Research Institutes and Research Centres Policy

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In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

1. PURPOSE:

Research Institutes and Research Centres

The strategic plan *Distinctive by Design 2018-2022* sets out the mission of the University of Canberra to promote excellence and innovation through integrating teaching, research and entrepreneurship. These initiatives will shape the University into a globally prominent institution of learning, research and public engagement. The vehicle for promoting research excellence and innovation is through Research Institutes and Research Centres, embedded within academic Faculties and with collaboration between academic Faculties.

A Research Institute or Research Centre is established when:

- The current profile of a substantial group of researchers meets criteria for national standing and where the creation of a Research Institute or Research Centre is likely to become international and national in standing respectively; and,
- Where the advantages of explicit recognition and support of this group of researchers is likely to enhance the status and standing of the University and provide a return on investment.

Research Institutes and Research Centres bring together staff around a coherent research theme that, while it may have had origins within a single field of research of the University, has or has the potential to have broad influence and engagement across the University.

The purpose of a Research Institute or Research Centre is to:

- stimulate collective research activity and provide critical mass around a research theme and fields of research (FOR) across Faculty boundaries;
- facilitate obtaining external research grants;
- undertake research which relates to agendas of national or international importance;
- provide an appropriate intellectual environment for the provision of research training;

- enhance the standing of the University and provide a return on investment through success in obtaining external research funding and high level recognition of research performance; and,
- provide a platform for external collaboration and engagement.

Research Institutes and Research Centres within and across Faculties

This policy contemplates the existence of a Research Centre operating within a Research Institute provided that all the criteria of a 'stand-alone' Research Centre are satisfied including: the principles of establishment; research key performance indicators (KPI); membership; funding; governance structure; reporting mechanisms and review. Research Centres are conceived as incubators and generators of new ideas. As well such centres may provide the organisational framework of research networks that promote experimentation and inter-disciplinarity.

The University of Canberra supports the establishment of Research Institutes or Research Centres in Faculties or across Faculties that are supported by the Executive Dean(s) and Executive Management of the Faculty(ies). The Research Institutes and Research Centres are the responsibility of the Faculties in terms of providing resources and may be referred to as Faculty or Cross-Faculty Institutes in situations where it is deemed advantageous to the Faculty and University to do so. Faculty or Cross-Faculty Institutes are subject to the same principles of establishment, reporting, review and continuation or closing as a Research Institute or Research Centre including reporting research KPI and are responsible to the relevant Faculty Executive Dean. A review of the research activities of Research Institutes and Research Centres will include a review of any Faculty or Cross-faculty research entities.

Transitional arrangements for existing Research Institutes and Research Centres to ensure compliance with this policy will be made by the respective Directors. It is expected that compliance should be achieved within a year of the implementation of the new policy.

Externally Funded Research Centres

The establishment of an externally-funded research centre is outside the Research Institute and Research Centre Policy. Such centres are established under the same guidelines as a Research Institute and Research Centre and/or additional requirements stipulated by the external funding agency for the life of the external funding.

2. SCOPE:

This policy sets out the vision and strategic intent for establishing Research Institutes (RI) and Research Centres (RC) at the University of Canberra as teaching and research entities. This policy promotes the integration of excellence and innovation through teaching, research and entrepreneurship as described in the Strategic Plan 2018-2022. This policy provides the structure to build and support research excellence, engagement and impact through Institutes and Centres. Research Institutes and Research Centres promote existing and emerging research themes that enhance the University's national and international profile such as the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and world university rankings. In addition, Institutes and Centres promote strategic linkages with industry partners, assist in attracting outstanding researchers and external research funding, foster research teams and collaborative networks to boost high quality research outputs and attract higher degree by research (HDR) students

3. PRINCIPLE:

3.1. The Vice-Chancellor approves the establishment of a Research Institute or Centre on advice from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation (DVCR&I) and the Executive Dean of the relevant academic Faculty.

3.2. In approving the establishment of a Research Institute or Research Centre, the Vice-Chancellor, on

the advice of the DVCR&I, must be satisfied that the benefits to the University outweigh the development and ongoing investment of the proposed Institute or Centre. The advice is informed by reference to the proponent's academic, business and strategic plans on whether the Institute or Centre:

- has the potential to be of demonstrable value to the University such as industry-linked research collaboration, ERA and global university rankings, and which aligns with the University's and Faculty's respective strategic and operational plans;
- will achieve the academic purposes and objectives within existing University organisational structure(s). Examples include, but not limited to, the creative and innovative nature of the proposed research programs, and their capacity to lead to a significant advancement of knowledge in the designated research theme; and the enhancement of the concentration and coordination of research in field(s) of research, engagement with end-users and impact on society at large;
- has the support of the relevant Faculty and the proponents have consulted across the Faculties and discipline areas;
- can demonstrate financial sustainability or value proposition for its initial operational term, normally five years for Research Institutes and three years for Research Centres; and,
- has a governance structure that incorporates appropriate administrative arrangements consistent with the purposes of its establishment.

3.3. Membership

a. A Research Institute should have a minimum of 10 academic staff members engaged in research. Research Centres must have at least five academic staff actively contributing to research.

b. An academic staff member may be an associate member of a Research Institute or Research Centre in a different Faculty.

c. A member of a Research Institute or Centre is an academic staff who contributes to the research efforts of a Research Institute or Centre, as assessed by various criteria such as publications, competitive grants, HDR load and HDR timely completions and where relevant, number of Honours students.

d. Membership may be held for five years and three years for Institutes and Centres respectively and is renewable subject to a review of contributions and performance assessment by the Institute or Centre Executive Management Group.

e. Membership of a Research Institute or Research Centre requires a minimum level of achievement in obtaining external research grants and research output detailed in a membership application to the satisfaction of the Institute or Centre Executive Management Group. These standard expectations should align with the current University Performance Expectations of Academic Staff (PEAS).

f. As Research Institutes and Research Centres are positioned within the Faculty, it is expected that members of such entities will be the key leaders in research excellence as well as participate in teaching. Members of the Research Institute or Research Centre should demonstrably perform at a higher level than the standard level under the PEAS at the relevant appointment level. A lower level of achievement may be set for early career researchers (ECR).

g. Members of a Research Institute or Research Centre may expect material support and resources including access to infrastructure, conference funding and publication fees. The provision of these resources is determined by the respective Directors of the Research Institute or Research Centre in consultation with the Executive Dean of the Faculty. Membership of either a Research Institute or Research Centre is also expected to attract significant benefits. These include working with a community of scholars and researchers, alignment with other researchers within a discipline area,

promotion of a personal profile and advantages from the marketing and branding of a Research Institute or Research Centre. Members will also contribute to and benefit from world-class rankings as well as industry-linked research collaborations.

3.4. Funding

a. The DVCR&I will determine the processes and criteria under which Research Institutes and Research Centres may be provided University strategic research funding. A criterion for all strategic funding is that preference is given to applicants which strengthen the University's competitive position as a research provider of excellence particularly in cases which may be used for leveraging external research funding.

b. Research Institutes and Research Centres are eligible to apply for University strategic research funding on a competitive basis. Through a regular review, the continuance of any central strategic research funding to Research Institutes and Research Centres is tied to the achievement of KPI targets.

c. Applications for strategic research funding must be submitted by the Director of the Research Institute or Research Centre through the relevant Executive Dean.

3.5. An External Advisory Board provides advice to the Director and DVCR&I on matters relating to the establishment and vision of either a Research Institute or Research Centre. The terms of reference of such a Board includes the provision of guidance and advice on the future directions of the Institute or Centre and its place in the Australian research community. Membership of the Board is to be drawn from relevant expertise in academic, government and professional sectors.

3.6. All Research Institutes and Research Centres are governed within an appropriate organisational structure led by a Director. This organisational structure and scope is to be detailed in the Research Institute's or Research Centre's business plan.

3.7. Members of a Research Institute or Research Centre will hold a primary appointment in the Faculty and assume responsibilities consistent with membership of the relevant academic faculty, including compliance with all University policies and processes. This clause applies to staff appointed by a Research Institute or Research Centre on external funds.

3.8. The Director of a Research Institute or Research Centre reports to, and consults with, the Executive Dean of the relevant academic faculty in relation to all matters including research KPI and has responsibility for developing strategic research plans to achieve agreed research outcomes. An additional reporting line and accountability of the Director is to the DVCR&I for achievement of key research measures in strategic foci areas of the university. The Executive Dean of the Faculty will have line management responsibilities over members of the Research Institute or Research Centre and maintains overall oversight of their teaching and administrative matters. Promotions, professional development, performance expectations and annual reviews are to be jointly undertaken by the member's respective Director of the Research Institute or Research Centre and the Executive Dean of the Faculty.

3.9. Changes to a Research Institute or Centre that materially affect any matter relating to its establishment, must be approved by the DVCR&I before being implemented.

3.10. Directors are responsible for the strategic directions and financial sustainability of the Research Institute or Research Centre in managing research funds from all sources. Directors will prepare an annual budget and provide financial statements to the Executive Dean.

3.11. All equipment purchased and obtained by a Research Institute or Research Centre are the property of the University and are maintained and managed by the Faculty. The Faculty will be responsible for providing the necessary resources in consultation between the Director of the Research Institute or Research Centre and the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty. Such resources include office space, research laboratories, storage facilities and space for HDR students and research staff.

3.12. The Director is responsible for the ongoing regular reporting of the performance of a Research Institute or Research Centre. The Executive Dean of the Faculty is to be informed of the research activities of the Research Institute or Research Centre.

3.13. Research Institutes and Research Centres must submit an Annual Report against agreed KPI to the Executive Dean and DVCR&I. The criteria for KPI are set out in the Procedures.

3.14. A formal review of a Research Institute or Research Centre must be made in the fourth year and second year respectively after initial establishment. The review is conducted by a Panel:

- The Panel is chaired by a person who is independent of the Research Institute or Research Centre, and, includes at least one member who is both external to the University and independent of the Research Institute or Research Centre.
- The DVCR&I, in consultation with the Executive Dean of the Faculty and Director of the Research Institute or Research Centre, must approve the review terms of reference, the nominees and selection of the review panel; and,
- Where a change in review date is required, the Director of a Research Institute or Research Centre must submit a request to the DVCR&I for approval.

3.15. The Vice-Chancellor may disestablish a Research Institute or Centre after an appropriate formal review on the recommendation of the Executive Dean and the DVCR&I in consultation with the Director of the Research Institute or Research Centre. The process of the closure of a Research Institute or Research Centre including details of the time frame; membership and staffing transition; and, notifications are given in the Procedures document.

3.16. In determining whether to approve the continuation or disestablishment of a Research Institute or Centre under this policy, the Vice-Chancellor takes advice from the DVCR&I, and relevant Executive Dean(s) of the Faculty(ies).

4. LEGISLATION:

This policy is made under the *University of Canberra Act* 1989 (ACT).

In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B (1) (b) of the *Human Rights Act* (ACT).

5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

- University of Canberra Strategic Plan *Distinctive by Design* 2018 – 2022.
- Research Institutes and Research Centres Procedures

6. DEFINITIONS:

Affiliates	**Affiliates** those who have been given Emeritus or Honorary (including Adjunct, Professional Associate and Visitor) appointments in accordance with the relevant University policies and procedures.
Researcher	**Researcher** means staff, students, and affiliates who undertake research for the University.

Staff	**Staff** means a person who is a member of the staff of the University, whether full-time, part-time, contract, sessional or casual and includes all academic, professional, technical and administrative officers and employees.
Research Centre	Research Centre is a small entity with at least five academic staff as members. The Research Centre will have the following qualities: • ability to promote and foster an established or emerging area of research strength in line with the University's strategic directions; • a level of critical mass appropriate to the endeavour; • the capacity to bring in significant external funding relative to discipline or field of research; • mechanisms for obtaining expert input from the broader university community; • the capacity to generate high quality research output commensurate with its size; • the capacity to engage and influence end-users; • a clear governance structure with a reporting line to the Executive Dean of the Faculty and DVCR&I with an initial establishment period of 3 years; and, • a Research Centre may exist within a Research Institute.
Research Institute	**Research Institute** is an entity with at least 10 academic staff as members. The Research Institute will have all the qualities defined for Research Centres above and engages in research activities and may have external collaborators. Research Institutes have an initial establishment period of 5 years.