

23 February 2022

Sent by email to FuturePathways@mbie.govt.nz

To whom it may concern,

Re: He Ara Paerangi Future Pathways Consultation

Thankyou for this opportunity to provide feedback on the above. We support a transformation of the RSI system to:

- truly honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in form and function. We refer to the Education Act amendments that enshrine this as an example of how this can be better managed in legislation and resulting changes in approach (e.g. through the Orders in Council that then established the Workforce Development Councils). Our view is that stronger statements and practices need to be introduced to ensure the prominence of Mātauranga Māori, particularly in light of widespread ill informed public discourse on this matter in 2021;
- place outcomes at the forefront, ensuring that impact is a requirement, not a secondary element;
- respond to national **impact** challenges and deliver against the Living Standards Framework to ensure intergenerational wellbeing;
- eliminate perverse outcomes, such as creating large administrative financial burdens in the funding application and delivery stages and competition vs collaboration;
- enable all research institution types, including independent research associations, to flourish based on demonstrated impact;
- create greater relationships with the Workforce Development Councils, which will be mapping out future workforce requirements for the industries and sectors that they represent. Although their focus is on vocational education requirements, it is not realistic that roadmapping is limited to vocational education when it is not immediately clear whether or not training for emergent technologies and business models should be vocational or university-based. Thus, the learnings that the WDC obtain will also be relevant to the broader research and training systems; and
- facilitate true alignment between national, industry and workforce needs and publicly funded research.

NGA WHAKAAROTAU RANGAHAU RESEARCH PRIORITIES

We note that Universities NZ proposes establishment of an independent research Council. This is a model utilised in Australia. If such a model was to be adopted, we would note that a Te Tiriti approach needs to underlie it and there needs to be adequate representation from experts in impact, as well as excellence. We note that expertise in impact is often not measurable in the same ways as expertise in excellence so there would need to be specific criteria developed to ensure that the Council adequately represents industry.

TE TIRITI, MATAURANGA MAORI ME NGA WAWATA O TE MAORI **TE TIRITI, MATAURANGA MAORI, AND SUPPORTING MAORI ASPIRATIONS**

We recognise that this requires strong engagement and consultation with Iwi, hapu and Māori, including Māori businesses. Their voices must be heard and incorporated (*i.e.* not just consulted with), and represented around any Governance or assessment frameworks. Currently, vision Mātauranga assessments by non-Māori are not appropriate and have significant shortcomings. This makes these assessments cursory and often wildly inadequate.

TE TUKU PUTEA FUNDING

We emphasise that transformation requires a dramatic change in process and thinking; it will require a marked change in approach. We support proposals developed by Te Pūnaha Matatini Centre of Research Excellence and the New Zealand Association of Scientists to use Common Pool Research principles (utilising 2009 Nobel Prize in Economics economic governance approaches focused on the commons). We believe this is an approach that could be incorporated into funding models.

In addition, we raise concerns about the focus on excellence vs impact in funding models, which tend to mean that IRAs are not as competitive as their University counterparts... despite having an arguable closer relationship with our industries/sectors and therefore likely greater ability to have impact in our areas of research strength.

NGA HINONGA INSTITUTIONS

We support separation of Callaghan Innovation's current roles; particularly separation of research activities from delivery of research support programs (*i.e.* grants and other incentives).

Institutions/individuals should never be supported to undertake research that does not have a reliable knowledge transfer plan that engages the community, industry, or end-users. The importance of impact in funding assessments needs greater attention.

TE HUNGA MAHI RANGAHAU WORKFORCE

There is a lack of acknowledgement that the research workforce extends beyond the scope of this consultation paper. Career movement and progression needs to be considered more broadly in terms of what opportunities exist to have researchers seamlessly transfer between academia and industry. Currently, promotion systems limit this connectivity. Again, this is an issue of adequately measuring and reflecting the significance of impact vs excellence.

There needs to be greater consideration of what entities in the broader research, training and innovation system undertake workforce development research. Currently, the Workforce Development Councils undertake this work for vocational education. We support the WDCs receiving greater funding to undertake this work on behalf of the whole system, from a sectoral and industry perspective.

TE HANGANGA RANGAHAU RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

It is our observation that the lack of coordination around capital investments is leading to replication of expensive infrastructure that then does not get the critical mass of utilisation required to fund its operation. If there was greater sharing and managed access to infrastructure, including with industry, this would be far more beneficial in terms of return on investment.

A mechanism to better facilitate industry access to infrastructure also needs to be developed. Currently, access to critical publicly funded infrastructure by industry for an important national project can be secondary to access by a research student working on a small research project- this does not make sense. The way this is currently managed is that industry would need to pay a premium to access that infrastructure preferentially. While there needs to be an obligation to research training, there also needs to be a recognised obligation to assist the broader community and industry to access publicly funded research equipment. This is a significant current gap that needs to be considered in funding and utilisation models.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Troy Coyle
CEO