

#46

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Page 2: Section 1: submitter contact information

Q1

Name

A/Prof Jo James

Privacy - 9(2)(a)



Q3

Yes

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

Yes

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?

Privacy - 9(2)(a)



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

University

What type of organisation do you work for?

Q14

No

Is it a Māori-led organisation?

Q15

Biomedical and clinical sciences

Which disciplines are most relevant to your work?

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)

Coordinated research priorities would be best defined by focussing on the problem, and bringing different perspectives and approaches to solve that in a cohesive way.

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)

There needs to be a mix between 'top down (government/society)' and 'bottom up (researcher driven)' inputs to identify the key problems/issues. This will help ensure that work is focussed on meeting real needs, but also helps capitalize on existing research strengths in NZ - ie where do we have the most potential to make significant impacts in areas that affect us. There needs to be a balance between short term focus on immediate problems at hand, and longer term focus on developing fundamental knowledge and skills that may be applicable to future problems.

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

Respondent skipped this question

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

Q26

Respondent skipped this question

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)

Q27

Respondent skipped this question

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)

Page 11: Section 5: Funding

Q28

Respondent skipped this question

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)

Q29

Not sure

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)

Whether this will improve stability and resilience depends on how the base grant works in practice - who applies for this? Faculties? Institutions? Is this an additional funding application required for research groups to 'stay alive'? What would such a base grant be assessed on?

It is important to consider that while large overheaded grants (Marsden, HRC) play important roles in research funding, because of their low success rates, a significant amount of the research going on in Universities (I would say the majority) is infact generated by cobbling together smaller amounts of money and consumables grants that fund postgraduate student research costs, or partial technician salaries, and are not overheaded. Thus I would argue that the overall volume of research in NZ is not at present as 'full cost' funded as the government suspects it is.

I like the idea of base grants supporting full salaries, and can see particular stability opportunities to aid early and mid career researchers here. However, this again comes back to who (within a large organisation such as a University) gets to decide who is supported by that?

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)

In my opinion the major resource constraint to improving collaboration, Māori engagement, stakeholder relationships and connectivity for many university based researchers is not institution design, but simply time. PIs in universities are overstretched as a result of the underfunding of research in NZ, where low success rates and budget caps that have not shifted in 10+ years despite rising research costs mean that multiple successful grant applications can be needed to undertake a single piece of work. A lack of postdoctoral funding opportunities in the system further depletes a critical part of research infrastructure that provide support to PIs and their research groups. This means we frequently find ourselves struggling to keep our heads above water with day to day tasks and deadlines to keep the lab running, the reality of which means that as much as we do not want them to, other worthy tasks (such as Māori and community engagement, or spending time developing additional collaborative partnerships and stakeholder relationships) can get put on the backburner.

Q32

Respondent skipped this question

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)

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

Respondent skipped this question

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)

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)

We need to acknowledge that the NZ research system is largely held up by PhD students, as these are the only research staff that can be afforded. This is not the most effective way to function, and is akin to running an accounting firm with a CEO and a pool of grads, and none of the layers of expertise inbetween. As such, being able to fund salaries of long term technical staff and postdocs that form critical layers within the research workforce is key to make the whole system operating better.

A further key consideration is that within universities researchers need to regularly financially support their own salary up to the top of the Senior Research Fellow scale (approx 15 years post PhD) or even to Associate Professor, via grant funding and fixed term contracts to be competitive for any permanent academic positions that arise. These researchers are functioning as PIs, and are a key component of the research system. Mechanisms need to be in place to enable top researchers to actually be able to achieve this. Fellowships for mid-career researchers (8-15 years post PhD) are few and far between, and major grants only allow about 20% of salary to be included in a PI role.

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)

This depends entirely on the level this base grant is awarded at, which was not clear in the document.

If a base grant was able to help reduce the precarity of ECR and MCR workforce this would be a great asset.

Re tying base grants to performance expectations - again, does this link to the university / faculty / department or individual level? Too large and those performing well would feel the burden and unfairness of carrying those who are not, too small and there is a large increase in administration.

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)

At the most basic level, a key factor in design that needs to be included is the ability to afford to budget postdoctoral salaries into major grants. At present the maximum Marsden budget has not moved for a significant time, while researcher salary and consumable costs (and PhD stipends now) keep rising. This in effect means that it is extremely difficult to include postdoctoral salaries (which attract 115% overheads) in Marsden budgets, with a L1 researcher just able to be squeezed in for 2 out of the 3 years if the budget is jiggled to make it look like they are part time across 3 years to not break the annual maximum. This is an issue because it means there is no way to retain researchers with specific expertise within a group - when someone finishes their first postdoc we are unable to re-employ them on a later Marsden at full salary because they are no longer on the lowest salary band. It also means the contract length of postdoctoral researchers doesn't match the funding cycle. Our largest grants should enable us to support world leading research, and at the moment they are not large enough to do this. A similar concept applies to HRC grants.

As discussed above, there is also a critical gap in funding for mid-career researchers, who must support their own salary for up to 15 years (sometimes more) to be competitive for faculty positions nowadays.

My overseas colleagues in the US and Europe whose applications I am sent to review can essentially put the same time and effort into a grant application, and receive 3-5x the amount of money, with 2-3x the chance of success. I appreciate budgets here are more limited in scope, and NZ has a number of research advantages in the collegiality of the way that people work together, but we need to see some movement towards change on the funding front (increase in grant size, increase in funding rates if possible). Is it any wonder that many NZ researchers are leaving the country and will continue to do so?

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)
