

**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board
held on Friday, 23 September 2022 at Grattan House, 67-72 Lower Mount Street,
Dublin 2.**

Present: Prof B Hannigan (Chairperson)
Dr T Cunningham
Prof S Donnelly (on Zoom)
Prof T Fahey
Prof M Harding (on Zoom) – until the end of item 8
Dr J Ling (on Zoom)
Prof C Normand
Dr C Saidlear

Apologies: Dr T McWade

In attendance: Dr M O’Driscoll, Chief Executive Officer
Ms C Cronin, Board Secretary and Head of Governance
Dr T Maguire, Director of Research Strategy and Funding, attended for items 6, 9 and 10.
Dr A. Montessanti, Programme Manager Investigator-led Grants, Research Careers and Enablers, attended for item 6 and 9a)
Dr A Cody, attended for items, Head of Investigator-Led Grants, Research Careers and Enablers, attended for items 6 and 9a)
Dr C Creely attended for item 9b)
Ms O Ward, Head of Research and Innovation Infrastructures, attended for items 9(b) and 10
Dr Jean Long Evidence Centre Business Lead, and Dr Kathryn Lambe, Research Officer, Evidence Centre attended for item 11
Mr M Morgan, Director of Corporate Operations and Mr D Murphy, Finance Manager, attended for item 12.

1. Conflict of Interest

Dr Cliona Saidlear, Prof Mairead Harding and Prof Tom Fahey had declared that the matter of the approval to issue a call for Secondary Data Analysis Projects 2023 fell within the interest of their wider communities. The Chairperson advised that these members of the Board should remain during

the discussion of this item but should not put forward any proposals in relation to the papers presented.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 1 July 2022 were approved.

3. Action points from previous meetings

The Chairperson reported that all of the action points arising from previous meetings had been completed

4. CEO's Report

PhD Stipend

The CEO informed the Board that the matter of the current level of the PhD stipend had been under discussion amongst the research funding agencies and that concern had been expressed that the stipend was not adequate in light of increasing rents, the cost-of-living crisis, and inflation. She said that the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research and Science, may wish to coordinate a multi-agency, national approach to the issue and seek funding through the estimates process.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate for the HRB to make a 'one-off' payment to assist PhD students until such time as a national solution is agreed.

Other matters

The CEO also reported on:

- Estimates process
- Beyond 1 million genome project
- Fulbright – new MOU
- Health Information Bill and other developments
- Research Integrity
- Disposal of Baggot Street
- Updates from around the organisation
 - NPIRS
 - TILDA
 - Call launched for Impact Award
 - Mental Health Research and 'Sharing the Vision'
 - Changes to the work programme of the Evidence Centre
 - National Drugs Forum 2022
 - HRB Media Coverage
 - HRB Conference
- Awards made under delegated authority

5. Outline of Agenda for Board Strategy Day

The Board considered a draft agenda for its annual Strategy Day on Friday 11 November 2023. It was agreed that the discussion on the matter of the Implementation of the HSE's Action Plan for Health Research (2019–2029) and implications for the HRB's strategy should include a briefing on the outcome of a preliminary meeting between representatives of the Board of the HSE and the Board of the HRB scheduled to take place on 29th September 2022.

6. Health Research Careers Framework

Dr Montesanti presented an overview of the HRB's health research careers framework. The benefits of completing an evaluation of the HRB's investment in research careers was discussed and it was agreed that meetings with the Universities was an appropriate point at which to start the process to address the many institutional barriers to career progression.

It was agreed that the Board should consider the matter of research careers on a regular basis.

7. Programme of Work for the Board and Listed Conflicts of Interest

The Board noted the programme of work for the remainder of 2022 and the listed conflicts of interest.

8. HRB Service Plan 2022 – Status Report as at 30 June 2022

The Board noted the report on status of HRB's Service Plan for 2022 as at 30 June 2022 and approved its submission to the Department of Health's Research Services and Policy Unit as the progress report on the annual Performance Delivery Agreement

9. Approval to issue calls

a) Post-Doctoral Fellowships 2023

The Board approved the simultaneous announcement of a call for two HRB Post-doctoral Fellowship schemes to fund in the region of 16 fellows. The Schemes approved were 'Applying Research into Policy & Practice' (ARPP) and 'Clinician Scientist Fellowships' (CSF).

b) Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP) 2023

The Board approved the issuing of a call for the Secondary Data Analysis Projects (SDAP) to support 8-10 awards between 2023 and 2024.

10. Other Research Funding Matters

HRB Policy for Change of Principal Investigator

The Board noted the HRB Policy for change of Principal Investigator and a report on the outcome of implementing this policy in response to a recent request.

11. Evidence Reviews

Impact of community water fluoridation on systemic health excluding oral health.

The Board reviewed the process to prepare the evidence review entitled the Impact of community water fluoridation on systemic health excluding oral health, including the peer review comments and authors' responses, and agreed that it should go forward for publication.

12. Corporate reporting

HRB Management Accounts to 31 August 2022

The Board noted the Management Accounts for the eight months ended 31 August 2022 and the revised forecast of year end outturn.

Procurement Activity Report

The Board noted a report on the following procurement activity:

- I. Between the period 01 June 2022 to 31 July 2022
 - a. Purchase Orders raised with a value more than €20,000
 - b. Contracts awarded between €25,000 and €75,000 (ex VAT)
 - c. Contracts approved by the Board more than €75,000 (ex VAT)
 - d. Authorised exceptions to the competitive procurement guidelines
- II. Between period 01 January 2022 to 31 July 2022
 - e. Supplier expenditure more than €25,000

Contracts valued at in excess of €75,000

The Board approved the award of a 36-month contract to Allen Creative for the provision of design and print services for the HRB with an option to extend by twelve months. The maximum value of this contract is €320,000 excluding VAT.

13. Other governance matters

HRB Board and Committee meeting dates 2023


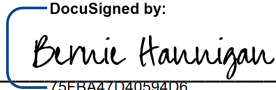
The Board agreed that two of the meetings of the HRB Audit and Risk Committee should take place on the same day as a meeting of the Board, and subject to that change, agreed a schedule of meetings for 2023.

14. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was set for Thursday 10 November, to be followed on by the Board's Annual Strategy Day on Friday 11 November 2022.

15. Executive Session of the Board

No decisions were taken during the executive session of the Board.

Signed:  
Prof Bernie Hannigan (Chairperson)