



University of Canberra's
Collaborative Indigenous Research Initiative (UC CIRI)

UC CIRI

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2020

UC CIRI acknowledges and respects the Ngunnawal people as the first people of the land the University of Canberra is situated on.

Mission Statement

The University of Canberra's Collaborative Indigenous Research Initiative collaborates with Indigenous communities and multidisciplinary researchers to promote Indigenous advantage.

Overview

This strategic plan of UC CIRI was developed for the period 2015 – 2020 and launched in November 2015. It was revised in April 2016 to take account of the many milestones already achieved and to set additional goals for the period 2016 – 2020.

UC CIRI is a network of researchers committed to Indigenous research. UC CIRI supports collaboration among UC's Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and fosters local, national and international partnerships. UC CIRI works with existing Research Centres and Faculties to promote, connect and enhance the University of Canberra's (UC) Indigenous research interests.

In 2015, UC CIRI began hosting a series of public [seminars](#) showcasing the research endeavours of UC staff and sponsoring visits by leading national and international Indigenous researchers. UC CIRI has also begun providing structures for training, support and mentorship of Indigenous higher degree by research (HDR) students and early career

UC CIRI is a 'bottom up' initiative – a new research network, started by researchers at UC involved in Indigenous research, who want to work together to collaborate to grow research capacity, impact and resources.

Dr Tom Calma AO, UC
Chancellor

researchers, and will assist with implementing Indigenous perspectives in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. In the longer term, we aspire to the appointment of Indigenous academics and an Indigenous-led research centre with national impact for Indigenous people and international regard for excellence.

The University of Canberra recognises the diversity of Indigenous research being undertaken across the disciplines at UC, and seeks to provide a formal network to connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers working in our Faculties and Research Centres.

Through research across UC’s five main research areas, Governance, Health, Education, Environment and Communication, and in supporting the [UC Reconciliation Action Plan 2013 – 2017 \(RAP\)](#) and the [UC Strategic Plan](#), UC CIRI strives to build ‘strong networks that locate reconciliation at the core of the University’s activities and structures’ (RAP).

Vision

Our vision is for UC CIRI to be:

- An Indigenous led collaboration of UC researchers that partners with others working in any research field that impacts locally and nationally on Indigenous people
- Globally regarded for excellence in its quality of inclusive, innovative and collaborative research engagement with Indigenous communities to transform our lives
- Committed to participating with and providing real outcomes for Indigenous communities
- Well-resourced and sustainable

I am very happy with the name of this initiative - it 'hits the jackpot'- collaboration is the solid rock on which CIRI is founded and which it will foster and promote.

Dr Tom Calma AO UC
Chancellor

Context

The [University of Canberra’s Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017](#) provides the commitment and platform for UC CIRI:

Purpose

UC exists for the following purposes:

1. To provide education which offers high quality transformative experiences to everyone suitably qualified, whatever their stage of life and irrespective of their origins.
2. To engage in research and creative practice which are of high quality and aim to make an early and important difference to the world around us.

3. To contribute, through our education and research, to the building of just, prosperous and sustainable communities that are respectful of their Indigenous past and committed to redressing disadvantage.

The establishment of UC CIRI accords strongly with the [UC Reconciliation Action Plan \(2013-2017\)](#):

- The [UC Reconciliation Action Plan](#) identifies the need to grow the number of Indigenous students and research-active staff at the University, and to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into all facets of University life
- It acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners of the land on which the University of Canberra stands and is committed to long-term engagement with the local community
- UC recognises the diversity of Indigenous research being undertaken across the disciplines at UC, and seeks to provide a formal network to connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers working in our Faculties and Research Centres
- The [UC Reconciliation Action Plan](#) is committed to develop a seed-funding program for collaborative, socially responsible research with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on issues of relevance and importance to them and in conjunction with priority research areas of the University, and
- Establishes a biennial conference to disseminate results of the research

UC CIRI Draws Together Four Critical Threads

- The challenges and opportunities facing Indigenous people must be informed by excellent academic research, focused on real world outcomes
- Those challenges and opportunities are complex and multi-factorial, requiring integrated, multi-disciplinary research approaches, developed with Indigenous Australians
- The UC has researchers active in Indigenous research in many research areas and disciplines including law, environment, health, education, public policy, economics and social sciences
- There is great opportunity for integrated, multi-disciplinary research here – and integrated research is what is needed to respond to the issues and opportunities facing Indigenous Australians and thus to Australian society (*Calma*, [UC CIRI launch, July 2014](#))

Closing the Gap

'Much more work is indeed needed because this seventh 'Closing the Gap' report is, in many respects, profoundly disappointing'

Prime Minister Tony Abbott, 11 February 2015

Governance

UC CIRI is governed by an [Executive Committee](#) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous members combining Indigenous, research and research management expertise to ensure successful implementation (current membership is at Attachment A and Terms of Reference are at Attachment B).

The Executive Committee reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research (DVC-R). Members of the UC CIRI Executive Committee are appointed for an initial term of two years, with reappointment by review, by the DVC-R. The DVC-R, or their delegate, currently the Dean of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership and Strategy, holds financial delegation for UC CIRI activities.

The UC CIRI research program is funded by UC and wider research funders. It is led and administered by the UC CIRI Executive Committee.

Administration and Program Management

The UC CIRI Executive Committee will:

- Design the program in detail in consultation with Indigenous people, UC CIRI members and other stakeholders
- Call for research project applications
- Assess and competitively fund those that best meet program criteria
 - Projects that are supported will:
 - target Indigenous disadvantage and opportunity and have a clear path to impact
 - be co-designed with Indigenous people
 - make best use of UC's multi-disciplinary research strengths
 - collaborate with national excellence
 - integrate Indigenous academics, Honours and Doctoral students into the research projects
- Manage Conflict of Interest as per the UC Conflict of Interest Policy

UC CIRI Lifts Off

UC CIRI participants have aspirations – they want CIRI to grow over time to be an Indigenous-led research centre with national impact for Indigenous people and internationally regarded for excellence.

I share such aspirations and look forward to how and where CIRI beds down at UC. To be viable and to grow we need a home and secretariat support for CIRI so let's all turn our minds to what's the best fit for the CIRI family.

With that said I officially launch CIRI with great hope and in anticipation of seeing ground - breaking, impactful work, and a cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars and researchers emerge in coming years.

Thank you for taking the initiative!

Dr Tom Calma AO UC Chancellor

- Successful projects are funded progressively based on achievement of agreed performance milestones

Achievements against this [UC CIRI Strategic Plan 2015 -2020 plan](#)

The UC CIRI Executive Committee revisited the Strategic Plan in April 2016 to document progress and reset goals and strategies for the remainder of the plan. They found that many of the UC CIRI initial strategies have been achieved quicker than anticipated,

Strategies achieved:

Implement a [program of seminars](#) and workshops by UC CIRI and invited researchers

- Since its official launch in July 2014, UC CIRI has implemented a successful seminar program
 - four seminars have highlighted research in Indigenous studies by UC Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers
 - four seminars have been presented by visiting Indigenous researchers

Deliver a program of [networking events](#) to build awareness of capacity and interests

The networking events commenced in 2014 and involve informal discussion between members of the UC community; members of other educational organisations; government representatives; and members of the community. Four networking events have been held as of March 2016.

Establish a committee [Executive Committee](#) to support the growth and development of UC CIRI

The UC CIRI Executive Committee was established in 2014, under [Terms of Reference](#) approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research. The Committee has met 16 times between 13 October 2014 and 17 March 2016.

Establish a [newsletter](#) and [web presence](#)

- The UC CIRI newsletter was launched in November 2014, six issues have been published in the period November 2014 to March 2016.
- UC CIRI established a web presence in October 2014. The site is used to:
 - Provide information about UC CIRI
 - Advertise events and provide information on past events
 - Provide information on UC CIRI Scholarship and Research programs
 - Provide information on UC CIRI funded projects
 - Provide downloadable copies of UC CIRI newsletters

Build linkages with Indigenous and non-Indigenous networks and key stakeholders, including through MOUs as appropriate

- Linkages are being built through:
 - Seminars
 - Networking events
 - Activities of the Dean of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership and Strategy and the UC Executive Committee Co-Chairs
 - The awarding of UC CIRI Research Grants which involve collaboration with:
 - Local Aboriginal Land Councils
 - State and Territory government bodies
 - Indigenous non-government organisations
 - Members of local and national Indigenous communities
 - Other educational institutions
- There will be stronger emphasis on this strategy over the coming 1 to 2 years

Develop and implement, with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, a funded program for a number (scale dependent on resources) of significant collaborative, multi-disciplinary research projects that make best use of the research capacity of UC

Develop multi-disciplinary [research grant application](#) in areas of greatest research capability and need

- The UC Executive Committee has developed and implemented a new research grant program with funding from the DVCR Portfolio. The program has been funded for 2016 - 2018 and will have four calls for research proposals over its first phase.
- All projects supported under this scheme:
 - Have the support of local Indigenous communities
 - Will produce tangible outcomes for those communities
 - Will build capacity for Indigenous Australians
 - Have Indigenous team members
 - Are collaborative
- In 2015, the UC Executive Committee put forward a proposal to the DVC-R to support four projects from a competitive field. The first four research projects under this scheme were announced in February 2016.

Provide funding support to Indigenous PhD scholars (at least one scholarship, more subject to scale of resources), and

Provide funding support for Honours scholarships for Indigenous students (at least one scholarship, more subject to scale of resources)

- The [UC CIRI Scholarship Program](#) was established in January 2016 and will provide a maximum of \$15,000 in grants per year
- The program is open to Indigenous Honours and Indigenous post graduate students

- The UC CIRI Scholarship Program was developed after consultation with Indigenous students and designed to be flexible and responsive in best supporting successful outcomes for UC students.
- Two scholarships for travel to an international First Peoples conference were awarded in March 2016.

Develop and implement a strategy to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate and HDR research students enrolling and graduating from UC

A range of UC CIRI activities support increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate and HDR research students enrolling and graduating from UC:

- Seminars, networking events, research projects incorporating students are key elements

Develop ‘buttress’, a program of mentoring, development and support for Indigenous postgraduates and Early Career Academics at UC (RAP commitment)

Work has commenced on this with the:

- The implementation of a ‘Yarning Circle’ which will provide informal mentoring, development and support for Indigenous students and other members of the UC community
- Implementation of a flexible scholarship scheme for Indigenous post-graduate students

Evolve UC CIRI into UC IIIR – the UC Institute for Integrated Indigenous Research

The first steps towards this have commenced with the:

- Implementation of the UC CIRI Research Grant Scheme
- Implementation of the UC CIRI Indigenous Scholarship Program
- And more widely from the initiatives of the UC Executive:
 - Creation of Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership and Strategy
 - Appointment of a Dean of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership and Strategy

Objectives and Strategies

Drawing on UCs existing objectives and commitments, in 2015 – 2017 UC CIRI aims to:

- Focus our collaborative research effort on urgent and important national challenges of redressing Indigenous disadvantage

- Develop the capacity to build awareness, engage, inform and connect the UC CIRI network to UC Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers
- Grow multi-disciplinary, integrated Indigenous research quality, capacity and outputs
- Establish collaborative and end-user relationships to grow influence and impact
- Establish commitments to Indigenous research from UC Research Institutes and Faculties
- Implement appropriate governance to support UC CIRI
- Secure resources to grow the activities and impact of UC CIRI
- Support Indigenous under and postgraduate students and academics to thrive at UC and beyond

Strategies

2016 – 2017

- Establish a one-day biennial symposium to disseminate results of the research and topical issues.
 - Focus on eminent Indigenous researchers, both national and international

2016 - 2018

- Implement a program of seminars and workshops by UC CIRI and invited researchers
 - The program will continue to run six seminars per year: some selected of as 'Provocation Seminars'. Provocation Seminars will focus on current, topical issues, be chaired by UC and involve eminent Indigenous speakers
- Increase Indigenous representation on the UC CIRI Executive Committee, consistent with the terms of reference, which specify that up to half of the committee membership may be non-Indigenous
- Further develop linkages with Indigenous and non-Indigenous networks and key stakeholders, including through MOU as appropriate
- Develop and implement a visitor's program for incoming and outgoing academics:
 - Purpose is to build Indigenous research capacity at UC through development of collaborations
 - Activities to include seminars and workshops, co-authorship of publications and research grants
 - Linked to the UC Visiting Scholar's Program
 - Hosted by proposing Faculty/Institute
 - Funding support from UC CIRI of up to \$5,000 per visit and up to five visits per year
 - Visitors from Australia and overseas

- A competitive selection process
- Continue to develop and implement a strategy to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate and HDR research students enrolling and graduating from UC (RAP DVC-R commitment December 2014)

In 2020

- Evolve UC CIRI into UC IIIR - the UC Institute for Integrated Indigenous Research

Measures and Resources

UC CIRI's overall objectives will be measured through the following actions:

- Executive committee established (achieved)
- Four seminars (over achieved) and three networking events (under achieved) in each year
- Two major seminars with attendance of more than 70 people (achieved)
- Establishment of an Executive Committee consisting of five to eight members with an Indigenous chair or co-chair and bi-monthly meetings (achieved)
- Indigenous representation on the Executive Committee is greater than 50%
- Quarterly UC CIRI newsletter developed and issued (achieved)
- UC CIRI web site operational and current (achieved)
- Mentoring program in place for UC Indigenous post-graduate students and ECRs (under development)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research scholarships established and offered for Honours and postgraduate students (achieved)
- A UC funded multidisciplinary research program, PhD and Honours Scholarships established (achieved)
- Briefing provided on UC CIRI to key end-user agencies and research partners (continuing)
- Increased employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff (achieved)
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population in undergraduate and postgraduate courses (ongoing)
- UC CIRI evolved into the UC Institute for Integrated Indigenous Research

Resources to Support this Strategic Plan

- **Phase 1 – 2015.** \$5,000 provided to administer UC CIRI.

- **Phase 2 – 2016-18.** \$1m provided to be distributed across the three years to fund the following activities:
 - provide seed funding (\$100,000 over 2 years) for a small number of initial projects
 - administration of UC CIRI
 - fund two to three significant initiatives with the ability to create profile and leverage external funds
 - fund Honours scholarships annually for Indigenous students
 - provide additional funding support to Indigenous PhD scholars for travel and related activities related to their course of study

ATTACHMENT A

UC CIRI Executive Committee Membership as of 1 August 2016

Jo Caffery	Assist Prof Early Childhood Primary (ESTeM)	non-Indigenous
Kerry McCallum	Assoc Prof Communication (FAD)	non-Indigenous
Paul Collis	Sessional, Creative & Cultural Practice (FAD)	Indigenous
Peter O'Brien	Adjunct Professor, IAE (Co-Chair UC CIRI)	non-Indigenous
Peter Radoll	Dean of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Leadership & Strategy (OATSILS) (Co-Chair UC CIRI)	Indigenous
Robyn Jorgensen	Prof Education – Equity & Pedagogy (ESTeM)	non-Indigenous
Wayne Applebee	Sessional, Creative & Cultural Practice (FAD)	Indigenous
Tamara Posch	OATSILS (UC CIRI Secretary)	non-Indigenous

ATTACHMENT B

UC CIRI Executive Committee Terms of Reference

Establishment	The University of Canberra’s Collaborative Indigenous Research Initiative (UC CIRI) Executive Committee is appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research (DVC-R) under the University of Canberra’s Research Portfolio.
Approval	These Terms of Reference were agreed by the UC CIRI Executive Committee on 7 September 2015 and approved by the DVC-R on 1 October 2015 .
Purpose	To collaborate with Indigenous communities and multidisciplinary researchers to grow Indigenous research capacity and quality at the University of Canberra and to promote Indigenous advantage.
Responsibilities	<p>To develop and implement the UC CIRI Strategic Plan with the approval of the DVC-R including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborating with Indigenous communities and multidisciplinary researchers to promote Indigenous advantage 2. Focusing collaborative research efforts on urgent and important national challenges of redressing Indigenous disadvantage 3. Designing, implementing and managing a research and scholarship funding program as approved by the DVC-R in consultation with Indigenous people, UC CIRI members and other stakeholders 4. Developing the capacity to build awareness, engage, inform and connect the UC CIRI network to UC Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers 5. Growing multi-disciplinary, integrated Indigenous research quality, capacity and outputs 6. Establishing collaborative relationships to grow influence and impact 7. Establishing commitments to Indigenous research from the University of Canberra’s Research Institutes and Faculties 8. Implementing appropriate governance to support UC CIRI 9. Securing resources to grow the activities and impact of UC CIRI 10. Supporting Indigenous under and post-graduate students and academics to thrive at the University of Canberra and beyond 11. Contributing to the achievement of the Research Portfolio’s Reconciliation Action Plan objectives
Membership	<p>The UC CIRI Executive Committee comprises of staff, students and adjuncts of the University of Canberra and up to two (2) <u>invited external members</u>. A maximum of half the committee can be non-Indigenous.</p> <p>The UC CIRI Executive Committee comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (one member) (Co-Chair) • Director of Ngunnawal Indigenous Higher Education Centre (<i>ex officio</i>) • Up to seven members of the University’s community from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research staff ○ Academic staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adjuncts ○ Students <p>Membership is to be no less than five and no more than nine members.</p> <p>Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UC CIRI Executive Committee is co-chaired. One Chair will be the representative of the DVC-R and the other chair will be an Indigenous member of the committee <p>Alternate Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UC CIRI Executive Committee does not make use of alternate members <p>Co-opted Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UC CIRI Executive Committee may make arrangements to co-opt members with specific expertise for a period of time
Method of Appointment	<p>The UC CIRI Executive Committee is appointed by the DVC-R for a two year period, with the option of reappointment. Appointment may be by invitation or in a response to a call for Expressions of Interest.</p> <p>The founding members of the UC CIRI Executive Committee were Wayne Applebee, Jo Caffery, Paul Collis, Craig Dukes, Tjanara Goreng Goreng, Kerry McCallum, Peter O’Brien and Tess Ryan, with Tamara Posch as the Secretary to the Committee.</p>
Term and Condition of Appointment	<p>Appointment is for a period of two years. The inaugural Executive Committee’s appointment commenced on 1 January 2015.</p> <p>Re-appointment can be made for additional terms at the discretion of the DVC-R.</p> <p>Attendance at meetings is compulsory. Non-attendance at two or more consecutive meetings may result in the replacement of the member on the UC CIRI Executive Committee.</p>
Secretariat Arrangements	<p>The Secretary will be provided by the DVC-R.</p> <p>The Secretary will provide administrative support to the UC CIRI Executive Committee including preparing and distributing agendas and papers, preparing minutes of meetings, maintaining the website, preparing and distributing the UC CIRI newsletter, coordinating seminars and events, collating reports and associated material as part of the official University records.</p> <p>Agendas and associated documentation will be distributed a week prior to the meeting.</p>
Quorum	<p>A quorum consists of a majority of members.</p> <p>Where there is no quorum the UC CIRI Executive Committee may still meet to ensure that the work of the committee continues.</p> <p>Recommendations made at such meetings must be endorsed at a subsequent meeting where a quorum is present.</p>
Schedule of Meetings	<p>The UC CIRI Executive Committee will meet a minimum of six times per calendar year.</p> <p>Special meetings may be called by the Co-chairs.</p>
Evaluation and Review	<p>The UC CIRI Executive Committee will review its Terms of Reference every two years commencing in January 2017, with amendments to be proposed to the DVC-R.</p>
Notes	<p>The UC CIR Executive Committee may establish working parties to assist its work.</p>