Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation and SFI were aware of the competitive environment and that the HEA are becoming more aware of the issues. The Director of Research, School of Psychology asked if HR were engaged with the process at a senior level. Dr Diarmuid O'Brien agreed that the approach described in the document was good but we need to be mindful that good external candidates will be assessing us and attention from as high a level in Trinity as possible will be beneficial.

## **RS/16-17/26 AOB**

The Deputy Contracts Manager and the Head of Office of Corporate Partnership and Knowledge Exchange in Trinity Research and Innovation are now authorised signatures for College contracts.