

The University of Dublin
Trinity College

RESEARCH COMMITTEE
11:00, Tuesday, 24 March 2026

Boardroom, Trinity Business School

MINUTES

Prof. Brian Broderick (Chair); Prof. Joseph Roche; Prof. Nicole Grimes; Prof. Joanne Banks; Prof. Lindsey Earner-Byrne; Prof. James Hanrahan; Prof. Mary Rogan; Prof. Sonia Bishop; Prof. Carol Newman; Prof. Nicola Carr; Prof. Benjamin Wold; Prof. Mathias Senge; Prof. Marco Ruffini; Prof. Bidisha Ghosh; Prof. Frank Wellmer; Prof. Andrei Parnachev; Prof. Susan Murphy; Prof. Ortwin Hess; Prof. Sarah Doyle; Prof. Eilish Burke; Prof. Ed Lavelle; Prof. Mark Little; Ciaran Conneely; Prof. Eoin O’Sullivan; Prof. Martine Smith; TRSA;

In attendance: Dr Fiona Smyth; Elaine Sharkey; Helen Shenton; Dr Jennifer Daly

Apologies: Prof. Sinéad Ryan; Michael Reilly; Prof. Pdraic Fallon; Chris Keely; Doris Alexander; Prof. Anne Marie Healy; Prof. Philip Coleman; Prof. Valentina Colasanti; Tadhg Caffrey; Dr Sally Smith; Prof. Patrick Geoghegan; Aoife Gleason; Emma Treacy Matunga

Section A – Items for Discussion and Approval	
A.1	Minutes Minutes of the February meeting were accepted as circulated.
A.2	Matters Arising from the Minutes
A.3	Appointment of new REPC Chair A memo was circulated in advance to propose the appointment of Professor Lina Zgaga as Chair of the REPC for a three-year term. The committee approved the appointment. The committee noted its thanks to Professor Richard Carson for his contribution during his term as Chair.
Section B - Items for Discussion Only	
B.1	Library Digital Preservation Policy <i>Helen Shenton, Librarian and College Archivist</i> The committee received a verbal update on the Library’s Digital Preservation Policy. During the presentation the following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is the first formal Digital Preservation Policy for the Library, clarifying what is in and out of scope.• Trinity holds responsibility by law for preservation of legal deposit content in perpetuity. A shared digital platform with the six legal deposit libraries is in development.• Trinity produces significant digital content itself, including the Virtual Trinity Library and digital archives (e.g., the Robert Fisk archive, spanning physical and digital material).• Trinity will assume responsibility for preserving the top layer of the TCD website; historically, this material has not been captured. The absence of national policy on archiving the Irish web domain was noted as an ongoing concern. In discussion with the committee, the following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In relation to the practicalities of how to preserve and manage this content, it was noted that Preservica is currently being piloted and offers an off-the-shelf

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	<p>solution. It was also noted that a dedicated staff member focused on digital preservation, but that an additional specialist would be required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was clarified that live research data is out of scope for the policy. • It may be possible in the future to include e-theses and remove the requirement for submission of hard copies. • Differences between UK and Irish legal deposit frameworks were noted; lack of legislation for Irish web archiving remains a “massive black hole” for contemporary history. <p>The Committee expressed support for continued progress and commended the work undertaken.</p>
B.2	<p>Update from the Associate Dean of Research <i>Prof. Brian Broderick</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that Research Ireland had recently published its strategic plan. It was also noted that RI was now moving to position itself as ‘more than a funder.’ • In relation to the INSPIRE programme, it was noted that call documents were still not forthcoming and there were no definite details to share about anything as yet. Members of the committee noted that in the absence of confirmed call documents and processes it was difficult to establish a definitive process to manage feedback and input into any necessary EOs. • It was confirmed that no additional information was available on the Global Talent Initiative beyond confirmation that interviews are underway. • Many members of the committee expressed displeasure with how the recent Pathways programme had been managed both in terms of how the internal review was arranged, timelines to complete reviews, and the extremely strict limits on number of applicants that could go forward to Research Ireland. The committee was advised that Research Ireland imposed the nomination caps on each institution, essentially pushing part of the peer review process back on to institutions. It was noted that RI appears to be struggling with the burden of peer review. Members of the committee noted that programmes like this should be externally reviewed as best practice. • Action: Members of the committee were asked to send feedback on the Pathways process to Jennifer Daly for collation as part of a review of how these calls are internally organised. • The Dean of Graduate Studies noted that she had received a number of enquiries recently in relation to the status of self-funded PhDs at Trinity. DGS confirmed emphatically that Trinity is not withdrawing support for self-funded PhDs. It was noted that minimum stipend requirements attached to internally funded PhDs may be causing confusion in this regard, but self-funded PhDs continue to be welcome to apply and proceed at Trinity and no plans are under consideration to change this.
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"> • Draft of refreshed Living Research Excellence Strategy will be circulated to the committee for comment before being presented for discussion and approval at June meeting

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy on Trinity Research Institutes will come back to the committee for approval before the end of this academic year• Open Scholarship sub-committee will provide an update to the committee at the May meeting.• It was noted that the agendas for the remaining meetings in this academic year were already mostly full so there would be very little capacity for additional items unless something urgent arises.
C.3	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Researchers' Night 2026-27: the committee was advised that Trinity's proposal was not funded in this call. It was noted that it was favourably reviewed and was on the reserve list but it was not expected that the list would be activated. As the proposal was favourably reviewed, it can be classed as an 'associated event' and still be included in the EU promotions, but as no funding would be available ERN events in Trinity would be significantly scaled back as a result. Options were being explored for what alternative plans could like and the committee was encouraged to share any ideas with Jennifer Daly.