



## PARTNER-LED DESIGN - INVESTMENT DESIGN DOCUMENT

### Pacific Research Program – Phase 2

#### A. Executive Summary

The Pacific Research Program – Phase 2 (PRP II) (\$20m, 2022-2026) will generate and disseminate independent Pacific-focused research as a regional public good, and support stronger evidence-based policy making in the Pacific by working to foster stronger research practice and deeper research-to-knowledge engagement.

PRP II will continue to be delivered by a consortia consisting of the Lowy Institute and two entities within the Australian National University (ANU) College of Asia and the Pacific – the Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA, consortia lead) and the Development Policy Centre (Devpol).

PRP II will build on Phase I of the program to foster strong partnerships between Australian and Pacific universities, and teach and train the next generation of Pacific researchers. Over the next four years, PRP II will also take forward new and ongoing research in key priority areas of Gender, Inclusion and Social Change; Labour Mobility and Integration; Politics, Governance and Economic Resilience; Papua New Guinea (and Bougainville) and Security, Regionalism and Geopolitics.

With these focus areas in mind, the overall goal of PRP II is:

*‘To deepen Australia-Pacific research & education partnerships that support evidence-based policy-making for the Pacific’.*

PRP II will achieve this goal through a research and education approach that strengthens people-to-people links by ensuring PRP research and other flagship activities are co-designed through genuine engagement, are of mutual interest, gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) responsive, ethical and collaborative, and above all else are anchored in partnership with Pacific island researchers, institutions and governments. PRP’s research will continue to focus on issues of gender, social change and inclusion as both thematic priorities and as a cross-cutting issues incorporated across all major research activities. A Disability Inclusion Plan, informed by both the ANU and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) best practice for disability-inclusive research will form part of the early activities of PRP II.

PRP II will focus on the achievement of three End-of-Program Outcomes that together contribute to the overarching goal. These End-of-Program Outcomes can also be considered pillars of the program, these include:

**Pillar 1. Better Informed Pacific Policy Makers** (Research-to-Knowledge pillar) – this will see *Pacific policy makers develop a deeper understanding of the Pacific development context and regional geo-politics, have greater access to quality independent research that supports evidence-based policy making, and deeper engagement with researchers.*

**Pillar 2. Stronger Pacific Research Partnerships and Practice** (Pacific Partnerships pillar) – this will see *Pacific researchers and institutions better equipped to undertake, manage and drive Pacific research, deliver quality research outputs and establish and maintain vibrant research networks and communities of practice.*

**Pillar 3. Greater Pacific Awareness** (Pacific Awareness pillar) – this will see *PRP research and analysis contributing to public debate and reaching a broader audience.*

Engagement Strategies developed for each of the pillars will outline key partnerships, ways of working and key outcomes. They will integrate cross-cutting themes and ensure PRP II’s human and financial resources are used in an optimal and complementary fashion. Deeper PRP-DFAT collaboration is intended to support stronger connections between DFAT policy makers and consortium researchers. Strengthened engagement will see DFAT participation in structured review

and reflection processes and an elevated focus on strategic communication, ensuring the outputs and outcomes of PRP II are communicated to DFAT in a way that supports improved policy formulation.

Strengthened governance mechanisms will support the implementation of PRP II, including quarterly program management committee meetings, monthly program operation meetings, annual, high-level policy dialogues and engagement with posts and research specialists. Risk management will be built into the governance and management of the program. Six-monthly progress reports will outline the progress of the investment against high-level outcomes, the budget and work plan, and discuss the alignment with Australia's strategic objectives in the Pacific. This will be complemented by annual reports and workplans.

A review of the Phase I investment was conducted in late 2021. The review highlighted a need to strengthen the overarching program logic and provide additional resources for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). These recommendations have been incorporated into this design (for a summary, see Annex 1). The review also highlighted the value for money the ANU-Lowy Institute consortium provides which has been underpinned by the ANU's unique funding arrangements and the long-term institutional investment in Pacific studies made by the ANU since its inception.

PRP II builds on DFAT's historical support for research and tertiary education in the Pacific, which has included support for Pacific universities, scholarships for Pacific islands' students to attend university in Australia and elsewhere in the region, and funding for research on issues of importance to Pacific island countries.

## **B. Development Context and Situational Analysis (What problem are we addressing?)**

### *Country/Regional and Sector Issues*

Despite renewed interest in the Pacific, driven by geopolitical and strategic changes in the region, Pacific studies in Australia has been in steep decline for several decades.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, integrated programs of research, teaching, and Higher Degree Research (HDR) training focused on the Pacific are no longer offered in a sustained or substantial fashion, except at the ANU.<sup>2</sup>

The acute pressures which have driven the decline in Pacific studies research and education remain extant and present ongoing challenges to the sustainability of Pacific studies research and teaching in Australia and consequentially in the region.<sup>3</sup> These pressures include: changes to the ways the tertiary sector is funded, which has seen low enrolment courses disestablished; a greater emphasis on technical, vocational and "job-ready" degrees; and the retirement of individual scholars who had previously championed Pacific studies research and teaching. Moreover, declining course and program offerings mean the pool of candidates possessing the foundational training for further study has also diminished.

Global experience demonstrates that foundational Pacific-focussed teaching programs (i.e. those needed to underpin stronger research practice) are built on the back of, and sustained by, long term investments by the universities offering them and with direct support from government.<sup>4</sup> The ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, University of Hawai'i Centre for Pacific Islands Studies, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific studies at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand and the University of the South Pacific are all cases in point. Pacific research, teaching and policy development therefore remains inherently dependent upon government funding. In this context continued funding of the PRP is critical, as it the modality by which that support is provided. Specifically, the grant modality amplifies the funding that flows to the ANU, and the totality of funding that is made available for Pacific research and teaching – funding the ANU has and continues to reinvest in the PRP partnership.

<sup>1</sup> See Rose, S., Quanchi, M., & C. Moore (2009) A National Strategy for the Study of the Pacific, Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific studies

<sup>2</sup> See Haley, N. (2021) 'Pacific studies in Australia', DPA briefing paper.

<sup>3</sup> See Rose, S., Quanchi, M., and C. Moore (2009) A National Strategy for the Study of the Pacific, Australian Association for the Advancement of Pacific studies and Carpenter, D (2021) Review of the Pacific Research Program, November 2021, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<sup>4</sup> See Firth, S. (2003) 'Future Directions for Pacific studies'. The Contemporary Pacific 15(1):139-148.

The ANU plays an important role in the Pacific research and education ecosystem and leads in supporting Pacific island countries improve their research and education capabilities. It is the only Australian university that offers a comprehensive suite of Pacific-focused education programs. These include four coursework degrees,<sup>5</sup> a higher degree research training program enrolling MPhil and PhD students, and 25 executive education “micro-credentials” in Pacific Politics, Security and Development which deliver ANU credit. All these programs, save one, are convened by the consortium lead, Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA). A total of 723 students took DPA-taught undergraduate, post-graduate, PhD-level and micro-credentialed courses in 2021 - up from 261 in 2017. These courses are taken by domestic and international students alike, including many Pacific islands’ students pursuing postgraduate coursework degrees and higher degree research training.

PRP II further strengthens this leadership role and builds on DFAT’s historical support for research and tertiary education in the Pacific, which has included support for Pacific universities, scholarships for Pacific islands’ students to attend university in Australia and elsewhere in the region, and funding for research on issues of importance to Pacific island countries. PRP II supports deeper relationships in the Pacific by building strong partnerships between Australian and Pacific universities, and teaching and training the next generation of Pacific researchers and policy makers, who will, as a result of this investment, will have a stronger affiliation with Australia.

The ANU’s primacy with respect to Pacific-related education extends to its Pacific-focussed research. This is a direct result of its Pacific studies mandate as defined in the Act of Parliament that established the university and the Research School of Pacific studies (RSPAS) in 1946.<sup>6</sup> The prominence of the ANU in this area has been clearly established over 75 years through the research work of RSPAS and the ANU College of Asia and Pacific. The ANU’s focus on higher degree research, coupled with its Pacific studies mandate, has helped ‘seed’ Pacific expertise around the world – including throughout the Pacific.<sup>7</sup> It also ensures that Pacific research continues to focus on relevant and pressing issues in an important geo-political region of the world. Thus, the ANU plays an important ‘anchoring’ role producing well qualified Pacific scholars and professionals who conduct relevant and important research on development issues in the region.

The sustainability of foreign policy and development-oriented Pacific studies at the ANU, in what is a financially constrained tertiary sector funding environment, is an ongoing challenge, however. As a global university, with internationally recognised Pacific studies expertise across a wide range of disciplines, including anthropology and archaeology, economics and development, linguistics and language studies, as well as legal and political studies, the ANU must necessarily adopt a balanced approach across disciplinary areas. DFAT’s PRP grant funding ensures much more of a focus on development and foreign policy-related research and teaching than might otherwise be the case. External grant funding continues to be critical in this context.

#### *Development Problem/Issue Analysis*

The Pacific faces a range of ongoing development challenges, many of which have been exacerbated by COVID-19. These include, *inter alia*: budget constraints, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience challenges, a shortage of human capital in key areas, economic governance issues, socio-cultural shifts, and gender inequality. Development assistance will continue to be important in this context, and consequentially, there is an ongoing need for sound evidence to inform Australia’s development policy decisions and programs.

It is equally imperative that Pacific policy makers have access to quality independent research in areas of strategic policy importance. Pacific island researchers and institutions are typically constrained in their ability to support evidence-based policy making, through a lack of data and research funding, human capital constraints and heavy teaching loads. By focusing on research and education partnerships PRP II will generate and disseminate Pacific-focussed research as a regional public good and support evidence-based policymaking in the Pacific by working to foster stronger Pacific research practice, deeper research-to-knowledge engagement, and firmer local ownership of Pacific research.

<sup>5</sup> These being the Bachelor of Pacific studies (BPAST), Graduate Certificate of Pacific Development (CPADE), Graduate Certificate of Engaging the Pacific (CENPA), and the Masters of Pacific Development (MPADE).

<sup>6</sup> See: [Australian National University Act 1946 \(legislation.gov.au\)](https://www.legislation.gov.au)

<sup>7</sup> See Haley, N. (2021) ‘Pacific studies in Australia’, DPA briefing paper.

The Pacific is also dynamic from a strategic and geo-political perspective. Relationships between Pacific island countries and global powers are fluid, regional politics is complex. There is a need to ensure research can inform these strategic and geo-political considerations as well as the development challenges.

#### *Evidence base/Lessons Learned*

An independent review of the PRP I was undertaken in late 2021.<sup>8</sup> The purpose of the review was to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the program and to provide recommendations on the focus and delivery approach of a future phase. The review made some important observations and suggested some recommendations that have been incorporated into this design (for a summary, see Annex 1).

First, it highlighted the need for research programs to have well defined, performance-oriented outcomes, and cascading program logics that clearly delineate outputs and intermediate and end-of-program outcomes (EOPOs) – this was a major flaw in the PRP I design. Aside from the generality and lack of performance orientation at the EOPO level, the absence of a cascading logic that linked intermediate outcomes to specific EOPO's was a problem. The Program Logic outlined in Section D, and the M&E Framework at Annex 3, address this by clearly defining PRP II's EOPOs and the intermediate outcomes linked thereto, and putting in place a performance-oriented M&E framework that ensures how progress against these outcomes can be tracked. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system explained in Section F is designed to support a more concentrated focus on outcomes and learning.

Second, the review highlighted the need to invest more human and financial resources to ensure there is a quality MEL system that can track progress towards outcomes while also supporting improved performance, learning and program-level adaptation. MEL resourcing under the first phase of PRP was inadequate. This design includes significantly more resources for MEL as outlined in the Budget (Annex 2), and a fit-for-purpose MEL system – see Section F.

Third, the review highlighted the need to ensure DFAT's GEDSI priorities are more clearly and substantively integrated in a future phase. Accordingly, this design strengthens the PRP's GEDSI focus.

Fourth, the review highlighted the need for DFAT to engage more proactively with the program, as well as finding ways to more systematically ensure the insights, ideas and concepts emerging from PRP's research are considered as part of Pacific policy and programming decision-making. As the program logic in Section D explains, this is now the basis of an end of program outcome of PRP II.

Finally, the incorporations outlined above also reflect the broader lessons DFAT has learned through funding research and those of other donors. Key lessons highlighted in ODE's 2015 evaluation of DFAT's research investments include the importance of: applied research aligned to program and investment-level needs; pro-active dissemination of research findings; succinct research products; in-person interaction between researchers and policy-makers; ongoing two-way policy dialogue; and long-term partnerships to research uptake.<sup>9</sup> Specific mention was made of the "good uptake of SSGM [DPA] research into DFAT policy and strategy in regional gender programs" and how "well managed dialogue between DFAT and researchers" in the SSGM [DPA] case had helped identify "a mix of research activities and outputs ... that improved the utility and value of the research".<sup>10</sup> The ODE evaluation also highlighted the importance of locally owned research to partner government decision making and the importance of maintaining the independence of research activities. It is in part this separation which sees research institutions such as the ANU and Lowy upheld as trusted sources of advice for partners in the region.

### **C. Strategic Intent and Rationale (Why?)**

<sup>8</sup> See Carpenter, D (2021) Review of the Pacific Research Program, November 2021, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra.

<sup>9</sup> See Office of Development Effectiveness (2015) Research for better aid: an evaluation of DFAT's investments. ODE, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pages 29 and 40.

Australia has supported independent research on Pacific issues at the ANU through the Pacific Research Program since 2017 and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM) Program before that (1996-2017).<sup>11</sup> Supporting the production of high-quality research not only strengthens the evidence base upon which sound policy-making and development programming rests but directly aligns with Australia's national interests in supporting high quality development programming. Importantly the PRP also aligns with the ANU's core mission as Australia's only national university. That mission involves serving our nation, region and the world through distinctive education programs and world-class inclusive research that is readily accessible and effectively communicated to inform the conduct of Australia's affairs regionally and support positive social and political change in our region. Further investment through PRP II will provide an important evidence basis and a richer context for supporting development and whole-of-government policy work especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery.

Strengthening Pacific research and practice remains an essential component of assisting with the social and economic elements of COVID-19 recovery. The overall goal of the PRP II is: *to deepen Australia-Pacific research and education partnerships that support evidence-based policy making for the Pacific*. Through further investment in the PRP, DFAT will be supporting skills development of Pacific researchers and engendering closer ties between Australian researchers and their Pacific counterparts. Strengthening the ownership of Pacific research by Pacific researchers themselves will also contribute to stronger Pacific research institutions, see the pool of experts expanded and see more links between Pacific and Australian students and researchers established.

The PRP's research outputs and findings will be a resource for the Office of the Pacific to inform DFAT's policy making. For example, the Pacific Attitudes Survey administered under Phase I of the PRP provided important insights into perceptions of Australia and its relationship with Samoa. The rollout of this survey elsewhere in the Pacific is expected to provide important insights into governance preferences, pressing challenges like climate change. As such, the research will enrich the strategic understanding of the Pacific, allowing for better targeted and nuanced programs to be designed. In a complex policy space where competing priorities demand attention, relevant, digestible and timely research is critical, especially if it is to inform and guide policymaking. Given the suite of development, economic and political challenges facing our Pacific neighbours, an improved understanding of the drivers of change and political economy context in which programs are operating will both inform and contribute to improved and more evidence-based decision making. As a world leader in Pacific research, the ANU plays an important anchoring role in the Pacific research and education ecosystem, which helps build important social capital between Australia and Pacific islands' peoples.

PRP II also builds on DFAT's historical support for research and tertiary education in the Pacific, which has included support for Pacific universities, scholarships for Pacific islands' students to attend university in Australia and elsewhere in the region, and funding for research on important Pacific issues.

<sup>11</sup> Funded in partnership by DFAT and the ANU, SSGM was established in 1996 following a competitive search for new research initiatives. Initially a modest research project, comprising three academics and a seconded DFAT officer, it was established with a view to better understand Australia's immediate region and to stem the acknowledged decline in Pacific expertise across Australia. Over time SSGM established itself as the leading centre for Pacific research, education, and training. In 2017 it became the ANU Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA), reflecting its consolidation as a vibrant and a fully integrated university department, undertaking a comprehensive suite of research, education, and outreach activities.



## D. Proposed Outcomes and Investment Options (What?)

### Overview

This section presents PRP II's program logic (see Figure 1) and defines each of the three EOPO's. Intermediate outcomes are also defined, and their contribution to each EOPO is outlined including the critical assumptions associated with these outcome areas.

The overall goal of PRP II is to:

*'To deepen Australia-Pacific research & education partnerships that support evidence-based policy making for the Pacific'.*

Research and education play an important role in building human capital, strengthening people-to-people and institutional linkages, and in generating data and insights that can help deepen understanding of the dynamic Pacific region. Pacific island countries are experiencing significant environmental, social, political and economic shifts and are facing seemingly intractable development challenges, heightened by globalisation, climate change and COVID-19. Research plays a crucial role in understanding the effects of these changes, how they play out at the local level, and where the opportunities to promote stability, security and prosperity lie within this dynamic context.

Over the next four years PRP II will focus on the achievement of three EOPO's that together contribute to the overarching goal. Each of these EOPO's can be considered pillars of the program, they include:

**Pillar 1. Better Informed Pacific Policy Makers** (Research-to-Knowledge pillar) – this will see *Pacific policy makers develop a deeper understanding of the Pacific development context and regional geo-politics, have greater access to quality independent research that supports evidence-based policy making, and deeper engagement with researchers.*

**Pillar 2. Stronger Pacific Research Partnerships and Practice** (Pacific Partnerships pillar) – this will see *Pacific researchers and institutions better equipped to undertake, manage and drive Pacific research, deliver quality research outputs and establish and maintain vibrant research networks and communities of practice.*

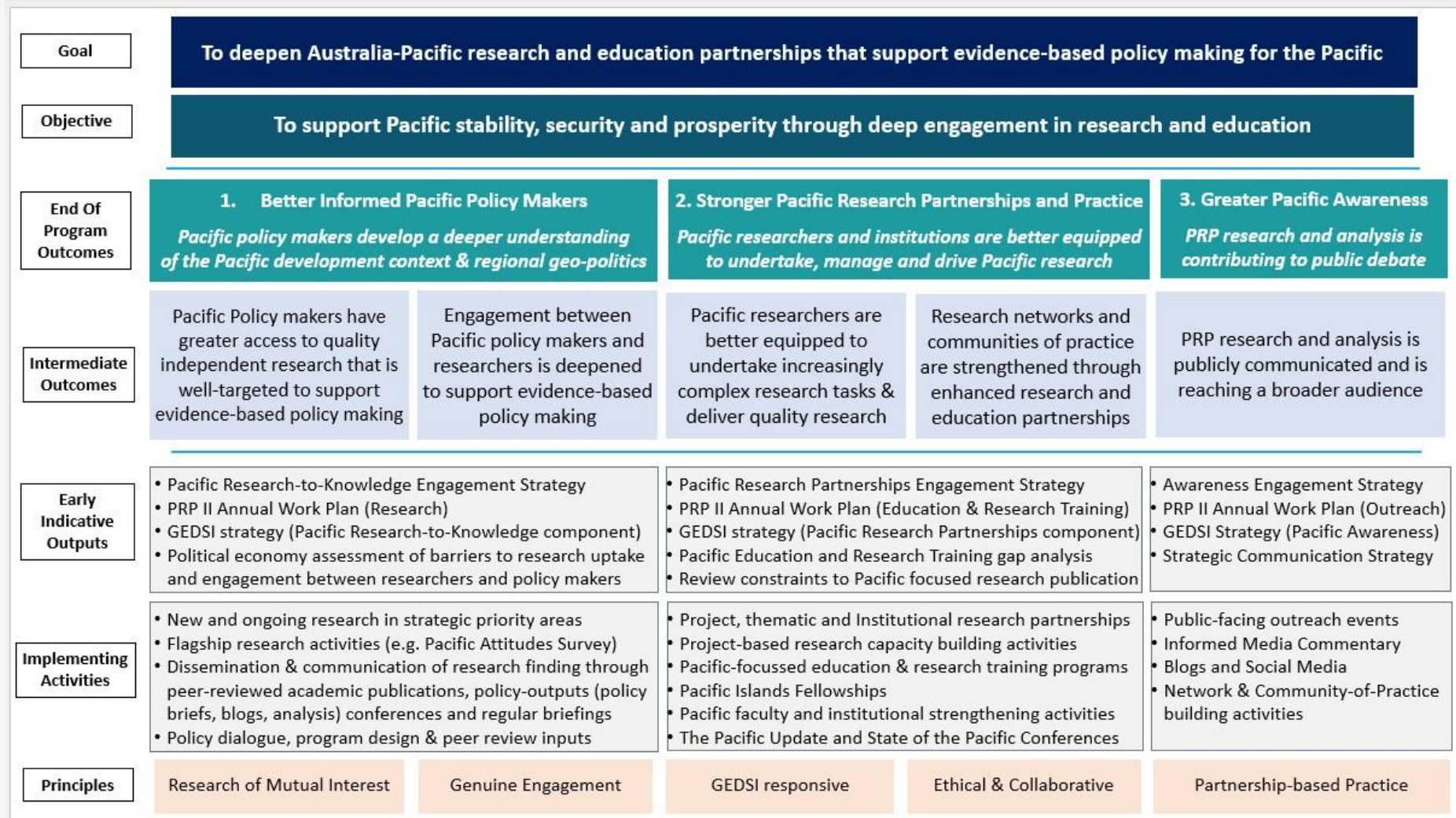
**Pillar 3. Greater Pacific Awareness** (Pacific Awareness pillar) – this will see *PRP research and analysis contributing to public debate and reaching a broader audience.*

Each EOPO and the intermediate outcomes that support it are shown in the PRP II program logic and are discussed below.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Figure 1: PRP II Program Logic





**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Evidence-based policy making is dependent upon research uptake and requires those formulating policy to have a good understanding of the operating context. Research uptake is most likely to occur when policy makers consider research to be of relevance to them: when it addresses the problems they are concerned with, and when they trust its quality and the veracity of the findings it delivers.

***Pillar 1: Better Informed Pacific Policy Makers***

***End-of-Program Outcome 1: Pacific policy makers develop a deeper understanding of the Pacific development context and regional geo-politics.***

PRP II's first pillar will support policy makers in Australia and partner countries deepen their understanding of both the Pacific development context and regional geo-politics. This involves focussing upon the intractable, pressing, or over-the-horizon development and geo-political issues that policy makers need awareness of to make well informed decisions. A deeper understanding of the Pacific development issues will generate a wide range of benefits for Pacific island and Australian policy makers, including by:

- ensuring policy decisions are based on quality evidence concerning the local and regional development context
- surfacing hitherto unknown issues that may present risks and require policy formulation
- presenting novel ideas and concepts that may inform policy or program choice and options.

The primary beneficiaries of PRP II's work under pillar 1 will be Pacific policy makers working to address the region's most pressing development challenges as reflected in the agreed strategic research priorities. PRP II's research-to-knowledge work is expected to influence policy makers across the region, including Pacific Island governments, donor partners, regional decision-making bodies and multilateral institutions.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the Pacific development challenges their programs and policies seek to address; Pacific policy makers require greater access to high quality independent research that is well-targeted. Additionally, their engagement with such research and the researchers undertaking it must be deepened. These, then, are the two intermediate outcomes that support the first EOPO.

***Intermediate Outcome 1: Pacific policy makers have greater access to quality independent research that is well-targeted to support evidence-based policy making.***

To achieve this PRP II will focus on delivering rigorous, high quality, well-targeted and independent research that empowers and strengthens the capabilities of Pacific Island researchers.

Rigorous high-quality research is that which conforms to best practice in research design and analysis and is recognised as such by the academic community. PRP II will deliver research that is internationally recognised, as evidenced by publication in international journals and through other peer reviewed publication channels and processes. All research activities will be delivered by a team of researchers overseen by senior academics who will play a substantive quality assurance role in areas such as research design, analysis and reporting. Delivering high quality research in the Pacific context also relies upon developing and maintaining strong relationships and partnerships with Pacific stakeholders, which is one of the strengths of the program. As such there is a strong linkage between this intermediate outcome and Intermediate Outcome 4.

If rigorous high-quality research is to be influential it also needs to be well-targeted. In this context, well-targeted research is that which focuses on issues that are of strategic importance to policy makers in the region, including DFAT and other Australian Government agencies. Through this design process, DFAT have identified five research themes that will guide PRP II's core research, these include:



1. Gender, Inclusion and Social Change
2. Labour Mobility and Integration
3. Politics, Governance and Economic Resilience
4. Papua New Guinea (and Bougainville)
5. Security, Regionalism and Geopolitics.

PRP II will establish research programs and flagship research projects. It will also appoint thematic leads who will work closely with DFAT and PRP researchers to develop and refine the research activities in each area. Development of the PRP's annual work plans and research activities will occur in an inclusive way to ensure they respond to the needs of Pacific policy makers, including through formal (an annual high-level policy dialogue convened at the start of the calendar year) and informal policy dialogues and the establishment of a Pacific Implementing Partner's Group. This group will comprise senior researchers, development specialists, those implementing other key investments and policy makers from the Pacific with whom PRP II already partners or seeks to partner with. These partnerships with other research institutions and academics will further elevate the profile of flagship research activities and provide multi-disciplinary perspectives.

These partnership dialogues will provide an opportunity to identify and discuss the emerging research and education needs of the region and have these inform the PRP's annual work plan, which will be submitted for DFAT's approval at the start of each financial year. Research projects funded under PRP II, will need to align with the principles that underpin PRP II's work and its program logic; they will need to be of mutual interest, developed through genuine engagement, GEDSI responsive, ethical and collaborative and contribute to stronger Pacific research partnerships and practice.

In addition to being rigorous, well-targeted and aligned with the principles underpinning the PRP, PRP II's research will be independent. Independence is the cornerstone of scholarly endeavour. It provides researchers with the freedom to pursue valid lines of enquiry, to be critical of policy positions, and to challenge assumptions, in this case around Pacific development and geo-political concerns.

Funded in partnership, by way of a grant modality, PRP II is not a vehicle for 'commissioned' research or service requests. Consistent with the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*, the PRP II grant is intended to support the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee, in this case the ANU-Lowy consortium, to achieve its objectives. PRP II has been designed as a genuine partnership, that involves established ways of working designed to ensure shared understandings of objectives and expectations. It is not prescriptive. With this in mind, the design outlines five thematic priorities. Should additional research priorities areas be identified, DFAT will need to provide commensurate funding and undertake relevant grant amendment steps.

The consortium will pursue independent medium-to-long term, policy-focussed and knowledge-focussed research. For the purpose of this design, policy-focussed research is that which is intended to directly inform policy and programming while knowledge-focussed research contributes to the generation of knowledge more broadly, and thus might be considered more academic in nature (noting of course that such research may also have policy-relevance). Policy-focussed research tends to involve collaborative co-design processes while knowledge-focussed research is often researcher led. Maintaining academic independence is critical in both cases. So too the need to ensure that independence, and the specialisation that comes therewith, does not undermine relevance.

***Intermediate Outcome 2: Engagement between Pacific policy makers and researchers is deepened to support evidence-based policy making***

In order to ensure the policy relevant knowledge and insights generated by high quality research can foster a deeper understanding of the Pacific development context and regional geo-politics, there is a need to deepen engagement between researchers and policy makers and between research outcomes and policy formulation more generally. Under this intermediate outcome the engagement between researchers and policy makers will be more substantive and systematic than under the previous phase and there will be an elevated focus on communicating the outcomes of research not just research outputs. Research outcomes are the findings, conclusions and recommendations emerging

from a research activity<sup>12</sup>, this is distinct from research outputs which are the journal articles, reports or other deliverables that are generated by a research activity. There will be a focus on capturing such outcomes and communicating those directly to policy makers in a way that maximises policy influence.

PRP II's approach to research-to-knowledge communication, will be articulated in the *Research-to-Knowledge Engagement Strategy*, and will take into consideration the institutional context in which researchers and Pacific policy makers are operating, which is fast-paced and resource constrained. This strategy will identify the many entry points for research influence in strategy setting, policy making and programming (including through the aid management cycle).

There will be deeper engagement at all levels from governance (through the Program Steering Committee), through to interpersonal engagement, programmatic engagement, policy engagement, training and capacity building. Engagements between researchers and policy makers will be tracked at the output level and M&E mechanisms will be established to assess the contribution of such engagements to outcomes – the approach to fostering deeper engagement will be outlined in the *Research-to-Knowledge Engagement Strategy*.

### ***Pillar 2: Stronger Pacific Research Partnerships and Practice***

***End-of-Program Outcome 2: Pacific researchers and institutions are better equipped to undertake, manage and drive Pacific research***

Under this pillar PRP II will work to strengthen the research capability of individual Pacific island country scholars and the Pacific research institutions it partners with. This EOPO is underpinned by the assumption that by improving research-related human capital and organisational systems, endogenous research capability can be sustained as these capacities mature through exposure to PRP's activities.

Developing stronger research practice and systems in the Pacific will have a range of benefits for Pacific scholars and Pacific research institutions, including:

- building individual research skills and expertise, which increases employment opportunities and provides the human capital needed to build strong Pacific research institutions
- enlarging the pool of well-trained experts with sound analytical skills who can advise Pacific Islands' governments and development partners (thereby reducing the reliance on expatriate experts)
- improving organisational research management capability, which ensures research grants and other revenue is used efficiently (and enhances the probability of independently accessing such grants).

The primary beneficiaries of PRP II's work under this pillar are the Pacific students who engage with the ANU through its Pacific education and training activities and the Pacific Islands-based researchers who partner with ANU on research activities. Other primary beneficiaries include the PRP's implementing partner research institutions. These presently include but are not limited to: University of the South Pacific (USP), University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and the National University of Samoa (NUS). ANU researchers will also benefit from the PRP II's work under this pillar as stronger research partnerships and practice will deliver greater opportunities for cross-learning, especially with respect to Pacific knowledge systems, ways of knowing and Pacific research methodologies.

Under the second PRP II pillar, the ANU-Lowy consortium will continue its support and faculty strengthening work with the UPNG School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). This support, albeit modest and bespoke by comparison, compliments the support provided to USP and to the UPNG School of Business and Public Policy under separate arrangements. The focus on supporting UPNG acknowledges Papua New Guinea as an agreed strategic research priority. PRP funds will be used to deepen research and education collaborations with partner institutions, through staff exchanges, research-based partnerships, teaching collaborations, cross-institutional supervision, and participation in research training and research capacity building activities. ANU-funded PRP staff will directly support EOPO2 through supervision of HDR students, through undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and through executive education.

<sup>12</sup> See Australian Research Council [Research Impact Principles and Framework](#) | Australian Research Council

Alongside this, research networks and communities of practice require strengthening through enhanced research and education partnerships. These intermediate outcomes are discussed below.

***Intermediate Outcome 3: Pacific researchers and institutions are better equipped to undertake increasingly complex research tasks and deliver quality research***

In order to sustainably build Pacific research capacity there is a need to ensure that individual students and researchers can deliver increasingly complex research tasks. Research is a complex process that involves, *inter alia*, research design and methodology development, data collection, analysis, writing and communication, editing, and quality assurance. It is important that budding researchers are exposed to as many of these tasks as possible as their capability increases, and that these things are conducted with academic rigour. The opportunity for Pacific based researchers to substantively participate in research projects is constrained by a lack of funding and opportunity, PRP II's research activities are very important in this context.

In order to foster stronger individual capacity, each relevant PRP II funded research activity will include a capacity development plan that will explain the role of Pacific Island-based researchers in the research activity, and how they will have opportunities to engage in increasingly more complex tasks over the course of the activity; the role of education, training and mentoring will also be explained. The mechanisms that will be used to generate these outcomes will be outlined in the *Pacific Research Partnerships Engagement Strategy*. This will be complemented by engagement with Pacific institutions on research processes including, *inter alia*: project management, financial management, work planning and activity scheduling, and human resource management. The review of PRP highlighted how organisational capability within Pacific implementing partners was strengthened through partnership with the ANU in the conduct of research activities.

There is also a need to ensure a constant supply of Pacific researchers who can provide the foundation for stronger research capability into the future. PRP II contributes to this through its diverse ANU-based Pacific education research programs, which enrol Pacific Islands' students, and through its broader research and education partnerships. PRP II will continue to support relevant, cutting-edge Pacific education courses that enrol high numbers of Pacific islanders, and it will work to expand student enrolments, especially at the post-graduate level. It will maintain the current teaching portfolio and the PhD program at current levels, while also working with new and existing tertiary partners. The review of PRP highlighted the important 'anchoring' role the ANU plays in the region in the area of Pacific studies and education. Through this phase this 'anchoring' role will be even further enhanced. The mechanisms that will be used to generate these outcomes will be outlined in the *Pacific Research Practice Engagement Strategy*. Likely mechanisms include the continuation of completion scholarships, noting that Pacific students typically require additional time and additional wrap around support to successfully complete their studies, and departmental sponsorship arrangements for Pacific Research Colloquium alumni seeking to complete the Graduate Certificate of Pacific Development.

***Intermediate Outcome 4: Research networks and communities of practice are strengthened through enhanced research and education partnerships***

PRP II's emphasis on partnership and inclusive research and education practices will form the basis for strengthening research networks and communities of practice in the Pacific, and between Pacific and Australian researchers. The ANU-Lowy consortium will use its position as a regional public good and research and education hub to anchor research and education relationships and ensure they remain vital ongoing partners. The way in which PRP II conceives of, and supports, research will be particularly important in this regard. For example, PRP II's flagship activities such as the Pacific Attitudes Survey will be structured in ways that strengthen research networks – in this case through the extension of a PAS network and support for PAS researchers to be involved in the extension of surveys across the region, and in the comparative analysis of survey data around periodic research and research capacity building networks. Similar communities of practice are being developed and will be extended around DPA's election observation research, which is

building a cadre of Pacific scholars who are beginning to lead on election observation, election research and research-informed election-related public commentary.

New research supported by PRP II will be structured in a way that continues to foster and support regional research networks in new areas of research, consistent with the shifting thematic focus of the program. For example, new research on issues such as Oceanic Diplomacy will provide opportunities for emerging scholars in the region to convene and establish research connections, which will be supported in various ways by PRP II over time, including through the provision of modest research funds, support for conferences and research-based secondments at ANU. Consortium partners will continue to use their respective platforms to nurture research networks and communities of practice such as Devpol's Pacific Update and Australian Aid Conference, Lowy's Leadership Dialogues and DPA's State of the Pacific Conference. The consortium will likewise continue its work to build a community of practice for Pacific gender research through ongoing support for *Toksave: Pacific Gender Resource*, and through its support of other investments including Balance of Power, Pacific Women Lead, PNG Women Lead and Women Make the Change. It will do so by providing advisory support, sitting or program reference groups, peer reviewing program outputs and actively contributing to program-level and broader thematic learning events.

One of the strengths of the PRP as a university-based partnership is its capacity to support long term and deep research. This is a different capability to those other DFAT-funded organisations who have research interests, such as managing contractor implemented development programs. In contrast to the PRP II, which will undertake policy and knowledge-focussed research, these organisations often commission targeted program-focussed research through a program's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system. This research is typically undertaken by independent researchers and consultants who lack institutional backing. All too often such research takes place without formal Human Research Ethics Committee oversight. The capacity to adopt a deep, long-term approach to research is a key strength and value add of the PRP, and one that strongly complements the work of others.

PRP II will work in ways that ensure its research and education activities complement broader development and policy activities. Specifically, it will work closely with existing development programs active in the agreed thematic research areas when developing the program's Engagement Strategies to ensure its research activities complement and support development program efforts. The responsive and collaborative governance structure will ensure research activities are developed in consultation with key stakeholders including development partners as well as bilateral and multilateral programs.

Under PRP I, consortium researchers worked closely with a range of development programs working in the gender space, including Balance of Power and the Women's Leadership Initiative, to ensure its research supported programming decisions. Similarly, DPA and Devpol researchers worked closely with various election support programs and agencies to strengthen evidence-based programming in areas such as electoral administration and women's candidate training. Election observation research conducted in PNG and Solomon Islands has informed election reform and capacity building efforts. Strong connections between labour mobility research conducted under PRP and various labour mobility program already exist.

### ***Pillar 3: Greater Pacific Awareness***

***End-of-Program Outcome 3: Pacific Research Program research and analysis is contributing to public debate***

Under this pillar, PRP II will work to ensure its research and analysis is contributing to public debate. It will do so through active media engagement and through public facing events designed to build greater awareness of Pacific issues amongst Australian's and others around the globe. Building Pacific literacy, and enhancing the general awareness of the Pacific, is an important part of deepening Australia's relationship with the Pacific as Australia seeks to engage more closely with its Pacific neighbours on all fronts. Building Pacific literacy and awareness will have a range of benefits for Australia and the Pacific community, including:



- building a cadre of better-informed Australian graduates and policy makers ensures that the Pacific context is considered in decision-making, cultural engagement and in other interactions with Pacific Island peoples, thereby demonstrating to Pacific partners that Australia is a strong friend in region
- raising awareness of Pacific issues amongst the Australian population, and within Australian organisations and institutions, in important areas like climate change, security, geo-politics and economic development helps galvanise and broaden support for the Pacific while diversifying partnerships in the region
- raising awareness of Pacific issues at a global level helps focus global attention on a region that is facing a range of pressing human development, economic and security challenges.

***Intermediate Outcome 5: PRP research and analysis is publicly communicated and is reaching a broader audience***

In order to ensure PRP research and analysis is contributing to public debate, it must first be publicly communicated to the Australian public, Australian business and other interests, and to global actors. It is by educating and informing the Australian public and others about Pacific issues that greater Pacific awareness will be fostered. Broadening audience reach will contribute to increased understanding and would likely help drive closer engagement between Australia and the Pacific. There are a range of ways PRP II will support this outcome including through the work of the Lowy Institute in highlighting Pacific issues through media and other channels, through Pacific education and training (including executive training), through Pacific events and colloquia, and through fostering partnerships between Australian and Pacific universities government and non-government organisations. The mechanisms that will be used to generate these outcomes will be outlined in the *Pacific Awareness Engagement Strategy*.

Raising Pacific Awareness also extends to global actors who include: multi-lateral agencies, 'like-minded countries', global NGO's, global media, universities, and academic publishing houses. It is important that global awareness of Pacific issues in areas like climate, security and economic development be raised so that global organisations can better target their policies, resources and publications, so that such issues can be elevated in the global arena. Raising such awareness extends to the global academic community where we see a comparatively low level of research focus in the Pacific, despite the many intractable and complex problems in the region. Raising awareness of these issues within that community can modify incentives within the academic community which may help crowd in more Pacific research globally.

PRP II will use multiple strategies to influence global actors, including through targeted outreach and events, media engagement, research publications, Pacific advocacy in academic networks, and increased partnerships with global actors in a range of areas. The mechanisms that will be used to generate these outcomes will be outlined in the *Pacific Awareness Engagement Strategy*.

***Delivery Approach***

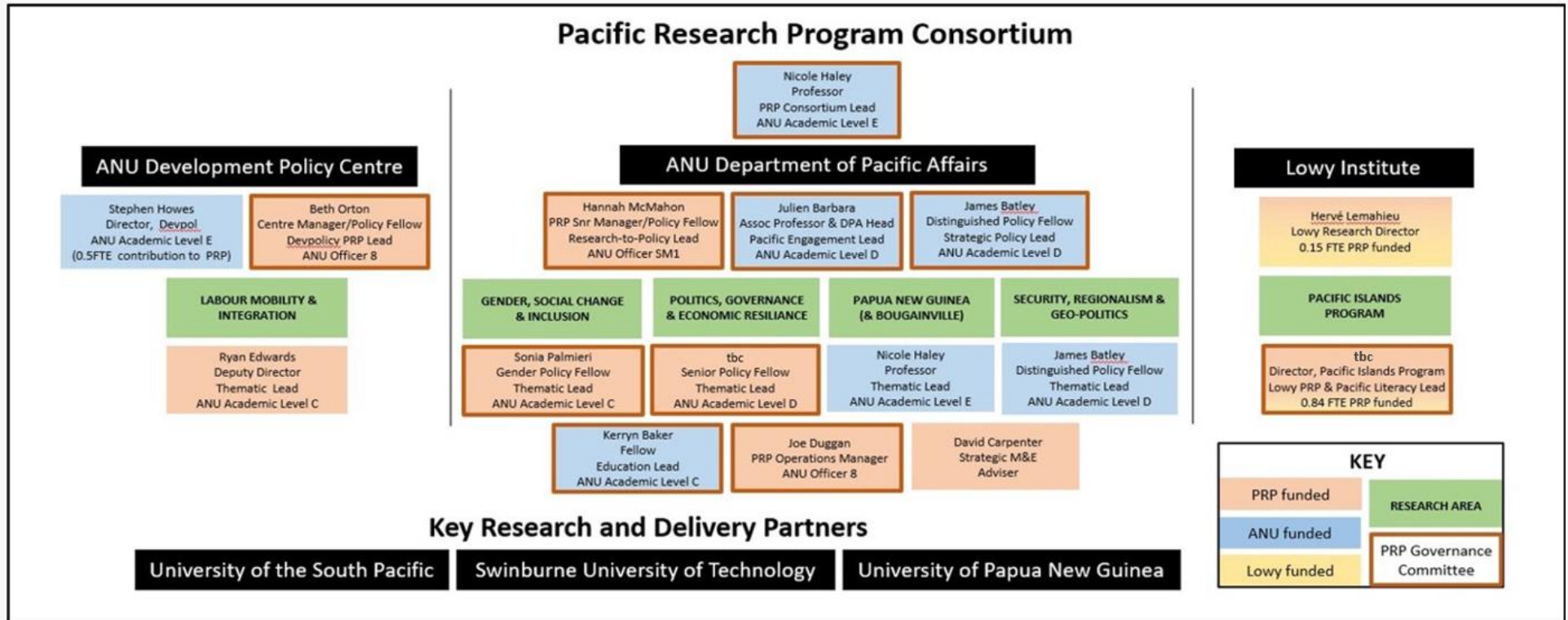
Funded jointly, PRP II will be delivered by a consortium comprising the ANU Department of Pacific Affairs (located in the Coral Bell School), ANU Development Policy Centre (located in the Crawford School) and the Lowy Institute. The rationale and value for money for continuing this arrangement was thoroughly explained in the recent PRP Review,<sup>13</sup> which highlighted the significant ANU co-investment (both direct and in-kind) in the PRP. The funding modality for PRP II will be a research grant as this will enable the ANU to continue to maximise its direct and in-kind contributions, which in the previous phase exceeded \$17 million and \$10 million respectively. As also noted in the 2021 independent review and above, ANU co-investment in the PRP, is made possible by its unique funding arrangements and could not be replicated by any other tertiary institution (or combination of institutions) in Australia. The structure of the PRP II consortium is presented in Figure 2.

<sup>13</sup> See Carpenter, D (2021) Review of the Pacific Research Program, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, November 2021, p.16



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

Figure 2. PRP Consortium Organogram





**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

The PRP Consortium is managed by the **ANU Department of Pacific Affairs**, the world's leading centre of research and education on state, society and governance in Melanesia and the broader Pacific. DPA will coordinate the inputs of consortium partners and ensure consortium activities contribute to the achievement of program goals and objectives.

The PRP Phase II will be led by Professor Nicole Haley, DPA's most senior academic. Haley has 15 years' leadership and management experience at the ANU, having been DPA Head of Department (2008-2020) and PRP Academic Lead (2017-2022). At the executive level she will be assisted by the PRP Senior Manager/Policy Fellow Hannah McMahon who will lead the Research-to-Knowledge pillar, DPA Head of Department, Associate Professor Julien Barbara, who will lead the Pacific Engagement pillar, and Distinguished Policy Fellow and Strategic Policy Lead, James Batley.

Given the key role DPA plays with respect to Pacific research and education, particularly in relation to Melanesia, Pacific politics, security, and gender senior DPA scholars will lead four of the thematic research programs identified in this design and the PRP's education programs. The identified education and thematic research leads are: Kerryn Baker (Education Programs); James Batley (Security, Regionalism and Geopolitics); Nicole Haley (PNG and Bougainville); Julien Barbara (Politics, Governance and Economic Resilience); and Sonia Palmieri (Gender, Inclusion and Social Change). General oversight of the entire program will be provided by PRP Senior Manager/Policy Fellow, Hannah McMahon, who will lead on issues of policy impact and engagement and will work closely with and coordinate the inputs of the Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser. DPA Head Julien Barbara will spearhead the development and expansion of the Pacific Attitudes Survey (PAS) as a flagship activity under the PRP Phase II. DPA will also use its convening power as the leading centre for Pacific research to host major Pacific research and outreach activities such as the State of the Pacific conference and Pacific Research Colloquium.

**The Development Policy Centre** (Devpol) is a think tank for aid and development serving Australia, the region, and the global development community. Its economic research and analysis supports development in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands region and contributes to better global development policy. Devpol Centre Manager/Policy Fellow Beth Orton will lead Devpol's PRP involvement and will actively contribute to the PRP governance committee, while Deputy Director, Ryan Edwards, will lead the PRP's research on Labour Mobility and Integration. Devpol will also use its convening power in the region to support the development of strong partnerships with regional institutions such as USP and to host key outreach and engagement activities to support the PRP, including through its Suva-based Pacific Update.

**The Lowy Institute for International Policy** will draw on its unrivalled public reach and influence to contribute high-quality economic analysis and policy relevant research on issues of geo-politics, security and economic resilience. Working across the priority thematic areas, Lowy will play a lead role in relation to PRP II's outreach and engagement objectives, both in the region and within Australia. Lowy will also lead the Pacific Awareness pillar and will work to enhance awareness of the Pacific. The Director of Lowy's Pacific Islands Program will sit on the PRP governance committee as will the Pacific Awareness pillar lead.

A strong focus of PRP Phase II will be consolidating connections across consortium partners. For example, a greater emphasis will be placed on ensuring cross-consortium collaboration on key flagship activities such as the Pacific Attitudes Survey. Enhanced cross thematic collaboration will also be required to ensure inclusion of key research priority issues such as gender and climate change in the research program under PRP Phase II. This will require thematic leads to play a more active role in program governance mechanisms such as monthly consortium partner meetings and to actively work across consortium partners to build key research and education relationships needed to deliver high impact policy research and engagement activities.

Given the way universities are funded and pressures upon the tertiary sector more broadly, research of the kind pursued through PRP II is inherently dependent upon government funding. Nevertheless the benefits of this program will be continued beyond the life of the investment by: building the capacity of Pacific researchers and institutions, building demand for research and better engagement between researchers and policy makers which will likely lead

to ongoing resource allocation, building awareness of the Pacific globally and domestically which will help build demand for ongoing investment in Pacific research, and by building on the long-term investments already made by the Australian Government and the ANU and leveraging existing funding channels including other competitive grant schemes as far as possible.

## E. Implementation Arrangements (How will DFAT engage?)

### *Governance Arrangements and Structure*

The objectives of PRP II's governance arrangements are to:

- provide clear lines of responsibility and accountability for program decision-making, implementation, and risk management
- foster closer engagement between the PRP consortium partners, and Pacific research stakeholders, most notably, DFAT.

PRP II will be overseen by a Program Management Committee (PMC) comprised of senior consortium partner and DFAT representatives, as follows:

- PRP II Lead – DPA
- PRP II Pillar Leads – DPA and Lowy
- PRP II Consortium Partner Leads – Devpol and Lowy
- PRP II Thematic Research Area Leads - DPA and Devpol
- DFAT SES Pacific Policy representative(s) (with interests in key research areas) – Office of the Pacific (OTP)
- DFAT Pacific Education and Partnerships Section – OTP
- DFAT Pacific Economist – OTP
- DFAT Pacific GEDSI representative.

The PMC will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss high-level strategic management issues associated with the implementation and strategic direction of the program, including the following: annual research plan, progress against intermediate outcomes, progress under each of the Engagement Strategies (and efficacy of these strategies), lessons emerging from M&E data, progress of flagship research activities, opportunities for deeper engagement, and consideration of risk management and other program issues.

The PMC meetings will be supported by a Secretariat which will include:

- PRP Operations Manager
- DFAT Activity Manager.

This Secretariat will provide PMC members with important information to review and consider ahead of each PMC meeting, and it will work with the PRP Lead and PRP's Strategic M&E Adviser to ensure PMC meetings are structured and focused on addressing key emerging and ongoing issues. This will include incorporating review and reflection processes into PMC meetings on a six-monthly basis, which allow for systematic reflection on PRP's Key Monitoring and Evaluation Questions – in this way PMC becomes an important cornerstone of PRP's MEL process.

The PMC will be supported by other governance and stakeholder engagement mechanisms designed to ensure a responsive and policy relevant research, capacity building and outreach program. These will include:

- an **annual, high-level policy dialogue** convened at the start of the financial year. This dialogue will include relevant representatives from DFAT (including representatives from key Pacific posts, programs and thematic areas) and the consortium partners. It will provide an opportunity for PRP stakeholders to discuss emerging policy developments and interests with a view to informing PRP II's research agenda. The policy dialogue will also provide an opportunity to review progress against program outcomes, including most importantly



fostering deeper engagement between the consortium partners and DFAT. An inaugural policy dialogue will be held following finalisation of the PRP design to inform the development of the first annual workplan for 2023. The annual high-level policy dialogue will be designed and facilitated by PRP's Strategic M&E Adviser.

- **Pacific regional engagement mechanisms** designed to facilitate effective policy dialogue with key Pacific posts. This may include an annual regional visit program where senior PRP II representatives meet with key posts to gauge policy priorities and research opportunities. PRP II will also look to establish a dialogue process around annual Pacific HOM visiting programs.
- **Pacific Implementing Partners Group** comprised of senior research, specialists, and policy makers from the Pacific with whom PRP II partners or seeks to engage. This group will meet around the time of the annual policy dialogue and will provide advice on emerging research and education needs in the region. The group will not determine research priorities but will instead provide a regional perspective on policy issues and engagement and partnership opportunities in the region.

The DFAT Activity Manager and the PRP Operations Manager will meet monthly to maintain regular communication, have honest and frank discussions about progress and hurdles, share operational updates, and work collaboratively on ways forward. They will also work to ensure the mid-term review provided for in this design occurs in 2024 as planned.

### *Management*

The key management roles and responsibilities for PRP II are outlined below and are reflected on the organogram included as Figure 2 above:

- **PRP II Lead (Professor Nicole Haley):** the PRP II Lead will have overall responsibility for the management of the program including: strategic oversight, planning and budgeting, risk management, partner relationship management, PRP II/ANU management, engagement with other tertiary institutions, development and oversight of the Research-to-Knowledge Engagement Strategy and the PNG (and Bougainville) thematic research program.
- **PRP II Pillar Leads (Hannah McMahon, Assoc Prof. Julien Barbara, tbc):** each PRP II program Pillar will have a designated Pillar Lead. The PRP Senior Program Manager/Policy Fellow (Hannah McMahon) will lead the Research-to-Knowledge Pillar, DPA Head of Department (Associate Professor Julien Barbara) will lead the Pacific Research Partnerships Pillar, and a TBC Lowy Institute representative will lead the Pacific Awareness Pillar. Each will have specific responsibilities. For example, the PRP Senior Program Manager and Research-to-Knowledge Lead will support development and operationalisation of the three *Engagement Strategies*; liaise with DFAT staff on a regular basis; and identify opportunities or policy focused research partnerships and collaborations to maximise the impact of PRP research, while the Pacific Engagement Lead will spearhead the development and expansion of the Pacific Attitudes Survey through new and existing partnerships.
- **Development Policy Centre PRP II Lead (Beth Orton):** Devpol's PRP II Lead will manage Devpol's PRP engagement, its PRP II research activities and broad-based community outreach and awareness raising activities. She will actively contribute to the PRP governance committee and coordinate Devpol's inputs into PRP reporting.
- **Lowy Institute PRP II Lead (Pacific Islands Program Director) (tbc):** Lowy's PRP II Lead will spearhead Lowy's research activities and internal Pacific literacy-oriented work; support the drafting and operationalisation of the three Engagement Strategies in particular the Pacific Awareness Engagement Strategy; contribute technical inputs into the research themes as required; and participate in PMC meetings.
- **PRP II Thematic Research Leads:** Senior academics from DPA and Devpol will be appointed to lead the Gender, Inclusion and Social Change (Sonia Palmieri); Labour Mobility and Integration (Ryan Edwards); Politics, Governance and Economic Resilience (Julien Barbara) and Security, Regionalism and Geopolitics (James Batley) research themes. The thematic leads will conduct stocktakes of existing research under each thematic area, work with colleagues to design and deliver flagship research projects, support research-to-knowledge engagement in the relevant thematic area (with the support of the PRP II Research-to-Knowledge Pillar Lead), support Pacific engagement around the relevant thematic area and support developing Pacific literacy in the relevant thematic area.

- **PRP II Education Lead (Dr Kerry Baker):** the PRP Education Lead will have overall responsibility for the PRP's Pacific-focussed Education Programs, education matters and governance. They will participate in PMC meetings and will work closely with the DPA Director of Studies, Program Convenors and DPA's HDR Delegate.
- **PRP II Operations Manager (Joe Duggan):** will provide program management support in a range of strategic and operational areas including: supporting the PMC; supporting MEL processes; overseeing contractual and administrative arrangements within ANU and with implementing partners; working closely with the PRP II Senior Program Manager/Policy Fellow supporting research-to-knowledge engagement; establishing synergies with other DFAT investments; liaising with Pacific partners, other donors and Australian government agencies.
- **PRP II Strategic M&E Adviser** will provide strategic M&E advice to the program in a range of areas including: designing the MEL system; facilitating key learning and reflection processes; supporting PRP II's reporting to DFAT; facilitating the annual high-level dialogue and other dialogue as required; drafting the Engagement Strategies template; facilitating inputs into the development of Engagement Strategies; and quality assuring Engagements Strategies.
- **DFAT Activity Manager:** will support the PMC, oversee the contractual and administrative arrangement on behalf of DFAT, working closely with the PRP II Senior Program Manager/Policy Fellow supporting research-to-knowledge engagement; establishing synergies with other DFAT investments; facilitate research uptake; serve as a knowledge broker within DFAT; coordinate DFAT participation in the annual high-level policy dialogue (including representatives from key Pacific posts, programs and thematic areas) and less formal policy dialogues; and coordinate DFAT codesign inputs and feedback on the annual work plan.

#### *Early Activities*

In addition to the ongoing research activities that have been carried over into the new phase of the program, there are a number of new early activities that will be prioritised in the first six months of implementation (July – December 2022), these include:

- drafting the FY2022/23 Research Work Plan
- drafting the M&E Plan and validating the draft M&E Framework
- drafting a risk management plan
- designing Engagement Strategy templates
- facilitating an Engagement Strategy development process with key consortium researchers and partners
- finalising Engagement Strategies
- conducting a stock take of existing research activities under each thematic area, including other related research funded by DFAT (e.g., the World Bank and Pacific Labour Facility research on Pacific Labour Mobility)
- identifying and designing Flagship research activities under each of the five thematic areas.

#### *Engagement Strategies*

Engagement Strategies will be developed for each of the three pillars (outcomes areas) of the program: Research-to-Knowledge, Pacific Research Partnerships and Pacific Awareness. These strategies will be used to maintain focus on the outcome trajectory, integrate cross-cutting themes and ensure PRP II's human and financial resources are used in an optimal and complementary fashion. They will be drafted in the first six-months of implementation, and they will inform and be informed by, PRP II's GEDSI Strategy, which will be developed in parallel with these important documents.

The Engagement Strategies will not only focus on *what* PRP II will do in each area (e.g., at the activity level), but they will also explain *why* this is important and *how* outcomes will be delivered. Theories of Change will be developed for each engagement area, this process will be facilitated by the Strategic M&E Adviser and will involve key consortium staff, Pacific partners and DFAT staff. Other key components of each Engagement Strategy will include: key partnerships and ways of working, synergies with other relevant DFAT/Australian Government investments (e.g., Pacific-Australia Labour Mobility scheme), complementarity with other Engagement Strategies, optimal utilisation of

PRP II inputs, budget and early indicative activities. The identification of early indicative activities is particularly important and will build on the work undertaken under PRP phase 1.

MEL Frameworks will be developed for each strategy that will measure progress at activity, output and outcome level, feeding in to the overall MEF. In addition to focusing on *what* is being achieved (i.e., results) there will be a concomitant focus on monitoring the efficacy of each Engagement Strategy, relevant performance questions will be developed and incorporated into learning processes, including at the governance level (see Section F for more details).

## **F. Monitoring and Evaluation (How will DFAT measure performance?)**

### *MEL Approach*

The dual purpose of PRP II's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system is to facilitate organisational learning through the development and sharing of evidence and analysis to inform decision-making and program direction, while also serving the accountability needs of DFAT, by generating information relevant for DFAT's Investment Monitoring Reporting. Information generated by the MEL system will be used to explain and contextualise progress towards the EOPOs and assess the efficacy of the Engagement Strategies. The MEL system will generate data and information that can be used to clearly explain how well PRP II is progressing and whether such progress can be considered reasonable within the prevailing context.

A MEL Plan will be developed within the first six months of inception, alongside the development of the pillar-level Engagement Strategies (which will include their own M&E Frameworks). This plan will explain how the MEL system will function, including outlining MEL processes and activities at various levels in accordance with DFAT's M&E Standards.

The MEL Plan will include:

- Guiding Principles and Key Approaches (including building the M&E capacity of Implementing Partners)
- Program-Level Monitoring Process (including Key Monitoring Questions and related processes of enquiry for strategic context monitoring – Annex 3 already includes these questions)
- Program-Level Evaluation Process (including Key Evaluation Questions and related evaluation processes)
- Activity-Level Monitoring and Evaluation processes (including M&E template for research activity design)
- Data Management and Information System functions
- Identification of Baseline Data against which progress will be tracked
- Learning Strategy (including strategies to facilitate DFAT uptake)
- MEL Roles and Responsibilities
- MEL Implementation Schedule
- Reporting schedule
- updated M&E Framework (MEF) – once Engagement Strategies are finalised.

The MEL system will also monitor, measure and report on results from the integration of GEDSI, in particular it will:

- develop indicators for the various GEDSI outputs and include these in the updated PRP II MEF and Engagement Strategy MEF's
- consistently collect and apply disaggregated data (sex, age group, location and disability) reporting as standard practice
- promote inclusive participation in MEL-related activities, and monitor and report on such participation
- ensure gender analysis and a gender perspective is incorporated into all MEL capacity building activities with Implementing Partners
- ensure the findings from Gender Analysis inform the refinement of the MEL strategy
- establish and facilitate learning processes that promote the effective participation of women, young people and people with disabilities.

### *MEL Tools*

The MEL Plan will outline the particular M&E tools that will be used to assess progress towards the achievement of the intermediate and end-of-program outcomes. A description of potential tools and how they may be used will be outlined in an appendix to the M&E Plan – PRP II’s M&E Toolkit. Due to the wide scope of this intervention which includes, *inter alia*, policy influencing activities, training, capacity building, social communication etc there will be a need to use a wide variety of M&E tools, these made include, but are not limited to:

- Surveys
- Outcome Harvesting
- Most Significant Change
- Process Tracing
- Contribution analysis
- Participatory methods.

The M&E Toolkit will explain which tools may be used to monitor and evaluate certain aspects of the program (e.g. MSC for capacity development, outcome harvesting for policy influence etc). The toolkit will be a reference document for the PRP II M&E team and will be the basis for M&E training and capacity building within the PRP team and with Implementing Partners.

### *Learning Processes*

PRP II will prioritise organisational learning and a focus on critical reflection in order to generate lessons that can lead to more effective implementation. It will also ensure such lessons are captured and communicated clearly to DFAT (and other key partners) through its reporting. To assist with this PRP II will use applied political economy analysis (PEA), including GEDSI analysis, to better understand institutional and organisational contexts of Implementing Partners for example and of DFAT in particular. A strategy for applied PEA, including GEDSI considerations, timing, resources, and outputs, will be developed during the inception stage. All PEAs will include a gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion analysis as an integral part of the process.

PRP II will place high value on review and reflection (R&R) processes as a means to regularly assess the political economy, evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of research activities, test assumptions, manage risk, and modify Engagement Strategies as required. Structured internal R&R sessions will take place on a six-monthly and annual basis, to align with progress reporting. The R&R sessions will enable the PRP II team and partners to reflect on the quality and impact of relationships, collaboration and/or coordination with other DFAT and other development partner programs. The Key Evaluation Questions outlined in Annex 3 will be used to guide the R&R learning sessions.

In addition to the internal, program-focused R&R processes there is also a need to establish a broader stakeholder-based R&R process that includes the program, DFAT and Pacific stakeholders. The purpose of this process is to elevate R&R to a more strategic, overarching level, facilitating reflection on the roles of the different stakeholders in the program. The timing of these processes is important and should take place after the program level R&R sessions but before (and in some cases during) Steering Committee meetings. This will ensure the lessons from stakeholder level R&R can feed into decision-making. In order to foster independence and critical reflection, an independent Strategic M&E Adviser (Dr David Carpenter) with expertise in M&E, Facilitation, Research and DFAT quality standards will facilitate these sessions.

### *Reporting*

It is anticipated that PRP II will provide the following formal reports to DFAT:

- six-monthly summary reports that cover progress of activities and notable achievements, risk and implementation issues
- annual reports and annual research plans that cover progress against EOPOs and IOs as well as updates to Engagement Strategies (due in June/July each year).



PRP II's annual reporting will be concise, strategic and explanatory in nature and not simply descriptive. These reports will clearly explain how PRP II is progressing against the high-level outcomes, the constraints and development risks faced by the program, and the changes made to implementation to address these constraints and risks. Annual progress reports are an important record of ongoing performance and are central to the evaluation process and thus they must be able to explain observed changes in implementation over the life of the investment. In relation to research activities, reports will clearly outline work under each of the five focus areas.

In accordance with DFAT's M&E Standards<sup>14</sup> PRP II's six-monthly progress reports will include:

- an up-to-date description of the strategic and implementation context
- a discussion of the ongoing relevance of PRP II's work to DFAT
- a discussion of the adequacy of progress against the high-level outcomes (incorporating reflections on how changes in context have affected progress)
- a review of performance against the Work Plan (with a discussion of productivity/efficiency issues) and budget
- reflections on the performance of PRP II's implementation approaches with a summary of lessons and how these will inform the subsequent annual plan and implementation period.

Reports will also include reflections on the efficacy of governance mechanisms, risk management issues and other operational issues.

#### *MEL Resourcing*

The human and financial resources for MEL in PRP II will be significantly higher than the first phase, and will include:

- a Strategic M&E Adviser will support the Senior Program Manager and Research-to-Knowledge Lead in all aspects of M&E, Learning, Reporting, Evaluation and Engagement Strategy development and validation, as well as capacity building with Pacific-based Implementing partners and PRP consortium staff
- the PRP Program Manager who will lead on monitoring, activity-level data collection and synthesis
- Research Thematic Leads, who will lead with the monitoring of Engagement Strategies.

## **G. Gender, Disability and Other Cross Cutting Issues**

### *Gender, Social Change and Inclusion*

The changing social and cultural landscape of the Pacific, coupled with changing gender identities and gender relations, are informing and challenging Pacific politics, security, and development. Driven by a senior thematic lead and the PRP II's in-house GEDSI strategic advisor (Dr. Sonia Palmieri), our research will continue to focus on issues of gender, social change and inclusion as both a thematic priority in its own right, and as a cross-cutting issue incorporated across all major research activities supported under PRP II.

PRP researcher and the Gender, Social Change and Inclusion thematic lead, Dr Sonia Palmieri, through her role as co-chair of the Bell School Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Committee plays a key role in ensuring considerations of diversity and inclusion are front and centre in School and College research and outreach activities, and that these same commitments are demonstrated in PRP II's research and engagement. The principles driving the PRP II's gender equality and inclusion outcomes and processes are set out in the Coral Bell School's Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and were developed in a highly consultative and inclusive way led by Dr Palmieri herself. In this way the PRP is driving improvements in the way research across the ANU is conducted.

PRP II will work to ensure continual improvements to the way diversity, in all its manifestations, informs the research we undertake, the way that research is conducted, and the workplaces we create. PRP II is committed to advancing gender equality and inclusion in its research, education, public engagement, and day-to-day operations, and will work to ensure it avoids 'solutions' and practices that place additional burdens on women, people with disabilities and our

<sup>14</sup> See DFAT (2021) Monitoring and Evaluation Standards – Standard 3 Investment Progress Reporting

Pacific partners. PRP II will be informed by and adopt tested good practices from the higher education sector, noting the specific historical, political and social circumstances of the Pacific Islands' region and that structural inequalities are often intersectional and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. PRP II will share its learnings across the sector with other programs and investments. It will do this by ensuring PRP researchers are connected to and supporting other key investments including but not limited to Balance of Power, Pacific Women Lead, PNG Women Lead, and Women make the Change.

PRP II also recognises that our education programs and research training activities shape how students perceive the world. To this end the PRP will support formal education offerings that elevate Pacific knowledge systems and Pacific research methodologies alongside more inclusive research methodologies. It will regularly monitor – and improve – the gender diversity of our reading lists and course offerings, and ensure students are exposed to Pacific views and voices throughout their programs. As well the PRP will work to ensure the work of female, gender diverse and Pacific scholars is published and promoted in academia and amongst policy makers, and will provide the necessary supports to ensure this.

Consistent with DFAT's Gender Strategy, PRP II's research on gender will focus on three major areas:

- 1) Research on women's leadership and political participation will investigate issues relating to the representation and participation of women in formal (elections, legislatures, bureaucracies) and informal (village politics, civil society) political spaces. It will build the evidence base for improved programming and consider how women's leadership and political participation are best supported in various contexts (from gender sensitive parliaments to community level decision making) and how collective action on the part of women to secure positive change might be enhanced and supported.
- 2) Research on women's economic empowerment will investigate women's economic (formal and informal) participation, the barriers to and enablers of women's economic empowerment and more inclusive forms of economic development. This research strand will include a focus on women's participation in labour mobility and broader integration initiatives, both as workers and as wives and mothers left behind. A key focus of such research will be the welfare of women, children and families. A final strand of research will investigate the intersection between gender and insecurity, focusing on the issue of violence against women and girls.
- 3) Ending violence against women and girls remains a key developmental challenge for Pacific island countries. PRP's research in this area will investigate violence against women and girls, seeking to better understand the drivers of such violence and how to interrupt and/or mitigate it, along with evidence-based policy responses including prospects for legislative and community-based approaches to prevention.

In addition to these gender-focused research initiatives, gender will be incorporated into all major research activities as a cross-cutting issue. For example, flagship research activities supported by the PRP will include significant gender components and, as a matter of course, collect gender disaggregated data. In the case of the Pacific Attitudes Surveys, this will also include substantive gender modules. Research on climate change (security) and elections will likewise include a strong focus on gender. In addition, the PRP's election research this will maintain a strong focus on inclusion including the franchise of women and those living with disability. It will investigate the gendered nature of money politics and political violence, as well as community attitudes to political inclusion.

Gender will also remain a core program management and capacity building focus of the PRP. This will include ensuring that PRP governance structures are inclusive and ensure equal representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles. It will also include ensuring equitable and gender-sensitive recruitment processes, including through gender diverse selection panels and genuine consideration of performance relative to opportunity. The PRP will also work to actively address the poor representation of women and scholars of Pacific heritage at senior levels within academia.

PRP capacity building and outreach activities will also be structured to ensure they are inclusive. For example, the Pacific Research Colloquium will be structured to strengthen research and education pathways for female and gender diverse students and policy makers from the Pacific, both in ensuring balanced selection of women participants for PRP activities but also in providing tailored support for women participants in terms of post-PRC and post-award

professional and education development. The research networks and communities of practice PRP II will work to strengthen will play a key role in fostering ongoing support for women.

#### *Disability Inclusiveness*

During Inception the Senior Program Manager (with the support of the Strategic M&E Adviser) will develop a Disability Inclusion Plan, informed by both ANU and DFAT best practice for disability-inclusive research. This will outline the various ways the program will can better support the needs of people with disability and Disabled People's Organisation through its research, research training, education and outreach activities, including through:

- identifying existing and potential research activities that address high priority issues for people with disability
- identifying the various ways people with disability interact with PRP II's research education, training and outreach activities, and determining how such interaction can be improved to maximise the substantive engagement of people with disability
- working with Pacific-based Implementing Partners to also identify opportunities to engage more substantively with people with disability and disabled people's organisations
- inclusion of disability disaggregated data where possible.

## **H. Budget and Resources (What will it cost?)**

#### *Budget*

Delivering a comprehensive research and education program that will deliver upon the PRP II's End-of-Program Outcomes will require a genuine partnership between DFAT, the ANU and the Lowy Institute. In line with DFAT's Aid Grants Policy, the objectives will also require significant investment (direct and in-kind) from both DFAT and the ANU.

The PRP Phase II represents significant value for money because the partnership and co-investment model underpinning the program leverages consortia partner resources that result in a doubling of the program's value. It also enables the PRP consortia partners to operate at a scale that can sustain a broad range of activities including Pacific-focused education programs, large scale research activities of direct relevance to the PRP and its program objectives. PRP thus benefits from indirect program activities that can only be provided by ANU as a national research institute that has made sizeable long-term investments in Pacific studies.

Importantly the 2021 review found that the current partners are the right ones, and in particular, that it would 'not possible for any other university, or university consortium, to deliver a program of this magnitude for the same [value for money].'

The DFAT funding for PRP II amounts to \$20 million AUD over four years. The grant amount from DFAT is set and will not be augmented in order to address overprogramming that may occur as a result of this risk. The PRP grant funds provided by DFAT will be matched directly by ANU (77%) and in-kind (23%) by the consortium, largely through ANU DPA, totalling \$22m. This brings the total value of activities supported by PRP to \$42m (\$22m from ANU and Lowy, \$20m from DFAT). The grant modality enables the high level of ANU co-investment, as does the strong alignment between the objectives of PRP II and those set out in the ANU Strategic Plan 2021-2025<sup>15</sup> and in its founding mission which confers unique national responsibilities upon the ANU in relation to public policy research and engagement, and in relation to the pursuit of scholarly research that contributes to the prosperity and security of our immediate region. PRP II will leverage much of the ANU's existing Pacific expertise in the areas of politics, history, culture, economics, development studies, law and security studies and will draw upon its existing research and education infrastructure. It is important to note that it is the grant modality which enables a doubling of resourcing compared to that which would otherwise be available to ANU and Lowy to undertake work in areas of DFAT interest.

The budget proposed herein flows from the PRP II program logic and sees each pillar of the program well resourced, either by way of the PRP II grant funding or the consortium co-contributions. In response to the Independent Review

<sup>15</sup> See ANU (2021) ANU by 2025: Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025.

of Phase I, the budget for Phase II incorporates greater investment in monitoring and evaluation as well as impact and engagement, and sees more resourcing for partnerships, collaborations and strengthened Pacific research practice, whilst maintaining funding for flagship activities including the Pacific Research Colloquium, Pacific Attitudes Survey, Pacific Update and State of the Pacific Conference. Each research focus area is also given equal weighting in terms of total resourcing.

#### *Resources*

DFAT will appoint an Executive Level 1 officer (0.5 FTE) to manage this activity (with assistance from other staff as required) under the leadership of the Director, Pacific Education Partnerships Section. Having these dedicated resources on both sides of the partnership will help further build the ANU-DFAT relationship, help the consortium partners to better understand the DFAT policy context and tailor the policy recommendations and research outputs accordingly, and will help the DFAT Activity Manager to promote PRP research throughout OTP as appropriate.

### **I. Procurement and Partnering**

The delivery mechanism will be a research grant provided to the ANU, who will, in turn sub-contract the Lowy Institute. The Value for Money of this mechanism has been validated by the review of PRP I as discussed under Section B. The ANU will use its own sub-contracting arrangements to engage Implementing Partners.

The 2021 PRP Phase I review recognised the unique value for money proposition the ANU-Lowy consortium provides, noting that the partnership and co-investment model underpinning the program leverages consortia partner resources that result in a doubling of the program's value. It also highlighted the consortiums' unique capabilities to achieve the PRP goals and objectives, concluding '... it is highly unlikely that an alternate implementing partner would have the internal capability (both in human resources and Pacific research expertise) to deliver such a program, and would, in all likelihood, have to "poach" ANU staff to do so.'

In view of this DFAT agreed with the review recommendation to provide a research grant to the existing consortium to support PRP Phase II, and to initiate a partner-led design process. The provision of PRP funding, through a grant modality was shown to be critically important to the success of the program during Phase 1. The reasons for this were twofold. First it promoted and supported academic independence – the cornerstone of scholarly endeavour. Second it generated additional funding – in the form of research returns – that were invested in Pacific research and teaching. Supporting ANU's capacity to fulfil its national mandate remains key to the achievement of the PRP II's overall goal and end of program outcomes which benefit from ANU's regional reputation as an independent research institution and its capacity to deliver high quality accredited programs and courses, including an internationally recognised Pacific-centred PhD program.

#### *Sustainability*

Notwithstanding that a research program of this kind – one intended to generate and disseminate Pacific-focused research aligned with Australian Government and Pacific partner governments interests and priorities as a regional public good – is inherently dependent on ongoing government funding, this design puts a premium on sustainability and responds to the structural challenges impacting upon Pacific research capabilities and Pacific policy making. Most significantly, PRP is deepening capabilities of individual researchers and supporting stronger communities of practice among tertiary institutions in the region.

PRP Phase II builds on long term successes achieved under Phase I by strengthening investments in research training and research-based partnerships with Pacific institutions, and through consolidation of a PhD program focused on emerging Pacific scholars. The growth of DPA's PhD program and the increased participation of Pacific students in that program is contributing to the revitalisation of Pacific studies and providing a basis to strengthen Pacific research capabilities in the Pacific tertiary sector. A focus on partnership-based relationships between ANU and regional institutions will ensure individual capability gains continue to be supported on return to the region. By strengthening research capabilities of Pacific scholars and policy makers, PRP Phase II is making a significant contribution to supporting development outcomes in the region.

Sustainability is also supported by PRP Phase II's strengthened focus on policy-focused research and engaging with the policy interests of Pacific policy makers. Improved governance arrangements will mean that research activities supported under the PRP are increasingly demand-led, ensuring the relevance of the research agenda and the support it provides to Pacific policy makers. A focus on building public awareness of Pacific issues will strengthen public interest in the region and ongoing demand for Pacific-based research. The need for active research on the Pacific is best evidenced by the increasing public debate on geopolitical issues in the Pacific.

The delivery model adopted by PRP Phase II, centres on a strong partnership between ANU, Lowy and DFAT and a co-investment funding model. This model provides a strong basis for anchoring research capacity gains made under PRP. The PRP will leverage existing funding channels as far as possible. The grant-based nature of the partnership crowds in additional research investments from ANU that significantly increase the overall quantum of funding for Pacific studies and facilitates a much higher level of Pacific-centred research and education. By enabling ANU to work at a higher scale and providing resources to support research-based partnerships in the region, PRP Phase II allows ANU to deepen its relationships and partnerships with regional institutions.

#### **J. Risk Management and Safeguards (What might go wrong?)**

PRP II will continue to work on a no-surprises basis, using its governance mechanisms to draw to DFAT's attention research issues and activities of particular sensitivity. The consortium will use sound political judgement and employ a "no surprises" policy when disseminating research findings that may carry reputational risk to DFAT, and when working with the Australian Government on sensitive policy issues.

Risk management will be built into governance, as part of dynamic management arrangements, with regular evaluation of treatments, controls and the addition or deletion of emerging or expired risks as the situation changes. Risk will be a standing agenda items at the PMC and at monthly operational meetings. As part of ongoing risk management, DFAT may seek information from PRP partners about the application of agreed treatment and controls, including through reporting. The Risk Register is attached at Annex 4 and will be considered a living document to be updated throughout the program as part of program management. Where there is duplication of risk or safeguard policy requirements, the higher standard of the two will apply. A comparative assessment of DFAT and ANU risk and safeguard policies is at Annex 5 (and review has satisfied that any gaps are minor and incorporated in the risk register).

PRP II researchers will work constructively with DFAT at the conception of politically sensitive research projects to agree strategies for managing identified risks. The process for this will be outlined in the Research-to-Knowledge Engagement Strategy. PRP II will communicate with DFAT staff in Canberra and at Posts in the region regarding research progress and emerging risks related to PRP II activities. PRP research will also be undertaken in compliance with ANU, Human Ethics and Responsible Conduct of Research protocols and informed by the DFAT Ethical Research and Evaluation Guidance Note. Research undertaken by PRP ANU scholars will be undertaken in accordance with ANU policies and procedures. Research will be subject to review and approval by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee and will be undertaken in accordance with the National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Risks that will be monitored cover program management, political sensitivities, stakeholder management, fraud and safeguards, travel and cultural sensitivities, and ongoing resourcing to PRP (noting the long history of funding Pacific research by DFAT at the ANU).

#### **K. Annexes**

The following annexes have not been included in the online publication version of this document due to commercial in-confidence sensitivities.

1. Summary of how Phase II incorporates review findings



2. Budget
3. 'Minimum Sufficient' M&E Framework
4. Risk Matrix
5. Comparative Assessment of Risk and Safeguard Policies