



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE<sup>®</sup>

## Research and Innovation Policy

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<b>Accountable executive manager</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Technology
<b>Policy owner</b>	Director: Technology Transfer and Innovation Support and Director: Research Support
<b>Responsible division</b>	Technology Transfer and Innovation Support, and Research Support
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<b>Approved by</b>	Council
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<b>Procedures in terms of this policy</b>	The overall process for research and innovation is captured in the document "Quality Assurance process for Research at the NWU" available from the DVC: RIT.
<b>Web address of this policy</b>	<a href="http://www.nwu.ac.za/content/policy_rules">http://www.nwu.ac.za/content/policy_rules</a>
<b>Address on the policy data base</b>	Amanda van der Merwe(10935746) R:\2. Management\2.1.3 Policy development and review\2.1.3.2 Review\Database\Policy documents\9P-research and innovation_e.docx



# Research and Innovation Policy

## 1 Preamble

As a pre-eminent University in Africa, driven by its pursuit of knowledge and innovation, with a unique institutional culture based upon the values the University espouses, the North-West University has adopted this Research and Innovation Policy on 20 September 2013.

## 2 Aim of policy

The aim of the research and innovation policy is to assure quality and to provide the framework for research and innovation and research and innovation management at North-West University.

## 3 Scope of Policy

This policy should be read with the Institutional Research and Innovation Strategy annually approved by Senate. This policy should also be read against the mission of the NWU to produce high-quality, relevant and focussed research, basic as well as applied, supplying innovative solutions to challenges faced by the scholarly community, the country, the continent and the world. Furthermore, as stated in the Institutional Plan, the NWU strives towards becoming a balanced tuition-research university with a growing 3<sup>rd</sup> income stream from commercialisation and making a significant impact through community engagement.

## 4 Policy Statement

It is the policy of NWU that Research be executed in identified Research Entities which promote innovative research and innovation for the economic development of the country, the continent and the world.

### *Principles:*

The management model used for research and innovation creates an institutional identity while at the same time allowing differentiation within the capabilities and capacity of campuses. The research entity model is geared towards increasing research and innovation quality, research and innovation participation and productivity, research and innovation development and funding. The research and innovation management model encourages, facilitates and stimulates research and innovation on all campuses. Each campus will develop and manage its own Research Entities. Participation will primarily be limited to researchers from a specific campus, open to collaboration with other campuses.

## 5 Definitions

### 5.1 Research Niche Area

A Research Niche Area is a small research group with a clear focus which is identified by the campus and is part of the overall strategic plan of the university and campus with local research impact. The campus must offer degrees approved by Department of Higher Education and Training at a minimum of Masters level in the disciplines which form the primary focus of the Niche Area. The team members of the Niche Area must show evidence of research output.

### 5.2 Research Focus Area

A Research Focus Area is a research group with a clear focus which is identified by the campus and is part of the overall strategic plan of the university and campus linked to national priorities with regional research impact. At least 50% of the research income of a Focus Area should come from external sources of funding. Masters and Doctoral students must be trained through involvement in the Focus Area. The team members of the Focus Area must progress towards increasing research output.

### 5.3 Research Unit

A Research Unit is a significant, nationally recognised, longer-term multidisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research activity. A clear focus is identified by the campus and is part of the overall strategic plan of the university and campus linked to national priorities with national research impact. The Unit represents a

significant organisation grouping and the level of activity within the Unit demonstrates significant critical mass. Masters and doctoral students should be directly linked to the research entity. Research income (at least 60%) is obtained from a variety of sources including competitive, industry and international sources. There must be evidence of significant research output within the Research Unit and participation of Post-doctoral students.

#### **5.4 Research Centre of Excellence**

A Research Centre of Excellence is an internationally recognised, longer-term multidisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research activity. The Centre should have a clear focus which is identified by the campus and is part of the overall strategic plan of the university and campus linked to national priorities with international research impact. At least 75% of its research income should be derived from external sources of funding. The Centre should have substantial research output with extensive postdoctoral student involvement. There must be a history of postgraduate student (M and D) training by individual members and collectively.

#### **5.5 Hosted Research Entity:**

A Hosted Research / Innovation Centre or Platform is a research or innovation entity that functions under the leadership of a Director or as determined by the external funder. The Entity typically hosts a trans-disciplinary programme of national importance with long term financial support from public and private institutions and conducts research and innovation activities commensurate with post-graduate training, within the NWU quality provisions for research. The Hosted Research / Innovation Centre or Platform works across institutional boundaries, often in a so-called hub-and-spoke model and although fundamental research forms the basis of activities, the focus is on innovation output lower in the innovation value chain. Centres / Platforms have significant organisational grouping and critical mass including a recognised core of staff and infrastructure, albeit often in spoke organisations and may be virtual centres / platforms with scientific or technical programmes in research entities or other (spoke) organisations.

#### **5.6 Commercial Research Entities:**

A Commercial Research Entity is an innovation entity that functions under the leadership of a Director. The activities within the entity are primarily aimed at implementing expertise, operates on business principles and all funding is obtained from external sources. The vast majority of activities are focused on research, development, services and products aimed at specialised industry/society needs. The NWU quality provisions for research and training are applicable as well as Industry accepted quality standards for products and services. The Commercial Entity has a recognised brand and standing in industry.

#### **5.7 Research and innovation output is defined as the following:**

Research output recognised for subsidy purposes by the Department of Higher Education and Training (including books and/or chapters in books and peer-reviewed conference proceedings);

- Staff qualification improvement on postgraduate level;
- Postgraduate qualifications awarded to students;
- Articles published in national and international journals (non-accredited and peer reviewed journals);
- Presentations made to local, national and international conferences, and therefore subject to peer- review;
- Patents registered at national or international level;
- R&D-related downstream activities, characterised by successful technology transfer;
- NRF Rating of researchers
- The number of research chairs, centres of excellence, centres of competency, research or innovation platform projects, niche areas allocated to NWU by funding agencies (on behalf of state departments), state departments, the private sector.

Research output recognised for subsidy purposes by the Department of Science and Technology;

- DST subsidises up to 50% of the patenting cost of selected patents filed by NWU; and
- DST awards inventors with amounts varying between R18 000 and R25 000 for selected South African granted patents.

Creative outputs defined as the participation in selected performances/exhibitions and the delivery of artistic products.

## **6 Rules**

The rules guiding research and innovation are defined within the following categories:

### **6.1 Research and Innovation Governance**

- Council governs and approves research and innovation policies.
- Senate governs academic quality.
  - The Institutional Research and Innovation Committee (ICRI) advises Senate on the strategy, plans and quality of Research and Innovation of the University.
  - Institutional Research Support Commission has the responsibility to evaluate the research undertaken within the Research Entities at NWU and make recommendations to Senate and management.

### **6.2 Research and Innovation Strategy**

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Technology assumes the overall responsibility for the policy and strategy of Research and Innovation at the University. Campus Rectors and Campus Vice-Rectors responsible for research and innovation assume the overall responsibility for the management of research and innovation at the campus.

### **6.3 Research and Innovation Structures**

- Research and innovation are performed within the defined Research Entities as categorised in the Institutional Research and Innovation Strategy. All research entities are linked to faculties.
- Internal Corporate Ventures (ICV), linked to research entities, are the responsibility of the directors or heads of research entities. Such ICV's are managed in fenced-off cost centers within the policies of the NWU.
- The relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor, after consultation with the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office and the relevant line managers, may recommend to IM the formation of spin-off companies.

### **6.4 Research and innovation Management**

- Research is managed according to the guidelines set in the Institutional Research and Innovation Strategy.
- Research and innovation is funded in accordance with the Institutional Research and Innovation Strategy.
- The Faculty Higher Degree/Research Committees direct faculty research and innovation within the NWU strategy. The Faculty Higher Degree Committee devises the strategies necessary to attain, promote, monitor and review postgraduate activities within the Faculty.

### **6.5 Research and Innovation Support**

- The Institutional Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office advises Campuses and Faculties on the protection of intellectual property rights, patents applications and professional indemnity, related to research and innovation activities.
- The Institutional Research Support Department facilitates and evaluates all project proposals submitted to research funding agencies; supports the effective and optimal appropriation of the University's funds, including applications and allocation of funds, as well as the continuous monitoring and reporting of all research funds of the University; Manages the administration of all government subsidised research and the handling of all such subsidy claims and facilitates the effective evaluation of research, internally by the Institutional Research Support Commission and externally by regular peer evaluation on international level .
- Research and innovation performance is evaluated or assessed by way of research and innovation performance indicators and an annual Research and Innovation Report. Measurements will include:
  - Measurement and benchmarking of the output defined in 4.5.
  - The extent by which the university can earn and leverage funding for research and innovation activities, including the categories:
    - first income stream funding (DoE ),
    - second income stream funding (e.g. NRF base funding, THRIP and Innovation

- Fund funding, patent subsidies and awards)
- third income stream funding (from Science Councils, Government departments and the private sector)
- fifth income stream funding (from international sources)
- A Research Ethics Committee (REC) as a standing committee of Senate. The purpose of the Main Committee of the REC is to ensure that research including or affecting humans, animals and the environment are conducted according to sound research ethics principals. The purpose of the REC is to protect the well being of humans, the environment and animals and also to ensure that the rights of humans are protected during a research project. The most important function of the Sub-Committees of the REC is to recommend approval of research protocols for ethical clearance to the REC.

## 7 Procedures

The NWU will ensure the provision of effective, efficient and equitable support for researchers, through the Research management structures.

The overall process for research and innovation is captured in the document "Quality Assurance process for Research at NWU".

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