

The University of Dublin  
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

11am - 1pm, 16 October 2018  
Arts Building Conference Room

**Present:**

Professor Linda Doyle, Dean of Research (DOR)  
Professor Andrew Bowie, Associate Dean of Research  
Professor Lorraine Leeson, Associate Dean of Research

**Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**

Professor Ruth Barton, Director of Research, School of Creative Arts  
Professor Ann Devitt, Director of Research, School of Education  
Professor Eve Patten, Director of Research, School of English  
Professor Daniel Geary, Director of Research, School of Histories & Humanities  
Professor Brian Brewer, Director of Research, School of Languages, Literatures & Cultural Studies  
Professor Diarmuid Phelan Rossa, on behalf of Director of Research, School of Law  
Professor Redmond O'Connell, Director of Research, School of Psychology  
Professor Agustín Bénétrix, Director of Research, School of Social Sciences & Philosophy  
Professor Trevor Spratt, Director of Research, School of Social Work & Social Policy  
Professor Daniele Pevarello, Director of Research, School of Religions, Peace Studies & Theology

**Faculty of Engineering, Maths and Science**

Professor Emma Creagh, Director of Research, School of Biochemistry & Immunology  
Professor Declan O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Computer Science & Statistics  
Professor Caitríona Lally, Director of Research, School of Engineering  
Professor Adrian Bracken, Director of Research, School of Genetics & Microbiology  
Professor Marcus Collier, Director of Research, School of Natural Sciences

**Faculty of Health Sciences**

Professor Jeffrey O'Sullivan, Director of Research, School of Dental Science  
Professor Louise Gallagher, Director of Research, School of Medicine  
Professor Maria Brenner, Director of Research, School of Nursing & Midwifery  
Professor Helen Sheridan, Director of Research, School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences

Professor Orla Sheils, Director of Trinity Translational Medicine Institute  
Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Director of Trinity Long Room Hub

**In attendance:**

Ms Doris Alexander, Research Development Manager, Trinity Research & Innovation  
Mr David O'Shea, Projects Accounting Manager, Financial Services Division  
Dr Geoff Bradley, Head of Academic Services and Operations, IT Services  
Ms Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist, Library  
Mr Leonard Hobbs, Director of Trinity Research & Innovation  
Dr Fiona Killard, Head of Strategic Research Development, Office of the Dean of Research  
Dr Jennifer Daly, Research Strategy Officer, Office of the Dean of Research (Secretary to the Committee)

**Apologies:**

Professor Blanaid Clarke, Director of Research, School of Law

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Professor Irene Walsh, Director of Research, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Studies

Professor Sinéad Ryan, Director of Research, School of Mathematics

Professor Mani Ramaswami, Director, TCIN

**Not Present:**

Professor Frank Barry, Director of Research, School of Business

Professor Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Director of Research, School of Chemistry

Professor Stefano Sanvito, Director of Research, School of Physics

Professor Orla Hardiman, Director, TBSI

Oisin Vince Coulter, President, Graduate Students Union

Professor Neville Cox, Dean of Graduate Studies

**Section A - Items for Discussion and Approval**

**A.0 Welcome for 2018-19**

Dean of Research welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year and noted her thanks to those who have stepped down.

**A.1 Minutes**

Minutes of May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted as read.

**A.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Matters arising were dealt with during the meeting.

**A.3 Update from the Dean of Research**

The Dean of Research updated the committee on activities over the summer. Noted that there no longer seems to be quiet time in the academic calendar. There was huge activity around grant applications, eg. SFI centres for doctoral training, and IRC advanced grants. DOR also discussed the review process for Trinity's three SFI centres, and the launch of the New Irish Studies Centre.

DOR discussed the IUA's new charter, *Ireland's Future Talent*, and noted that the IUA held its first lobbying day to highlight the need for increased investment in the sector. SFI is also developing a new strategic plan and Trinity researchers have been able to feed back as part of the consultation process.

The Provost's PhD awards were noted, as was the IRC Laureates reception. DOR noted that an aim for the year is to be more systematic about celebrating achievement and asked members of the Research Committee to flag potential events with her.

A lot of work was done over the summer on strategic hiring with a number of potential candidates with ERCs on the horizon. Also discussed the EU Network initiative.

DOR noted that QS and THE published their university rankings in recent months. Trinity fell out of the top 100 for QS and also saw a small drop in THE position. Noted that 50% of QS ranking is based on surveys. Institutions can return lists of contacts but GDPR has decimated Trinity's old lists. Working with Careers and other units in college to build this back up again but the academic side is also important.

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**Section B - Items for Discussion Only**

**B.1 European Research Council grants**  
Bevin McGeever, ERC Project Officer  
Sarah Nangle, ERC Project Officer

BM and SN addressed the committee in relation to European Research Council grants, explaining how the process works. Trinity is currently 24<sup>th</sup> in Europe for ERC grants which is a good performance relative to size. Also hold about 50% of all ERC grants in Ireland.

BM and SN would like to increase success rates across Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced ERC grants, and noted that schools are best placed to identify strong candidates who could apply.

Members of the committee discussed at length with BM and SN ways to improve application and success rates, demystify the process, and to provide more comprehensive support structures for applicants and their schools. It was noted that not every researcher needs a large grant to conduct their work, and it is important to acknowledge the different ways in which researchers achieve. There was also some discussion of the possibility of joint appointments with UK universities post-Brexit.

**B.2 Intellectual Property: Policy, Practices, Regulations**  
Leonard Hobbs, Director Trinity Research & Innovation  
Emily Vereker, Technology Transfer Case Manager, TR&I

LH and EV presented to the committee in relation to the revised Intellectual Property policy. Policy was due for review, and also needed to be updated to reflect change in external environment with new regulations and national policy recommendations coming into effect.

The committee discussed the implications of the new policy with LH and EV at length, and advised that anyone seeking clarity on the policy should contact TR&I for advice. There was some discussion around copyright, shareholding, and conflicts of interest.

LH noted that the policy still has to go to EOG, Finance Committee, and Board. The hope is that the policy will be approved by the end of the year, and a communications process will then be put in place.

**B.3 Research Strategy**  
Dean of Research

DOR updated the committee as to the status of the research strategy. The document containing the principles was approved by EOG; based on their suggestion it will now be called a “charter”. Over the summer, a number of brainstorming days with the ODRes staff helped to create a list of actions that will populate the “living plan”/research excellence strategy. DOR also noted that she wants to create a framework that will make the transitions between Deans of Research smoother as the role is not clearly defined.

In discussion with the committee, the DOR emphasised the strategy is not about identifying specific topics. Individually, researchers know what they are doing, but the strategy is about being clearer and more coherent at an institutional level. Also noted the importance of linking the strategy’s actions with other policies and strategies around college. DOR also noted that it is difficult to discuss the next phase of the strategy given the time constraints of Research Committee meetings, so extra meetings will be arranged to allow everyone have some input.

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DOR also noted that the strategy will identify actions that other units around college will have to take responsibility for.

**B.4 Items for Discussion at Future Meetings**

DOR flagged a number of items that will need to be addressed in future meetings of the committee, including the policy for Trinity Research Institutes, and invited members of the committee to suggest topics for discussion over the coming year.

A number of committee members raised the issue of fees/stipends for PhD students. While not within the purview of the Research Committee all agreed that the committee could look to support initiatives to improve conditions for PhD students.

It was also suggested that the committee could discuss issues around E3, data storage to comply with data provenance, and admin loads.

**Section C - Items for Noting**

**C.1 REPC/School of Education Research Ethics Committee**

It was noted that the REPC reviewed a submission from the School of Education to make operational changes to its Level 2 REC. REPC happy to recommend the amendments proposed by the School of Education Research Ethics Committee for ratification by the Research Committee.