Special Session on SSH and Interdisciplinary Research in EU Research

Interdisciplinary Futures: *Open the Social Sciences* 20 Years Later
Lisbon, Portugal 19-20 January 2017

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January 2017
Trinity College Dublin
Founded in 1592

Active participant in all EU Framework Programmes

– 19th out of 1337 education institutes that secured H2020 funding

– 29th out of 14,804 organisations drawing down H2020 funding (Ecorda Data October 2016)

– Remain committed to the EU

– Close collaboration with the UK

Strongly advocating Interdisciplinarity and promoting the integration of SSH

Institutional members of LERU, EARMA, COIMBRA

National context – H2020 target of €1.25bn,
Trinity College target of €154m
Expectation that Horizon 2020 as an exemplary programme should drive IDR/SSH integration ...BUT

- LERU paper shows there are many stakeholders – an integrated strategy of people and structures to help lower the obstacles
- LERU identify 3 targets for IDR – University governance, funding and evaluation and publication and valorisation
- All Stakeholders need to provide incentives - rewards

HOWEVER
IDR does not necessarily mean SSH integration

**Questions:** How do the LERU recommendations for IDR map with the drive for SSH integration? - Does SSH integration need any additional specific supports? The benefit of IDR is understood – is the value of SSH integration understood? What is the difference between integration and inclusion?
Irish Research Council: Consultation on SSH Integration
- What are the top three measures that would improve Ireland’s performance on embedding AHSS in successful proposals in H2020 – Good Consensus with LERU recommendations

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<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support programme for AHSS embedding within institution</td>
<td>69.94% 114</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stronger emphasis on AHSS embedding and/or interdisciplinary research by institutional leaders</td>
<td>50.92% 83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater emphasis on structured opportunities for IDR in postgraduate research education</td>
<td>35.58% 58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater emphasis on challenge-based approaches within national funding schemes</td>
<td>34.97% 57</td>
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<tr>
<td>National prize(s) for IDR</td>
<td>25.15% 41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target-setting for AHSS embedding by institutions</td>
<td>20.86% 34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritisation of AHSS embedding within higher education system performance framework</td>
<td>20.86% 34</td>
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Total Respondents: 163
1\textsuperscript{st} Target: University governance and YOU

University governance WITH the support of researchers at all career levels to drive the change - Both Top Down AND Bottom UP needed

• To establish IDR as a core business of the University, to identify and support priority areas

• YOU have to be willing to participate, to drive change, to act as evaluators, to suggest relevant activities, to get on committees, to champion centres/institutes, to talk to funding agencies and politicians, to story tell your successes.

• YOU means management AND researcher AND administrative support

Questions:

If University governance for IDR is supported and fostered – will this automatically foster SSH integration?

What LERU IDR recommendations are the most important in the context of achieving SSH integration?
Our strategy will continue to focus on developing interdisciplinary research and scholarship of international significance ...secured by academic, administrative and support staff capable of delivering our mission
Research Active Themes
underwent international review to prioritise
1st Target contd - Education

19 million students across European Universities – our future professionals and innovation and sustainable development leaders

Need:

• Core disciplinary knowledge balanced with interdisciplinary courses
• to foster problem solving approach
• Experience in interdisciplinary teams and exposure to concepts
• Doctoral IDR training modules
• Value the contribution of Schools and Departments

Questions: Will research Funding help drive doctoral IDR - Will students require IDR provisioning and how can such courses specifically address SSH inclusion – How will Impact of employability skills requirements affect SSH, How to encourage IDR whilst not undermining the development of disciplines against context of limited resourcing
Trinity College and Education

- The Trinity Education Project – curriculum renewal, assessment, development and delivery of cross-disciplinary modules informed by graduate employability attributes
- Masters and PhDs are meant to ‘scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them’
- Many PhDs are conducted through research projects – many IDR in nature
- Trinity Employability award – first of its kind in Ireland – problem solving, critical thinking – 3rd year undergrads – being piloted
- Bridge 21 – Transition year students (2nd level education) - essential life skills, including communication, problem solving, and project planning- all critical components for a successful knowledge-based economy.

Question: STEM embedding/appreciation starts at second level – what about SSH appreciation?
Second Target: Evaluating and funding IDR

At National and European levels

Key: Earmarked Funds for IDR, support high risk IDR, develop transdisciplinary funding opportunities, establish explicit criteria for evaluation ex ante and post ante, consider time needed, IDR itself needs further research.

Questions:

Does having a mature well funded national system of support for SSH disciplines effect the development of IDR and/or SSH integration.

Does having a mature well funded national system of support for IDR and/or SSH integration affect the ability to be competitive at international level.

Irish Social Science Platform perspective -Nationally the absence of stable and significant levels of funding for SSH PIs has meant that many potential co-ordinators (and partners) feel they do not have the requisite experience (in project and financial management) to be competitive in Horizon 2020 funding programmes.

If IDR itself needs further research then whose role is it to fund this?
Across Europe - In terms of countries represented, the SSH partners come predominantly from the EU-15 Member States.

- **United Kingdom (16%), (11%)**
- **Germany (10%), (10%)**
- **Netherlands (9%), (5%)**
- **Italy (8%), (10%)**
- **Belgium (7%), (8%)**
- **Spain (7%), (8%)** and **France (7%), (6%)**

Combined, the top seven countries account for 64%/57% of the SSH partners.

In contrast, only 4 of the EU13 represented in the top 20 countries (20 share 85%) – SSH affiliation

8 countries account for 89% of the SSH coordinators and none are from the EU13.

**Question:** How do we promote the integration of SSH across all EU MS, What effect will Brexit have on SSH integration? (top SSH coordinator)
2014 - 2015 Commission Monitoring of SSH Integration
Uneven Integration...

Across Projects – 40% in 2014 and 57% in 2015 of projects funded under topics flagged for SSH show good integration of SSH in terms of share of partners, budget allocated to them, inclusion of explicit and purposeful contributions, and variety of disciplines involved – BUT 21% (threshold of 10%) had NONE compared to 28% in 2014

Without SC6 – situation worsens

AND 29% in 2014 and 16% in 2015 of the projects funded under topics flagged for SSH had no SSH partners

Across disciplines

9% SSH expertise

- Project manag

- Communications
More investigation needed

- Human factors drive our society but only 5% of the total WP 2015 for LEIT and SCs went to SSH – reduces to just 4% excluding SC6 from total budget

- Start further upstream – Who frames the research/Topic for SSH inclusion.

- Should funders do more to bring disciplines together?

- How many applications with SSH inclusion were received - how many excellent*?

- SSH flagged in the call topic versus IDR in the evaluation criteria – Should we have bonus marks for IDR/SSH?

- Who should judge IDR/SSH integration Management/Implementation of proposals

- 2 stage proposals – often only 2 evaluators stage 1 – need more to properly consider IDR/SSH inclusion

- Examine IDR/SSH embedding policy and practice in other jurisdictions

* Not withstanding that refinement of definition of excellence is needed for IDR/SSH inclusion
TRiSS – Trinity Research in Social Sciences

Example of The SSH community reaching out

TRiSS currently represents 14 disciplines involved in social science research across 8 different schools.

Communicating social science research to key stakeholders nationally and internationally - highlights the contribution of social science to current public issues.

A visiting scholars programme, a research fellow programme to support academics conducting interdisciplinary research and a planned summer school programme.

Promoting collaboration - a single one-stop-shop for academics seeking to collaborate with social science researchers (either within or outside College).

Question: To what extent does SSH promote itself and provide such mechanisms for collaboration – should the community do more, should funders do more?
Situation in Horizon 2020

- **Evaluator** – How many of you are registered as evaluators?
- **Interim Evaluation of H2020** – How many of you responded?
- **What are you as the SSH community doing to influence the agenda setting** - if not you then who?
Publication and Valorisation

• Different disciplines – different cultures of generating impact – unidimensional measures for IDR won’t work

• Is the lack of high impact interdisciplinary journals an issue or is it that outputs are not always high quality enough to channel via disciplinary journals – time to impact – too early and it is broad and shallow? Move from high impact Journal to the impact of your paper (San Francisco Declaration)

• Check your paper is working for you – where are your citations coming from. A need for alternative metrics that measure outputs other than citations- policy, social media engagement

• More Interdisciplinary themes in more journals

• Properly Open access can help researchers engage in IDR by acting as an attractor
Alternative metrics for impact of interdisciplinarity:

tracking news media, social media, wikipedia references, policy paper references and more.

Image source: http://www.wellesley.edu/lts/research/projects/emergingtech/altmetrics

- Don’t forget Your ORCID ID.
- Open Access- to publications AND data (where possible).
Where to from here: H2020 and beyond

- What about a SSH Flagship? ‘Europe in the world’ - as suggested by LERU – combination of bottom up and top down.
- FP9 – Societal challenges in UN Sustainable development goals
- Should bottom up IDR be evaluated differently to top down?
- What about the concept of Sister Projects- systematic companion research by both the hard and the social sciences – already under way in some digital fields
Thank you
Background slides
17 SDGs, 169 targets – 3000 connections........The challenges we face are fundamentally Human in nature – understanding human behaviour is critical. The more complicated the more the need for IDR

Trinity College Dublin, The University of Dublin
## Irish Research Environment - Innovation 2020

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<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>LEAD RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
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<td><strong>2.8</strong> Promote inter-disciplinary research</td>
<td>Research funders will review their programmes to ensure that they incentivise and reward interdisciplinary collaboration.</td>
<td>Research funders</td>
<td>2016 - 2020</td>
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| 4.3 | Address global and national societal challenges | Explore potential for competitive funding mechanism aimed at stimulating solutions-driven collaborations; engage the civic community and enterprise in identifying the grand challenges. | All Government departments and agencies | 2016 - 2020 |

| 4.4 | Strengthen public policy and societal impact | Target supports to cultivate interdisciplinary research; increase the engagement of public entities and civic society in public policy and societal challenge-based research. | IRC, HRB | 2016 - 2020 |
Trinity Education Project

- Balance between depth and **breadth**
  - Trinity Electives
  - Non-core Modules (Approved Modules)
  - Co-& Extra Curriculum
  - Internships
  - Global exchanges

Capstone/Independent piece of work across all programmes

- Underpinned by curriculum principles informed by Graduate Attributes

- Structured but flexible pathway choice for students
Number of cross-school co-authored publications in TCD per school*.

Number of TCD Schools who have NOT co-authored a paper with at least one other TCD school = ZERO

Purple - Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences
Blue – Engineering, Mathematics, Sciences
Green – Health Sciences

*Source: TCD RSS
Thank you