

**The University of Dublin
Trinity College**

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

**11:00, Tuesday, 9th September 2025
Boardroom, Trinity Business School**

MINUTES

Prof. Sinéad Ryan (Chair); Prof. Brian Broderick; Prof. Padraic Fallon; Prof. Catherine Welch; Prof. Nicole Grimes; Prof. Joanne Banks; Prof. Clare Clarke; Prof. Lindsey Earner-Byrne; Prof. James Hanrahan; Prof. Mary Rogan; Prof. Valentina Colasanti; Prof. Sonia Bishop; Prof. Carol Newman; Prof. Nicola Carr; Prof. Benjamin Wold; Prof. Tomás Ryan; Prof. Marco Ruffini; Prof. Bidisha Ghosh; Prof. Andrei Parnachev; Prof. Susan Murphy; Prof. Ortwin Hess; Prof. Sarah Doyle; Prof. Eilish Burke; Prof. Anne Marie Healy; Prof. Ed Lavelle; Prof. Patrick Geoghegan; Prof. Eoin O'Sullivan; Prof. Martine Smith.

In attendance: Audrey Crosbie; Dr Sally Smith; Tadhg Caffrey; Doris Alexander; Emma Treacy Matunga; Dr Geoff Bradley; Helen Shenton; Michael Reilly; Dr Jennifer Daly.

Apologies: Prof. Mathias Senge; Prof. Frank Wellmer; Dr Fiona Smyth; Prof. Mark Little; Dr Michelle Olmstead; Vincent Coole; Prof. Joseph Roche.

Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval	
A.1	Minutes Minutes from the previous meeting in June were approved as circulated.
A.2	Matters Arising from the Minutes DOR noted that any matters arising would be addressed during the meeting.
A.3	Terms of Reference Amendments to titles were the only proposed changes to the terms of reference for the Research Committee. Amendments were approved as circulated.
Section B - Items for Discussion Only	
B.1	Introduction to the Research Committee Dean of Research DOR presented a brief overview of the remit and activities of the committee ahead of the new academic year.
B.2	Dean of Research Update Dean of Research The committee noted the appointment of Prof. Ed Lavelle as the Academic Director of TBSI. Funding news over the summer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr John Kennedy, Prof. Wolfgang Schmitt, and Matthew Chersich secured Environmental Protection Agency funding for research to address climate challenges.• A team of researchers at Learnovate received €500,000 in funding to develop an AI-enabled platform to help teachers create assessments and provide formative feedback to learners.

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- Four Trinity researchers secured awards worth a combined total of €2.57 million under Research Ireland's Pathway funding programme: Deirdre Foley a Research Fellow in History; Niamh Ryan a Senior Research Fellow in Psychiatry; Marco Rosario Capodiferro, Research Fellow, Genetics; Dunzhu Li, Visiting Research Fellow, CRANN.
- Professor in Political Science Thomas Chadeaux was one of 150 new ERC Proof of Concept winners across Europe and one of only two in Ireland in the most recent round.
- Researchers from Trinity and Queen's University Belfast secured funding of approximately €3.7 million to establish a Living Observatory of Shared Languages and Identities on the Island of Ireland. The LIFELANGS project was announced as one of four that will be supported by the North-South Research Programme (NSRP), administered by the Higher Education Authority. DOR noted that this was one of four projects funded in a highly competitive call. It was also noted that discussions were ongoing with the HEA via the IUA as to how to increase the funding envelope for the programme.
- Dr Lara Cassidy has secured European Research Council (ERC) funding of €1.5 million to lead a new Starting Grant research project, LIFETIMES, which will utilise thousands of ancient and modern genomes to tell the story of three medieval Irish communities, whose burial grounds remained in use for almost a millennium.

DOR noted that the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute (TSJCI) has become the first and only cancer centre in Ireland to be accredited as a Comprehensive Cancer Centre. This prestigious award from the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (OECI) was the culmination of almost a decade's work by colleagues at St James's Hospital and Trinity. DOR noted the huge amount of work that went into achieving the accreditation and congratulated all involved.

DOR noted that the QS World University Rankings were announced after the last meeting of Research Committee; Trinity moved up to 75 in the world. DOR noted that while this was good news, it was important to acknowledge the volatility of rankings and that many factors that feed into them are outside the control of the university.

The appointment of Diarmuid O'Brien as the new CEO of Research Ireland was noted. DOR noted that he was taking time to meet with colleagues across the sector. DOR noted that it was hoped this appointment would see some stability in Research Ireland. It was noted that the research centre calls were moving to final interview stage. 14 proposals were shortlisted with Trinity leading 6 of those. It was noted that the Global Talent Initiative was launched and closed over the summer. Trinity submitted 34 expressions of interest from across all three faculties; 22 early career and 12 senior academic. DOR noted that approximately 150 proposals were submitted nationally but there was no further detail available as to the breakdown of those. The next deadline in the process would be October for full proposals but there had been no movement from Research Ireland on this yet. It was noted that RI and the Minister were still insistent on letters of offer going out by March 2026 which suggested that there would be no flexibility on the October deadline. DOR noted that it was not possible to commit to any kind of funding beyond the lifetime of an award at this stage as it was not known how many, if any, successful proposals Trinity might have. It was noted that 15 positions would be supported nationally through the programme. It was also noted that RI launched the Investigator Programme over the summer which replaced the SFI Frontiers and IRC Laureates schemes.

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	<p>DOR noted that the main update from DFHERIS was that there had been some discussion of a “new PRTL” with an announcement expected soon. It was expected that it would be composed of two strands: an institutional allocation similar to the HEREG funding, as well as a “shared advanced infrastructure” strand. No further information was available on the shared advanced infrastructure, but the DOR noted that infrastructure was being interpreted broadly and would also include technical support. DOR noted that the importance of a coordinated approach at a sectoral level had been discussed at the IUA. It was noted that the funding was expected to be €100 million per year for 5 years.</p> <p>DOR noted that Paul Johnston had been appointed as the new Director General of the IUA and would take up the role in November.</p> <p>It was noted that at an EU level, the Commissioner for Startups, Innovation and Research had recently stated that the new FP10 would be “dual use by default” which marked a significant shift from previous iterations of the Horizon programmes which have always been focused on civilian use. DOR noted that Trinity would need to consider what this means for the university and its policies. It was also noted that while the statement was made there was currently no legal basis for the shift. It was also noted that proposals for FP10 had been published and no versions mention this idea of dual-use by default. DOR also noted that it is expected that increased research funding would also be coming on stream via the European Defence Fund.</p> <p>DOR noted that the new College Strategic Plan had been submitted to HEA in July and would be officially launched in October. DOR advised the committee that the Provost had established a Strategic Plan Implementation Group. DOR flagged that more detailed updates would come to the committee once the implementation plan had been properly fleshed out. DOR also noted that the Living Research Excellence Strategy was still under review and would be refreshed in alignment with the new strategic plan.</p> <p>DOR noted the working group that had been established to assess some detail related to the OTMR policy had met once. It was noted that an update would be brought to the committee soon.</p>
<p>B.3</p>	<p>Update on Research Integrity Processes Prof. Padraic Fallon</p> <p>The committee was reminded that a 2021 audit by SFI produced a number of suggestions for integrity and misconduct processes in Trinity with some changes implemented as a result.</p> <p>The committee received an update on the revised processes. The importance of the Policy on Good Research Practice was emphasised as the point of reference for the academic community. DOR noted that updates to the policy would come to the committee for consideration and approval. The importance of raising and maintaining awareness of research integrity and good research practice was noted by the committee.</p> <p>In discussion with the committee it was noted that the Policy on Good Research Practice was due for review to incorporate recent developments particularly in relation to AI. It was noted that the Senior Lecturer was leading out on College’s approach to AI and any additions to the Policy on Good Research Practice would have to be cognisant of existing statements etc. It was also noted that the CA7000 module for PhD students</p>

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	required an update with the Dean of Graduate Studies noting that a refreshed module was expected to be in place for 2026/27.
Section C – Items for Noting	
C.1	Items for Noting
C.2	Items for future discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taskforce report: It was noted that at the last meeting in June the committee had been informed that the Taskforce’s report would be an agenda item at this meeting. DOR noted that Board had not met since then and had not had an opportunity to draft a memo outlining what was expected of the principal committees by way of discussion of the report and its recommendations. DOR noted that once Board had met to approve the minutes of the June meeting and had drafted a memo the report would be circulated for consideration.
C.3	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DOR reminded the committee that anyone interested in giving a “spotlight” presentation was welcome to volunteer.• The committee was reminded that European Researchers’ Night would take place on Friday, September 26th and all were welcome. It was also noted that the Postdoc Academy was hosting a welcome day for new and current postdocs earlier that week.• DOR noted that Ireland would hold the EU presidency in the latter half of 2026 so there would be an opportunity at institutional and national level to be involved in discussions, events etc.