
VICE-CHANCELLOR'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FUNDING

1. ISSUE

To provide an update of progress to date with the projects funded under the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Priorities Funding.

2. BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Vice-Chancellor's \$20M Strategic Priorities Fund is to lay the foundations for UNSW to bridge the gap to move UNSW into the 1-2-3 band of the Go8. There are two components to this initiative:

1. **\$5M Strategic Research Performance Scheme** to strategically support Faculty strategic research priorities with a view to strengthening the University's research position on a 5-year horizon. The allocation is based on research performance over the previous 2 years. This funding is distributed directly to the Faculties.
2. **\$15M Strategic Priorities Scheme** is allocated on a competitive basis in areas of strategic importance/priority. Funding through this scheme is allocated to individual projects, and is managed and monitored centrally by the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

3. DISCUSSION

The table below provides a summary of projects funded under the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Priorities Fund (to date).

	Strategic Research Hires (\$K)	Strategic Research Projects (\$K)	Strategic Student Projects (\$K)	Strategic Capabilities (\$K)	Total Strategic Bid Funding 2007 (\$K)	Total Strategic Bid Funding over 3 years (\$K)		Total Research Performance Funding 2007 (\$K)		TOTAL 2007 Strategic Priorities Funding (\$K)
COFA	189	200	9	0	398	1,412		175		573
FASS	625	445	439	0	1,508	5,353		555		2,063
ENGINEERING	422	484	0	0	906	3,728		1,141		2,047
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	0	0	450	0	450	450		117		567
LAW	126	0	0	0	126	568		167		293
MEDICINE	0	2,110	0	0	2,110	6,189		1,139		3,249
SCIENCE	999	2,109	0	0	3,108	7,742		1,187		4,295
BUSINESS	0	0	0	0	0	0		519		519
DVCA	-	0	215	0	215	665		-		215
COO	-	0	0	277	277	277		-		277
DVCR	-	1,302	0	0	1,302	5,982		-		1,302
TOTAL ALLOCATED	2,086	6,649	1,113	277	10,124	32,365		5,000		15,124
TOTAL UNALLOCATED										4,876

Summary by Project type:

Categories	2007 \$K	2008 \$K	2009 \$K	2010 \$K	Total \$K
Hires	2,086	4,510	4,117	1,759	12,473
Research	6,649	5,408	5,101	895	18,053
Students	1,113	450	0	0	1,563
Capability	277	0	0	0	277
Committed	10,124	10,368	9,218	2,654	32,365
Budget / Plan	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	60,000
Variance to Budget / Plan	4,876	4,632	5,782	12,346	27,635

Note that there is already a significant commitment of funding to 2008/9 (and beyond) and that we are actively managing this pipeline.

4. Selection Criteria

Overall staff should be looking at ideas which will "significantly improve the average research performance" in the School or Faculty. Proposals which improve our research performance (over the long term) and can demonstrate a concrete and quantifiable return on that investment including:

- (i) how many new grants will a proposal will generate,
- (ii) how many new HDR students will come as a result,
- (iii) how many post-docs will add to the critical research effort,
- (iv) how many additional publications or other research outputs will come,
- (v) seeding the potential to grow the research effort through Centres of Excellence or similar ventures,
- (vi) scope to attract more research effort to UNSW etc etc.

Also the "softer" indicators of research impact including:

- (i) improving the profile and standing of UNSW,
- (ii) visibly having UNSW being seen to take a leadership position in an area,
- (iii) measures of esteem to improve the depth and quality of the overall research effort at UNSW etc etc.

5. CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Strategic Hires

Where funding is approved for strategic hires, unless otherwise agreed, these must be continuing (tenured) positions or long-term contracts, and this has been specified in the letter of offer.

The VC's Strategic Priorities Initiative will fund the strategic hires for the first 3 years, and then the Faculty must absorb them thereafter. This means that the Faculty must manage its staffing profile to ensure that these new recruits are sewn into Faculty staffing plans after this time and this translates to the need to actively manage retirements, staffing changes or generate new income streams to support an increased number of staff.

Strategic Projects

Where funding is approved for strategic projects involving the ***creation of new Centres***, funding will be provided subject to the Centre being formally established in accordance with the UNSW Centres Policy.

Funding Arrangements

Where funding has been approved for more than one year, any unexpended funds will be rolled over to the following year. At the end of the funding period, any unexpended funds will be re-couped for redistribution.

Any significant variance from the original proposal must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

6. RECOMMENDATION

That staff note the update.

Les Field
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