

**AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**  
**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**Meeting No. 4, 2007**

Meeting No. 4, 2007 of the University Research Committee was held on Thursday 25 October 2007 at 9.30 am in the Ross Hohnen Room of the Chancelry.

Present: Professor Cram, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair); Mr Angel (for Dr Wheeler); Mr Choo; Professor Glasgow; Dr Jones; Professor Kirk; Dr McMahon; Professor Merlan; Ms Pabian (for Professor Morris-Suzuki); Professor Smith; Professor Thomas; Dr Tierney (for Professor Stoljar); Ms Verney; Professor Williams; and Ms Wood.

**By invitation:** Dr Bain; Professor Carroll.

**In attendance:** Ms Bruce

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**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: GENERAL ITEMS**

**ITEM 1. MINUTES**

The minutes of Meeting No. 3, 2007 of the University Research Committee (663/2007) held on 26 July 2007 were confirmed (published at [http://info.anu.edu.au/OVC/Committees/060PP\\_Research/meetings.asp](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 Hill, Professor Morphy, Dr Stoljar, Mr Watt and Dr Wheeler.

**3.2 Announcements**

### 3.3 Confidential Items

There were no confidential items. Ms Burke, Dr Dan, Ms Goldwater, Ms Rayner and Dr Wellard attended as observers.

## PART 2: REPORTS AND POLICY MATTERS

### ITEM 4. REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Committee noted the report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the following:

- **Research Integrity**

*Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/r39syn.htm>

- . The new Code replaced the *Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* (1997) and was in two parts, Part A and B.
- . Part A advocates and describes best practice for both institutions and researchers.
- . Part B provides a framework for handling breaches of the *Code* and research misconduct. This section poses some complex issues for the University, such as the conduct of enquiries by external bodies. These will be addressed by the Director, Office of Research Integrity and the Legal Counsel in the coming months.

Human Research Ethics Committee

The revised HREC Terms of Reference (659c/2007) have been finalized for publication at the website.

- **Policies in progress**

- . Responsible Practice of Research Policy: A review is in progress
- . Policy on Commercialisation - Draft Principles: Further development is on hold, pending drafting of the proposed Intellectual Property Statute.

- **HDR Training Review**

A report from the Reference Group may be made available to the next meeting of the Committee.

- **Research Support Planning Day**

- . Positive feedback has been received about the Planning Day.
- . Drawing on Mr Glenn Dickins' expertise, the guest speaker on developing research relationships, to assist ANU Colleges was being discussed.
- . Summaries from the breakout sessions would be distributed to ANU Colleges.

- **Common Research Infrastructure Services (CRIS)**

- . Work to aggregate research infrastructure was in progress. Facilities under consideration for possible inclusion in the unit were the bioscience research facility, the electron microscope, Kioloa, NARU, and Siding Springs Observatory.
- . Phenomics and animal services in JCSMR were currently being addressed. The changes were expected to further improve the quality of service and help to contain costs.

- **Computing Infrastructure**
  - ANU e-research: A paper from the committee chaired by Professor Williams would be put to the December Committee meeting.
  - The NCRIS Capability 5.16 (see report at Item 10.) was of extreme importance for ANU:
    - ANU was a major player in the National Computational Infrastructure investment area, has an involvement in the Interoperation and Collaboration Infrastructure and aims to be a major player in the Australian National Data Management Infrastructure
    - Work being done concurrently on Health data in the ANUCMHS could be built into NDMI investment area by ANU
- **Reviews:**

Review of Biosciences  
This review was a major enterprise generating much cross-campus discussion in the preparatory stages. The panel was expected to convene in January and complete its work by March/April.

Review of Information Services  
The review of administration and technical aspects may have implications for ANU's research infrastructure.
- **Go8 Research Intensive Universities**  
ANU College Research Committees had been invited, following the July meeting:
  - to engage in discussion about our future research
  - share in the analysis of relative performance data presented to the meeting
  - bring forward ideas and strategies

Members noted that ANU's performance in Linkage areas of the ARC schemes has been a focus of discussion in the ANUCoS. Some institutions performed particularly well comparatively. The reasons for this and how ANU could position itself more advantageously were topics which Colleges may wish to consider further.

## **ITEM 5. ANU COLLEGE RESEARCH COMMITTEES (AUQA REPORT)**

The Chair advised that the report from the AUQA panel would become available in mid-November 2007. It was timely to consider the interrelationship of the terms of reference for the University Research Committee (URC) and ANU College Research Committees, an area that had been addressed in the review. A mechanism which enabled the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to consult the Chairs of the College Research Committees on particular issues, and representation by the Chairs in respect of ANU Colleges in matters relating to the University Research Committee, would be explored.

The Committee noted the description of the current operations of the URC and the ANU College Research Committees set out in the documents:

- University Research Committee and ANU College Governance Arrangements document (960/2007)

- ANU College Research Committees: terms of reference and statement of functions (959/2007)

Principal comments arising in discussion were:

- . The URC has a strong role in contributing to strategic research directions:
  - Through ownership of the University's Research Plan which is a critical statement of directions steering us towards 2010; and
  - Strategic policy settings for emergent management structures and research agendas that arise from the ANU Colleges. For instance, the Committee provides a forum for the discussion of research performance indicators.
- . The AUQA implementation report required in 12 months time should address the alignment of the terms of reference of the committees and include an assurance about information flows and that members of the URC are representing their constituencies.
- . That ANU may need to consider the way forward for a more harmonised research management arrangement. Centre to area transactions, broad functions, research infrastructure support and research integrity etc collectively were generally considered to work well; the organisational alignment and how to prosecute initiatives for thematic research that crosses ANU College boundaries could give rise to tensions.

The Committee endorsed the Chair's proposal to articulate the roles, responsibilities and functions of the URC and ANU College Research Committees within the broad framework of the terms of reference set out in the relevant legislation.

## **ITEM 6. RESEARCH QUALITY FRAMEWORK (RQF)**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported on progress since the July meeting of the Committee leading to implementation of the RQF:

- . Panel chairs and secretaries have been meeting fortnightly.
- . Assigning of approximately 1400 eligible researchers to approximately 30 draft groups was close to completion.
- . The next stage would involve working with groups to prepare their statements.
- . Because much of the activity was being driven by research agendas and external forces, Heads of Areas were less involved than they have to be under normal line-management operations of the University.

Comments arising in discussion related to:

- . The treatment of publications and journals of research staff in the Asia and the Pacific fields. Panel 14 has done a lot of work on the optimal presentation of ANU's strengths in Asia-Pacific research. How this approach would play out for some areas was still to be seen.
- . Careful planning and management for the ANU to hopefully achieve a strong RQF outcome with possibly 1000 researchers in groups ranked 5 in the quality stakes.

- . The RQF guidelines allow membership of groups formed by other institutions. In this regard, some small ANU groups might be best presented from being grouped with other universities.
- . The need for discussion about positioning clinical researchers with groups formed at other universities.

#### **ITEM 7. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PLAN**

The Committee noted the paper, “Monitoring ANU’s Capacity and Capability for Research Management and Development” (953/2007) and the proposed College Research Management Capabilities detailed in Attachment A.

The Committee:

- (i) Agreed in principle to the proposal for the development of a Research Management Capability Report as part of the University’s Research Plan with regular reporting from ANU Colleges to enable tracking and improvement of ANU’s research management capacity and capability;
- (ii) Invite ANU College Research Committees to forward their comments on the paper to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Dr McMahon.

#### **ITEM 8. GRANT OUTCOMES**

The Committee noted the following reports on the outcome of the ARC and NHMRC grant rounds and processes:

- 2008 ARC Grants Schemes (955/2007)
- 2008 ANU Results for ARC Discovery DP08 spreadsheet (957/2007)
- 2008 NHMRC Schemes (956/2007)

Following discussion about a perceived levelling out in ANU’s performance, several actions were proposed and endorsed:

- . An analysis of successful candidates at ANU
- . Tracking of unsuccessful ANU candidates with a view to gaining insight into the granting processes for future rounds
- . Making use of ARC panel member visits to areas
- . Collecting data from local areas about ANU research involvement in successful projects led by other institutions and broad funding levels.

#### **ITEM 9. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT**

The Chair spoke to the “ANU Discussion Paper – Research Relationship Development” (993/2007). The paper described the relationship between ANU “action-points” and other bodies and offices and approaches for improving coordination, maximising the potential of the representatives of the action-points and giving them wider recognition. On the issue of funding of research relationship development, the paper proposed the introduction of the Business Opportunity Fund to bridge the funding gap between the 2007 Linkage Pilot Project Fund and ANU Connect Ventures.

Following discussion, the Committee indicated broad support for the directions proposed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's paper (993/2007).

**ITEM 10. NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (NCRIS)**

The Committee noted the Report on National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) (958/2007). The ANU was a player in three currently active planning areas for which funding has been provisionally allocated:

- . Networked Biosecurity (with Sydney University)
- . Population Health and Clinical Data Linkage
- . Terrestrial Ecosystem Research Network (in progress)

Members noted that it is a matter of concern that NCRIS funds could be charged against the Higher Education Endowment Fund, consuming over \$100m p.a. of HEEF funding for a program that could be funded from normal Commonwealth appropriations. ANU was pleased with NCRIS outcomes – approximately \$25m of infrastructure was being acquired for an investment of approximately \$5m, much of which the University intended to invest in capital works.

**PART 3. ITEMS OF OTHER BUSINESS**

**ITEM 11. OTHER BUSINESS AND QUESTION TIME**

- **Grants and Consultancies**

The Committee noted the report on Grants and Consultancies (952/2007) from 1 July to 30 September 2007 which had been published at the Committee website.

jab/30 October 2007