

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Senate

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Matters for note by Senate arising from the meeting of Research Committee on 25 November 2021

1. Relationship between CITY College, Thessaloniki, and the University of York

- (a) The Committee welcomed the CITY College Vice-President for Research and Innovation. CITY College was in the process of developing a research strategy, and it was intended that this aligned with that of York. The institution was focused on responding to regional and global challenges, building knowledge capacity, and attracting talented researchers at all levels. It was noted that CITY College had been successful with applications for funded research.
- (b) CITY College was keen to foster collaborative thinking and research with colleagues from the University of York, and a York Europe Campus Strategy Group was in place to support these efforts. It was recognised that an environment of collaboration across the two institutions would need to be developed in a 'bottom-up' manner. CITY College encouraged colleagues from York to work with and in the region of South-East Europe, and it was recognised that CITY could offer a base to do so.

2. Institutional Statement on Responsible Research and Innovation

- (a) The Committee approved the draft Institutional Statement on Responsible Research and Innovation. The Statement would provide a base text for researchers to respond to funding requirements relating to responsible research and innovation. Variation across faculties and disciplines was noted, however the Statement was in alignment with goals arising from the Knowledge Exchange Concordat (KEC) and University values as articulated by the University Strategy.
- (b) The current priority was to make the Statement available online, however following this supporting case studies and training opportunities would be developed. It was recognised that further work was needed to ensure RRI was embedded within the culture of the University.

3. Update from the new Director of Library and Archives

- (a) Progress continued in regards to Open Access requirements, and it was heartening to see the cultural change within the research community. York remained an outlier within the Russell Group due to the lack of a central fund for Open Access publishing at the University; the potential risk of this was noted. The Open Access team continued to work with Departmental Research Committees to prepare for the launch of the UKRI Open Access policy in April 2022. National publisher negotiations were underway.
- (b) A paper would be prepared concerning the background to current discussions around the UK Scholarship Communications Licence, which would involve outlining possible options for committee consideration.

4. Five-year forecast procedure from 2022/23

The plans for the forecast process did not need to formally return to URC for approval, however it was **acknowledged** that input and involvement from the Committee would be useful. The process would be initiated in early-2022. A sub-group of Planning Committee had been established to consider the future of Faculty operating margins.

5. Draft of the 2021-2022 PURE Development Plan

- (a) The Committee approved the draft PURE Development Plan, with the acknowledgement that further work was needed in this area to ensure key aspects were fully developed and supported. The plan presented to the Committee focused on priorities of operational necessity. This was due to the imminent arrival of Andrew Taylor (incoming-Head of PIP), who would likely wish to review this area once in post. Concerns about the usability of PURE, raised by the Committee, were to be considered also as part of the post-REF review.

- (b) It was acknowledged that there was not enough expertise on such systems within the sector to meet the demand for it at a national level. The issue could be pushed by URC, but it was not included on the PURE development plan as it would not be achievable within the year. Such efforts would also need to be aligned with work on research culture.

6. Other Business

- (a) Progress was being made in the regional and business engagement space, and this was noted in regards to corporate training agreements and a raised profile for the BioYorkshire initiative. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The success of the Streetlife Project was noted. T [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The project would involve developing a series of community and heritage spaces to rejuvenate the area of Coney Street in the centre of York, combining the expertise of academic research and city partners and generating new research in the process.
- (b) Bob Hide, Chief Electronics Technician from the Department of Physics, had been awarded the Professor Lord Bhattacharyya Lifetime Achievement Award at the Higher Education Technician Summit, which is part of the Papin Prizes for technical excellence and innovation in higher education and research. Further, University of York technicians were shortlisted for 'Team of the Year', in part due to their role in the national response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee recognised these achievements and congratulated colleagues for their success.
- (c) Faculty planning and strategy meetings were in progress, and a key takeaway from these was a focus on 'public good' in research. It was clarified that interdisciplinary research and the work of Research Theme Champions was embedded within Faculty business.
- (d) The University KEC submission had received positive feedback, with a few areas for improvement noted. Input from colleagues would be sought as appropriate. It was clarified that a longer timescale for completion had been chosen in consideration of the workload faced by colleagues. This was endorsed by the Committee.
- (e) The Committee received an update from the Office of Philanthropic Partnerships and Alumni (OPPA), and noted that interactions between philanthropy and research had increased over the last year, in line with a heightened awareness of the need for alternative sources of funding. There was scope for further training in this area. The new campus at CITY College, Thessaloniki, was a useful base from which to engage with alumni based in South-East Europe.
- (f) The Committee considered a report on European Funding, the first received since January 2020, after which there had been some disruption due to Brexit and the C-19 pandemic. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The Committee acknowledged the importance of retaining long-term ambition. The non-monetary value of European funding was emphasised, for example the loss of the wider academic community and mobility this provided. A focus on reconnecting with former partners could also kickstart further work.