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Page 1: Personal Details

Q1

Your name

David Stern

Q2

Your organisation (leave blank if not applicable)

Australian National University

Q3

Are you making this submission on behalf of your organisation?

This submission reflects my personal views and not those of my organisation

Q4

Email address

david.stern@anu.edu.au

Q5

What best describes your interest in making a submission?

I am a researcher at an Australian university

Q6

Submissions may be made public unless you request otherwise.

Respondent skipped this question

Q7

What form of submission do you wish to make?

Provide my responses through the online survey

Page 2: Upload Response

Q8

Respondent skipped this question

Please upload your submission.

Page 3: ERA and/or EI choice

Q9

I want to answer questions on both ERA and EI

Please indicate whether you wish to answer questions on ERA and/or EI.

Page 4: ERA Policy /1

Q10

To what extent is ERA meeting its objectives to:

Continue to develop and maintain an evaluation framework that gives government, industry, business and the wider community assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australian higher education institutions.

Comment:

A moderate amount

Available international university rankings etc can provide the same information.

Provide a national stocktake of discipline level areas of research strength and areas where there is opportunity for development in Australian higher education institutions.

A moderate amount

Identify excellence across the full spectrum of research performance.

Comment:

A small amount

Universities increasingly avoid submitting sub-par research.

Identify emerging research areas and opportunities for further development.

A moderate amount

Allow for comparisons of research in Australia, nationally and internationally, for all discipline areas.

A moderate amount**Q11**

The ERA objectives are appropriate for meeting the future needs of its stakeholders.

Neither agree nor disagree,

If you disagreed with the above statement, please explain your answer.:

Universities will track their performance in any case, Government, students etc can track performance using existing 3rd party rankings. If funding was tied to the ERA that would be another case altogether.

Page 5: ERA Policy /2

Q12

Respondent skipped this question

What impact has ERA had on:

Q13

How do you, or your organisation use ERA outcomes?

We have used them to guide researchers to think about where they publish in order to maximize ERA outcomes...

Q14

Neither agree nor disagree

ERA outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

Q15

Respondent skipped this question

How else could ERA outcomes be used?

Page 6: ERA Methodology /1

Q16

The current methodology meets the objectives of ERA.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

Can reduce/eliminate peer review in disciplines like economics, which are journal based and maybe also in political science. See my research on research assessment in these disciplines using citations instead of peer review:

https://econpapers.repec.org/article/sprscient/v_3a108_3ay_3a2016_3ai_3a2_3ad_3a10.1007_5fs11192-016-1979-1.htm Requiring submission of all publications is also unnecessary. UK approach of just asking for a given number of best publications makes more sense in peer review fields. Though it doesn't seem to be popular, using publication outlets as indicators of output quality in disciplines with low citations makes sense. Journals and presses peer review publications already. Why not rely on their assessments.

Q17

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the overall ERA methodology?

Strengths

Covers all disciplines and institutions

Weaknesses

Burden of peer review etc is high for outputs that have already been peer reviewed.

Q18

Does the discipline-specific approach for evaluating research quality (citation analysis or peer review for specific disciplines) continue to enable robust and comparable evaluation across all disciplines?

Not really.

Q19**Strongly agree**

The citation analysis methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

Q20

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the citation analysis methodology?

Strengths

It is objective.

Weaknesses

Simple citation counts don't take into account the quality of the citing publication.

Q21**Yes**

Can the citation analysis methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

Q22**Disagree,**

The peer review methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

Please explain your answer.:

Research outputs have already been peer reviewed. It's a waste of time to do this again.

Q23

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the peer review methodology?

Strengths

Can assess quality of non-traditional outputs

Weaknesses

Is labor intensive.

Q24**No**

Can the peer review methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

Page 7: ERA Methodology /2

Q25**Agree**

The volume and activity indicators are still relevant to ERA.

Q26**Strongly agree,**

The publishing profile indicator is still relevant to ERA.

Please explain your answer.:

It provides an idea of the overall output rather than the curated peer review selection in peer review disciplines.

Q27**Agree**

The research income indicators are still relevant to ERA.

Q28

The applied measures are still relevant to ERA.

Patents

Agree

Research commercialisation income

Agree

Registered designs

Neither agree nor disagree

Comment:

I don't know what this is.

Plant breeder's rights

Neither agree nor disagree

Comment:

I don't know what this is.

NHMRC endorsed guidelines

Neither agree nor disagree

Comment:

I don't know what this is.

Page 8: ERA Methodology /3

Q29**Agree**

The five-band ERA rating scale is suitable for assessing research excellence.

Q30

Noting that 90% of units of evaluation assessed in ERA 2018 are now at or above world standard, does the rating scale need to be modified to identify research excellence?

Yes,

If you answered 'Yes', please explain how the rating scale can be modified to identify research excellence.:
It makes sense that research in Australia is above the world average. So, maybe we want to differentiate more at the top end.

Q31**Neither agree nor disagree**

The ERA low volume threshold is appropriate.

Q32**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there ways in which the low volume threshold could be modified to improve the evaluation process?

Q33**By-line,**

What is the more appropriate method for universities to claim research outputs—staff census date or by-line?

Please explain your answer.:

This better reflects the research done at a university and reduces incentives to move staff just for the ERA.

Q34**Respondent skipped this question**

What are the limitations of a census date approach?

Q35**Respondent skipped this question**

Would a by-line approach address these limitations?

Q36**Respondent skipped this question**

What are the limitations of a by-line approach?

Q37

ERA adequately captures and evaluates interdisciplinary research.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

It discourages interdisciplinary research because schools want research that will give them a high ERA ranking in their discipline. There is the same problem in the UK.

Q38

If you disagreed with the previous statement, how could interdisciplinary research best be accommodated?

More thematic categories rather than disciplinary ones.

Page 9: ERA Methodology /4

Q39**Respondent skipped this question**

My institution would meet ERA low volume threshold in Indigenous studies at:

Q40**Respondent skipped this question**

In ERA, the best approach for evaluating Indigenous Studies is (choose one):

Q41**Respondent skipped this question**

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of your preferred approach for evaluating Indigenous studies in ERA?

Page 10: ERA Process /1

Q42

ERA should move to an annual collection of data from universities.

Strongly disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

ERA should move to at least a 5 year cycle. If nothing else changes it would be hard to assign outputs to the optimal category and assess low-volume threshold annually. If all that is meant is that the publications are uploaded to an ARC database each year, then that is OK.

Q43**Respondent skipped this question**

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of an annual data collection.

Q44**Yes**

In future ERA rounds, should the volume of outputs submitted for each unit of evaluation be published?

Q45**Neither agree nor disagree,**

Please explain your answer.:

In future ERA rounds, research outputs should be published with their assignment to specific disciplines following completion of the round.

The difficulty is that some researchers may be upset with the field that their publication was assigned to, especially for interdisciplinary research.

Q46**Respondent skipped this question**

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of publishing research outputs with their assignment to specific disciplines?

Q47**Respondent skipped this question**

What other data do you think the ARC should publish following an ERA round? (Note - in ERA 2018 metadata included: Research output title, Research output type, reference year, outlet, publisher, ISBN, ERA round, and Institution)

Page 11: EI Policy /1

Q48

Considering that EI is a new assessment, to what extent is EI meeting its objectives to:

encourage greater collaboration between universities and research end-users, such as industry, by assessing engagement and impact?

A small amount

provide clarity to the Government and the Australian public about how their investments in university research translate into tangible benefits beyond academia?

A small amount

identify institutional processes and infrastructure that enable research engagement?

A small amount

promote greater support for the translation of research impact within institutions for the benefit of Australia beyond academia?

A small amount

identify the ways in which institutions currently translate research into impact?

A small amount

Page 12: EI Policy /2

Q49**Disagree**

The EI objectives are appropriate for the future needs of its stakeholders.

Q50**Respondent skipped this question**

What impact has EI had on:

Q51**Respondent skipped this question**

How do you, or your organisation, use EI outcomes?

Q52**Disagree**

The EI outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

Q53**Respondent skipped this question**

How else could EI outcomes be used?

Page 13: EI Policy /3

Q54**Agree**

The current Engagement definition is appropriate.

Q55**Agree**

The current Impact definition is appropriate.

Q56**Neither agree nor disagree**

The current end-user definition is appropriate.

Q57**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there any end-user categories excluded in the current definition of research end-user that you think should be included? Please explain your answer.

Q58**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there other key terms that need to be formally defined?

Page 14: EI Methodology /1

Q59**No**

Are the two-digit Field of Research codes the most appropriate method to define units of assessment for Engagement and Impact?

Q60**Yes**

Are there other ways to classify units of assessment in EI, for example SEO codes?

Q61**The same number as in EI 2018**

Should there be more or fewer units of assessment per university?

Q62**Neither agree or disagree**

The EI low-volume threshold should continue to be based on the number of research outputs submitted for ERA.

Q63**Respondent skipped this question**

If you disagree, how should eligibility for assessment in EI be determined?

Q64**Neither agree nor disagree**

The low-volume threshold is set at the appropriate level.

Page 15: EI Methodology /2

Q65**Neither agree or disagree**

Overall, the engagement indicator suite for the assessment of research engagement is suitable.

Q66**Neither agree nor disagree**

The cash support from research end-users using HERDC data is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

Q67**Strongly agree**

The research commercialisation income is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

Q68**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there additional metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

Q69**Respondent skipped this question**

Are there alternative metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

Q70**Respondent skipped this question**

Should any of the current engagement metrics be redesigned?

Q71**Agree**

The co-supervision of HDR students should be made an engagement indicator in future rounds of EI.

Q72

In your opinion, are any of the ERA applied measures appropriate indicators of research engagement in EI?

Patents

Yes

Research commercialisation income

Yes

Page 16: EI Methodology /3

Q73

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing research engagement with end-users.

Strongly disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I wrote the engagement narrative for economics at ANU. We have more than 80 researchers, many of who engage with different stakeholders. It is hard to write a coherent narrative about all these engagement activities. It would be better just to provide a table of topics and stakeholders.

Q74

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Just data on topics and stakeholders.

Q75**Agree**

One engagement submission per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research engagement within that discipline.

Q76**Agree,**

The engagement narrative needs to be longer.

Please explain your answer.:

But not be a narrative per se.

Q77**Neither agree nor disagree**

Additional evidence is needed within the narrative.

Page 17: EI Methodology /4

Q78**Agree**

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing Impact.

Q79**Respondent skipped this question**

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Q80**Agree**

One impact study per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research impact within that discipline.

Q81**Neither agree nor disagree**

The impact narrative needs to be longer.

Q82**Neither agree nor disagree**

There is need for additional evidence to be provided within the impact narrative.

Q83**Respondent skipped this question**

In your opinion, are there quantitative indicators that could be used to measure the impact of research outside of academia?

Q84**Respondent skipped this question**

If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, please name and describe the quantitative indicator/s, and the disciplines for which they are relevant.

Page 18: EI Methodology /5

Q85**Disagree,**

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing approach to impact.

Please explain your answer.:

I don't know that "approach to impact" is a coherent idea.

Q86**Respondent skipped this question**

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Q87**Respondent skipped this question**

One approach to impact narrative per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the activities within that discipline.

Q88**Respondent skipped this question**

The approach to impact narrative needs to be longer.

Q89**Respondent skipped this question**

There is a need for additional evidence to be provided.

Q90**Yes,**

Would there be benefit in combining engagement and approach to impact?

Please explain your answer.:

I don't think they are different things.

Page 19: EI Methodology /6

Q91**Respondent skipped this question**

The engagement rating scale is suitable for assessing research engagement.

Q92**Respondent skipped this question**

The descriptors for the engagement rating scale are suitable.

Q93**Respondent skipped this question**

The impact rating scale is suitable for assessing impact.

Q94**Respondent skipped this question**

The descriptors for the impact rating scale are suitable.

Q95**Respondent skipped this question**

The approach to impact rating scale is suitable for assessing approach to impact.

Q96

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptions for the approach to impact rating scale are suitable.

Page 20: EI Methodology /7

Q97

Yes

Should EI continue to include an interdisciplinary impact study in addition to the two-digit Field of Research impact studies?

Q98

Respondent skipped this question

Should the EI low volume threshold be applied to the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research in EI 2024 with the option to opt in if threshold is not met?

Q99

Respondent skipped this question

Should the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research include engagement in the next round of EI?

Page 21: Overarching Issues Common to ERA and EI

Q100

Every five years

How often should ERA occur?

Q101

Respondent skipped this question

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of ERA results, particularly in the intervening years?

Page 22: Overarching Issues Common to ERA and EI

Q102

Every five years

How often should the EI assessment occur?

Q103

Respondent skipped this question

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of EI results, particularly in the intervening years?

Page 23: Overarching Issues Common to both ERA and EI

Q104	Agree
ERA and EI should be combined into the one assessment.	

Q105	Respondent skipped this question
What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of ERA and EI being combined into the one assessment.	

Q106	Yes, Please explain your answer.: Automate data acquisition and move to citation analysis as much as possible.
Are there other ways to streamline the processes to reduce the cost to universities of participating in ERA and EI?	

Page 24: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

Q107	Respondent skipped this question
In your view, what data sources could ERA utilise?	

Q108	Respondent skipped this question
In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the ERA submission?	

Q109	Respondent skipped this question
Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?	

Page 25: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

Q110	
In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the EI submission?	
Trying to get information from faculty	

Q111	Yes, Please describe.: Universities need to collect this data as it happens.
Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?	

Page 26: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

Q112	Strongly agree
ORCID iDs should be mandatory for ERA.	

Q113	Respondent skipped this question
What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory ORCID iDs?	
Q114	Strongly agree
The automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID iDs would streamline a university's submission process.	
Q115	Respondent skipped this question
What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID iDs?	
Q116	Strongly agree
DOIs should be mandatory for ERA.	
Q117	Respondent skipped this question
What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory DOIs?	

Page 27: Overarching Issues Common to Both ERA and EI

Q118	Yes, Please explain your answer.: Use Scopus, ORCID etc.
Are there other ways to collect data to reduce the cost and burden to universities of participating in ERA and EI whilst maintaining the robustness of the ERA and EI process?	
Q119	Respondent skipped this question
What are the advantages and/or disadvantages?	

Page 28: Additional Comments

Q120	Respondent skipped this question
Please provide any additional comments:	