

**The University of Dublin  
Trinity College**

**RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**11:00, Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
Neill Lecture Theatre, Trinity Long Room Hub**

**MINUTES**

Prof. Sinéad Ryan (Chair); Prof. Brian Broderick; Prof. Padraic Fallon; Prof. Joseph Roche; Prof. Nicole Grimes; Prof. Gavin Murphy; Prof. Philip Coleman; Prof. Lindsey Earner-Byrne; Prof. Valentina Colasanti; Prof. Carol Newman; Prof. Nicola Carr; Prof. Tomás Ryan; Prof. Marco Ruffini; Prof. Bidisha Ghosh; Prof. Frank Wellmer; Prof. Andrei Parnachev; Prof. Susan Murphy; Prof. Ortwin Hess; Prof. Sarah Doyle; Máire Brady; Prof. Anne Marie Healy; Prof. Ed Lavelle; Prof. Patrick Geoghegan; Prof. Eoin O’Sullivan; Dr Chris Keely; Prof. Martine Smith

*In attendance:* Dr Sally Smith; Dr Fiona Smyth; Doris Alexander; Elaine Sharkey; Emma Treacy Matunga; Dr Geoff Bradley; Helen Shenton; Michael Reilly; Dr Jennifer Daly

*Apologies:* Prof. Eilish Burke; Prof. Catherine Welch; Prof. Mark Little; Prof. Joanne Banks; Aoife Gleason; Prof. Mary Rogan; Prof. Benjamin Wold; Tadhg Caffrey; Sonia Bishop.

<b>Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval</b>	
<b>A.1</b>	<b>Minutes</b> Minutes from the meeting of December 2 <sup>nd</sup> were circulated in advance and approved.
<b>A.2</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOR noted that revisions to the policy on Trinity Research Institutes will be brought to the February meeting for approval.</li> </ul>
<b>Section B - Items for Discussion Only</b>	
<b>B.1</b>	<p><b>Spotlight: Trinity Centre for Social Innovation</b> Dr Gemma Donnelly Cox, Dr Graham Dwyer, Deniz Aksaray <i>Dr Donnelly Cox, Dr Dwyer, and Deniz Aksaray joined the meeting for this item.</i></p> <p>The committee received a detailed presentation on the work of the Centre, established in 2018 as a transdisciplinary initiative supporting Trinity Business School’s mission of advancing societal, environmental and economic value creation. Research areas include nature-based solutions, sustainability and resilience, sustainable finance, social entrepreneurship and philanthropy.</p> <p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSI operates an “umbrella” model enabling flexible participation across research, teaching, and engagement.</li> <li>• Current collaborations span Natural Sciences, CRANN/AMBER, Trinity Haus, the School of Law and TAP.</li> <li>• The CSI Hour Innovation Series will commence in late January.</li> <li>• Opportunities exist for broader engagement across Trinity, including Health Sciences, Civic Engagement, and STEM.</li> <li>• CSI works to maintain an Irish focus in projects that frequently carry European or global dimensions.</li> <li>• The Centre is exploring collaborations focused on civic life in cities, linked to an international partnership originally founded at Stanford.</li> <li>• Methodological clusters include finance, action research, and qualitative methods focused on hidden actors.</li> <li>• CSI plays a role in supporting efforts around decolonising knowledge and addressing structural issues at institutional level.</li> <li>• Appreciation was expressed to the Research Development Office for its support.</li> </ul> <p>The DOR thanked the presenters on behalf of the committee.</p>

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	<i>Dr Donnelly Cox, Dr Dwyer, and Deniz Aksaray left the meeting.</i>
<b>B.2</b>	<p><b>Serials Crisis and Open Scholarship</b> Christoph Schmidt-Supprian and Helen Shenton</p> <p>A discussion paper circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting outlined early considerations around shifting expenditure away from large e-journal packages and gold Open Access models.</p> <p>In discussion with the committee, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Library’s mission was to provide necessary knowledge resources while navigating evolving Open Access models. It was noted that publishers have repeatedly monetised OA innovations.</li> <li>• IReL negotiations have demonstrated both successes and constraints; capped OA elements in major agreements (e.g., Elsevier) are particularly problematic.</li> <li>• APC allocations for last year were exhausted by September 2025, generating significant concern among researchers.</li> <li>• The structural imbalance in publisher–university relationships was noted. The committee discussed past cancellations in Sweden and Germany, where favourable agreements were eventually reached.</li> <li>• Committee members raised issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The tension between taking collective action as a sector and the risk of harming researchers, particularly those at earlier stages of their careers who could be disproportionately impacted. The need to ensure the voices of early career researchers were included and considered in sectoral approaches was noted.</li> <li>○ The potential for EU-level coordinated action was discussed, as well as the importance of aligning with LERU and considering Ireland’s position ahead of the EU Presidency.</li> <li>○ Implications for niche journal access and mitigation strategies such as post-cancellation access clauses, inter-library loan systems, and individual article procurement.</li> <li>○ The need for a coherent institutional stance and acknowledgement of the exploitative dynamics of the current publishing ecosystem.</li> <li>○ Impacts on teaching and learning if journal access becomes restricted. Members of the committee noted that students might become dependent on unreliable sources should access to traditional sources of information be restricted.</li> <li>○ Members of the committee noted the implications for a review of research information systems as the industry standard platforms were also owned by the same commercial providers.</li> <li>○ Members of the committee also noted that not all publishers operate on the same business or operations model as large commercial publishers that make huge profits from academic publishing. Examples of journals that operate on models that only cover the costs of, for example, peer reviews, administration, and hosting on a suitable platform for publication were noted by the committee.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that further discussion would take place at Faculty Executives and other committees before returning to Research Committee with more concrete proposals.</p>
<b>B.3</b>	<p><b>Update from the Dean of Research</b> Prof. Sinéad Ryan</p> <p>Recent awards, announcements:</p>

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- Dr. Irina Kinchin (School of Medicine) has been awarded a Wellcome Career Development Award worth €4.6 million over eight years. This is a largest individual research fellowship in Ireland to date. Dr Kinchin will lead ‘Valuing Vanishing Voices: creating empowerment and inclusion in health economics’ a research programme that aims to transform how healthcare systems measure and value the quality of life of people living with dementia.
- Dr Tian Carey (School of Physics; AMBER) was awarded a Royal Society-Research Ireland University Research Fellowship. URFs provide salary costs and research expenses for up to eight years. Dr Carey will now grow his team and lead a project that will develop printed electronics using two-dimensional (2D) materials – specifically field-effect transistors (FETs) and circuits, which make up some of the fundamental building blocks of modern computing.
- The ABAIR project led by Prof. Ailbhe Ní Chasaide and Dr Neasa Ní Chiaráin in the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences has received €2million, over 5 years, from the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht. ABAIR focuses on developing a range of speech technologies and language facilities, providing them to the Irish-speaking community.
- Three researchers from Trinity College Dublin have secured highly competitive ERC Consolidator Grants. The awardees are Professor Mary Rogan (warm congratulations to MR from committee) and Dr Brian Barry from the School of Law and Dr Mark Ward from the School of Medicine. Consolidator Grants are valued at up to €2 million each over five years.
  - Professor Mary Rogan’s project entitled ‘DOLI: Dignity and the Deprivation of Liberty’ will explore how dignity is experienced by people living in prisons, psychiatric hospitals, and care homes for older people in three European countries (Ireland, Norway and Romania).
  - Dr Mark Ward, from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing, School of Medicine, will undertake a project entitled ‘*GLomol*: a global study of the macro- and individual-level causes and consequences of loneliness’.
  - Dr Brian Barry’s project is entitled ‘JUDGEASSIST: A framework for principled AI-assisted judicial decision-making’ and will examine the use of AI for assisting judicial decision-making, providing a robust, multidisciplinary response to the challenges and opportunities that arise.
  - DOR also noted that Mary, Brian, and Mark would note thanks to the RDO for the support in applying for these complex grants.
- Two Trinity-led mental health research projects received funding in a recent announcement by the HRB. Improving Outcomes for Children in Care will be led by Prof. David Hevey and Prof. Ben Butlin (Trinity College Dublin) with Robert O’Connor (Tusla Child and Family Agency). Understanding and Addressing Mental Health, Loneliness and Quality of Life in Older People Living with HIV in Ireland: A Pathway to Social Prescribing, is led by Dr Louise Brennan (Trinity College Dublin) and Professor David Robinson (St James’s Hospital Dublin).

INSPIRE: DOR advised the committee that there was no formal update since December; institutional allocation expected early 2026. It was anticipated that Phase 2 planning will require strategic consideration of institutional needs. DOR noted that there was an opportunity to invest in top-down research infrastructure over the next five years.

DOR also noted:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A refreshed Living Research Excellence Strategy would be presented to the committee once remaining school visits are completed.</li><li>• Updated analysis of Trinity’s research competitiveness and RSS alignment with sectoral best practice is underway.</li><li>• An update on the College Strategic Plan implementation would be provided at a future meeting.</li><li>• Guidelines for researchers on AI use are being drafted and will be brought to the committee.</li><li>• It was also noted that there had been no update on the Global Talent Initiative.</li><li>• DOR confirmed that the Research Ireland centres call results were still under embargo and had not been formally announced yet.</li></ul>
<b>Section C – Items for Noting</b>	
<b>C.1</b>	<b>Items for Noting</b>
<b>C.2</b>	<b>Items for future discussion</b>
<b>C.3</b>	<b>AOB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Next meeting of the committee in February will be at Portal in the Trinity Business School as the Boardroom is not available. Calendar invite will be updated with room details.</li></ul>