

CHARTER OF THE MELBOURNE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Made under Section 7 of the Vice-Chancellor Regulation

1 Definitions

“institute” means interdisciplinary research institute

“interdisciplinary research institute” means an institute established under this Charter to promote research linkages and collaboration across the University and to play a lead role in articulating University research to external audiences

2 Establishment

Institutes established after December 2018 are established under Section 7(1) of the Vice-Chancellor Regulation. Earlier Institutes were established under section 13(3) of the Council Regulation. In 2020 the commitment to Interdisciplinary Research Institutes was reaffirmed under the Advancing Melbourne strategy. Current and disestablished institutes are listed in the schedule to this Charter.

3 Common Objectives and Functions of Institutes

In addition to the particular objectives and functions related to their respective fields of operation, Institutes are aligned with the Advancing Melbourne strategic plan and have the following objectives in common:

- (a) to respond to societal concerns which require interdisciplinary research approaches;
- (b) to increase public awareness of, and debate on, critical issues in their field;
- (c) to raise the profile of University research as the basis for various forms of partnerships;
- (d) to develop relationships with relevant government departments and instrumentalities, educational institutions, and government and private research agencies, both within Australia and internationally;
- (e) to promote, and attract funding for, interdisciplinary research in a recognised area of strength of the University;
- (f) to encourage, design and consider proposals for research projects, particularly collaborative research projects across the University;
- (g) to support research activities in selected priority areas, specific to their respective fields of operation;
- (h) to provide a point of contact for University and external parties interested in their field of operation; and
- (i) to provide advice to the University on any matter which it considers appropriate relating to the field of operation of the Institute.

4 Director and Staff

- (1) The Director of an Institute is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) after consultation with the Dean of the relevant faculty to which the Director is to report on operational matters, as set out in the schedule to this regulation (“host Dean”).
- (2) The Director reports to
 - (a) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on strategic and financial matters; and
 - (b) a host Dean on operational matters.

- (3) The Director is responsible to the University through:
- (a) the host Dean for ensuring that the Institute discharges its academic and administrative functions in accordance with the statutes, regulations, policies and procedures of the University; and
 - (b) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) for ensuring the Institute conforms with policies relevant to Institutes that are established by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) from time to time.
- (4) A Deputy Director of an Institute may be appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the recommendation of the Director.
- (5) Any Deputy Director appointed under (4) reports to the Director.
- (6) Nothing in (4) or (5) requires each Institute to have a Deputy Director.
- (7) All appointments to an Institute, including those in (1) and (4), are staff of the University.

5 Organisational arrangements

- (1) The Director of an Institute is responsible for establishing arrangements for the effective operation of the Institute which include:
- (a) an appropriate administrative structure, to support the Director;
 - (b) the establishment of a body (which may be termed the Institute Executive) that includes researchers with significant involvement in Institute research activities, and that provides advice to the Director on matters such as research development and the quality of Institute research activity;
 - (c) mechanisms by which academic staff of the University with expertise relevant to the field of operation of the Institute have the opportunity to be engaged with Institute activities; and
 - (d) the establishment of a body (which may be termed the Institute's Advisory Group) with advisory input to the Director and Institute Executive, if applicable, to provide high level advice, and to promote the interests of the Institute.
- (2) The composition and terms applicable to the bodies referred to in paragraphs (b) and (d) of sub-section (1) are to be determined by the Director and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) provided the maximum term of external members is three years.
- (3) Nothing in sub-section (2) prevents the re-appointment of a member.
- (4) The Director of an Institute is responsible for ensuring that details of the arrangements in this section, including the membership and frequency of meetings of the relevant bodies, are published in a form approved by the University Secretary and accessible throughout the University.
- (5) In exercising the responsibilities of the role, the Director is to have regard to advice and recommendations provided from time to time by the Institute Executive and the Advisory Group, as applicable.
- (6) Annually, and within the University planning cycle or as otherwise agreed between the Director and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), the strategic directions, operational arrangements and program of activities of the Institute are to be included in a plan prepared by the Director, in consultation with the Institute Executive and the Advisory Group, as applicable.

- (7) That plan is to be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) following consultation with deans of faculties and schools that have involvement in the Institute.

6 Reporting and review of Institute

- (1) Each Director will report at least annually to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and to the host Dean on operations of the Institute, or as otherwise requested by the relevant officer.
- (2) Each Institute will be reviewed on a three year cycle, or as otherwise determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).
- (3) The outcome of such a review may be the continuation or the disestablishment of the Institute.

7 Review of Charter

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) must review this Charter on an annual basis and request the Vice-Chancellor to approve any amendments.

Schedule to Charter

Current interdisciplinary research Institutes of the University comprise those named below. The listing also shows the host Dean to which each Institute Director reports on operational matters.

- Melbourne Energy Institute | Dean, Faculty of Science
- Melbourne Social Equity Institute | Dean, Melbourne Law School
- Melbourne Disability Institute | Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
- Indigenous Knowledge Institute | Dean, Faculty of Science.

Former Melbourne Interdisciplinary Research Institutes comprise those named below:

- Melbourne Materials Institute (*disest-2014*) | Melbourne School of Engineering
- Melbourne Neuroscience Institute (*disest-2019*) | Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
- Networked Society Institute (name change from the Institute for a Broadband Enabled Society in 2015) (*disest-2019*) | Melbourne School of Engineering
- Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (*disest-2022*) | Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning