

Ref: F23/103



MINUTES

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING 01 - 23

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2023 IN THE SENATE ROOM FROM 10:00AM TO 11:50AM

MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE PRESENT:

<i>Chair:</i>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (Professor Anna Nowak)
<i>Ex-officios:</i>	Chair of the Academic Board (Professor Raymond Da Silva Rosa); Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) (Professor Andrew Page); Pro Vice-Chancellor (Health & Medical Research) (Professor Romola Bucks); Dean, Graduate Research School (Professor Imelda Whelehan); Director, Office of Research (Dr Laila Simpson); Director, Institute for Advanced Studies (Associate Professor Clarissa Ball); Nominee of President, Postgraduate Students' Association (Mr Agyeya Pratap)
<i>Elected Heads of Schools:</i>	Professor Annette George, Professor Amanda Davies, Professor Alexandra Ludwig, Associate Professor Matthias Leopold, Professor Jeff Keelan
<i>Academic Board Elected Members:</i>	Associate Professor Sarah Collins, Professor Richard Vokes
<i>Co-opted members:</i>	Dr Abbie Rogers (Senior Research Fellow, School of Agriculture and Environment),

SECRETARIAT: Academic Secretary (Dr. Kabilan Krishnasamy)

STANDING INVITEES: Associate University Librarian (Mr. Scott Nicholls), Associate Director, Research Enterprise (Dr. Vicky Johnstone), Associate Director, Research Operations (Ms. Katie Flanagan), Associate Director, Research Ethics and Integrity (Dr. Carina Marshall).

APOLOGIES: Pro Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Commercial) (Ms. Samantha Tough), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Education) (Professor Jill Milroy); University Librarian (Ms. Jill Benn); Dr Lucy Furfaro (Raine/Robson Fellow, Obstetrics and Gynecology)

WELCOME

The Chair offered an acknowledgement of country and welcomed all members, including the following:

- **New Committee Members:** Mr Agyeya Pratap (Nominee of the President, Postgraduate Students' Association); Associate Professor Matthias Leopold (incoming Head of School, School of Agriculture); Associate Professor Sarah Collins (member elected by Academic Board); Professor Richard Vokes (member re-elected by Academic Board).
- **New Standing Invitees:** Associate Director, Research Enterprise (Dr Vicky Johnstone), Associate Director, Research Operations (Ms Katie Flanagan); and Associate Director, Research Ethics and Integrity (Dr Carina Marshall).

The Chair also invited members to offer acknowledgement of country at future meetings.

DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Further to noting the register for Declaration of potential or perceived Conflicts of Interests no additional agenda driven declarations were recorded.

1. MINUTES – Ref F22/297

RESOLVED – URC R01/23

to confirm the minutes of a meeting of the University Research Committee (URC 04/22) held on Thursday 17 November 2022, as set out in the agenda attachment, subject to a minor correction in relation to recording a declaration of conflict of interest for Professor Bucks whose position should be stated as Director of Raine Study (not Raine Institute).

2. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE MODUS OPERANDI AND COMMITTEE SURVEY 2022 – Ref F21/265

In accordance with the Committee's practice, the Chair briefly outlined the role of Committee, as set out in its [Constitution](#), and the expectations of its members guided by the following:

- Rules for the Operation of Committees;
- Principles for the Operation of Committees;
- University Committee Members' Code of Conduct;
- Guide to effective committee meetings; and
- The Effective Committee Member.

Members noted that the above, which may be accessed via the [Staff Intranet](#), served as a reminder as to the protocols for best practice of the Committee. Members were encouraged to familiarise themselves with the information and use the information as a resource during their term of membership.

A review of the Committee's performance in 2022 was conducted in December 2022. The Chair spoke to the results of this performance review, which were noted to be available from [Power BI](#). It was noted that the survey results reflected that some members considered the committee lacked representation of the appropriate skill set. It was recognized that there was no voice for research institutes on the Committee which agreed that a Director of a Research Institute should be co-opted to the committee.

The Chair also recorded the following qualitative feedback, as provided in the survey:

- "The committee has been very effective at engaging diverse voices and debating issues to ensure good decisions are being made for UWA. The introduction of an 'open discussion' session at the end of meetings (time permitting) has been excellent".
- This committee has been an excellent example of UWA's Code and Principles in practice, particularly in regard to respectful conduct that has enabled inclusive and informed discussions".

RESOLVED – URC R02/23

to endorse the co-option of a Director of a Research Institute on the Committee, which would be exercised at the discretion of the Chair.

3. RESEARCH PRIORITIES 2023-24 – Ref F21/1765

Members had before them Research Priorities 2023-24, which were noted to be framed as part of the University's broad strategic priorities, which were listed as follows: Enhancing Student Experience; Growing Student enrolment; Building Research Capacity; and Sustainable Finances and Operations. The following were amongst the points noted:

- A few of the research priorities were aspirational and were dependent on budget allocations.
- There was discussion with regard to income from the commercialization aspect of the research endeavours at UWA. The allocation of resources to an industry engagement and commercialisation function was queried. The Chair briefly described commercialisation income, the small size of the team, the need to focus on areas with high potential for commercialisation, and future strategy, noting that there was an increased state and national emphasis on commercialisation, translation outcomes, and industry engagement.
- A member suggested that it would not be appropriate to create more UWA strategic institutes when current institutes are unable to be fully supported. It was asserted that resources would need to be more purposeful allocated, used wisely and be aligned with the University's research strategic directions. A case for the establishment of new institutes is assessed carefully to ascertain its long-term sustainability and self-sufficiency.
- Researchers' interaction with UWA systems was identified as an obstacle and an ongoing issue that required attention.

4. REPORT: OUTCOMES OF MAJOR GRANT ROUNDS – Ref F20/873

Members had before them a summary of UWA's application and success in major grant rounds in 2023. It was noted that UWA remains lowest of the Group of Eight in many major schemes both in terms of application numbers and success. It was pointed out that the Office of Research would continue to engage with Schools in identifying strategies for addressing the low application numbers and success in major grant rounds.

5. REPORT: NATIONAL PERSISTENT IDENTIFIERS (PID) – Ref F 20/873

Persistent identifiers (PIDs) were noted to be unique, perpetual references to an entity such as a person, place, or thing that allow researchers, developers, funders, publishers, and librarians to improve the discoverability and citations of research outputs and provide better opportunity for interoperability across research systems. Members noted that the Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC) had recently commenced discussions with the sector about a proposed National PID Strategy. A National PID Taskforce had been formed with the aim of developing a draft strategy. Members had before them a paper that provided an overview of developments that have been occurring nationally around the use of PIDs in research and the implications these might have at UWA.

The low connection rates with ORCID (Open Research and Contributor ID) for staff was a point in discussion. It was pointed out that only 3093 staff (that is 33 per cent) have an ORCID connected to the UWA Profiles and Research Repository. It was noted that 566 (27.75 per cent) of higher degree research students have an ORCID. There was broad discussion around ways in which staff including adjunct appointments to connect with ORCID. Some of the strategies discussed included the management of the renewal of PHEME password, building it in as part of the annual performance review and engage with staff via research forums. It was noted that the University is unlikely to have appetite for further mandatory compliance as part of the annual PDR.

RESOLVED – URC R03/23

to approve the following recommendations outlined in the discussion paper as attached to the agenda:

- (a) Representatives from the Library, Office of Research and Uni IT attend the ARDC National PID Strategy and Roadmap workshop on February 20, 2023 and consider participating in targeted working groups.
- (b) Library to work with the Office of Research to carry out targeted promotions to ERA-eligible staff in 2023 to ensure they have an ORCID registered with the UWA Profiles and Research Repository.
- (c) Institutional Research Data Store & Management System project to investigate the use and implementation of RAIDs at UWA.
- (d) Library to review and update the affiliation information on the UWA ROR entry according to the current UWA organisational structure.
- (e) Monitor the progress of DOIs being allocated for grant records.

6. REPORT: ANNUAL UPDATE ON FOREIGN INTERFERENCE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 – Ref F22/318

Members had before them a report that provided a summary of activity undertaken in 2022 around foreign interference policy, education and training as well as steps taken to manage risk involved in research with the Australian Department of Defence. It was noted that the report would be used to monitor activities required to manage risks related to foreign interference and compliance with Defence Industry Security Program. A key issue that was noted related to the fact that the International Activity Declaration registered through 'Service Now' had a low compliance rate at 55 per cent.

One of the factors contributing to the low compliance rate related to the disengagement by staff holding adjunct positions. Monitoring this cohort for compliance might be a challenge. Notwithstanding this, there was discussion about ways to tackle the low compliance in general and some of the strategies identified included setting up activation via PHEME password renewals, educating staff, providing appropriate training which required to be updated in line with the developments arising from the recent Parliamentary review. An incident relating to denial of granting of visas to three international higher degree by research students was also briefly discussed. The report was noted.

7. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS – Ref F21/1765

One component of the UWA Research Strategy has been to ensure that best practices were being implemented in the way that the University's research infrastructure was used to support its capabilities. These capabilities, in part, contribute to UWA achieving its institutional mission. It was pointed out that currently, UWA does not have an optimal overview of all its research infrastructure, a clear outline of how its research infrastructure capabilities was being sustained, and a process to

optimally review and plan for current and future infrastructure needs. It was pointed out that there would be potential financial risks with proceeding in the current manner, as it will not be possible to advise the Capital Infrastructure Advisory Group on its decisions if there is not a broad understanding of investment needs across the whole of the institution. Members had before them a proposal that suggested the adoption of a two-phased approach to address these issues, as follows:

- Phase 1: Identifying Research Infrastructure Capabilities and Capability Leaders
- Phase 2: Audit of Research Infrastructure Capabilities

The committee's feedback on the proposal included the following:

- Members welcomed the identification of the following seven domains for Phase 1: Advanced Platforms for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS), Advanced Imaging, Materials Characterisation and Advanced Fabrication, Advanced Physics and Astronomy, Marine, Earth, and Environmental Systems, Life Sciences/Complex Biology/ Therapeutic Development, Bioresources and Agriculture. However, HASS domains were felt to be underrepresented.
- Representation of these domains were broad, but there could be some trade-offs in relation to the extent to which domain leads would be able to connect at the various levels within each domain.
- The need to include a domain Indigenous representation and cultural collections was highlighted.
- The potential to merge the functions of the Research Facilities Committee and Research Entities Committee was raised. It was clarified that the Research Entities Committee has been established as a new committee to manage the establishment and renewal of entities and it might not be a good idea at its infancy stage to overly stretch its focus and remit by requiring it to also consider infrastructure issues.
- Certain aspects such as IT, data management, e-research and business school related activities were highlighted to be cutting across the domains. It was clarified that the University Research Data Committee might be meeting these needs.
- It was clarified that there would be a call for expressions of interest for appointment of the proposed leads for each domain established.

RESOLVED – URC R04/23

to approve the two-phased approach to fostering UWA research infrastructure capabilities, as set out in the agenda attachment.

8. INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY: STANDING ITEM - Ref F20/1765

The following general issues relating to inclusion and diversity were raised and discussed:

- The use of the phrase 'inclusion and diversity' was welcomed by members as it broadens the scope by considering issues beyond gender related matters.
- Need for guidelines and mentoring to promote better understanding of the concept of 'relative to opportunity' and how it is operationalized in various business activities within the University and specifically within the research portfolio. Some of these activities identified and discussed included UWA grant application process, academic promotion applications, and LIEF (Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities Grants) application process. There has been a consistent movement within the University at various levels in creating a greater awareness of staff could be disadvantaged by lacking an understanding of how 'relative to opportunity' should be applied.
- The Chair highlighted a recent experience with the Snow Foundation, which in considering funding grant applications, sought an understanding of the institutional environment in which gender and equity issues were represented.
- The Chair also welcomed members to raise any issue relating to inclusion and diversity at future meetings or to flag to the Academic Secretary prior to the meeting.

9. RESEARCH ENTITIES COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS – Ref F21/2940

In considering the proposed revisions to the Research Entities Committee Constitution, members agreed that clause 3(2) be amended as follows (amendment underlined): "The appointment of Heads of School and co-opted members on the Committee must take into account of adequate disciplinary representation".

RESOLVED – URC R05/23

to recommend to Academic Board that the proposed amendments to the Research Entities Committee Constitution, as set out in the agenda attachment, be approved subject to inclusion of the above-minuted feedback.

10. PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW RESEARCH ENTITY – Ref F23/311

Members had before them a proposal for the establishment of the UWA Centre for Burns Research and Translation in the School of Biomedical Sciences. At its meeting held on 29 November, the Research Entities Committee resolved by REC R03/22 to endorse the proposal.

RESOLVED – URC R06/23

that the proposal to establish the UWA Centre for Burns Research and Translation in the School of Biomedical Sciences as a centrally-endorsed Research Entity for a period of 5 years, as set out in the agenda attachment, be endorsed and forwarded to the Academic Board for approval.

11. REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT ON RESEARCH DATA COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 – Ref F20/783

Members had before them an annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Data Committee.

RESOLVED – URC R07/23

that the annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Data Committee, as set out in the agenda attachment, be endorsed.

12. REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT ON RESEARCH FACILITIES COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 – Ref F20/783

Members had before them an annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Facilities Committee. Noting that the membership and constitution of the Research Facilities Committee would be reviewed in due course, the Committee

RESOLVED – URC R08/23

to endorse the annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Facilities Committee, as attached to the agenda.

13. REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT ON RESEARCH ENTITIES COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES IN 2022 – Ref F20/783

Members had before them an annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Entities Committee.

RESOLVED – URC R09/23

that the annual report on the 2022 activities of the Research Data Committee, as set out in the agenda attachment, be endorsed.

14. URC STANDING COMMITTEES: MEETING MINUTES

Members noted meeting minutes of the following committees:

- Research Data Committee meeting minutes of 12 December 2022 – Ref F21/2009
- Research Facilities Committee meeting minutes of 21 November 2022 – Ref F19/881
- Research Entities Committee meeting minutes of 22 November 2022 – Ref F22/1401

15. NATURE AND SCIENCE PUBLICATION REPORT – Ref F20/783

Members had before them a report that provided a summary of UWA-authored 2022 Nature & Science Publications. The report was noted.

16. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAM 2023 – Ref F23/103

Members had before them the Committee's updated Work Program for 2023, which was noted to be rolling throughout the year. The work program was noted.

Meeting Closed: 11:50am

CONFIRMED BY THE COMMITTEE

Signed on behalf of the Committee: _____

CHAIR

/ / 2023