Te Ara Paerangi – Future Pathways Programme submission: proposal for formal Te Tiriti and mātauranga Māori curriculum for researchers

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This submission proposes that MBIE develop a formal, regular curriculum on Te Tiriti and mātauranga Māori for all researchers in Aotearoa who apply for government funds. We propose that this course be a requirement for funding, both base funding and project specific streams. More in-depth, optional, specialised courses would be offered for those researchers who work directly with human resources, be that communities, individuals, sensitive information related to communities or individuals, clinical samples, cell lines or data such as genomes or gene expression patterns; or for all researchers who work in Aotearoa with endemic and native non-human species; or for researchers who are involved in applying for funding for projects in Aotearoa that include any of the above. This programme would mirror similar training requirements enforced by the Ministry of Primary Industries regarding responsible animal use as per the Animal Welfare Act 1991 and the Environmental Protection Authority under Ministry for the Environment biosecurity protocols required for genetically modified organisms as per the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, for example. We consider ethical research with, by and on Māori to be of equal importance, justifying widespread minimum basic training. Such minimum basic training has been proposed by the National Science Challenges and Ngā Pae o te Māramataka Rauika Māngai in the 'Guide to Vision Mātauranga' report from 2020 (pg. 11, 69).

It would address the following question in the Green Paper:

- *Key Question 5: What are your thoughts on how to enable and protect mātauranga Māori in the research system?*

The programme would consist of a short seminar (basic training) or a longer detailed programme (sector specific), to be completed before initiation of projects and a refresher course every 12 months. It could be carried out by an authorised in-house cultural advisor, or an external contracted party, and would involve post-seminar quizzes on basic cultural competency. It would consist of the following topics, with optional exploration of sector relevant information in the detailed programmes:

1. General topics
    a. Basic content of Te Tiriti and relevance to research in modern day Aotearoa.
    b. Basic explanation of mātauranga Māori and unique value to research.
2. Sector specific topics
    a. Basic te reo terms relevant to their sector.
    b. Basic overview of Māori inequities in the researcher audience sector.
    c. Brief history of Māori community relationships with research in their sector.
3. Code of conduct when engaging with Māori and Māori communities in the course of research, whether that be as:
    a. External community collaborator (e.g. iwi sharing research relevant mātauranga/knowledge on e.g. local waterway)
    b. External service provider (e.g. field guide)
    c. Research subject (e.g. clinical trial patients and whānau)
    d. Fellow researcher (e.g. PhD student)
4. Group lead/Funding applicant specific topic
    a. Best practices and behaviour to avoid in incorporating mātauranga Māori into existing or proposed research (e.g. Vision Mātauranga in funding applications, project design considerations)
5. Time for general questions and discussion on mātauranga, Māori communities, and research, which can take place in a space that does not put that burden on Māori colleagues.

This programme would, in the short term:
1. Vastly and quickly increase the basic knowledge of the entire hierarchy of the Research Science and Innovation (RSI) system, especially amongst tangata Tiriti who lack cultural competency, and international researchers choosing to undertake research in Aotearoa. Many researchers are aware cultural competency is an area they need to improve in, but are unsure how best to go about this.
2. Move Te Tiriti and mātauranga Māori from an optional career development upskill for those researchers already inclined to further knowledge on Te Ao Māori into a required key minimum competency for every researcher whose work impacts Māori.
3. Decrease the chance of racist research being carried out, whether that be stealing Māori intellectual property, perpetuating racist stereotypes, inadequate consultation, or erecting barriers to Māori access to research outcomes such as medical therapies.
4. Formalise, centralise and standardise already existing cultural training courses for researchers in Aotearoa. It is envisioned that this would reduce but not eliminate the need for already existing training programmes within institutions, as these could be reprioritised to give more industry specific (e.g. clinical, taonga species etc) or in-

depth training. The course would also not replace the need for project-specific community engagement, but serve as foundational knowledge for that work to begin.

5. Minimise rare Māori researchers having to work double shifts/aronga takirua to oversee research from their tangata Tiriti colleagues and make sure it is culturally ethical and safe, while also trying to carry out their own research. Especially for those Māori researchers where a cultural advisor role is not part of their designated job description.

This programme would, in the long term:

1. Increase Māori trust in the RSI system, and therefore increase equity and diversity as Māori see the RSI system as a viable career choice.
2. Improve connectivity between the RSI system and Māori communities and therefore lead to more and better collaborations and successful research.
3. Normalise the consideration of tikanga and Te Ao Māori values in all sectors of research in Aotearoa, and lead to deeper general understanding among RSI workers and their associates of Te Tiriti, mātauranga Māori and Te Ao Māori in general.
4. Serve as a pilot for efficient and effective cultural literacy and reciprocity training that reduces surprise scenarios for international collaborations.

Feasibility. A government programme that requires Aotearoa researchers to display minimum cultural competency would have some start-up costs required, and would take time to approve curriculum, publicise the new requirement, and train course providers. However, taking advantage of the training resources for similar already extant courses within several institutions, this set-up cost and time can be minimised. Examples of training programmes already in use are:

1. Te Tiriti Course led by Robert Consadine based on material in his book (Consedine and Consedine, 2012)
2. The Science for Technological Innovation (SfTI) Capacity Development Programme, which includes modules on Vision Mātauranga (Q.10, pg 14)
3. University courses, for example:
   a. Manukau Institute of Technology programme on cultural competency
   b. Victoria University of Wellington Te Hāpai programme
   c. Massey University course on Te Reo and tikanga Māori
4. Various international graduate and undergraduate courses based on the book 'Decolonising Methodologies' by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Smith, 2012) for instance in Australia, the UK and USA.

Conclusion. A government Te Tiriti and Mātauranga Māori programme for researchers would undoubtedly improve the research, science, and innovation system, with long-term benefits and reach beyond the RSI sector. Although it would require not insignificant set-up costs, the

benefits both intangible and tangible would strengthen the RSI system as a whole and more than make up for this investment. This proposal would roundly improve the RSI system and support the aspirations of the Te Ara Paerangi – Future Pathways Programme as a modern, accessible, inclusive, and productive sector of Aotearoa.

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