Terms of Reference for review panels for ‘consolidation phase’ reviews

Initial three yearly reviews of the Melbourne Interdisciplinary Research Institutes were conducted 2012-2015, and these considered the activities and planning of the establishment phase of the institutes. A review of the portfolio of Melbourne Interdisciplinary Research Institutes was conducted in May 2016.

These terms of reference are designed to build from the initial reviews, with the focus of investigations being the programs and strategic positioning of what we may term ‘the consolidation phase’.

Composition of the Review Panels

The review panel will comprise members to be agreed in discussion between the Institute Director and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVCR) and may include the DVCR, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Collaboration and Partnerships), host Dean or nominee, participating Dean or nominee, an external member. The Chair of the review panel will be agreed in discussion between the DVCR and the Institute Director.

Terms of Reference – Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute Review 2018

- Comment on the effectiveness of the Institute in promoting multi and interdisciplinary research and engaging academic researchers in interdisciplinary activities.
- Comment on the Institute’s performance in developing relations with a broad base of external stakeholders.
- Comment on any internal and external factors that enable or impede the Institute achieving its objectives.
- Review the Institute’s aims as articulated in its strategic statement and comment on the appropriateness and feasibility of these aims.
- Review the governance arrangements, operation and academic objectives of the Institute and comment on their effectiveness in supporting the work of the Institute.
- Review the financial performance of the Institute and its return on University funding investment and comment on opportunities for new sources of funding.
- Comment on the capacity of and opportunities for the Institute to identify additional external sources of funding in the next 3–5 years.
- Comment on the interactions and interdependencies between the MSSI and the Melbourne Energy Institute and the University’s Sustainability Plan.

Reporting

The Review Panel will report to the DVCR who will report the outcome of the review to the University Executive.

Method of Working

The Panel is expected to meet once to conduct the review. This will include an interview with the Director and management team and a site visit.

Secretariat support for the review will be provided by Chancellery Research and Enterprise with administrative support for pre-review arrangements provided by the Institute.
Material for the Review Panel

The Review Panel will be provided with the following material:

- Annual activity plans and annual reports from the last 3 years
- An Institute report of no more than twelve A4 pages (page guide provided) from the Institute management team under the following headings:
  - High level summary of achievements to date (1–2 pages)
  - Report on activities and performance against strategic objectives under each of the three major performance categories: research capacity / income, linkage creation and partnerships, engagement and profile building (2–3 pages)
  - Strategic statement for the next three year period (covering broad directions and objectives for future development) (1–2 pages)
  - Governance and management including membership of and meetings held by both the executive and the advisory bodies, and comments on the support provided by the host and other Faculties (1–2 pages)
  - Report on financial performance including income and expenditure for the last 3 years
  - Estimate of the multiplier achieved on University investment with supporting data (1–2 pages)
  - A reflective statement in relation to the Energy/Sustainability ecosystem and the connections, interactions and interdependencies between the MSSI and the Melbourne Energy Institute and the University’s Sustainability Plan. (1–2 pages)
  - Any other items that the Institute may wish to highlight such as curriculum development, PhD program development etc.
- Summary of publications and research grants that can reasonably attributed to the enabling activity of the Institute in the last three years (these may reported separately or included in the annual reports)
- Any comments provided by Faculties in relation to the Institute review.

Criteria

The criteria used to judge the success of the Institute following the consolidation period are:

- Success in fulfilling the University’s strategic research objectives in tackling the key issues faced by society, specifically those related to sustainability
- Degree of multi and interdisciplinarity achieved
- Engagement with a broad spread of academic staff and research students from across the University
- Engagement with external organisations and partners
- Added value from research income, publications output and research impact
- Attraction and retention of high quality research higher degree students in interdisciplinary studies
- External recognition of the Institute as a centre of excellence by a range of stakeholders
- Media coverage for both the Institute and staff linked to it.