

Stakeholder Feedback June 2015

PBRF SRG Consultation Paper #4 - Establishing a Pacific Research Peer Review Panel

The information below is a summary of the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) Sector Reference Group's (SRG's) fourth consultation paper on the establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel. Where the organisation is not identified in the comment, the TEC has not attributed those comments to any organisation. Each line of commentary denotes a separate response from an organisation or individual.

Number	Organisation name
1	Victoria University of Wellington
2	University of Waikato
3	University of Otago
4	University of Auckland
5	Unitec Institute of Technology
6	Tertiary Education Union Te Hautū Kahurangi o Aotearoa
7	Massey University
8	Individual
9	Individual
10	Individual
11	Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
12	University of Canterbury
13	Auckland University of Technology
14	Individual
15	Individual
16	University of Auckland, Pacific Womens Health Research Unit, Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
17	Individual

A. Do you support the establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100%	17
No	0%	0
Possibly	0%	0

Comments

Victoria University strongly supports the establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel. We see this as a very positive step.

The University of Waikato strongly supports the establishment of a PBRF Pacific Research Peer Review Panel. We agree that increasing understanding within the sector of the assessment framework and what Pacific research means in a PBRF context has the potential to increase the number of EPs that would be sent to the Pacific Panel, and the establishment of the panel also gives due emphasis to research by Pacific researchers and to research into Pacific matters.

The University agrees that, with the disestablishment of the two EAGs (Pacific Research and Professional and Applied Research) and Specialist Advisors, the establishment of a Pacific Research Panel should be cost neutral for the 2018 Quality Evaluation.

We are, in principle, in favour of the establishment of such a panel, but note that concerns have been raised on its feasibility. First, there is the question of whether there is a critical mass of researchers available to serve on the panel. There is also the concern that undue burden will be placed upon Pacific researchers, and that it will be difficult to constitute a panel where overlapping established collaborations won't produce unmanageable conflicts of interest.

These concerns are of a sufficient level that we recommend that the SRG consider the benefits of keeping the Pacific Research EAG from the 2012 round, or focusing more on ensuring strong Pacific representation on extant panels.

The establishment of a Pacific research peer review panel is a welcome development, as such a panel will:

- support visibility and recognition of a specific Pacific research paradigm and its benefits, both within the research sector and within Pacific communities
- ensure Pacific research is assessed on its own terms by a panel with the appropriate expertise and cultural knowledge to understand its research context
- enable senior Pacific researchers to assess quality in their own field (rather than merely advising)
- assist in building an inter-disciplinary Pacific research peer group
- assist in building capacity in Pacific research.

However, as outlined in the sections below, the University, in consultation with its Pacific academic staff, has identified a number of issues with the current proposal that need addressing before such a panel can most effectively assist with the recognition of, and capacity building in, Pacific research.

As the TEC notes in the consultation paper, the continued growth of Pacific research and growing numbers of Pacific researchers or those working within Pacific paradigms indicates that the establishment of this panel is timely. It is important to note that - as was the case with the Māori Knowledge and Development panel - it is likely that the establishment of this panel will see greater numbers of EPs being assessed or cross-referenced through the panel. The greater recognition of Pacific research that a distinct panel signals will likely contribute to institution and individual researcher confidence that this work will be appropriately valued and recognised using robust processes and scrutiny.

In my experience of making PBRF submissions, I did not feel supported at all as a Pacific researcher; nor did I feel that my own university and TEC were supportive of capacity development of Pacific research. In the 2006 Round, I noted that the panels (including the internal panels) did not seem to take the Guidelines for Pacific research seriously at all. It appeared that while panels claimed to have authority in adjudicating Pacific research, their decisions did not seem to align with the contextual wisdom embedded in the Guidelines for Pacific research. In the 2012 round, I ended up not including key outputs which met the 4 principles of Pacific research; particularly work which related to indigenous Pacific scholarship. By then it was clear that the PBRF had a two-tier effect on indigenous Pacific researchers. At one level, scholarship which might be loosely referred to as indigenous Pacific research (which is ontologically, epistemologically, axiologically and methodologically embedded) was not understood and hence less supported. At another level, scholarship about the indigenous Pacific scholarship, seemed to be more readily acknowledged. The combined effect was still disheartening, in my experience.

Moreover, I hold the view that not having a Pacific panel in the 2018 PBRF round is neglectful to Pacific intellectual traditions which are rightly, part of the New Zealand and Oceania knowledge environment. By including a Pacific panel, this acts as a developmental step in creating a pluralistic environment for the wider New Zealand knowledge community.

If a researcher in and of the Pacific wishes not to be assessed by this proposed panel, she or he should be allowed to select another. I could see occasions when the researcher believes that the particular panel members are unfamiliar with a discipline or subject, such as accounting or geo-physics.

There is no discussion about including it with Maori peer review panel.

Yes. We agree with the broad intent and purpose of establishing a Pacific Research Peer Review assessment panel and strongly support the growth and development of Pacific research activity.

For the review of papers and research that have been performed using Pacific methodologies and in Pacific contexts that mainstream researchers are unfamiliar with. The same can be said for Maori research.

I am not sure though that my research, which is in a mainstream medical field, should go through that panel.

B. Do you recommend any changes to the draft objectives and underlying principles of the proposed panel?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	47.1%	8
No	52.9%	9

Comments

The University of Waikato is pleased with the inclusive tone of the 'Objectives and Principles of the Pacific Research Panel' and with the objectives including the value of research as being judged relevant to, and developmental of, 'Pacific' research. However, the University recommends modifying the first bullet point of item 35 appearing on page 6. This currently reads
Pacific research is defined both geographically and ethnically but will not be solely determined by the ethnicity of the researcher; and

Proposed wording

Pacific research is defined both geographically and ethnically. There are no restrictions on the ethnicity of the researcher; and

The University of Waikato also notes that Pasifika and Māori research are interconnected at times and might not always be easily separable.

The principles appear to be a useful guide. Care should be given to considering who is an expert in Pacific research and what Pacific world-views and research practices are.

We feel it is important that individuals selected for the panels have demonstrated achievements in the principles as put forth in the Consultation Paper.

The University recommendations below are made to ensure:

- i. Researchers and panellists have clear and appropriate guidance, which is aligned with other robust sector guidance on Pacific research (such as the HRC Pacific Research guidelines) so that confusion is minimised
- ii. Neither eligibility criteria nor the quality standards include burdensome criteria over and above what is expected in other research fields (for example, evidence of external impact).

Concerns re Objective

1. Currently, no objective is described in the proposal; what is listed as an objective is merely a vague description of what research the proposed panel will and will not consider - not why the panel is considering it. (See "principles" paragraph below for a discussion of the definition of Pacific research.)
2. Within the description is a stipulation that "research must be transformative, innovative and adaptive rather than merely 'protective' of certain aspects of Pacific knowledge." This stipulation should be avoided:
 - a) Other panels do not exclude research that is not "transformative, innovative and adaptive"; this stipulation sets three additional criteria for Pacific research to fulfil (before it will even be considered as research), eligibility criteria which research being assessed by other panels does not need to fulfil.
 - b) The word "transformative" suggests Pacific research must have impact external to academia; assessing external impact via PBRF is not appropriate in the Research Contribution component, let alone in the Research Outputs component (see the University of Auckland submission to SRG consultation paper #3).
 - c) "Protecting" and "maintaining" are also active verbs; the stipulation erroneously suggests they are always more passive (and therefore, by inference, less desirable) than transformation. The role of kaitiaki includes discovery, unearthing and preservation, and is important in a context where, for example, Pacific languages are endangered.
3. The repeated phrase "there should be recognition of X" does not stipulate who needs to recognise X, nor why.

University of Auckland recommended objective

"The objective of the PBRF Pacific research panel is to appropriately assess Pacific research evidence portfolios in accordance with the quality values of Pacific research paradigms, in order to:

- support visibility and recognition of Pacific research paradigms and their benefits, both within the research sector and for Pacific communities
- ensure Pacific research is assessed by a panel with the appropriate expertise and cultural knowledge to understand its research context
- allow senior Pacific researchers to assess quality in their own field (rather than merely advising)
- build an inter-disciplinary peer group
- assist in building capacity in Pacific research."

Recommendations re Principles

1. The term "Pacific research" needs to be positively defined.

Current definition concerns:

- a) "Pacific research" is not defined in the proposal. While a wide array of research should be considered, it would alleviate stress and confusion to give researchers brief, clear guidance as to whether this panel is an appropriate one to assess their research.
 - b) The use of "Pacific research" is inconsistent in the consultation document. For example, footnote 1 suggests the role of researcher ethnicity is not to be considered in the definition of "Pacific research" at all, but the first principle on p6, as well as the objective, suggests ethnicity of the researcher does have influence on whether a piece of research is considered to be "Pacific". The University view is that the ethnicity of the researcher should be immaterial. Whether or not research is considered 'Pacific' or not should rest on the work itself and its paradigm.
2. Research outputs vs research contribution: The principles are not currently related to the structure of the Evidence Portfolio; such a relation would be useful in order to operationalise the principles.
 3. Eligibility vs assessment criteria: Eligibility criteria (what makes research suitable for assessment by this panel) and assessment criteria (what constitutes quality of research) need to be clearly separate.
 4. Deleting assessment of external impact: Assertions such as "Pacific research is likely to... Have a demonstrable impact on the well-being of Pacific peoples" need to be used with extreme care; if used, it should be clear that this is an expected outcome/ objective of Pacific research and not a PBRF inclusion or assessment criterion for the research. As mentioned above, assessing external impact via PBRF is not appropriate in the Research Contribution component, let alone in the Research Outputs component (see the University of Auckland submission to SRG consultation paper #3).
 5. Clarifying examples: Some of the wording in the principles - such as "bio-piracy" seems unusually specific. Examples should be clearly identified as such.
 6. Clarifying optional characteristics: If phrases such similar to "Contribute to the advancement of Pacific knowledge, spirituality and development, and be responsive to changing Pacific contexts" are used in some context, they should acknowledge that such benefits do not come as a package deal, for example: "...Pacific knowledge, spirituality and/or development..."

7. Clarifying required characteristics: If the proposed principles are used as eligibility criteria, the language around them should be more positive (eg 'must' rather than 'might be'), such as this example editing of par 39 pg7 of the consultation paper:
"Paradigm

Pacific research may be characterised by To be considered Pacific research for the purposes of the PBRF, a research output needs to demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics:

- It may be Being informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world views, knowledge, practices and values.
- It may be Being conducted in accordance with appropriate Pacific ethical standards, values and aspirations.
- It includes research Being carried out and/or reported in any Pacific language.
- It comprises a range of disciplines in the natural and social sciences and disciplinary research practices including quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- It may involve research processes and practices that are may be consistent with Pacific values, standards and expectations, or which provide critical analysis which challenges long held notions or which offers new interpretations of these values, standards and expectations.
- It may include methods, analysis and measurements that recognise Pacific indigenous knowledge, cultural norms, philosophy, spirituality and experience.

8. Alternatively, the University recommends the following operational definition of Pacific research:

University of Auckland recommended definition of “Pacific research” for the purposes of PBRF (informed by the 2006 PBRF Guidelines for Pacific Research and the HRC Pacific Research Guidelines):

“Pacific research generates knowledge and understanding both about, and for, Pacific peoples. It engages with Pacific cultural values (for example, communal relationships, reciprocity, holism, and respect).

The term ‘Pacific’ refers to Pacific peoples living in Pacific nations, as well as Pacific peoples living in New Zealand and elsewhere, while connected through their heritage and ancestry to a Pacific nation.

Eligibility criteria

EPs submitted to the Pacific research panel are expected to include all the following components:

Research Outputs

1. Research that:

(i) generates knowledge and understanding both for Pacific people/s and about them and/or their environment; and

(ii) recognises Pacific knowledge, cultural norms, philosophy, spirituality and/or experience (for example, through the research question/s, language, methods, analysis, data sources or measurements); and

(iii) shows a relationship to Pacific values (examples of such a relationship include, but are not limited to, a respectful upholding, a mindful critique or a new interpretation of those values).

Research contribution

2. Contributions that engage the Pacific research community and/or wider Pacific communities external to the sector. In particular, contributions aimed at growing capacity and capability within the Pacific research paradigm are expected.

Not all the research outputs nor research contributions in an EP have to be Pacific research (as defined above) in order for that EP to be submitted to the Pacific research panel; however all research outputs and contributions in all EPs submitted to the Pacific research panel will be assessed by that panel, in cross-referral consultation with other panels where appropriate.

Assessment criteria

Research outputs

Research outputs will be assessed on:

- Disciplinary quality

In addition, Pacific research outputs will be expected to fulfil, and will be assessed on the extent to which they have fulfilled, at least one of the following criteria (whichever is/are most appropriate to the output):

- Contributions and/or enhancements of the Pacific knowledge base in the relevant subject area.
- Contributions to a greater understanding of Pacific cultures’ experiences and world views.
- Protection of Pacific knowledge from exploitation and/or disappearance.
- Contributions to the advancement of Pacific knowledge, spirituality and/or development, responding to changing Pacific contexts.
- Enhancement of one or more Pacific research epistemology or methodology.

Research contribution

Research contributions will be assessed on the same criteria (such as significance and peer esteem) as other panels.

In addition, Pacific research contributions will be expected to fulfil, and will be assessed on the extent to which they have fulfilled, at least one of the following criteria (whichever is/are most appropriate to the contribution):

- Building the capacity and/or capability of Pacific researchers.
- Building non-Pacific researchers’ knowledge and/or understanding of Pacific research paradigms and issues.
- Enhancing the capacity of Pacific communities to access and/or use the results of the research.

It is recommended that the Pacific research peer review panel have the mandate to assess and approve Pacific research in the first instance (ie, without pre-approval from mainstream panel). We believe this will allow for some positive effects of self-determination in an established system - particularly while this area of research moves towards refined definition and wider understanding.

Alternatively, the Chair of the Pacific panel must be given due-recognition around assessing evidence portfolios and determining whether they meet the Pacific research criteria.

The TEU is pleased to note that the consultation document discusses the issue of the size of the population of researchers working within Pacific research paradigms and the challenge of ensuring objective analysis of EPs given this small population. This is not an issue confined just to the proposed Pacific research peer review panel; indeed it would be the case for most panels, given the size of our academic community in New Zealand. We expect that what has been learned from other panels in relation to this issue will be applied to the new panel, and that robust processes will be developed that ensure individual researchers and institutions have confidence in the objectivity and transparency of the process.

While we support the draft objectives and underlying principles of the proposed panel, we would recommend that the principle “cultural inclusiveness” should be replaced by three main principles namely:

- Bicultural: the PBRF should acknowledge different sources of Maori knowledges and western scientific knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi /Treaty of Waitangi principles: should underpin the PBRF operations and processes;
- Cultural and linguistic diversities: enrich the measure and quality of PBRF;

The expression, ‘cultural inclusiveness’, is highly deficit in the sense that while it may appear to call for inclusivity it merely politicises, marginalises and homogenises the status of Tangatawhenua , their language and knowledges; diversities amongst Cook Islands Maori, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu, Tonga; and, other linguistic and cultural migrant groups and communities.

1. Under #35, the first bullet point, delete the word “both” and include “intellectually” so that the new statement reads, “Pacific research is defined intellectually, geographically and ethnically.....” This suggestion is based on my view that indigenous Pacific societies have intellectual traditions which must be recognized beyond the variables of geography and ethnicity.

2. Under #36, bullet point line 1, after “range of” include “philosophies” so that its reads “...range of philosophies, discourses and methodologies...”

3. Under #39, Paradigms, the second bullet point, insert the word “systems” followed with a comma, between the word “ethical” and “standards”. This new section of the sentence will read, “...Pacific ethical systems, standards, values and aspirations.”

Generally no, but would add requirements for membership of the panel, as below in C.

Re : "Pacific research may be characterised by one or more of the following:

- It may be informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world views, knowledge, practices and values. "

This is acceptable when couched as "may" as there are some researchers of Pacific ethnicity or of non-Pacific ethnicity who are less focused on applied indigenous epistemological methods or such methods of inquiry and who prefer or chose to adopt a more "Western" approach. It should be kept in mind that such research framing should not be discounted or minimized in pursuing the admirable goal of giving recognition to indigenous epistemologies, which, of course, are not uniform across all Pacific societies.

Should include health and not be a limited number of disciplines e.g. Creative Industries would have Pasifika research outputs.

We suggest a number of revisions to the current draft to provide clarity, these are:

1. Principles. Paragraph 35 proposes two (bullet pointed) underlying principles. The two principles outlined seem redundant when compared with the well-defined four principles outlined in paragraph 38 and detailed in paragraph 39. These two 'sets' of principles are confusing. We suggest removing the two principles described in paragraph 35.
2. Objectives. The paragraph (36) defining the Pacific Research Panel's objective is confusing and presents as a further description of the range and types of Pacific research activity that should be recognised. We would expect that a fundamental objective of the Pacific Research Panel would be to help define and determine excellence in Pacific Research and to help to link the tertiary sector to Pacific aspirations1.

1 Ministry of Education and Transition Tertiary Education Commission (2002). Investing in Excellence, the Report for the Performance-Based Research Fund Working Group. Wellington: Tertiary Education Commission. (Pages 13-14).

C. Are there any additional issues that have not been addressed?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.7%	5
No	58.3%	7

Comments

It should be made clear that Pacific researchers can chose to submit to either the Pacific Research Panel or a disciplinary panel.

The issue of appointment of panel members is a significant concern due to the limited pool of expertise in this area. The nomination process needs to have clear expectations for the level of expertise required for panel appointment to encourage a large number of panel member nominations.

In all PBRF rounds to date, my research on indigenous Gula'alaa (Solomon Islands) had not been fully included; particularly the work which is done in Gula'alaa language. Without any Gula'alaa speaker researchers globally, such work demands additional efforts for PBRF purposes. Rather than forego such work due to its community importance, I'd rather that the PBRF regime supports such work as they make significant contributions to cultural and intellectual survival and sustainability of indigenous Gula'alaa.

A difficulty could arise from the cross disciplinary nature of the submissions

Paragraph 31 of the consultation paper infers that the Pacific Research Panel would follow the same weighting regime of the MKD Panel and apply the underlying subject weighting for each portfolio it assesses. However this is not explicit in the consultation paper and we believe should have been an item for specific feedback. There are differing views on whether the Pacific Research Panel should, like the MKD Panel, be given the unusual status of variable subject weightings and we believe this point should be explicitly offered to the sector for consultation. This topic could be included in the pending consultation paper 'Review of the assessment framework including applied research' due out in late May.

The rise in the importance of qualitative and narrative research, which is the main type of research by Pacific researchers, is welcomed and should have some equivalent weighting when compared to quantitative research.

What mitigations can you suggest to address these and any other issues?

Clear guidelines need to exist for how a Pacific research panel will operate with regard to research that could come from a wide spectrum of disciplinary perspectives. The elimination of selecting two panels could pose some difficulty for Pacific researchers, and the Chair of this Panel (if formed) may need to use cross-referrals to other panels extensively.

As a starter, establishing a Pacific panel.

If the discipline panels are going to have more Pacific membership then would a mixture be best - Evidence Portfolios (EP) submitted to the disciplinary panel where there are Pacific panellists and to the Pasifika panel where there are not. It would allow for the possibility that there are few Pasifika panel reviewers and overcome the previous problem that EP were not forwarded to Pasifika expert advisors.

The composition of the panel need to be multi-institutional and should be from differing research disciplines. The membership should also rotate similar to the model used by the Pacific HRC.

Comments

The University of Waikato agrees with the SRG that there could be issues with the composition of the 2018 PBRF Pacific Research Panel and suggests a census be taken in 2016 to determine which portfolios are likely to be submitted to the Pacific Research Panel, and the proposed subject area of those portfolios. This would assist the TEC in better ensuring an appropriate mix of disciplines is represented on the 2018 PBRF Pacific Research Panel. We also argue for representation across the sector to reflect the relevance of Pacific Research to all universities and areas of inquiry.

The University is pleased that the SRG has considered the issue of the small size of the Pacific research community, with the related issues of managing conflicts of interest and attracting appropriate expertise. The University endorses the proposed response of appointing international panel members, and recommends that TEC supports the Pacific research panel by using international panellists as a significant minority of the panel, given the unique issues in convening the Pacific research panel and the desirability of retaining Pacific members on other panels also.

The University also supports, in principle, the appointment of panel members from other non-participating New Zealand TEOs and research organisations; however this is likely to be less successful, as it is unlikely that an appropriate level of expertise in Pacific research outside the participating entities is to be found. New Zealand panellists should be senior researchers with experience of at least one PBRF round.

While cross-referrals are useful - and the panel guidelines should encourage the strong use of outside expertise - the discipline representation of the panel should include medical and health research, and educational research as well as the social sciences and humanities (and creative arts, if appropriate).

It is important that Pacific researchers are also included on other PBRF panels, for the purposes of, for example, having Pacific research input into the assessment of other EPs, and to educate the wider academic sector about Pacific research paradigms. Realistically, for 2018, Pacific inclusion will not be possible on all the PBRF panels. Therefore, the University recommends:

- TEC develops a strategy to ensure all panels include at least one Pacific researcher in any post-2018 research assessment exercises, as well as maintaining a Pacific research panel
- For 2018, the following PBRF panels include at least one Pacific researcher: Education, health and social sciences and humanities

If the Pacific panel is not given due-recognition to assess submitted evidence portfolios, we believe Pacific people may be reluctant to participate in this process.

Initially, with the set-up of the Pacific panel, it may add value to appoint a deputy chair of the Pacific panel to sit alongside the Pacific chair when the panel chairs and principal moderator meet to make the final decision on the allocation of EPs. As the definition of this area of research is still emerging, better support may increase the ability to advocate for Pacific research (in an established process).

6. For noting: Consultation paper #4, point 44, page 9 - while it may be important for some to note the cost neutral establishment of a Pacific panel, we also feel that any expense incurred in the establishment of the Pacific panel is a sound investment. As our Pacific research community grows with our population, there will only be greater demand for Pacific led research in the future, providing better data and understanding around health, education and social justice particularly.

It is wise to try to mitigate against potential conflicts of interests, given the size and inter-relations of the Pasifika academic community but be aware that these relationships criss- cross those of regional universities, particularly in the southern hemisphere.

Looking at the members of the past panels associated with the Pacific, one wonders if the respective TEOs have indeed checked regarding the degree to which some of these people have achieved these goals themselves:

“Demonstrate community engagement - it recognises and validates the relationship between the researcher and the ‘researched’.”

“Engage the Pacific community right from the initial stages of the research.”

And:

“Have a demonstrable impact on the well-being of Pacific peoples.”

And:

“Enhances the capacity of Pacific communities to access and use the results of the research.”

In other words who judges the judges? Just because a Pasifika or other Pacific-oriented person has an academic position in a New Zealand tertiary institution does this mean that their research has indeed reached back into the “researched” and the community, be it in New Zealand or the Pacific islands. And how is “impact” measured and how long does it take to be manifest?

TEOs need to develop some firm criteria to assess this selection and not just put forward any Pacific academic who happens to be on staff. Moreover, as this document implies, the desired outcomes/relationships above are not measured necessarily by academic publications but by several other indices that need clear enunciation to guide the TEOs in this selection. If such criteria are to be used by a Pacific panel to assess researchers, it is only just to ensure that the panel members reflect these attributes. As it stands now, most TEOs are far more focused on publications, conferences, and so on that communicate research findings to other academics or people in leading positions in government and commerce.

D. Please describe and detail any areas or issues relating to establishing a Pacific Research Peer Review Panel that require our attention but have not already been included in the consultation paper.

We would suggest looking at how the panel might be able to support portfolios from a wide range of disciplines.

We also suggest that thought be given to the definition of ‘Pacific’ - for instance, it needs to include Melanesian and Micronesian intellectual traditions and speakers of Melanesian indigenous languages.

We recommend that the SRG look for lessons in the introduction of a Pacific Research Panel from the similar work on the Māori Knowledge and Development panel.

There needs to be clear guidance and advice provided to ensure the correct panel selection is made for an EP. Particularly in determining whether to submit to the Pacific panel or the underlying discipline panel of an EP. The cross referral process also needs to be clear - We would propose that a TEO is able to request cross referral to both the Pacific and MKD panels.

As with submission to the MKD panel in 2012 - it is also important that any submission to the Pacific panel is allocated the subject weighting of the underlying discipline rather than the subject weighting of the Pacific panel.

1. The issues pointed out in the Background section of the above noted document indicate the PBRF assessment since the 2003 and the formation of the Pacific Research Expert Advisory Group. The key issues to note for the Evidence Portfolio are:

a) The Nominated Research Outputs (NRO) that include Pacific Research have a substantial low level acceptance of the papers for publications in the A* and/or A main stream discipline-based journals. For example under the Australian Business Dean Council (ABDC) classification acceptance is low where the research focus is on the Pacific nations and Pacific peoples and the aims and objectives of the Journals are mainly applied for larger developed and developing countries, and those issues broad-based issues of the main stream disciplines.

b) The Pacific Advisory Research Peer Review panel (PRPR) members should provide guidance that publications in A and B journals are of quality publications that apply the underlying Pacific subject-weightings given its importance to the discipline and issues addressed for Pacific research, methodology, paradigm, participation, contribution and capacity and capability.

c) Peer Review Output (PRP) and Contribution to Research Environment (CRE) of the Pacific Researchers may also include these outputs applied to their discipline and other regions/countries and not just on Pacific Research. The PRPR panel should take into consideration the level of recognition of the researchers' expertise in non-Pacific research output based on the international standing of the researchers in their discipline.

2. The PRPR panel should include Pacific members from an inclusive group of disciplines that make up the panel from Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, Pacific Studies, etc. with areas of expertise to include subject areas that can apply knowledge to economic issues, social and development issues, health and well-being, education, environmental issues, specific science areas and issues applied to the Pacific nations. This will reflect the quality evaluation of the outputs published in the relevant journal and other outputs.

i) Past experience of the PBRF rounds show that some of the Pacific Researchers and non-Pacific researchers in their discipline areas undertaking Pacific research have not resulted in the score of A where the lack of knowledge/clarifications and/or expertise has resulted in getting a lower-level PBRF score.

ii) Research on the Pacific issues published in the A and B ranked ABDC journals are quality papers. However the assessment made by the panel on that research outputs did not meet their criteria and thus were assigned a lower overall score. These need to be assessed by experts as suggested in the document applied by Maori Knowledge and Development panel. A similar Pacific Knowledge and Development panel may be established as a Pacific peer review panel.

iii) Many research outputs on the Pacific nations and Pacific Peoples are read and referenced by people in other ranked journals as they are not always published in A* and A ranked-journals. This is the case given the importance of the issues and also for the quality of the articles, Pacific-based journals and discipline-based journals that are either A or B category journals.

iv) Even the world renowned researchers publish in the B category journal given the subject areas they research on and also based on their expertise and information dissemination with the likelihood of reaching a wider group of readers/audience and also the availability of that journal/information in the Pacific.

3. As noted to appoint experts from other academic institutions from the Pacific region is vital but that should also include a cross-discipline and actual nature of subject expertise to be part of such panels.

4. A point noted above is once again emphasized here - the selection of the 2018 Pacific panel should include experts from a wide-range of subjects with interdisciplinary research expertise.

5. Pasifika research and knowledge production is emergent within a Pasifika research paradigm where methodological and epistemological guidelines are being established (see Introduction to Pacific Research Appendix 4). These guidelines enable paradigm specific assessment of contribution to a field in a way that assures not only appropriate cultural regard but also assures the "rigorous sector and expert scrutiny" that is required (p.1) Consultation Paper # 4.

1. The term 'Pacific research' is narrowly defined and prone to exploiting the knowledges, values and beliefs of diverse peoples of Cook Islands Maori, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu, Tonga. 'Pacific research' ought to relate to the topic or subject of Pacific research that is set in relationship with

- Diverse Pacific peoples' research agendas
- Pacific peoples' values and spiritual beliefs
- The use of indigenous languages of Cook Islands Māori, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, Samoa, Tuvalu and Tonga

2. We would like to propose that two of the members of the 2018 Pacific Research Peer Review Panel ought to be:

- A Pacific member from the University of the South Pacific who is actively engaged in Pacific research in the homelands; and
 - A Pacific member who has an international profile and is actively engaged in Pacific research elsewhere.
-

In time, having Melanesian and Micronesian researchers in New Zealand will require further TEC and institutions' attention. In other words, while a Pacific research panel is a necessary first step, the future is one where there are Melanesian researchers in New Zealand without anyone around who speaks or understands their indigenous Melanesian languages. In the interim, the (new) Pacific research panel must not just be a Polynesian panel.

Comments from AUT staff:

I would be in support of a Pacific Research Panel so long as Pacific representation on other panels remains in place.

Concluding remarks

We hope the responses and points raised here assist in the design of an effective and efficient mechanism to help advance Pacific research activities within the New Zealand tertiary sector and their service to the wider sector. If we are able to help in any further discussions on this matter we would be more than happy to do so.

I think I have covered this. In addition, the membership should be comprised mainly of people who have published.
