

Roadmap for leadership in implementing Indigenous studies in Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2023 and Engagement and Impact (EI) Assessment 2024

What is the purpose?	To promote awareness and importance of FoR 45 (Indigenous studies) through the ERA and EI programs by ensuring meaningful reporting based on accurate data							
What is needed to achieve the purpose?	Accurate data from universities		Knowledgeable community of practice with an ethical and respectful engagement ethos		A cohort of skilled coders and assessors			
What else is needed to achieve the purpose?	Capable and accurate coding by universities		Ethical and rigorous co-designed engagements/partnerships with communities of Indigenous researchers as best practice as per the AIATSIS Code .		Support and, where needed, building capacity of Indigenous researchers to be engaged in submission and assessment processes			
How is this done?	Design and develop materials that are fit for purpose and easy to use at point of need			University leadership culture to build the knowledge, skills and understanding of the principles underpinning FoR 45				
What are the outputs?	Fact sheets – E.g., How to code outputs, how research is assessed	Videos - E.g., underlying principles why coding is important	FAQs – Common questions	Case studies E.g., engagement	MOOC/ OLE/ Accreditation module for coding FoR 45	Dialogue with: VCs, DVCRs, peak bodies, academies & at conferences	Encourage community of practice/ cross university collaboration for coding FoR 45	Targeted information for senior leaders such as resourcing requirements



Context for the Roadmap

Why is the roadmap important?

- Indigenous peoples are the first innovators and have undertaken research continually for millennia. The knowledge generated from this experience continues to be important and relevant to today; it is knowledge that contributes to social, economic and cultural benefits for all and can address big issues such as climate change.
- Evaluating the quality, engagement and impact of Indigenous studies research recognises the valuable contributions Indigenous peoples and communities make across the full range of research disciplines including sciences, arts, social sciences, humanities and creative arts.
- Ethical recognition of Indigenous knowledge ownership and contribution provides an opportunity to engage ‘properly’ with First Nations, in alignment with international standards such as those articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). In doing so, we collectively acknowledge and support the sovereignty of First Nations research.
- By making Indigenous research visible we create an opportunity for greater accountability of ethical research practices that respect and benefit First Nations. Best ethical practice of Indigenous research provides opportunities to promote and continue to build research excellence in Indigenous studies both in Australia and across the world for mutual benefit, and to advance Indigenous futures via the benefits of research.

Indigenous studies in ERA and EI

- Indigenous studies will be assessed as a separate research discipline for the first time in ERA 2023 and EI 2024.
- ERA 2023 will collect data on Indigenous studies research outputs and researchers at Australian universities. The outcomes of ERA will show what type and how much Indigenous studies research is being produced by Australian universities and the quality of that research as understood in scholarly terms and aligning with the values of Indigenous peoples.
- EI 2024 will collect engagement and impact studies on Indigenous studies research that will show the types of impact universities are generating that benefit Indigenous peoples and industries supporting Indigenous peoples, and how well universities are engaging with Indigenous peoples through their research and translation processes.
- Indigenous studies will be visible and comparable to other disciplines in ERA and EI. The ARC will also use the baseline datasets from ERA 2023 and EI 2024 for program analysis and modelling which will be used to make improvements for future Indigenous studies evaluation rounds.
- The Indigenous Studies Excellence and Engagement (ISEE) Group brings together leadership from universities, Indigenous research and the ARC, to ensure Indigenous studies is given a good start in ERA 2023 and EI 2024.
- ISEE is co-designing leadership strategies and materials (outlined in the roadmap) to support the sector in its transition to including Indigenous studies in the ERA and EI programs.

How is successful implementation achieved?

- Accurate ERA and EI submission data on Indigenous studies (FoR 45) informed through ethical and respectful communities of engagement practice with Indigenous researchers and data experts.
- A leadership culture that continually engages and builds knowledge and understanding of Indigenous studies (FoR 45).
- Appropriate and skilled resourcing, including Aboriginal coders, to support submission coding and ARC assessment processes in ways that are ethically and culturally responsive to Indigenous peoples/communities as per best practice (e.g., UNDRIP and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Code of Ethics—AIATSIS Code).
- All levels across the research sector to advance advocacy, accountability and best practice in application of the FoR 45 codes in relevant ERA and EI submission and assessment processes.
- Genuine partnership, collaboration and ongoing engagement between university and Indigenous research leadership, university administration, Indigenous researchers and communities and the ARC.
- Ongoing clear and consistent communication and information around best practice (e.g., UNDRIP and AIATSIS Code) underlying the principles of FoR 45.