

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE
Meeting No. 3, 2008

Meeting No. 3, 2008 of the University Research Committee was held on Thursday 24 July 2008 at 9.30 am in the Ross Hohnen Room of the Chancelry.

Present: Professor Cram, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair); Professor Stanton; Professor Thomas; Professor Byrne (for Professor Williams); Professor Gatenby; Dr Golley; Professor Hill; Dr Jones; Ms Kelly; Professor Kennedy; Dr McMahon; Professor Makkai; Ms Pabian; Professor Rubenstein; Professor Smith; Mr Smyth; Professor Stoljar; and Professor White.

By invitation: Dr Bain; Mr Brown; and Professor Carroll.

In attendance: Ms Bruce

Disclosure of Pecuniary or Material Personal Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary or material personal interest in matters listed on the agenda.

Use of Inside Information or Position

Under sections 24 and 25 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, a member of the University Research Committee must not make improper use of his or her position or of inside information to gain an advantage for himself or herself or to cause detriment to the University or to another person.

MINUTES

PART 1: PROCEDURAL ITEMS

ITEM 1. MINUTES

The minutes of Meeting No. 2, 2008 of the University Research Committee (379/2008) held on 1 May 2008 were confirmed (published at http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/060PP_Research/meetings.asp)

ITEM 2. MATTERS ARISING

ITEM 3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

3.1 Apologies were received from Professor Deane, Professor Kirk, Ms Kulhanek, Professor Marsh, Professor Merlan and Professor Williams.

3.2 Announcements

The Committee noted the following changes to the membership:
ANU CASS representative (Social Sciences): Professor David Marsh
ANU CASS representative (Humanities): Professor Toni Makkai
ANU CECS representative: Professor Rod Kennedy
ANU CoL representative: Professor Kim Rubenstein for Semester II, 2008
General Staff representative: Ms Kathrin Kulhanek; Alt: Ms Judith Pabian

3.3 Confidential Items

There were no confidential items. The following attended as observers: Dr Dan, Ms Payne, and Dr Steinhauser.

PART 2: REPORTS AND POLICY MATTERS

ITEM 4. REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Committee noted the report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and comments arising in discussion:

- **Budget 2008-09:**

Higher Education 2020 Newsletter at

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/2020_newsletter/default.htm#Newsletter_Issue_02_\(May_2008\)](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/2020_newsletter/default.htm#Newsletter_Issue_02_(May_2008))

Better Universities Renewal Funding (\$500m): ANU's grant of \$24m would be allocated by the Vice-Chancellor to benefit education and research, roughly in proportion to the way it was calculated.

APAs: The value of awards had not been raised and the Government had opted consistent with its election commitment to increase numbers by more than double by 2010. International students were now eligible for direct offers. In the likely event that the demand from domestic students falls short of available places, the cohort of international students would be likely to increase and institutions would need to address the issue of payment of tuition fees.

Education Investment Fund: This comprises \$6b from the former HEEF and \$5b from the 2007-08 and 2008-09 budgets. The broadening to include VET suggested a lesser concentration on research which may impact on ANU. The Science building project would be the main project in ANU's HEEF bid.

- **Australian Research Council**

Linkage Projects: Round 2 for funding commencing in 2008 - Statistics at http://www.arc.gov.au/rtf/LP08_R2/LP08_Rd2_attachment.rtf

ANU's performance in the round was pleasing with eight proposals having been funded (\$2,264,528). The cap of \$2m per application project introduced for the 2009 round should favour disciplines requiring smaller grants such as the social sciences at ANU and would possibly generate strong competition from institutions packaging research projects in smaller lots.

Review of Centres of Excellence: The last of the ARC's review cycle were taking place including two in which ANU has an involvement. The next selection round would be opened in 2009 for funding to commence in 2010.

- **Reviews**

National Innovation System Review: The green paper from the Review being chaired by Dr Terry Cutler was expected soon. Workshops had been held at ANU feeding into the Review. The ANU is assisting a project to determine the full cost of research items. It is hoped that an outcome could be a revision of the RIBG rate from 20cents to 60cents per dollar and similarly for NHMRC grants. A further question will relate to whether RIBG should be attached to grants or allocated to the institution to strategically target research projects. ANU current allocation model appears to work well and recognises and supports the research areas generating the grants.

NCRIS Roadmap - Exposure Draft: ANU's responses were identified, the discussion paper from the Review had been submitted. Some issues related to a growing divergence between NCRIS and the Government on certain issues, such as mission-based compacts; accessing NCRIS funds; and that the "hub and spoke" model. The proposed E-research Pty Ltd had not been supported by ANU, for reasons including concerns about the consequences of imposing fees to access archived data.

- **ANU Reviews**
 - Review of Biosciences**
(http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Executive/070PP_Reports_and_Papers/index.asp)
A major re-organisation has been recommended. The new ANU College of Medicine, Biology and Environment would consist of JCSMR, the School of Biology, the Fenner School of Environment and Society and the School of Health and Psychological Science. Subject to Council approval in July, the new arrangements would become fully effective following a period of transition, from 1 January 2009. The recruitment/appointment of Deans and Directors would be announced shortly.
 - Review of Chemistry:**
(http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Executive/070PP_Reports_and_Papers/index.asp)
 - ANU CAP Review:** The terms of reference to be considered by Council in July proposed a review of research in three perspectives: disciplinary, regional, and thematic. The outcome would help inform the approach to be taken by the ERA initiative in relation to Asia and the Pacific.
 - Review of Information Service Report:** Submitted to the Vice-Chancellor.
 - ANU Major Equipment Funding Review:** The panel is just being formed, and the current processes would be used for allocations for 2009.
- **IARU: Research Projects**
The President's meeting in April had been attended by the Vice-Chancellor and Professor Thomas, Pro Vice-Chancellor. Research topics were identified in the areas of ageing, longevity and health; energy, resources and the environment; security; and mobility of people. The level of research activity remains narrowly scoped, but was moving forward.
- **ANU Climate Change Institute (501/2008):** Professor Steffen has been appointed Director of the new Institute.
- **Research Planning Day:** Areas were being notified about the Planning Day to be held in October.

ITEM 5. OPEN ACCESS AND PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH

The Committee received a slide presentation from Professor Stanton on the open access project which had been reported to the meeting of 1 May 2008. A summary follows:

- Open access to the University's scholarly work
Context:
 - Openness as an ANU Value: a topic for conversations
 - Public access to publicly funded scholarship
 - Publishing
 - Intellectual Property

- Privacy
- Presentation scheme
 - Current focus: People, publications, projects
 - Longer-term focus

OATS website

- Open Access to Scholarship
- The ANU is committed to providing public access to the University's expertise, discoveries and scholarship.
- This site is an expression of that commitment and an open invitation to explore the ANU by searching publications and related materials, by locating researchers or by reading about the objectives of current research projects.
- The University supports scholars in publishing their discoveries, opinions and initiatives through this site at the earliest practicable time.

Professor Stanton commented on the importance that consultation with academics and other staff plays in this challenging and important project. Few universities were undertaking similar projects or at ANU's level of involvement. Issues to do with IP and privacy were being resolved and the policy framework would be brought to ANU Colleges and the Committee for input. Commencement was planned for mid Semester II, 2008 although some data were not well populated at this stage and would need building up in time.

Members expressed their support for this new venture and the interface it would provide between the University and the community. Principal comments related to:

- . benefits for users, e.g. Government departments would find the site very helpful and informative
- . guidance for staff about "careful to protect" aspects of the project
- . a co-ordinated and simple scheme that makes use of existing information, i.e. harvesting information from ANU Colleges and Central University data bases and addressing quality issues
- . developing full and comprehensive profiles that include publications, grants etc for the site to be as useful and effective as possible
- . consistency and value gains from the project for ANU Colleges and the University

The Committee noted the presentation and the comments made in discussion.

ITEM 6. EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH FOR AUSTRALIA

6.1 ERA Consultation

The Committee noted the ERA Initiative Consultation Paper (at http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ERA_ConsultationPaper.pdf) and ANU's Submission (503/2008).

The Chair commented that ANU's current concern was to ensure that the ERA is not underestimated or taken lightly. The metrics tool was unproven around the world and could have negative consequences if it failed. Disciplinary advisory groups were being formed for the two first clusters to be evaluated, the Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences, and the Humanities and Creative Arts. A good sense of what would be required was emerging. ANU has reactivated the RQF process and is building the apparatus needed for ERA.

Members noted:

- . concerns about being able to identify Asia and the Pacific research and Indigenous studies under the proposed four digit coding system have been signaled to the Government
- . the response to Issue 2. of Measures of Research Activity and Intensity and whether non-salaried and adjunct staff should be incorporated into staff FTE reporting. Were there implications for measuring medical research most of which is carried out in hospitals if these staff were not incorporated?
- . many issues need to be addressed separately in relation to medical research funding in the Government's health and medical policies. Counting State funded research for block Commonwealth funding and the disproportionate allocation to medical research in this model were some of the issues.
- . the ERA was a more streamlined system that the RQF proposal and much of the preparation would be done centrally. ANU Colleges should focus on the quality of their research, stellar performances and so forth rather than taking an ERA driven approach in their planning.

6.2 Consultation on Journal Rankings for ERA Initiative

The Committee noted consultation was currently in progress on a draft journal rankings list, one of the indicators that would be used on a discipline-specific basis to evaluate research as part of the ERA initiative. The mechanism used at ANU to recommend changes or additions to the list was set out in the paper, *ANU ERA Response to the ARC Journal Rankings (504/2008)*.

ITEM 7. FUTURE FELLOWSHIPS SCHEME

The Committee noted ANU's response (502/2008) to the Future Fellowships: Consultation Paper (http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/future_consultation.pdf). The Scheme announced in the Federal Budget and intended for talented Australian and international mid-career researchers would have similar processes to those of the ARC Discovery Program Fellowships. The first round of Fellowships would be awarded in 2009.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor commented that ANU's recommendation for a more strategic approach of an allocation of a block of fellowships to institutions on the basis of their research activity had not at this stage been taken up. Applications would be solicited once advice about details of the program and funding arrangement had been received. Areas should initiate conversations with potential Fellows at any of the three levels C, D or E. Awards at ANU should aim to attract new researchers either as Fellows, or through opportunities to back-fill vacancies created by ANU staff becoming Fellows. At the conclusion of the Fellowship, existing staff in receipt of awards would be eligible for renewal or for return to their previous positions; salary savings could be used to support other research appointments.

The Committee noted the report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

ITEM 8. RESEARCH RELATED POLICIES

8.1 Responsible Practice of Research

- Revised Policy on *Responsible Practice of Research* (74c/2008)
- Implementation: *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, Part B* at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/r39syn.htm>

The Committee noted that the revised policy addressed concerns about different legitimate practices between disciplines and allowed for sign-off in these instances. It had been cleared by the ANU Legal Office. The Committee:

- (i) endorsed the Policy: *Responsible Practice of Research* (74c/2008);
- (ii) noted that Part B: *Breaches of the Code, Research Misconduct and the Framework for Resolving Allegations* had been updated. A comprehensive revision would be undertaken with experience of the new *Code*.

8.2 Principles for Research Contract Negotiations

The Committee noted that the paper *In the Interests of Innovation: Time for a New Approach to Negotiating Research Contracts with Australian Universities* (at: http://www.go8.edu.au/storage/go8statements/2008/Go8_Innovation_Review_Supp_Sub_300408.pdf) from ANU's Legal Council had been finalised and submitted as a supplementary submission by the Go8 to the review of the National Innovation System.

8.3 Higher Degree Research Policy Issues

Professor Thomas, Pro Vice-Chancellor, reported on the following issues:

- (i) Enrolment trends. Domestic student numbers have declined nationally in recent years. The decline at ANU was less than at other universities. Reasons were to do with the economy, opportunities in the workforce and the level of the scholarship stipend. Scholarship availability was the limiting factor for international students and support from Governments overseas was being explored. ANU would expect increased interest from international students and had some capacity to supervise more students but there was little incentive while funding to universities remained at the current level. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor observed that, similar to the position in the US, international students may be funded from soft grants money. ANU Colleges may want to consider this option.
- (ii) HDR Sub-committee. A new policy and procedures for joint and dual-award PhD programs was endorsed by the Sub-committee at its first meeting.
- (iii) Oral presentations. The policy for presentations to be held three months prior to submission applies to all 2008 commencing students. The description would be circulated to areas for students to be advised directly and at inductions and in annual milestone reviews.
- (iv) the *Inquiry into the research training and research workforce issues in Australian universities* was ongoing and likely to be linked to the Review of Australian Higher Education. Submissions from ANU, the Go8 and Universities Australia had been referred to in the agenda for the information of members:

ITEM 9. COMMERCIALISATION

The Committee received a presentation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the commercialisation of research activities at ANU. The Committee also noted a paper *Commercialisation of Research Activities* (tabled) including data for the University of Queensland (UQ) from the most recent (2004) National Survey of Research Commercialisation to be published (in 2007) and comparative data for the years 2004-2007 at ANU.

Measures of commercialisation activity at UQ were generally greater than at ANU. UQ has several discipline areas that lead to commercialisation activity, in a pattern quite different from the position at ANU. The proportion of R&D in applied research areas was significantly different, e.g. in 2004, the percentage of the total R&D expenditure expended on engineering and technology was 3.8% at ANU and 14.3% at UQ.

Opportunities for growth at ANU were difficult to realise because of constraints relating to disciplinary mix, the interrelationship with other research organisations and identifying resources to build capacity in applied commercialisation other than block funding which is used for basic research. Feedback from the AUQA audit that ANU should benchmark against Stanford University failed to take account of disciplinary mix.

The Committee noted in conclusion that commercialisation at ANU could be stronger and that this requires adjustments to enhance the translation of research as indicated in the paper.

ITEM 10. REPORTS FROM ANU COLLEGES

10.1 Reports

The Committee received reports from:

- ANU College of Medicine and Health Sciences
- ANU College of Engineering and Computer Science (474/2008)
- ANU College of Law (tabled – 919/2008 linked)
- ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences (tabled – 920/2008 linked)

10.2 Revision of Terms of Reference of ANU College Research Committees

ANU College Research Committees were reminded about revising their terms of reference as agreed at the meeting of 11 March 2008 of the University Research Committee to incorporate standard elements as proposed by the paper 'Research Committee Governance Matters (72/2008).

PART 3. ITEMS OF OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM 11. OTHER BUSINESS AND QUESTION TIME

11.1 Grants and Consultancies

The report on grants and consultancies awarded between 1 April and 30 June 2008 may be viewed at the Committee's website (500/2008).

11 August 2008