Newcastle University

RESEARCH POLICY AND STRATEGY

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Related documents

UJ documents	Other
(e.g. Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Contracts)	(e.g. Legislation, DoE and HEQC directives and guidelines)
• Charter for University Research Committee • UJ Higher Degrees and Postgraduate Studies Policy; • UJ Policy on the Student-Supervisor Relationship ; • UJ Policy on Academic Co-Authorship; • Policy on the Protection, Management and Commercial Exploitation of Intellectual	• ....

Property; • VC Distinguished Researcher Awards; • UJ Policy on Research Ethics; • UJ Policy on Third Stream Income; • UJ Policy on Human Resource Management of Non-Core Income Generating Activities of Academic Employees; • Strategy for Diversifying Income Resources; • Financial Policy in Respect of Non-Subsidized Academic Programmes, Solicited Research and Consultation • UJ Vision and Mission; • UJ Strategic Plan.	
Stakeholders affected by this document (units and divisions who should be familiar with it): • Senate; • Subcommittees of Senate; • Faculty Boards and Subcommittees of Faculty Boards; • Executive Dean and Deputy/Vice-Deans; • Executive Directors and relevant Directors; • Heads of Departments; • Staff and students.	
Website address of this document:	**Intranet** / **Forms and Documents** / **Research and Innovation**

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RESEARCH POLICY AND STRATEGY

1. PREAMBLE

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Strategic Plan commits the university to distinguished scholarship and reputable research and innovation, and to the promotion of internationally competitive research as a core strategic goal. To ensure that South Africa can compete in a globally competitive environment, this commitment to research is aligned with the national imperative to encourage more postgraduate studies, to increase the production of traditional research outputs (as defined by research articles, books, book chapters, and conference proceedings) and to expand the pool of researchers that can contribute to knowledge production and generation in our society.

The purpose of this document is to:

- present a policy framework for the management, support and development of research at the UJ, and
- provide a strategy on how to achieve the research goals.

The responsibility for the implementation of the research policy resides with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement and the Executive Director: Research and Innovation. Such responsibility is exercised through the University Research Committee (URC), which functions in accordance with the authority delegated to it by Senate. The Research and Innovation Division is responsible for implementing the strategy and exercising institutional-level responsibilities and functions, while the faculties take ownership of and manage research operations.

The following definitions of different types of research apply:

Research and development is "creative work undertaken systematically to increase the store of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications".

Basic research is "experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view".

The results of basic research are not generally sold but are usually published in scientific journals or circulated to interested colleagues.

Strategic research (also known as oriented research) is "research carried out with the expectation that it will produce a broad base of knowledge likely to form the background to the solution of recognised or expected current or future problems or offer possibilities for solving them".

Applied research is "original investigation in order to acquire new knowledge". It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective. The results of applied research are intended primarily to be valid for a single or limited number of products, operations, methods or systems. The knowledge or information derived from applied research is often patented but may also be kept secret [OECD document entitled "Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development" (also known as the "Frascati Manual"), 2002 by Eurostat].

2. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH POLICY

The policy outlines the guiding principles regarding the management, support and development of research to all those involved in research at the University of Johannesburg. It is applicable to all temporary, fixed-term contract and permanent employees, as well as registered students of the University.

The purpose of the policy is to:

2.1 provide a framework for the governance of research and research development;

2.2 affirm research as a priority;

2.3 provide for continued high-level, effective and efficient support for research;

2.4 ensure the fair treatment of all researchers, staff and students;

2.5 ensure effective communication (internally and externally) about the principles and policies on which the research activities of the University are founded;

2.6 establish rational, transparent and collective decision-making processes around the allocation of research funds and other kinds of support for research;

2.7 balance the needs of research capacity development against those of established researchers;

2.8 integrate support for postgraduate research into the main research system; and

2.9   clarify roles and functions within the university research system.

3.   PRINCIPLES OF RESEARCH POLICY

3.1   The Executive Deans of faculties (and the researchers within the faculties) are responsible for the management of research. Where research is conducted outside of faculties, the Executive Director to whom the researcher ultimately reports is responsible (together with the researcher) for the management of research. The Research and Innovation Division, in consultation with the Executive Director: Research and Innovation and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement are responsible for the provision of research support and the exercise of institutional-level responsibilities and functions in accordance with relevant university policies and regulations.

3.2   Support is provided both for sustaining and promoting the research activities of established researchers, as well as for the development of less-experienced or less-developed researchers.

3.3   Material and in-kind support for postgraduate (masters and doctoral) students and postdoctoral fellows is imperative for creating an enabling research environment.

3.4   Requests for support of research projects or activities are judged on the merits of the proposal, the merits of the applicant, the need for research capacity development, and the need to sustain existing research activities or capacity.

3.5   Applications to the central fund (via the faculty to the URC) are expected to adhere to a funding cycle, and applications are only considered outside this cycle where faculties advance good reasons for such applications.

3.6   Faculties are responsible in the first instance to provide financial support for research activities, but if required, will be assisted in this by the Research and Innovation Division.

3.7   The extent of the URC's support for applications from a faculty is informed by the extent of the faculty's own tangible commitment to research support and research output record.

3.8   Researchers not attached to faculties who seek financial support from the URC must be supported in their request by their Executive Director and must demonstrate the tangible commitment to research support of the unit or division within which the applicant functions.

3.9   All applicants requesting support from the URC need to show evidence of seeking funds outside the University, or need to provide a persuasive

rationale why this is not feasible, in order for their application to be considered.

3.10 Postgraduate (masters and doctoral) bursary amounts from the central (internal) funds are standardized across the University, as well as the conditions attached thereto.

4 CUSTODIAN OF RESEARCH POLICY

4.1 The Executive Director: Research and Innovation, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement, the URC, and the faculties, is responsible for compiling and maintaining a research database, containing information about research activities by UJ staff and students in as accurate and comprehensive a form as possible.

4.2 The Executive Director: Research and Innovation, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement, the URC, and the faculties are responsible for placing research information on the UJ research website and regularly updating the information.

4.3 The Executive Director: Research and Innovation, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement, the URC, and the faculties compile an annual Research Report that contains a summary of the nature and scope of the main research activities at the UJ, and reflects research achievements.

4.4 The Executive Director: Advancement, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement, is responsible for driving external funding campaigns at an institutional level and keeping a database of all strategic partnerships.

5 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy identifies the strategic research goals and the resources and actions required to achieve the stated goals. The strategic goals for research stated below, and the activities designed to achieve those goals, serve to give effect to the Research Mission statement and the concomitant core value. The proposed strategy has been informed by a range of imperatives both external and internal to the university, and is described within the framework of the National R&D Strategy.

5.1   STRATEGIC RESEARCH GOALS

5.1.1   Maintain and enhance the quality of research undertaken.
5.1.2   Enhance the institutional research profile.
5.1.3   Increase, manage and structure the external and internal funding for research.
5.1.4   Support and promote fundamental scholarship.
5.1.5   Support national, regional and industry-specific research and development policies and strategies.
5.1.6   Maximize the impact and international recognition of UJ research.
5.1.7   Capitalize on UJ intellectual property.

5.2   ACTIONS REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE STRATEGIC GOALS

5.2.1   Create an enabling environment for research

(i)   Research and Innovation Division to provide and coordinate efficient institutional support systems[1] to researchers to develop and maintain research quality;

(ii)   assess, assure and promote research quality by Senate- and Faculty-controlled structures and the implementation of Senate-approved policies;

(iii)   adopt efficient research management systems;

(iv)   implemented peer review processes;

(v)   recognize, encourage and reward research and innovation excellence by incentives such as the Vice Chancellor's Excellence Awards, recognition for IP disclosure and increased publication subsidy for researchers;

(vi)   reorganize research structures and establish new centers and research niche areas;

(vii)   establish research collaborations and partnerships with national and international universities and research institutions;

(viii)   establish a postgraduate centre to facilitate, support and coordinate post graduate students activities;

(ix)   establish and implement career development pathways for researchers;

(x)   run adequately-resourced research capacity development initiatives for novice researchers at both institutional and faculty level;

(xi)   attract, retain and provide maximum support for postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers; and

(xii)   promote international exchange of researchers at all levels.

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[1] i.e. a Research and Innovation Division, a Library and Information Service, a statistical consultation service, a research equipment maintenance facility, access to the state-of-the-art ICT, etc

5.2.2 Enhance the institutional research profile

(i)   develop a rational model for the adequate provision of internal university resources for research;

(ii)   provide faculties with financial, infrastructural and human resources to develop and maintain institutional research capacity;

(iii)   create financial incentives for researchers to engage in high quality, internationally competitive sustained research activity and, especially, subsidized output[2];

(iv)   create support for research mentorship structures for emerging and young researchers;

(v)   identify, encourage and provide incentives for undergraduate students to pursue fulltime postgraduate research;

(vi)   identify, encourage and provide support to staff to acquire at least a masters qualification through specialized programmes;

(vii) establishing a staff-to-student ratio conducive to research productivity;

(viii) increase the number of research students and postdoctoral fellows;

(ix)   enhance the postgraduate student profile and the throughput of the university;

(x)   encourage dormant researchers to start publishing;

(xi)   include research output indicators in performance appraisals for Executive Deans and Heads of Departments;

(xii) increase the number of NRF-rated researchers;

(xiii) provide institutional support to researchers to achieve and improve their NRF ratings; and

(xiv) appoint Research Professors and establish Research Niche Areas, Research Centers and Centers of Excellence.

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5.2.3 Increase external funding for research

(i)   engage in dedicated and sustained activity to identify and source all external research funding opportunities, both national and international;

(ii)   establish and expand appropriate strategic research partnerships and collaborative networks, both nationally and internationally;

(iii)   utilize internal research funds as a strategy to attract external research grants

(iv)   utilize internal research funds only for research activities that cannot be funded – or cannot be adequately funded – by external funds, and for strategic research interventions;

(v)   prioritize some internal funds for emerging researchers; and

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[2] By, e.g. individualised research funds, annual awards for research excellence and talent management

    (vi)   focus on specialized support for priority funding streams of the National Research Foundation (NRF), Innovation Fund (IF), European Union FP7, etc.

5.2.4 Support and promote fundamental scholarship and basic research

    (i)   promote an ethos of fundamental scholarship within the UJ;
    (ii)   develop fundamental scholarship skills in staff and students; and
    (iii)   promote public understanding and appreciation of scholarship;

5.2.5 Support national, regional and industry-specific research and development policies and strategies

    (i)   participate in appropriate national and international organizations that promote research and innovation;
    (ii)   identify and develop institutional research strengths[3] that complement national research strategies and priorities;
    (iii)   enhance the social responsiveness of research conducted at the UJ;
    (iv)   identify and develop opportunities for relevant and applied research and knowledge production;
    (v)   establish and expand appropriate strategic research partnerships and collaborative networks; and
    (vi)   promote research capacity development of historically disadvantaged individuals through adequately-resourced initiatives at both institutional and faculty level.

5.2.6 Maximize the impact and international recognition of UJ research

    (i)   encourage enhanced participation by researchers in national and international funding agencies;
    (ii)   encourage enhanced participation by researchers in national research initiatives;
    (iii)   encourage researchers to become part of international peer review circles such as those established by the EU;
    (iv)   publicize research achievements and research initiatives widely (OR actively disseminate research results and achievements nationally and internationally);
    (v)   encourage publication of research results in international journals, particularly DoE-accredited ones;
    (vi)   promote the international exchange of researchers at all levels;

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[3]   Instead of research "strengths", one might also refer to "focus areas", "niche areas" or "themes".

(vii)   enhance social responsiveness of UJ research;

(viii)   establish and expand appropriate strategic research partnerships and collaborative networks;

(ix)   increase the number of NRF-rated researchers; and

(x)   provide institutional support to researchers to achieve and improve their NRF ratings.

5.2.7 Capitalize on UJ intellectual property

Implement the Intellectual Property and Commercialization initiative and strategy, as provided for in the Policy on the Protection, Management and Commercial Exploitation of Intellectual Property.

6 RESEARCH QUALITY CARE

6.1   Research quality care includes the maintenance and promotion of the highest internationally recognised standards of scientific and research practice, of adherence to the highest ethical standards in research and postgraduate study supervision.

6.2   Research quality care is the responsibility of the Executive Dean of the faculty.

6.3   All applications for external research funds must finally be signed-off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement (or his or her designee), on the recommendation of the relevant Executive Dean (or his/her nominee), before the application can be sent for external research funding.

6.4   All research agreements[4] (except those undertaken within the context of approved private work) concluded by staff with external entities must be approved in consultation with, and be signed off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Advancement or his/her designate on the University's behalf, on the recommendation of the relevant Executive Dean.

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[4] "Human Resources Management of 'Non-core' Income Generating Activities of Academic Employees"