

**The University of Dublin
Trinity College**

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

**11:00, Tuesday, 13 May 2025
Boardroom, Trinity Business School**

MINUTES

Prof. Sinéad Ryan, Dean of Research (Chair); Prof. Brian Broderick; Prof. Padraic Fallon; Prof. Joseph Roche; Prof. Joanne Banks; Prof. Mark Bell; Prof. Sonia Bishop; Prof. Sharyn O'Halloran; Prof. Nicola Carr; Prof. Ed Lavelle; Prof. Mathias Senge; Prof. Marco Ruffini; Prof. Michael Monaghan; Prof. Frank Wellmer; Prof. Andrei Parnachev; Prof. Yvonne Buckley; Prof. Ortwin Hess; Prof. Hal Duncan; Prof. Sarah Doyle; Prof. Eilish Burke; Prof. Anne Marie Healy; Prof. Kingston Mills; Prof. Mark Little; Prof. Eve Patten; Prof. Rhodri Cusack; Prof. Martine Smith.

In attendance: Elaine Sharkey; Dr Geoff Bradley; Helen Shenton; Dr Jennifer Daly:

Apologies: Doris Alexander; Claudia Peroni; Jacob Erickson; Audrey Crosbie; Mohamed Ahmed; Sally Smith; Michael Reilly; Fiona Smyth; Caroline Jagoe; Pádraic Whyte; Michelle Olmstead.

Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval	
A.1	Minutes Draft minutes from the meeting of April 8 th were circulated in advance and approved as read.
A.2	Matters Arising from the Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RS/24-25/9 DOR advised the committee that conversations were continuing with TDA and they would hopefully be able to bring a more detailed update and plan after the summer. DOR noted that Trinity Research was working closely with TDA to ensure any plan would be aligned with the new College Strategic Plan.• RS/23-24/6 Researcher Recruitment Policy update: DOR noted that the draft policy was approved at EOG and was due to go to the People & Culture Committee soon. It was noted that due to some personnel changes in HR the composition of the working group had been delayed but should be in place by Research Committee's final meeting in June. It was confirmed that the composition of the working group would be proposed to the committee for consideration. Some members of the committee asked for clarification on the role Heads of Schools play in the policy approval process. It was noted that there was no official approval role for Heads but that the extensive consultation via Directors of Research and Research Committee should have been communicated to Heads of Schools for feedback. DOR noted that while some feedback could still be incorporated at this stage, substantive feedback had already been gathered. DOR also noted that other college committees would have input to the policy.
Section B - Items for Discussion Only	
B.1	Spotlight: Green Labs Dumitru Anton, Green Labs Officer <i>Dumitru Anton joined the meeting for this item.</i> The committee received an overview of the Green Labs initiative from the Green Labs Officer. DOR noted to the committee that climate and sustainability was a cross-cutting theme on the research & innovation pillar in Trinity's HEA System Performance Framework, with Green Labs certifications being one of the KPIs.

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	<p>During the presentation, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research buildings account for approximately 55% of Trinity's total energy use. DA noted that he was working with the Carbon Reduction Manager in Estates & Facilities to ensure that they were not duplicating effort. The definition of a lab was difficult to articulate for the purposes of certification, but it was estimated that there were c. 500 labs/PI groups in Trinity. • Some major research funders were beginning to make some form of certification a condition of receiving grant funding. • It was emphasised that sustainability was not about scaling down activity but instead was to focus on efficiencies that would aid sustainability. Trinity had invested in the position of a Green Labs Officer, funding to help labs secure certification, and access to an accredited professional course for staff interested in green labs. <p>In discussion with the committee, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was difficult to accurately identify how much a specific lab or group might have saved. It was hoped that a process could be put in place whereby energy savings could be reinvested back into departments but significant work was needed to identify baselines etc before this could happen. • External certification costs €500 per lab; it was noted that the cost is the same regardless of the size of the lab. There was some discussion about whether groups, institutes, schools etc could collaborate on certification to reduce costs. It was noted that for this to work, all PIs would need to be involved and agree to participate in the process. • It was clarified that Wellcome would make it a condition for grant funding by the end of 2025 to either hold certification or to have begun engaging with the process. It was noted that new applications would receive funding to assist with securing certification. • It was noted that the design of some of Trinity's buildings actively worked against sustainability initiatives with issues related to automatic doors and open floors, poor ventilation, expensive energy sources etc. The cost to address these issues would be significant. It was noted that any new builds now had to conform to specific sustainability standards. It was noted that the GL officer had made contact with colleagues in institutions across the EU and U.S. to identify how they had addressed similar issues. • In response to a question as to how dry labs with relatively low consumption would be impacted by being located in the same building as labs that were heavier users, it was noted that certification was based on behaviour as opposed to monitoring consumption. • It was noted that PhD researchers were a key cohort in driving sustainability initiatives and the support of PIs and supervisors would be crucial in ensuring they could avail of training opportunities. • There was some discussion about how the growing need for computing power etc would impact on sustainability initiatives and how best to address this. <p>DOR encouraged Directors of Research to share the update with their schools. <i>Dumitru Anton left the meeting.</i></p>
B.2	<p>Dean of Research Update Prof. Sinéad Ryan</p> <p>DOR advised the committee that Prof. Patrick Geoghegan had been appointed as the next Director of the Trinity Long Room Hub and will succeed Prof. Eve Patten at the conclusion of her term.</p>

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	<p>Congratulations were noted to the new Scholars and Fellows announced on Trinity Monday.</p> <p>Seven Trinity research projects have received funding from Research Ireland under its New Foundations programme. Trinity research projects to receive funding are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Whelan, School of Social Work and Social Policy • M. Felicity Daly, Public Health & Primary Care • Claire Howlin, School of Psychology • Catherine Elliott O'Dare, School of Social Work and Social Policy • Irina Kinchin, School of Medicine • Saranya Rameshkumar, CRANN • Mairead Hurley, School of Education <p>Congratulations were noted to Doris Alexander who recently received a lifetime achievement award from the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA).</p> <p>The committee was advised that Research Ireland had communicated that an infrastructure call would be announced soon but no detailed information, call documents or any timeline had been received as yet. As with the last time the call ran in 2023, there would be a cap on the number of applications from each institution (6 each) so an internal review process will have to be conducted. DOR noted that it was expected that the timeline for the internal review would be very tight but all efforts would be made to give researchers as much time as possible. It was also noted that the call was now open to all disciplines; however, there was a minimum ask of €500,000 and no maximum.</p> <p>DOR attended Future of Ireland event at which Minister James Lawless spoke. DOR noted generally positive tone of Minister's speech, with the main points mentioned including PhD students, student accommodation, widening of access and skills, and the importance of supporting fundamental and curiosity driven research in the Irish and global context. It was also noted that he mentioned a possible PRTL-style programme that would not be restricted to buildings/capital projects. It was also noted that plans for a global talent initiative were mentioned.</p> <p>DOR reminded the committee about the campaign to promote the importance of research that the IUA was currently running. The committee noted that some of the financial asks included in the campaign were very conservative relative to the actual need in the system. The timing of the campaign was crucial as discussions related to the next budget in October were already underway.</p>
B.3	<p>Update on the Postgraduate Renewal Programme Dean of Graduate Studies</p> <p>The committee received an update from the Dean of Graduate Studies (DGS) on the progress of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme. During the presentation and subsequent discussion, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DGS noted thanks to all involved in reviewing the Trinity Research Doctorate Awards which had just been finalised. • Approval had been given to extend the scheme to write down the fee differential for PG students funded by Irish funders. • The DGS highlighted the Blueprint for PhD Student Skills Development and the Triple I Framework as significant deliverables currently in progress. It was also

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	<p>noted that a major piece of work was being done to streamline and automate the process to administer student stipends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that there was a wide range of opportunities for students across the institution but many of them are “invisible” and as a result are undersubscribed. An effective way to communicate these had yet to be identified. It was also noted that the intent was to provide opportunities for students, not obligations. • Focus groups to review the supervisor-student agreement had just concluded. Feedback from students was very positive. It was noted that newer supervisors found the form to be most helpful. • DGS noted that the draft Code of Conduct for Supervisors and Research Students had been shared with the committee and asked that all members share the document with colleagues. It was noted that all feedback would be welcome. It was noted that this would be the first time the university had a code of conduct of this kind. • DGS noted that there was a proposal to clarify the structure of the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies to make information and contact points more clearly accessible.
B.4	<p>Update and discussion on Laidlaw Library Helen Shenton, College Librarian</p> <p>Due to time constraints, it was agreed to hold this item to a later date.</p>
Section C – Items for Noting	
C.1	<p>Items for Noting No items for noting.</p>
C.2	<p>Items for future discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOR noted that there was currently major recruitment into Trinity Research. The committee would receive a full update in September to give an overview of the new structures and supports in the unit. • The Open Scholarship sub-group would present an update in June
C.3	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee was reminded that the Postdoc Academy was now active with a meeting organised for next week with the reps. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Meeting concluded.</i></p>