

#129

COMPLETE

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Page 2: Section 1: submitter contact information

Q1 Respondent skipped this question

Name

Q2 Respondent skipped this question

Email address

Q3 Respondent skipped this question

Can MBIE publish your name and contact information with your submission?Confidentiality notice: Responding "no" to this question does not guarantee that we will not release the name and contact information your provided, if any, as we may be required to do so by law. It does mean that we will contact you if we are considering releasing submitter contact information that you have asked that we keep in confidence, and we will take your request for confidentiality into account when making a decision on whether to release it.

Q4 Respondent skipped this question

Can MBIE contact you in relation to your submission?

Page 3: Section 2: Submitter information

Q5 Individual

Are you submitting as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Page 4: Section 2: Submitter information - individual

Q6 Yes

Are you a researcher or scientist?

Q7 Privacy - 9(2)(a)

Age

Q8

Gender

Privacy - 9(2)(a)

Q9

In which region do you primarily work?

Q10

Ethnicity

Page 5: Section 2: Submitter information - individual

Q11

Respondent skipped this question

What is your iwi affiliation?

Page 6: Section 2: Submitter information - individual

Q12

Respondent skipped this question

If you wish, please specify to which Pacific ethnicity you identify

Page 7: Section 2: Submitter information - individual

Q13

Respondent skipped this question

What type of organisation do you work for?

Q14

No

Is it a Māori-led organisation?

Q15

Earth sciences,

Which disciplines are most relevant to your work?

Education

Q16

There is some Mātauranga Māori, but it is not the main science knowledge

What best describes the use of Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in your work?

Page 8: Section 2: Submitter information - organisation

Q17

Respondent skipped this question

Organisation name

Q18

Respondent skipped this question

Organisation type

Q19

Respondent skipped this question

Is it a Māori-led organisation?

Q20

Respondent skipped this question

Where is the headquarters of the organisation?

Q21

Respondent skipped this question

What best describes the use of Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) in your organisation?

Page 9: Section 3: Research Priorities

Q22

Priorities design: What principles could be used to determine the scope and focus of research Priorities?(See page 27 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

The Green Paper provides everyone an opportunity to design the research sector they want to work in; this chance allows us to help craft the best approach to the wicked problems we are currently facing as a country and a world. Many of these wicked problems are transdisciplinary in nature. Our disciplinary and interdisciplinary ways of working have not sufficiently tackled these wicked problems, which is why we are still facing these issues. Thus, we need to focus on transdisciplinary work and be training transdisciplinary researchers.

To create transdisciplinary work, people need regular and prolonged access to others outside of their field. Thus, when designing priorities, defining the priorities by grouping researchers in the same “field of research” seems to defeat this idea by segregating researchers instead of encouraging transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary ways of working. Therefore, the other suggestions seem preferable although there needs to be strategic thought to ensure the new priorities do not create new silos. It is also important to consider how priority and critical will interface. For example, research about shaking during earthquakes both helps improve damage estimates and therefore affects emergency management resource allocations immediately after the event but also relies on having a seismic monitoring network and sometimes requires augmenting sections of the network. How will such work be funded if it could fit both the definition of priority and critical?

Finally, it is important to value social science when designing our priorities. While many non-social scientists include a social science aspect in their work, both social science and physical science are specialities in their own rights. Thus, substantial consideration should be given to re-establishing the Institute for Social Research and Development. Crown Research Institutions should not be required to turn a profit; their research is for the public good. Re-establishing the Institute for Social Research and Development would provide a centre for social science and make it easier for stakeholders to find and work with researchers who can help them. It would also allow for social scientists to work more closely together and be able to support each other in ways physical scientists cannot.

Q23

Priority-setting process: What principles should guide a national research Priority-setting process, and how can the process best give effect to Te Tiriti?(See pages 28-29 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

When deciding priorities, Māori, stakeholders, and researchers all need input. It seems that a panel may help ensure each group is represented. If stakeholders and researcher can help ensure that an appropriate balance of applied and basic research is kept. Māori will help ensure that both types of research being pursued is good for all of Aotearoa New Zealand, not just a subset of those living here.

Q24

Respondent skipped this question

Operationalising Priorities: How should the strategy for each national research Priority be set and how do we operationalise them?(See pages 30-33 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Page 10: Section 4: Te Tiriti, mātauranga Māori, and Māori aspirations

Q25

Engagement: How should we engage with Māori and Treaty Partners?(See page 38 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

This discussion should be led by Māori.

As tauīwi, I would like to lend my voice to strongly request that Māori need to be much more deeply integrated into research institutions and practice to make meaningful change to our current institutions. Research has shown that a quorum of historically under-represented minorities is needed before being willing to speak up or able to affect change. Tokenism and window dressing institutions with kupu Māori are not okay.

Additionally, there desperately needs to be a cultural shift in the research sector, simply asking Māori to join and then pushing them out is highly problematic. Given a high percentage of Aotearoa's population, especially in the research sector, is not New Zealand-born, additional professional development around te ao Māori, kaupapa Māori, and tikanga Māori is needed and should be included in research degrees and for those joining later in their career. This training is incredibly important, and the current paradigm in which researchers who do not already have knowledge must teach themselves in their spare time is insufficient. Progress towards anti-racist attitudes and ways of working is too slow.

Q26

Mātauranga Māori: What are your thoughts on how to enable and protect mātauranga Māori in the research system?(See pages 38-39 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

This discussion should be led by Māori.

Q27

Regionally based Māori knowledge hubs: What are your thoughts on regionally based Māori knowledge hubs?(See page 39 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

This discussion should be led by Māori.

Page 11: Section 5: Funding

Q28

Core Functions: How should we decide what constitutes a core function, and how do we fund them?(See pages 44-46 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

A guiding principle should be if the entity were dissolved, which parts of their work out have to be continued (regardless of their home) because of the nature of the good they are doing for the public. For example, I assume if GNS Science were dissolved, volcanic monitoring would continue to ensure lives are saved prior to an eruption.

When defining core functions, I think there should be significant consideration to what research government agencies are funding at other agencies and have been doing so continuously through many funding rounds. If government agencies are continually commissioning work, then perhaps this should be funded directly out of a base grant to make this funding more direct and cost-effective.

Q29

Yes

Establishing a base grant and base grant design: Do you think a base grant funding model will improve stability and resilience for research organisations?(See pages 46-49 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Q30

Establishing a base grant and base grant design: How should we go about designing and implementing such a funding model?(See pages 46-49 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

The Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) are doing research for the public good. It is unethical to charge for such research. If research can save lives, then it should be freely available. I do not want to be part of a society that prioritises profit over lives. Therefore, the requirement that CRIs should not be required to be profitable or even be viable companies. All "extra" money should be reinvested into additional research to improve New Zealanders' lives. Therefore, I support a base grant that supports core functions/research, also funds the staff who are supporting the research being done, some early career researchers (ECRs), and open access fees. I would hope by removing the precarity of CRIs would also encourage researchers who want to focus only on research to join CRIs and create space in the university system for researchers who want to teach.

Additionally, serious consideration should be given to funding the staff who support grants (i.e., technicians, project managers, etc.). In the current model, staff are brought on while there is funding to pay overheads that support their work. This adds precarity to their work and requires hiring support staff when grants are funded. When new staff are brought on, they have to be onboarded and trained. Keeping staff in institutions even when funding is lower would make the system more efficient. This would also decrease the overheads that institutions charge on staff time, meaning more competitive grants can go to research.

I also wonder if there is financial support to include a few ECR positions at each institute with the base funding model. I know several researchers who, as a rule, do not take on research fellows/ECRs because the overheads are simply too high and they lose too much money to overheads. Instead, they fund PhD students who are relatively inexpensive but still have the ability to conduct mostly independent research. This produces a glut of PhDs who have nowhere to go at the end of the degrees. While the base grant would not fully fund all ECRs, it would provide more opportunities and allow for a decrease on overheads.

Finally, many other countries legally require research funded by taxpayer money is published open access. This transparency and access to publicly funded work makes sense. Taxpayers should not have to pay to access what they have already paid to have conducted. This requirement has seen many governments negotiate open access fees with publishers. I am not sure this is necessarily part of a base grant, but I support taxpayer money being used to force us all into publishing open access and urge the government to enter these negotiations with academic publishers.

Page 12: Section 6: Institutions

Q31

Institution design: How do we design collaborative, adaptive and agile research institutions that will serve current and future needs?(See pages 57-58 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

I have two suggestions about institutional (and funding) design. First, the Green Paper comments that stakeholders find the current RSI difficult to navigate and connect with the right researchers to help on their problem. I have also heard this comment from international researchers who want to work with New Zealand scientists. Even internally, it can be difficult to the correct person if you are new to the system. I would like to propose an office (perhaps at the priority oversight level) that stakeholders (and researchers) can contact to help connect with the correct researcher. This office could also help researchers connect outwards to stakeholders. Anyone working in this office would need a very high-level view of research projects and the people working on them. This leads to my second suggestion, which is less about design but might be handled by the same office/people.

In previous sections of the Green Paper, there were concerns that there may be work that is duplicated or very similar projects running simultaneously who do not collaborate. When researchers submit conference sessions, there is often a phase in which similar sessions are combined by the conference organising committee before being approved. This seems like a model that could be built on to decrease duplication. Rather than forcing projects combine, it would be useful if funding bodies provide researchers a list of similar projects and the researchers working on them. These projects could already be in progress or be proposed in the same funding scheme. If this occurred at a short-listing step (rather than the funding step), then researchers would have an opportunity to discuss their respective projects to either make sure they compliment each other or even combine their proposals. The discussion prompted by such feedback by the funders could be used in the final selection stage if researchers are required to write a section about how their discussions shaped the final proposal or why the discussion did not affect their proposal.

Q32

Role of institutions in workforce development: How can institutions be designed to better support capability, skill and workforce development?(See page 58 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Even though lecturers and research fellows are at similar career stages and often on the same pay scale at universities (such as at the University of Auckland), friends have reported that research fellows do not have the same access to professional development as lecturers. This discrepancy should not be. There are relatively few research fellows. Some research fellows may be more likely to transition to a different institution, but professional development will make this jump easier. Providing research fellows an easier step to somewhere else would help decrease the sense that ECRs have nowhere to go.

Q33

Respondent skipped this question

Better coordinated property and capital investment: How should we make decisions on large property and capital investments under a more coordinated approach?(See pages 58-59 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Q34

Respondent skipped this question

Institution design and Te Tiriti: How do we design Tiriti-enabled institutions? (See page 59 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Q35

Knowledge exchange: How do we better support knowledge exchange and impact generation? What should be the role of research institutions in transferring knowledge into operational environments and technologies?(See pages 60-63 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

N.B. This relates to my comments about base funding and open access.

Many international funding bodies, including the European Commission and the United States' National Science Foundation, require intended knowledge translation to be explicitly addressed in funding proposals. This ensures that research conducted will both be applicable to stakeholders/the public and that these people will have access to this research (which their taxes are funding). This should also be required for funding here in Aotearoa New Zealand. This means public good research will be accessible and can be enacted even if stakeholders do not maintain expensive journal access.

Right now, number of publications and citations is integral to maintaining a career in research, but these numbers do not actually mean work is being put to use nor that the public can access this research. We need to shift away from these measures to impact, meaning how our work is helping and/or be implemented by stakeholders and communities. This is how we can demonstrate our work is for the public good. Talking to each other behind paywalls does not demonstrate our work is useful. This transition is extremely important and would recognise work being undertaken by Māori researchers more equitably in part because this is built into kaupapa Māori and in part because of racism in academic publishing. To make this transition, we really need leadership that values this. On that note, we also need to value leadership abilities which cannot be measured by publication and citation numbers.

Page 13: Section 7: Research workforce

Q36

Workforce and research Priorities: How should we include workforce considerations in the design of national research Priorities?(See pages 69-70 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

In general, while the number of researchers in Aotearoa New Zealand obviously cannot expand infinitely, it makes sense the number of researchers would expand as our economy transitions from being export focused to becoming knowledge driven. In order to make sure this new sector properly reflects Aotearoa New Zealand, some considerations and inequities need to be addressed. The underlying concern being expressed in the next few paragraphs is that parts of the RSI sector are inequitable and toxic, so a cultural shift is necessary to maintain the workforce we want.

First, I would like to propose that an independent body external to all of the RSI institutes be established. This ombudsman type of agency would be responsible for all investigations into complaints into issues arising from racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, etc. This is a really important move because internal investigations are not enough. Many whisper networks exist in Aotearoa New Zealand because institutions try very hard not to let funders know that there have been complaints about well funded researchers because they do not want to lose the overheads they are gaining from these well funded researchers. This is highly problematic and creates a toxic environment where some people avoid others or are simply decide to leave the system altogether because of the lack of basic respect afforded them. This not only hurts them (mentally and/or physically) but also harms the sector and country in general. We must stand up for each other and demand that our sector function with respect and equity. By having an external body, then funders will have easier access and can defund problematic researchers as has been done in Australia. This will have more of an impact than internal investigations that may have consequences that are too small to make a difference to ensure continued financial viability of the institution at the expense of its workforce.

Second, we to value our mana whenua. Some may want to do research using Western Science methods, kaupapa Māori, or both. This is enough. They should not be required to be ambassadors for their culture also. We need more cultural advisors to less the burden on Māori who just want to do research.

Third, during most of history, the phrase “gentleman scientist” was common. These were normally men who did not have to balance a career and caring/family responsibilities and were already independently wealthy. The figment of this idea still haunts the RSI sector in hiring and promotion criteria and internal policies. This is manifested in the slow contracting processes which can mean ECRs go months at a time without pay but still have to pay bills/take on bills to survive, in how we accommodate carers, in how parental policies are set up including return to work policies, requiring expenses are paid out of pocket to be reimbursed, etc. All of these situations are very common in our RSI and push workforce out of the sector. This needs to be addressed if we want to include more than the “gentleman scientists” in our workforce, and we should really want to include more than just the “gentleman scientists.” One way to change policies to make the sector more attractive to parents is to offer parental leave and then ease new parents back into work. In Germany, if you were working in the research sector before the birth, then you take parental leave before slowing increasing your full time equivalent back up to where you were. This process takes half a month to a year and allows new parents to figure out how to juggle work and their new caring responsibilities. Similarly, colleagues from Europe also report that they were given equal amounts of research leave when they first returned to work as they took parental leave to help them ramp their research back up again and decrease the impacts of a parental leave gap on their CV. Both of these policies would make our sector more family friendly.

Finally, to increase the number of ECRs who are not independently wealthy in research, grants should not explicitly advertise as waiting to award grants to ECRs and then not allow ECRs to fund their own time. Many ECRs are precariously employed, so they are then compelled to donate their time to do their research. ECRs feel compelled into these situations though to obtain the next job. Often, the choice is to be principal investigator on the grant (and help your CV and career) at the expense of being able to pay for the time you are going to put into the project. This is not a choice ECRs should be forced into and pushes ECRs who cannot afford to donate their time out of the sector. This situation should not be allowed.

Q37

Base grant and workforce: What impact would a base grant have on the research workforce?(See pages 70-71 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Please see previous answer to question about Base Grant Design.

Q38

Better designed funding mechanisms: How do we design new funding mechanisms that strongly focus on workforce outcomes? (See page 72 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)

Please see previous answer to question about Knowledge exchange.

Page 14: Section 8: Research infrastructure

Q39

Respondent skipped this question

Funding research infrastructure: How do we support sustainable, efficient and enabling investment in research infrastructure?(See pages 77-78 of the Green Paper for additional information related to this question)
