



ANU E-Research Task Force Report

Executive Summary

The e-Research Task Force has considered a range of issues related to its terms of reference, carried out a survey of e-Research stakeholders across the ANU and taken account of external drivers such as NCRIS, APAC and the national e-Research agenda. This report outlines the findings of the Task Force in a series of recommendations. The role of ICT-based methods and advanced computing in research in recent years (so called e-Research) has become all pervading, affecting every discipline, particularly in the area of data. ANU is not adequately responding as an institution to this changing environment and needs to better harness and coordinate its resources to meet current and future demands. The Task Force's key recommendations relate to an urgent need for ANU to establish an overarching cross-campus e-Research Centre, built around an expanded ANUSF as the Central resource. Such an entity would not be an academic Centre per se but would link e-Research activities in the Central resource with computing-intensive research in the Colleges. The Centre needs a full time Director and a budget that allows existing activities to be consolidated and a range of important new initiatives to be established. This will allow ANU to adequately respond to both internal and external e-Research drivers. The key recommendations of the Task Force are:

- 1. The ANU establish, as a matter of urgency, a cohesive cross-campus e-Research Centre, with a full-time Director, that links the entire ANU e-Research community in the Colleges with the central ANU computational resources and research data management (within ANUSF). This coordinating entity will not be an Academic Centre but will be the 'engine' to drive the e-Research agenda and provide a visible focus, so that the ANU can respond in a timely and coordinated way to both internal needs and external opportunities.*
- 2. ANU puts in place an appropriate Centre Governance structure and e-Research policy, including processes and mechanisms for engagement to support it, and to allocate appropriate resources to provide both visibility (internal and external) of ANU's e-Research agenda and to allow ANU's e-Research to flourish.*
- 3. The Advanced IT Advisory Committee (AITAC) should evolve into a cross-campus e-Research Steering and Policy Committee with a considerably broader role than the existing AITAC.*
- 4. New resources should be provided to establish and sustain the Centre, to seed (incubate) new projects for support of common advanced computing infrastructure and methods in research that involve high performance computation and modelling, data, visualisation and support for structural changes that arise from e-Research opportunities. Furthermore, the provision of enhanced resources should facilitate adequate support of growing e-Research needs, especially those that can be supported by a common infrastructure. The Task Force proposes a new recurrent allocation of around \$1.5million per annum.*
- 5. Procedures must be established to provide an enabling environment which encourages full engagement of the Colleges with the Centre, particularly with the Central e-Research resources.*

6. *That the ANU builds upon the successful ANUSF as the central resource for e-Research services and provides an appropriate career structure for Centre staff that recognises that most staff straddle academic and general staff classifications.*
7. *That the e-Research Steering and Policy Committee would be the appropriate group to develop the mechanisms that provide timely and visible engagement with the whole of ANU e-Research community as well as intersections with NCRIS, national e-Research agendas, and other bodies such as APAC.*
8. *That the ANU establish, as a priority, a working party to investigate present and future needs of e-Education and impacts of e-Research methods on undergraduate education.*