Research Impact Framework
2022

INTRODUCTION

The University of Otago *Research Impact Framework* presents a programme of support to help University of Otago scholars achieve optimal impact through their research.

The Framework was developed partly in response to the New Zealand Government's increased focus upon evidence of impact as a requirement for research funding – such evidence demonstrating value for money. Articulation of the impact of research is now compulsory in many funds at the ("ex-ante") planning and application stages, and at the ("ex-post") reporting stage following funding.

The Government's shift towards a focus on impact was signalled in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE's) *Impact of Science Discussion Paper* (2017) and *Impact of Research Position Paper* (2019). In the position paper, MBIE defines research impact as: "A change to the economy, society or environment, beyond contribution to knowledge and skills in research organisations."

A Research Impact Working Group comprising research support staff from across the University was established to discuss a response to these papers. The Working Group presented a review of research impact to the DVCs/PVCs Advisory Group in late 2019. This paper included a recommendation that the Working Group further explore engagement with research impact across the University with a view towards making formal recommendations about how this engagement could be optimized. The *Research Impact Framework* is the culmination of that work.

The Framework seeks to articulate a nuanced and broad response to impact, addressing Government signals while engaging impact on our own terms – promoting the University of Otago's identity, values and self-determined strategic priorities, and our capacity to work autonomously as a critic and conscience of society.

The University of Otago *Research Impact Framework* was approved by Senate on Wednesday 29 June 2022.

Research Impact Framework

Where we are now

GOAL

Providing a framework of support that enables researchers to engage successfully with the impact agenda.

PURPOSE

The Research Impact Framework responds directly to stakeholder-identified research impact priorities, outlining a programme of support that advances the University's contribution to the application of skills and knowledge to benefit society, the environment and the economy.

CHALLENGES FOR OUR SERVICES

- Limited knowledge of impact requirements among researchers and research support staff.
- Additional workload created by impact responsiveness.
- Uncertainty around future research funding.
- Some outdated IT systems and infrastructure.
- Difficulty predicting impact for some disciplines – impact could occur years later than the research.
- Limited resources and infrastructure to translate research to impact.

What we want to do over the next three years

PILLAR 1: Awareness, Culture and Planning

- **1.1** Promote the importance of research impact to the University
- **1.2** Create incentives and mechanisms to encourage planning for impact and to showcase impact achievements
- **1.3** Promote University research undertaken by and for Māori & Pasifika
- **1.4** Monitor national and global sources for research impact developments
- **1.5** Communicate research impact developments to the University community

PILLAR 2: Enablers

- **2.1** Support researchers to plan and implement pathways to impact
- **2.2** Provide research impact training & support resources & professional development opportunities
- **2.3** Develop online tools for researchers to use to increase impact
- **2.4** Address barriers to engaging with impact
- **2.5** Support researcher engagement with Treaty responsiveness requirements
- **2.6** Support optimal resourcing of research impact data systems

PILLAR 3: Knowledge Exchange

- **3.1** Engage with communities outside academia and build research partnerships
- **3.2** Advise Government from areas of expertise
- **3.3** Support and advance research commercialisation
- **3.4** Increasing uptake of Otago research by Government, communities, business, health and social services, individuals, other stakeholders
- **3.5** Knowledge exchange through disciplinary transfer

PILLAR 4: Evidence and Celebrating Success

- **4.1** Increasing quantity of researcher impact data stored in the Otago Research Information System and MyResearch
- **4.2** Collect and collate research impact data and case studies to track performance
- **4.3** Communicate our research impact achievements to key stakeholders
- **4.4** Demonstrable benefits to economic, social & environmental health & wellbeing attributable to Otago research
- **4.5** Increasing public recognition of the value of Otago research
- **4.6** Leverage our reputation for delivering impact to help secure new research partnership and funding opportunities

CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ The Government and its associated funding bodies, particularly MBIE, are requiring evidence of the impact of funded research. The quality (and quantity) of impact evidence is likely to influence future funding disbursements.
- ❖ The Government and associated funding bodies are also strengthening Treaty responsiveness requirements at the application and reporting stages of research funding.

STRENGTHS WE CAN LEVERAGE

- ✓ Institutional commitment to serving as a critic and conscience of society.
- ✓ Highly skilled staff.
- ✓ A culture of collaboration.
- ✓ Strong domestic and international networks.
- ✓ Excellent support at senior levels of the organisation.
- ✓ Access to the resources required to deliver.

What we want to achieve

- ✓ Research impact is embedded as a motivating principle in all research activity.
- ✓ Our research promotes the national interest.
- ✓ Our research has beneficial impact within and beyond academia, including internationally.
- ✓ Our research advances the University's strategic intentions and enhances its role as critic and conscience of society.
- ✓ The Treaty of Waitangi is upheld through excellent support of Māori researchers and Māori research activity.
- ✓ Pasifika research is supported to promote career momentum for Pasifika researchers and beneficial impact for Pasifika communities.
- ✓ Our researchers enjoy success with research funding rounds.
- ✓ Our researchers enjoy success with the Performance-Based Research Fund and other evaluations.
- ✓ Research staff achieve recognition for impact.
- ✓ Increased revenue from commercial successes.
- ✓ Graduate research students are supported to achieve impact.
- ✓ The new ORIS and CRM systems provide improved support for impact and other research data.
- ✓ Support processes efficiently enable research impact.
- ✓ Staff workloads are effectively managed to ensure good health and work/life balance.
- ✓ Activities are delivered from the correct areas.

To learn more visit:
otago.ac.nz/research/

PILLAR 1: AWARENESS, CULTURE AND PLANNING

Objective	Activity	Internal Stakeholders
1.1: Promote the importance of research impact to the University	• Deliver workshops to describe the different kinds of impact; provide an overview of the significance of research impact within major funding rounds; and provide basic training in how to "plan for impact" in funding applications	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions; Otago Innovation Limited
	• Communicate the value of appointing research staff with demonstrated ability to deliver high impact from their research	DVC R&E; PVCs Academic; Research Committee; Human Resources
	• Champion impact at the highest levels of the University and embed into University-wide strategic planning	DVC R&E, VCAG; Strategy, Analytics & Reporting
	• Establish multiple communication pathways for informing researchers on what impact means	Research & Enterprise; Library; External Engagement; HEDC; Human Resources
	• Integrate impact agenda priorities consistently across all Academic HR processes including performance review, promotion and Confirmation Path	HEDC; Human Resources
1.2: Create incentives and mechanisms to encourage planning for impact and to showcase impact achievements	• Incorporate research impact as a factor/criterion within academic promotion policies and monitor its application	Human Resources
	• Embed impact planning requirements within internal research funding rounds (University of Otago Research Grants; Research Centres, Themes and Networks; etc.)	DVC R&E; Research Committee; PVCs
	• Targeted internal funding pool for impact development and planning	DVC R&E; Research Committee; PVCs
	• Incorporate impact case studies/statements into Quality Advancement Unit academic department reviews	DVC R&E; DVC Academic; PVCs; Quality Advancement Unit
	• Establish University-wide impact highlights reporting, including case studies from all Divisions	DVC R&E; External Engagement; Academic Divisions
1.3: Promote University research undertaken by and for Māori and Pasifika	• Showcase nationally and regionally important research taking place in partnership with Māori and/or Pasifika communities	External Engagement; Academic Divisions; Research & Enterprise; Māori academic staff; Pacific academic staff
	• Promote Māori and Pasifika research funding opportunities to University researchers, and support associated funding application processes	Te Poutama Māori; Associate Deans Māori; Pacific Academic Staff Caucus; Associate Deans Pacific; Office for Māori Development; Office for Pacific Development; Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
	• Support implementation of MBIE's Vision Mātauranga throughout the University's research	Māori academic staff; DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
1.4: Monitor national and global sources for research impact developments	• Review Government and major funding agencies for changes to policy/research impact requirements	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office; Senior Research & Policy Analyst
	• Scan international sources for research impact developments in benchmark funding systems (UK, Australia, etc.)	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office; Senior Research & Policy Analyst
	• Monitor national and global sources for best practice in research impact data capture and benchmarking (information systems, bibliometrics, etc.)	Research & Enterprise; Library; PBRF & Publications Office; Strategy, Analytics & Reporting
1.5: Communicate research impact developments to the University community	• Communicate policy and technology changes to University researchers through committees and internal communications	Research & Enterprise; Library

PILLAR 2: ENABLERS

Objective	Activity	Internal Stakeholders
2.1: Support researchers to plan and implement pathways to impact	• Encourage researchers to utilise Research and Enterprise as a source of advice, and provide individual support, as required	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
	• Professional development for Research and Enterprise in supporting researchers to achieve impact	Research & Enterprise
	• Research impact planning and advice becomes standard part of initial Research Advisor meeting with new research staff	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
	• Co-design, stakeholder engagement plan, implementation planning becomes standard part of conversation between Research and Enterprise and researchers planning to submit grant applications.	Research & Enterprise
	• Update the University of Otago Intellectual Property Rights Policy to allow researchers to translate their research outputs into commercial products and/or services through easier/simpler IP protection processes, enabling researcher-led start-up, proactive licensing and so on.	Otago Innovation Limited; Research & Enterprise
	• Provide training and support resources to assist academic decision-making on the best research translation path, including options other than IP commercialisation and contract research	Research & Enterprise; Otago Innovation Limited
	• Appoint dedicated Research Impact Advisers in Research and Enterprise	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise
	• Resource Research and Enterprise Business Development Managers team to provide support for stakeholder engagement for knowledge exchange (not just pursuit of funding).	PVCs Academic; Vice-Chancellor; DVCs
	• Employ specialist evaluation staff (e.g. economists, health impact evaluation experts) to provide evidence of impact for both research and capital investments	DVC R&E; Operations Division
2.2: Provide research impact training and support resources and professional development opportunities	• Develop and deliver workshops to staff and students around the integral role of research impact within the major funding mechanisms.	Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office; Graduate Research School; PVCs Academic
	• Develop guidelines for each major fund to support researchers in developing optimal "line-of-sight to impact" statements in their funding applications	Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office
	• Work with HEDC and the Academic Leadership Programme to develop, test and deliver impact workshops focused (broadly) by research field	Research & Enterprise; HEDC; Human Resources
	• Develop guidelines for academics who choose to select commercialisation as their impact pathway, to ensure that they do not inadvertently disclose their IP before an IP assessment/provisional patent application is filed	Otago Innovation Limited; Research & Enterprise
	• Deliver training workshops focussed on specific techniques for influencing non-academic audience (e.g. social media, crowd funding, citizen science, wānanga, engaging with mass media)	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions; External Engagement; University Library
	• Advise researchers about alternative means of research dissemination and knowledge exchange (social media, wānanga, citizen science, etc.)	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions; External Engagement
	• Ensure adequate training in commercialisation of research is offered to all early career staff	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
2.3: Develop online tools for researchers to use to increase impact	• Establish a research impact webpage for dedicated resources	Research & Enterprise; Library
	• Develop a database/library of best practice case studies for each fund	Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office
	• Promote and provide training for online impact tracking and evidence collection tools	Research & Enterprise; PVCs Academic; Library
	• Ensure research impact resources and links are incorporated within the refurbishment of Research Division webpages	Research & Enterprise; External Engagement; Office of the DVC R&E

2.4: Address barriers to engaging with impact	• Access to funding for stakeholder engagement and co-design, for example via University of Otago Research Grants (UORGs)	DVC R&E; Research Committee
	• Allowance for academic FTE devoted to community/stakeholder engagement	Vice-Chancellor; PVCs Academic
	• Recognise success in areas of impact, stakeholder engagement, inclusive research practice in annual performance review	Vice-Chancellor; PVCs Academic; Research Committee
	• Ensure the University supports increased external engagement activities while respecting sustainable development goals and environmental, health and financial pressures	Vice-Chancellor; Human Resources; Financial Services Directorate
2.5: Support researcher engagement with Treaty responsiveness requirements	• Embed Treaty responsiveness requirements within internal research funding rounds (UORGs; Research Centres, Themes and Networks; etc.)	DVC R&E; Research Committee (with the guidance of its Māori members); Research & Enterprise
	• Provide support for researchers to address Government priorities around Māori health and science and innovation, including MBIE's Vision Mātauranga and HRC's Māori Health Advancement.	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise (Kaitakawaenga Rakahau Māori); Academic Divisions
	• Health Sciences Division Māori Health Advancement Workshops generalised for all divisions and rolled out on a continuing basis by Human Resources and the Higher Education Development Centre.	Human Resources; HEDC
	• Support ongoing implementation of the annual Te Poutama Māori Advancing Research Collaboration Funding Round	Te Poutama Māori; Office of Māori Development; Research & Enterprise; PVCs Academic; Research Committee
2.6: Support optimal resourcing of research impact data systems	• Advise development of the University's new Otago Research Information System, including capacity to collect impact evidence	Research & Enterprise, ITS
	• Ensure MyResearch provides optimal functionality for researchers, including capacity to reference impact evidence	PBRF & Publications Office
	• Provide expert input into decisions around bibliometric and altmetrics purchases or subscriptions	Library, Research & Enterprise

PILLAR 3: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Objective	Activity	Internal Stakeholders
3.1: Engage with communities outside academia and build research partnerships	• Engage early and appropriately with relevant communities and stakeholders in planning and prioritizing research, including co-design	Academic Divisions; External Engagement; Office of Māori Development (in support of mana whenua engagement); Office of Pacific Development
	• Support and promote research collaboration with stakeholders and communities	Academic Divisions; External Engagement; Māori academic staff; Pacific academic staff
	• Communicate outstanding or important research to our communities via media, alumni networks, committee participation and other fora	Academic Divisions; External Engagement
	• Promote public lectures, exhibitions and performances	Academic Divisions; External Engagement
	• Make research information readily available to our communities via media, public fora, presentations at community spaces, and targeted meetings	Academic Divisions; External Engagement; Māori academic staff; Pacific academic staff; Office of Māori Development; Office of Pacific Development
3.2: Advise Government from areas of expertise	• Provide research-based expert advice to the Government to inform decision making and policy, including critical response	Research Staff; University Senior Management
	• Provide expert research-based opinions to the media on relevant matters	Research Staff; University Senior Management; External Relations
	• Influence Government research policy and/or funding consultation processes by making high-quality submissions	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise
3.3: Support and advance research commercialisation	• Identify research that has potential for commercialisation and provide appropriate support (including IP protection) at an early stage.	Research Staff; Research & Enterprise; Otago Innovation Limited
	• Connect research with commercialisation potential to technology transfer experts and funding agencies at early stages.	Research Staff; Research & Enterprise; Otago Innovation Limited
	• Support training and development for researchers in research commercialisation	Research Staff; Research & Enterprise; Otago Innovation Limited
3.4: Increasing uptake of Otago research by Government, communities, business, health and social services, individuals, other stakeholders	• Collect and collate evidence of uptake of our research outputs by end users	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions; Office of Māori Development; Office of Pacific Development; Sustainability Office
	• Promote uptake and effectiveness of our research in the media	External Engagement; Academic Divisions
3.5: Knowledge exchange through disciplinary transfer	• Promote and share knowledge from the cutting edge of disciplinary research	Research staff; Research & Enterprise; External Engagement

PILLAR 4: EVIDENCE AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Objective	Activity	Internal Stakeholders
4.1: Increasing quantity of researcher impact data stored in the Otago Research Information System and MyResearch	• Communicate importance of research impact to researchers, as per activities listed under Objective 1.1 above	Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office; Academic Divisions
	• Complete planning for the new Otago Research Information System (ORIS) – including allowance for optimal storage capacity for research impact data, and begin implementation	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office
	• Continue refining MyResearch to ensure optimal storage of research impact data	DVC R&E; PBRF & Publications Office
4.2: Collect and collate research impact data and case studies to track performance	• Collect and collate research impact data from PBRF rounds and other major research evaluations to track performance	Research & Enterprise; PBRF & Publications Office; Library; Strategy, Analytics & Reporting Office
	• Ensure there is a standard process for collecting case studies across our academic divisions	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions
4.3: Communicate our research impact achievements to key stakeholders	• Report research impact data/success to funding agencies as required	Research & Enterprise; External Engagement
	• Communicate research impact success to University staff and our local and national communities via media release and events	External Engagement; PVCs Academic
	• Annual reporting against the commitments and activities in this Plan (disseminated via the University's Annual Report, He Kitenga, etc.)	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; Strategy, Analytics & Reporting
	• Promote research that has achieved positive effect in terms of equity and social justice (via internal bulletins, external media releases, etc.)	External Engagement; Academic Divisions; Research & Enterprise
	• Promote research that has achieved positive effect in advancing environmental and economic sustainability practices	External Engagement; Academic Divisions; Research & Enterprise
4.4: Demonstrable benefits to economic, social and environmental health and wellbeing attributable to Otago research	• Collect and collate evidence of improved economic, social and environmental health and wellbeing attributable to Otago research	Research & Enterprise; Academic Divisions; Office of Māori Development; Office of Pacific Development; Sustainability Office; Equity & Diversity Committee
	• Promote benefits of our research in the media	External Engagement; Academic Divisions
4.5: Increasing public recognition of the value of Otago research	• Promote impactful University research via the media, University reporting mechanisms (including Annual Report and He Kitenga), lectures, conferences, showcases, community hui and fono	DVC R&E; External Engagement; University senior management; Academic Divisions
	• Collect and collate evidence of positive media coverage of University research	External Engagement; University Library
4.6: Leverage our reputation for delivering impact to help secure new research partnership and funding opportunities	• Promote our funding and impact successes to influence new research opportunities	DVC R&E; Research & Enterprise; External Engagement; Academic Divisions