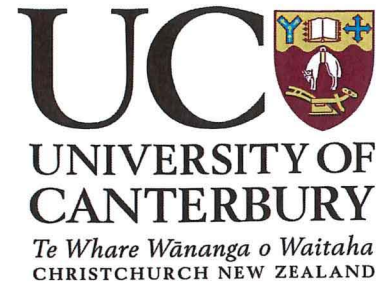


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Privacy - 9(2)(a)



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Tēna kōrua

## **Te Ara Paerangi - Future Pathways Programme Consultation**

### **Introduction**

This submission from the University of Canterbury | Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha (UC) is an institutional view to the Te Ara Paerangi - Future Pathways Programme discussion process, following both internal university consultation and endorsement by the university leadership team. This submission should be read in conjunction with UC's specific responses to questions within the online Te Ara Paerangi consultation portal.

UC was an active participant in the development of the Universities New Zealand (UNZ) | Te Pōkai Tara submission, and wholly supports the observations, suggestions, and recommendations in the UNZ submission. UC is particularly supportive of the following elements of the UNZ submission:

- Proposed design features of a future RSI system;
- Partnership embodied in Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
- Establishment of an independent Aotearoa New Zealand Research Council;
- New Zealand's research workforce is explicitly linked to strategic research priorities, infrastructure access, and the totality and transiency of funding.
- A national research infrastructure plan, that provides known and transparent access, and disentangles where possible, conflicts between ownership and operation.

Additionally, UC are direct partners in other entities or collaborations (e.g., Food Transitions 2050, MacDiarmid Institute, and National Energy Research Institute) that similarly have made submissions, and UC supports the broad views of those submissions.

This letter submission expands further elements of the UNZ submission that UC wishes to emphasise.

## **Te Tiriti o Waitangi, mātauranga Māori, and Vision Mātauranga**

UC has embarked on a process in announcing a new Office of Treaty Partnership within the university, believed to be the first of its kind among Aotearoa universities, which embeds mana whenua – Ngāi Tūāhuriri | Ngāi Tahu into the management and governance structure of Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha University of Canterbury. Transformation of the Ngāi Tahu Centre at UC will create a tangible space that represents the partnership and works directly with the university governance and management to oversee the implementation of the partnership agreement and provide strong Māori academic leadership on a pan-university basis. UC believes that is one example of how the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Mātauranga Māori, and Vision Mātauranga can be given effect at an institutional level, but does require a concomitant systems-change approach across the RSI.

## **International Collaboration**

International connectedness is mentioned throughout the Te Ara Paerangi - Future Pathways Programme green paper as a system weakness but UC were surprised that it was not a point of specific feedback or question. UC's view is that there are international dimensions to all the main focus areas in the discussion paper. International collaboration, New Zealand's international competitive research competitiveness in specific research domains, and "grand challenge" priorities (e.g., climate change, energy transitions, aging populations, food security) should be considered in setting national priorities and designing funding mechanisms that can leverage international knowledge, workforce and infrastructure. Recent Catalyst Strategic funding rounds have been an important first step at targeted medium scale research partnerships, but these types of funding schemes should be expanded. New Zealand should seize opportunities to participate in larger international research and innovation programmes (e.g., EU's Horizon Europe) where there are aligned and mutually beneficial research and innovation outcomes.

## **Interaction and Co-location of universities and CRI's**

Institutional research collaborations between universities and CRI's (and potentially co-location) are best built around having a shared vision of research priorities, research delivery, capacity development, and the translation and benefits of impact. Contrived or forced "marriages" rarely work. UC has long-standing collaborations with a number of CRI's and other entities and is actively pursuing opportunities for co-location on the UC campus. Similarly, UC is allied with (via the Food Transitions 2050 collaboration), and sees the benefits of, the co-location of three CRI's on or near the University of Lincoln campus. The co-location of a recently new FENZ training facility adjacent to UC's fire engineering laboratories provides a further example of smart, co-aligned, and co-located research and educational activity.

## **Funding, base-funding, core funding and overhead recovery**

All countries have finite capacity to invest in their respective national research and innovation systems. Current levels of private and public R&D investment in New Zealand necessitates every research and innovation investment needs to be "very smart", while New Zealand remains on target to significantly undershoot its stated aspiration of R&D expenditure. Any funding changes to be cognizant of: (1) the current RSI system is internationally competitive and effective, and (2) universities function, out of necessity, in a mixed-funding and internally subsidizing mode, where potential change in one part of that institutional economy has high potential of unintended consequences. Any re-design of the New Zealand research and innovation system (or part thereof) needs to be premised on the principle that the system is resource limited (except potentially property and building infrastructure), and not efficiency or funding mechanism limited.

## Research workforce and precariat

The shape and size of New Zealand's research workforce is explicitly linked to a national system of research priorities (from the perspective of both public and private funders), access to infrastructure, and critically the total national investment in RSI. Equally important is the longevity (or conversely the transiency) of funding. The workforce (including specifically the precariat) desire funding and employment stability, whereas parts of the current RSI system are explicitly designed to succeed or fail fast (e.g., Smart Ideas), where the research (and research team) may not evolve. Similarly, TEC-funded CoRE's, not successful at funding reviews, have had uncertain exit strategies, with profound impact on some early career and post-doc research communities. The observation is that competitive and review process are an important test for research excellence and relevance, but a systems approach for appropriate exit strategies is necessary where either priorities change and / or resources are limiting. Finally, a systems approach needs to be taken in a "whole of government" view around developing the requisite future research and innovation capacity (via the education sector) and addressing national research priorities given the ~20 year horizon to train, recruit, and retain high-quality researchers. The very best researchers, and emerging career researchers, and post-doctoral fellows are a highly mobile workforce. Salaries, system and institutional resourcing, opportunities for developing and retaining professional networks, work-rights, and immigration status are all factors that will cumulatively drive whether New Zealand is able to train, recruit and retain a competitive RSI workforce.

If any parts of UC's online or written submission require further information or clarification, then please contact Professor Ian Wright, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation).

Ngā mihi



Professor Ian Wright

**Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) | Tumu Tuarua Rangahau**