



minutes

Te Komiti Rangahau o Unitec | Unitec Research Committee

Date:	2024-03-14
Scheduled Start:	1300h
Scheduled End:	1500h
Location:	Microsoft Teams

MEETING OPENED:	1300h
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SECTION 1 – NGĀ KUPU ARATAKI | PRELIMINARIES

Item 1.1 Karakia Tīmatanga | Opening Prayer

Item 1.2 Mihi Whakatau | Welcome from the Chair

The Chair warmly welcomed members of the committee to the meeting.

SECTION 2 – STANDING ITEMS

Item 2.1 Ngā Whakapāha | Attendance, Apologies & Quorate Status

Members Present

1. Marcus Williams (Chair)
2. Arun Deo
3. Yusef Patel
4. Nora Md Amin
5. Kristie Cameron
6. Daisy Bentley-Gray
7. Khaled Ibrahim
8. Kambiz Bornha
9. Hamid Sharifzadeh
10. Leon Tan
11. Lian Wu (from 1.30pm)
12. Tanya White (from 1.30pm)

Total members represented:	12 members
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Apologies

1. Helen Gremillion
2. Lian Wu (for lateness)

Total apologies: 2 members

Absent

1. Carly Van Winkel

Total absent: 1 member

MOTION

That the committee accepts the apologies for today's meeting.

Moved: Marcus Williams

Seconded: Daisey Bentley-Gray

MOTION CARRIED

Quorate Status

A minimum of seven representatives is required; the meeting was quorate.

Hunga Mahi | Staff in Attendance

1. Brenda Massey, Acting Secretary

Item 2.2 Pitopito Kōrero o Ngā Hui | Minutes of Previous Meeting

MOTION

That the committee approves the minutes of the 2024-02-08 meeting as a true and accurate record, subject to changing Terri-Ann Berry's title from Adjunct Professor to Professor (items 3.1 and 3.2 referred).

Moved: Kristie Cameron

Seconded: Leon Tan

MOTION CARRIED

Item 2.3 Mahia Atu | Matters Arising

The chair warmly welcomed new committee members Kambiz Borna from the School of Building Construction, and Khaled Ibrahim from the School of Applied Business to the meeting.

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
3.1 & 3.2	Advise Professor Terri-Ann Berry of the approval of the appointment of Joanne Low and Shannon Wallis as Honorary Research Fellows within the School of Environmental and Animal Sciences.	Marcus Williams	Complete
N/A	The committee was scheduled (in its workplan) to review the Unitec Research Strategy Action Plan this month*.	All	We will delay this review by at least one month as the institution's Takitahi is still pending.

** Update: the review of the Unitec Research Strategy Action Plan is actually scheduled to occur in June this year, not March as it was in 2023, so the review will be scheduled to occur then.*

SECTION 3 – MEA HEI WHAKAAE | ITEMS TO APPROVE

There were no items to approve.

SECTION 4 - WHAKAWHITI KŌRERO | ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no items scheduled for discussion.

SECTION 5 - NGĀ TUKUNGA | ITEMS TO RECEIVE

Section 5.1 Conference Seed Funding

The committee was provided with an overview of the purpose of the Conference Seed Fund, its priorities and eligibility criteria, and were asked to assist to promote its availability to staff in their Schools.

The application form and guidelines are available on [Te Aka | The Nest](#).

It is expected that the average application will be less than \$5,000 but the maximum amount available is \$10,000. Applications are submitted to this committee for approval on an 'as received' basis and are assessed on the quality of the opportunity in terms of academia.

Kristie Cameron received a grant from the fund which was intended to be allocated to cover the up-front costs of rental of a conference venue and food (costs that needed to be paid before conference fees were received). If the conference hadn't been moved online due to Covid, the conference fees would have been utilised to repay the seed funding, however delegates' fees were refunded and only ~\$300-\$400 of the conference seed funding was utilised, going towards student prizes.

The CITRENZ conference was allocated \$10k, however only ~\$5k was utilised, which was returned after the conference.

Once applications are approved by the committee, conference convenors must liaise with Research Partner Enterprise, Gregor Steinhorn, to develop a business case. Gregor can assist convenors to determine, for example, how much delegates should be charged to attend, how much catering might cost etc. The seed funding is intended to underwrite conferences, so that up-front costs are covered and in case events aren't as successful as anticipated, then Schools aren't left to wear the costs.

School or discipline specific symposiums and conferences are in many ways more valuable and effective than all-staff Research Symposiums. Symposia that are culturally or discipline specific often provide better opportunities for peer review and the inclusion of external participants relevant to the context, and generally lead to the generation of Quality Assured (QA) outputs.

It was noted that it is more cost effective and productive to host conferences that generate outputs for multiple staff, rather than spending similar amounts of funding to support individual staff to attend international conferences.

The RRAU conference has been generating QA outputs for staff in the School of Architecture, providing, for example, a good opportunity to publish in Springer, something that they normally wouldn't be able to do. Young lecturers who have never published in a journal were able to go through the process of writing up their research, submitting a paper and having it reviewed.

Learnings from the RRAU conference were that it would have paid to liaise with Tūāpapa Rangahau earlier in the process of developing the conference. This is particularly important for convenors who have not organised a conference before.

The School of Business is in the process of organising the Auckland Regional Accounting Conference for December and is interested in accessing Conference Seed Funding, however Khaled Ibrahim noted that the Conference Seed Funding Guidelines state that *"this is **not** a fund to cover the costs of holding a conference, it is to assist staff to undertake the development of a business case to stage a new conference or to make a bid to host an international conference and to seed some of the initial costs, ultimately towards repayment, providing all goes to plan"*. Marcus Williams clarified that the funding is intended to help host conferences, however he concurred that the above statement is open for misinterpretation. In fact, the guideline was intended to articulate that it is expected that the seed funding will be recovered after the conference, if it is successful.

Action: Brenda Massey and Marcus Williams to review and update the Conference Seed Funding Guidelines to ensure it is clear that the funding is intended to help host conferences, and that the point of contact to assist convenors to prepare seed funding applications and business cases is Gregor Steinhorn.

Action: Brenda Massey to ask Penny Thomson to table the Conference Seed Funding memo and updated guidelines at the next Research Leaders Hui.

Section 5.2 **Verbal Updated on Te Pūkenga Research from the Director Research and Enterprise**

Marcus Williams recently emailed a research update to Unitec Research Leaders, MIT Academic Leads (Research) and research committee members in both Unitec and MIT. A combined summary of Marcus' email and his verbal update today is as follows:

- Te Pūkenga's disestablishment will take between 12 and 18 months. Unitec and MIT remain separate business divisions. Marcus is the Director of Research and Enterprise for both Unitec and MIT, while in Te Pūkenga there is a national Research Director, Jamie Smiler (this position has not been disestablished).
- The way that research is managed has not been restructured and Tūāpapa Rangahau continues to operate as it did before, although within a very disrupted environment. Support units including HR and Finance are under a lot of duress and patience is required (e.g., in the case of approvals), both from Tūāpapa Rangahau and from the staff they serve.
- Research budgets (which remain separate between Unitec and MIT) were greatly delayed but have now been resolved and are robust. Tūāpapa Rangahau is progressing the implementation of important funding priorities in both organisations, e.g., the 2024 Research Professional Development Suite, led by Professor Helen Gremillion and shared as much as possible across Unitec and MIT, and funding products such as the Wairaka Natural Environment, History and Culture Fund. There has been a considerable increase to Research Dissemination Funding.
- The Rangahau Research Forum continues to function effectively, meeting monthly and now led by Jamie Smiler. The Rangahau Research Forum has been running for over 10 years and comprises research managers in Vocational Education from across the mōtu. Jamie is leading

a strategic piece of work on how we can continue to collaborate, no matter what happens post Te Pūkenga, and is leading a working party on readying ROMS for the next PBRF.

SECTION 6 - KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA | CLOSING

Section 6.1 Ētahi Kaupapa Anō | Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

Section 6.2 Komiti Self-Assessment

An opportunity was given for the committee to reflect on their self-assessment provocations. The committee is reminded that feedback on any aspect of the committee's operation can be emailed to the Chair or the Secretary at any time (in confidence if requested).

Section 6.3 Karakia Whakamutunga | Closing Karakia

MEETING CLOSED: 1350 h

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Agenda Item(s)	Action	Responsible	Outcome
5.1	Review and update the Conference Seed Funding Guidelines to ensure it is clear that the funding is intended to help host conferences, but that it is expected that the seed funding will be recovered after the conference, if it is successful, and that the point of contact to assist convenors to prepare seed funding applications and business cases is Gregor Steinhorn. Ask Research Partner Penny Thomson to table the Conference Seed Funding memo and updated guidelines at the next Research Leaders Hui.	Brenda Massey/ Marcus Williams Brenda Massey	