

**FIJI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY**  
**Internal Memorandum**

**From:** Vice Chancellor

**Date:** 08/08/2014

**To:** All Staff

**Re:** Research and Publications

Colleagues,

As you are aware, the core function of a University is the creation and dissemination of knowledge. In this regard, research and publications play a vital - indeed the most critical - role. Research is critical not only for the new knowledge that is generated by it, but also for the development of our countries, our region, and our professions. At the personal level, research and publication (also read: R&D) is the single most important factor that allows academics in the higher education stream to grow in their careers, and advance up the rank and salary scales.

FNU has, from its commencement date, made available substantial funds for research. For 2014, we have over \$1m available. This fund is available for all FNU staff to carry out research. To access this fund, one needs to write research proposals and submit the same to the relevant committees for approval. For any research that will cost less than \$8,000, the proposal is to be submitted to the College Research Committee, [for support staff, to the Manager Operations in VC's Office (Research)]. For proposals over \$8,000, proposals should be submitted to the University Research Committee ([URPC@fnu.ac.fj](mailto:URPC@fnu.ac.fj)).

So far, while a number of our staff are engaged in good research and have done very credible publications, by and large a majority of the higher education stream staff have remained distant from research and publications.

This memo describes the measures put in place to provide additional support to staff on research and publications.

## **I. Streamlined Research Support**

**1. For all staff in the higher education stream:** an initial seed grant allocation of \$1,000 immediately upon joining the University shall be provided. Submission of a proposal is not necessary to access this fund; necessary funds would be allocated to each College, which will manage the utilisation of this by the new staff and provide the necessary acquittals [Finance Division will assist the Colleges with processes and paperwork]. The only condition is that within 6 months of the utilisation of this fund, an acceptable proposal must be submitted to the College or the University Research Committee.

**2. For all academic staff:** other than that described in (1) above, any proposal for research funding that is upto \$8,000 would need to be submitted to the College Research Committee (CRC). The CRC would make decisions each month (i.e. each submittee should be advised of the outcome of the proposal within 4 weeks). It is the responsibility of:

- (a) each and every HOD, HOS, Associate Dean and Dean to ensure that every HE staff is guided and supported with time and advice in the preparation of at least the first research proposal of upto \$8,000.
- (b) each CRC to provide positive feedback on any proposal that does not succeed in the first instance, and for each first proposal to actually assist the writer to revise the same to a standard that leads to its approval within 3 months.

- (c) each and every staff in the HE stream to produce at least one first paper within 18 months of commencement of employment at FNU, for presentation in a symposium at the FNU.
- (d) the University Research Committee to meet (face to face or e-meeting) at least quarterly, consider all proposals submitted to it within 90 days and advise the submittees of the outcome promptly.

**3. For all support staff:** Research Proposals are to be submitted to the Support Services Research Committee (SSRC), chaired by the Manager Operations in VC's Office responsible for research.

**4. For all staff of FNU:** In addition to supporting thematic conferences/symposia, the University would convene one University Symposium annually between June and August, where all HE staff would have the opportunity to present papers in their respective areas.

**5. For all Colleges/Centres/Support Sections:** The section with the:

- (a) highest approved research proposals, including research proposals externally funded, as a percentage of its staff in HE stream, would get discretionary allocation of funds to support one conference costing upto \$5,000 per annum.
- (b) highest ranked journal paper publications as a percentage of its staff in HE stream would get a discretionary allocation of funds to support upto 5 conferences per annum (with a sum up to \$5,000 per conference)
- (c) second highest ranked journal paper publications as a percentage of its staff in HE stream would get a discretionary allocation of funds to support upto 3 conferences per annum (up to \$5,000 per conference)
- (d) third highest ranked journal paper publications as a percentage of its staff in HE stream would get a discretionary allocation of funds to support 2 conference per annum (upto \$5,000)

[\* Discretionary here means that all decisions on conference funding is delegated to the section head. For support sections, the number of HE stream staff is deemed to be one]

## II. Conference Leaves

Council has approved the following amendments to the Conference Leave Policy.

1. research and conference presentation limit increased from one conference leave per 3 year contract to 2 conference leaves per three year contracts, with a conference leave per year for exceptional researchers who show concrete evidence of converting their conference papers to journal publications.
2. The maximum limit of total funding (inclusive of air fare) per conference be \$5000 each, or \$10,000 in a 3 year period. However, a staff who has utilised less than \$5,000/conference in his/her conference entitlement, can utilise the balance for the third or fourth conference irrespective of the 2 conference entitlement per contract term of 3 years.
3. FNU has certain fully funded research units. Research funding for these units includes provision for conference participation. As such, staff employed on a full-time basis in these units doing research on a full-time basis shall not be eligible for Conference Leave funding.
4. Conference funding is only available to staff who go through the processes in place for conference leave applications.

## III. Incentives for Publishing

The following incentives, in addition to those in the Performance Appraisal mechanism, are provided to any person in the HE stream who carries the normal workload and also publishes:

1. in hardcopy A-ranked journals, be awarded a bonus of \$5,000 per article so published

2. in hardcopy B-ranked journals, be awarded a bonus of \$4,000 per article so published
3. in hardcopy C-ranked journals, be awarded a bonus of \$2,500 per article so published
4. in un-ranked hardcopy journals which have a consistent publication history of at least 10 years – be awarded a bonus of \$1,000 per article so published.
5. hardcopy academic books through bona-fide publishing houses (i.e. those established with the primary purpose of publishing academic books), a bonus be paid upto \$10,000 per book, with the quantum to be determined by a committee comprising the VC, at least 2 deans, and 2 independent professors in the subject area selected from outside FNU.

\* For clarity, the journal ranking is that which is used by the Australian Research Council. For added clarity, for joint publications, the rewards are apportioned to the staff in proportion to his/her contribution to the paper.

#### **IV. Effective Date**

The publications incentive is backdated to apply from 1 January 2014. All other measures listed above are in effect from 01 August 2014.