



OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

BI-ANNUAL REPORT
January – June 2024

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July, 2024.

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iii List of Acronyms

ADR	Associate Deans of Research
ANU	Australian National University
CHANCES	Climate cHange and the future of coAstal CommuNities: transformation of soCiality, livElihoods and lifeStyLe
CRB	Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle
DFS	Department of Fisheries Studies
FAFF	Faculty of Agriculture, fisheries and forestry
FALAH	Family Farming, livelihood and Health
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FBT	Faculty of Business and Tourism
FEH	Faculty of Education and Humanities
FNMHS	Faculty of Nursing, Medicine, and Health Sciences
FST	Faculty of Science and Technology
HOS	Head of School
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPSOS	Institut Public de Sondage d'Opinion Secteur
IWC	International WaterCen
PacWM	Pacific Water Management
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NUV	National University of Vanuatu
ORPS	Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies
PDR	Postgraduate Degrees by Research
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PIURN	Pacific Islands Universities Regional Network
RERIPA	Strengthening Research and Innovation ecosystem to address the impact of climate change in the pacific
SINU	Solomon Islands National University
SINUREC	SINU Research Ethics Committee
SPAR	Acronym for the study on indiginous knowledge, practices and resilince in the Pacific Islands.
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SSEC	South Seas Evangelical Church
SWOT	Stengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNICEF	United Nations International Childrens Emergency Fund
USP	University of the South Pacific
VNPF	Vanuatu National Provident Fund
WASH	Water and Sanitation and Hygiene

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The Office of Research & Postgraduate Studies (ORPS) at Solomon Islands National University (SINU) was established with a crucial mandate to foster a robust culture of research within the university. Originally known as the Office of Research, it was renamed to the Office of Research & Postgraduate Studies in 2018 to reflect its expanded responsibilities and commitment to supporting both research and postgraduate education.

The primary objective of ORPS is to cultivate an environment that encourages and supports faculty staff and students in their research endeavors. By building research partnerships, securing external research funding, and overseeing the university's research policy, ORPS provides essential administrative oversight of SINU's research functions. This office ensures that all research activities meet the highest ethical standards, thereby instilling confidence in the research community at SINU.

The ORPS is dedicated to the development and administration of the Postgraduate Degrees by Research (PDR) programs. This includes managing the admission processes for PDR candidates, overseeing the implementation of the PDR program, and ensuring the quality and integrity of postgraduate research. By developing and drafting policies, procedures, and guidelines, ORPS plays a vital role in the seamless management and administration of all aspects of the PDR program delivery.

The ORPS at SINU is instrumental in advancing the university's research agenda and postgraduate studies. Through its comprehensive support system, ORPS not only enhances academic research but also ensures the professional growth and development of its researchers and postgraduate students.

1.2 The purpose and function of the Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies

Goal 3 of the SINU 2021-2025 strategic plan, titled "Knowledge Creation and Innovation," underscores the importance of fostering a dynamic research environment. To achieve this goal and ensure the sustainability of future research activities at SINU, ORPS has implemented strategies to cultivate a growing cohort of research-active staff and graduates. Additionally, ORPS actively promotes the value of SINU's research capabilities to potential partners and collaborators, thereby enhancing the university's research profile and impact.

1.3 Vision

A quality National University, raising standards of education, training and research in the Solomon Islands and Pacific region, towards achieving better standards of living, foster nation building, creation of an inclusive society and empowerment of people and enhancement of the core universally accepted values of humanity.

1.4 Mission

To actively promote the inclusive, relevant and transformative possibilities of knowledge development, skills enhancement, academic enquiry and research that it supports.

This will be achieved through fostering a culture of research within SINU, providing support to research activities across the various Faculties, Institutes and Departments, and coordinating the conduct of research activities. Academic research will be further supported by building partnerships with the wider research community, developing and securing strong relationships with sponsors, securing funds for research activities, facilitating knowledge transfer through presentations and seminars, providing administrative oversight, and ensuring compliance and the ethical conduct of research.

1.5 Values and Principles

The Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies is dedicated to encouraging innovation and creativity in the pursuit of solutions to local challenges; fostering mutual respect within a collegial research environment; helping to inspire and empower future leaders; and using available resources responsibly.

1.6 Strategy, Planning and Objectives

Following the review of the Research Office in 2018 and the inclusion of responsibility for postgraduate degrees by research in its charter, it was clear that a strategic approach would be essential to map out an effective pathway going forward. The Office now is developing the following guiding fundamentals to ensure that it best served the needs of SINU.

1.6.1 ORPS Strategy:

It is developed to concisely articulate SINU's research-related priorities which are:

To **RECOGNISE, AUGMENT, MOBILISE and PROMOTE** the full complement of research skills and resources available at SINU.

1.6.2 ORPS strategic plan:

It is designed to deliver on the Strategy by focusing on three key objectives:

1. CREATING AN ENABLING RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

- Leading research-related planning, advice and communication;
- Securing provision of essential research-related support services, systems and processes;
- Providing management oversight and coordination of research endeavours; and
- Planning and implementing appropriate management and resourcing of postgraduate research studies.

2. DEVELOPING THE CAPABILITY OF RESEARCHERS

- Promoting shared responsibility for professionalism, compliance and ethical conduct of research;
- Facilitating professional development to enhance the SINU research capacity; and
- Monitoring, promoting and rewarding excellence in research performance and publication.

3. ACCESSING EXTERNAL RESEARCH-RELATED SUPPORT

- Acknowledging and expanding the SINU community of partners and supporters; and
- Actively and systematically seeking income-generating opportunities.

2.0 ORPS Highlights and achievements

The highlights and achievements mentioned here reflect the progress made towards achieving some of the key elements.

2.1 Staffing (Established ORPS staff, Associate Deans Research, Adjuncts, Research Assistants)

The Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies (ORPS) has broadened its scope of responsibilities and currently has three staff members, with a fourth joining soon. The office is led by a Director, who is supported by an Administration Officer, a Research Project Manager, and a Senior Postgraduate Liaison Officer. Additionally, Associate Deans of Research (ADR) have been appointed and assigned to each faculty to oversee research activities (See figure 1).

Additionally, ORPS has welcomed four Adjunct Professors and Senior Fellows from universities abroad who will support the office in achieving its visions and objectives. ORPS is also managing external projects, one of which has recruited three Research Assistants and one intern (see table 1). Going forward, ORPS will play a crucial role in providing guidance and support for both academic and applied research, as well as in the management and administration of postgraduate degrees by research.

Figure 1 Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies Organogram (ORPS)

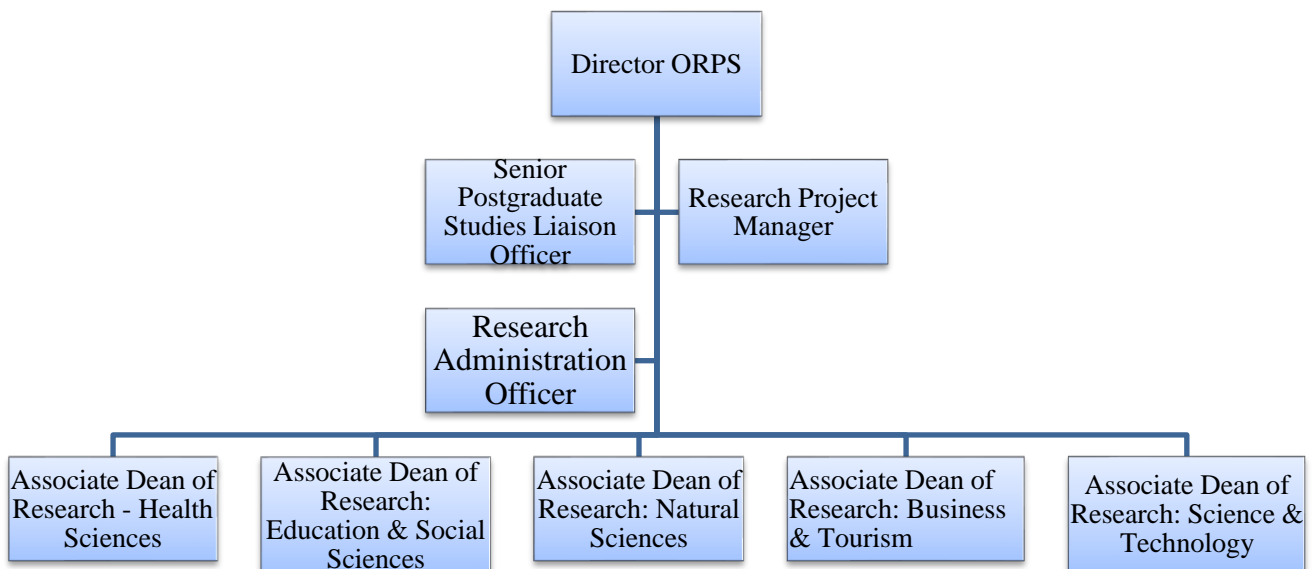


Table 1 Shows the current established positions in the ORPS, including Associate Deans Research, Adjuncts, and Project Research assistants who also have signed contracts to assist the ORPS.

Position	Filled / Vacant	Name of staff	Year of contract signed
1. ORPS established staff			
Director ORPS	Filled	Dr Hugo Bugoro	2023
Research Project manager	Filled	Mr. Alex Makini	2024
Senior Postgraduate Liaison Officer	contract in progress	Ms Emelda Ariku	2024
Research Administrator	Filled	Ms Miriam Mulu	2024
2. Associate Deans Research based at the faculties			
ADR – Health Sciences	Filled	Mr. Nixon Panda	2023
ADR – Education & Social Sciences	Filled	Dr Lincy Pende	2023
ADR – Natural Sciences (FAFF)	Filled	Dr Lindon Havimana	2023
ADR – Science and technology	Filled	Dr Timothy Kale	2023
ADR – Business & Tourism	Filled	Dr Jerry Siota	2023
3. Adjunct professors and senior fellows			
Adjunct Professor	Filled (from UQ)	Professor Clive More	2023
Adjunct Professor	Filled	Professor Padma Lal	2024
Adjunct Senior Fellow	Filled (From ANU)	Dr Anouk Ride	2023
Adjunct Senior Fellow	Filled	Dr Pete Connelly	2024
4. Project Research Assistants and Interns			
Research assistant (RERIPA Call 1 project)	Filled	Fiona Meke	2024
Research assistant (RERIPA Call 3 project)	Filled	Clarence Cheon	2024
Research Intern (RERIPA Call 3 project)	Filled	George Horoasia	2024
Research assistant (RERIPA Call 4 project)	Filled	John Rofeta	2024

Note: Staff contracts were achieved during 2023 and 2024.

2.2 RAMP-up strategy implementation

The RAMP-up strategy, originally developed by the present Director of the Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies (ORPS) at SINU in 2018, is being revisited to bolster the university's research capacity. This strategy was conceived in response to the observation that SINU staff had been predominantly focusing on teaching and learning, with minimal engagement in research activities.

It is important to note that research informs teaching and so, as a university, it is essential to embrace both teaching, learning, and research to fulfill its comprehensive educational mission. To address this, the RAMP-up strategy involves a structured approach:

1. **Recognize Current SINU Capacity:** Assess and understand the existing capabilities and expertise within the university staff.

2. **Augment Staff:** Identify areas where additional support and resources are needed to enhance research capacity.
3. **Mobilize Staff:** Equip and prepare staff to become research-ready through training and development programs focused on research methodologies.
4. **Promote Partnerships:** Encourage staff to partner with experienced researchers, fostering collaborative projects and knowledge exchange.

In implementing this strategy, five ADRs have been recruited and stationed within the faculties (see Table 1). Their roles are pivotal as they oversee research activities within their respective faculties and provide support and guidance to both staff and student research initiatives. By fostering a research-conducive environment and empowering staff with the necessary skills and confidence, the RAMP-up strategy aims to transform SINU into a hub of innovative research and academic excellence.

2.3 Research methodology course revived

The research methodology course was first implemented in 2017 however was discontinued in 2019. Now, as part of the RAMP-up strategy, reviving the research methodology course for staff is a key initiative to enhance research capabilities at SINU. Briefings on the RAMP-up strategy and preparations for the implementation of the research methods course have been successfully conducted in four out of the five faculties. These briefings were attended by academic staff from the Faculty of Education and Humanities (FEH), the Faculty of Science and Technology (FST), the Faculty of Business and Tourism (FBT), and the Faculty of Nursing, Medicine, and Health Sciences (FNMHS) (see figures 2).

Figure 2 Showing faculty debriefing of the RAMP-up strategy at the faculties



Fig. 2a: Dr. Hugo outlining the RAMP-up strategy at Faculty of Business and Tourism



Fig. 2b: Dr. Timothy Kale Associate Dean Research FST, moderating the RAMP-up strategy discussion

Already, the FEH and FST have shown significant progress, submitting a total of 12 research proposals to the SINU Research Ethics Committee (SINUREC). These proposals have been reviewed and awaiting funding for data collection (see table 2).

Table 2 Showing the approved research proposals from staff and students

Name of staff/student	Faculty	Research title	Date of approval ¹
Buka Misifea	FST	Using Mathematics Model and the Differential Equation to mitigate traffic congestion in Honiara	Process
Dr Timothy Kale	FST	Statistical Analysis of Climate Change and Meteorological Weather Predictions in the Solomon Islands using Smart Classifiers Algorithms	Process
Michael Kualu	FST	Wind nano-grid for five communities within and around Honiara, Solomon Islands	Process
John Rofeta	FST	Comparative study of the population density of starfish species along the intertidal zone of Honiara City and Blueflag/Visale, West Guadalcanal Island in Solomon Islands.	Process
Dr Dickson Boboria	FST	Assessment of heavy metals contamination in freshwater streams around the nickel mine in Isabel province, Solomon Islands.	Process
Herbert Fugui	FEH	Technology Leadership: An exploratory study into the roles, challenges and strategies facing principals in integrating technology in the Solomon Islands secondary schools.	11/06/2024
Simon Mau	FEH	Exploring Solomon Islands Secondary School year ten and eleven social study Curriculum: A critical stakeholder analysis.	11/06/2024
Jenny Te'etaloa Wanerofea	FEH	Challenges faced by students with Writing and Reading in schools.	11/06/2024
Macson Keniano	FEH	Unpacking Factors Affecting Teachers Welfare In A Case Study In Honiara	11/06/2024
Stella Huitarau	FEH	An Investigation into Teachers Challenges In Regards To Effective Classroom Teaching with In Special Education (Disability) Schools in Solomon Islands.	11/06/2024

¹ Date the proposal was approved by the SINU research ethics committee.

Jillian Faáfunua	Hannah	FEH	Exploring Outcome-Based science curriculum approaches in Year 7 science classrooms: A case study in Solomon Islands.	11/06/2024
Jonny Tasa		FEH	Unpacking the foundation and Culture of School Educational Leadership and adapting <i>intergeneration Wellness “Nothing Missing and Nothing Broken”</i> Approaches to make significant difference in school and students learning outcome.	02/07/2024

The FNMHS have also submitted their staff proposals but awaiting the next Solomon Islands National SINUREC meeting later to be announced.

Table 3 Showing the research proposal submitted by staff, awaiting the SINUREC approval

Name of staff	Faculty	Research titles	Date of approval
Marineth Dereveke et al	FNMHS	"Exploring the Transition Experience of International Students at Solomon Islands National University in 2024: A Qualitative Study"	Yet to confirm review
Pressly Fafokona, et al.	FNMHS	Examining the knowledge attitude practice of medical sciences students at SINU regarding utilizing moodle as a learning platform.	Yet to confirm review
Nixon Panda et al	FNMHS	Evaluating the impact of the Public health training in Solomon Islands.	Yet to confirm review
Richard Tatau et al	FNMHS	Outcome of type 2 diabetes discharge from Medical ward with medication from January to March 2023	Yet to confirm review
Elizabeth Manedika et al.	FNMHS	Examine the causes of late enrolment of students at SINU Kukum Campus in Semester 1, 2024	Yet to confirm review
Leon Manehoua, et al.	FNMHS	Qualitative analysis of students' general comments and proposed actions regarding village health status assessment by year 1 nursing students in selected villages in Guadalcanal from 2022 to 2023.	Yet to confirm review

The SINUREC is also anticipating proposals from FBT in the coming weeks. The proactive engagement of these faculties underscores the positive impact of the briefings and the readiness of staff to embark on research projects. This anticipated influx of proposals reflects the growing interest and commitment of faculty members to integrate research into their academic roles.

ORPS saw that equipping staff with the necessary research skills thru reviving the research methodology course can foster a robust research culture within the university. This initiative not only supports staff in developing their research capabilities but also aligns with SINU's mission to balance teaching, learning, and research excellence.

2.4 Governance and Policy

With the increasing engagement of SINU academic staff in research (as evident in staff participation in conference presentations), it is essential that SINU has in place a comprehensive framework for the management and administration of a wide range of research projects. Depending on the funding source, different protocols may apply, and ORPS is systematically identifying and developing flexible frameworks to accommodate the needs of international development partners and donors, national and international government agencies, and SINU acquittal and reporting requirements needs to be followed accordingly.

To support the successful implementation of research activities within SINU, ORPS is progressing with the review and expansion of the suite of policies and procedures that guide researchers in developing and managing projects, obtaining funding, conducting research, and disseminating results in line with appropriate financial, ethical, infrastructural and human resource guidelines (see Table 3).

Table 4 Showing drafts of the research policy and related documents

No.	Policy item	Lead unit	Status	Next steps
Research specific				
1	Research policy – purpose	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
2	Finance policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
3	Authorship policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
4	OHS policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
5	Human ethics policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
6	Managing use of hazardous materials in laboratories and research projects policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation

7	Intellectual property rights policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
8	Integrity policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation

With the inclusion of the responsibility for PDRs in its charter, ORPS is also addressing the policy and procedural requirements to ensure that SINU has the necessary systems and procedures in place to competently and professionally manage candidates for Masters of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). This library of guiding documents is expected to address all processes from admission and enrolment through management of all aspects of candidature to examinations and the final conferring of awards (see Table 4).

Table 5 Showing drafts of Postgraduate Degrees by Research policy and related documents.

No.	Policy item	Lead unit	Status (as of 24/7/24)	Next steps
PDR specific				
1	Postgraduate Degree by Research policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
2	Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research policy	ORPS	Draft	Progress to approval
3	Appointment of supervisors policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
4	Change of supervisors policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
5	Responsibilities of supervisors policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
6	Research students annual review policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation
7	Supervision records policy	ORPS	Draft	Consultation

Table 6 Showing other items relevant to PDRs which need to be addressed

Item #	Application for Research Funds
1	Acceptance of Offer – Form
2	Application for Admission
3	Enrolment and Registration
4	Annual Review – Procedure
5	Acquittal of Research Funds – Form
6	Approval of Continuance – Form

7	Academic Misconduct Policy
8	Upgrade/downgrade enrolment/registration – Form
9	Change of Registration Status Request – Form
10	Application for Leave – Form
11	Application for Examination – Form

2.5 ORPS Web Page

The ORPS webpage was launched on the 19th of January 2024. After being dormant for 4 years the immediate task, to mark the start of the academic year is to revive the webpage. This significantly, visualises the roles and functions of the ORPS within the SINU community and abroad. It features research collaboration with partner universities and staff publications. It can be viewed in the link below:

<https://www.sinu.edu.sb/executive-governance/vice-chancellor/pro-vice-chancellor-academic/office-of-research-and-postgraduate-studies/>

Figure 3 Shows the ORPS Web page depicting rural water management project (IWC-PaCWaM+2)/FBO.



2.6 Workshops and Conferences Co-organized by ORPS

The Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies (ORPS) at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) has been proactive in organizing and co-hosting several significant workshops and conferences to foster academic collaboration and knowledge exchange.

2.6.1 RERIPA Call 1 workshop in Vanuatu

From March 5th to 7th, 2024, SINU, through the ORPS, co-hosted the RERIPA Call 1 (see figure 3) and participated in the inauguration of the CHANCES project (See figure 4) in Port Vila, Vanuatu. This conference provided a platform for researchers and participants from SINU, National University of Vanuatu (NUV), The University of the South Pacific (USP), The University of New Caledonia (UNC), Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) and European Union (EU) representatives to discuss issues affecting the Pacific Islands and initiatives.

Figure 4 Showing SINU staff at the conference co-hosted by SINU and NUV in Port Vila



Fig. 4a: National University of Vanuatu's Vice Chancellor Dr. Jean Piere Nirua giving his Key note & Opening speech during the RERIPA Call 1 opening ceremony.



Fig. 4b: NUVs' RERIPA Call 1 conference coordinator Dr. Robson Tigona discusses with SINUs' Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (Ag) and Dean of Faculty of Science and Technology Dr. Eric Katovai



Fig. 4c: SINUs' Director of Research and Postgraduate Studies Dr. Hugo Bugoro moderating a session during the RERIPA Call 1 conference.



Fig. 4d: SINUs' Research Project Manager Mr. Alex Makini delivering his presentation during the RERIPA Call 1 conference.



Fig. 4e: SINUs' Dr Eric Katovvai leading a discussion during the RERIPA Call 1 conference



Fig. 4f: Participants of the RERIPA Call 1 preparing for a group photo

2.6.2 The inauguration of CHANCES PACIFIC project

The Climate cHange and the future of coAstal CommuNities: transformation of soCiality, livELihoods and lifeStYle in the South Pacific (CHANCES PACIFIC) project, led by The University of the South Pacific, was launched on March 7th in Port-Vila, Vanuatu, during the RERIPA Call 1 project workshop. Part of the RERIPA Call 3 – Living Labs project, CHANCES PACIFIC focuses on the futures of coastal communities affected by climate change.

During the launch, Professor Sushil Kumar, the USP Lead Coordinator, emphasized that climate change has already impacted countries like Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, with communities facing sea-level rise and coastal erosion (figure 5a). To mitigate these impacts, the CHANCES teams will collaborate with rural and peri-urban communities to develop solutions for diet and health, with the project running until the end of 2025.

Figure 5 Showing the inauguration of the CHANCE project in Port Vila



Fig. 5a: USPs' Director of Research Professor Sushil Kumar moderating the launch of the CHANCE project. On the background is Dr. Maurizio Cirrincione presenting his opening remarks via zoom.

Fig. 5b: Participants of the CHANCES PACIFIC project launch., SINU is represented by Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (Ag) and Dean of Faculty of Science and Technology Dr. Eric Katovai, Research Project Manager (ORPS) Mr Alex Makini, and Director of Research & Postgraduate Studies Dr Hugo Bugoro.

2.6.3 Sideline meetings during the RERIPA Call 1 workshop

Outside of the workshop's official hours, separate sideline engagements were conducted between SINU and the French Embassy, the Vanuatu National Provident Fund (VNPF), and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), enhancing collaborative efforts across Melanesia (see figure 6). Dr. Eric

Katovai of SINU met with the first secretary of the French Embassy to discuss provisions for collaboration and research assistance particularly on areas relevant to SINU and Solomon Islands. Additionally, a discussion with the Executive Director of the VNPF took place, during which VNPF expressed their intention to send Vanuatu students to SINU in the coming years.

Figure 6 Showing sideline meetings with Frech Embassy, VNPF and MSG groups



Fig. 6a: SINUs'Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (Ag) & Dean of faculty of Science and Technology Dr Eric Katovai discusses with the first secretary of the French Embassy in Port Vila.

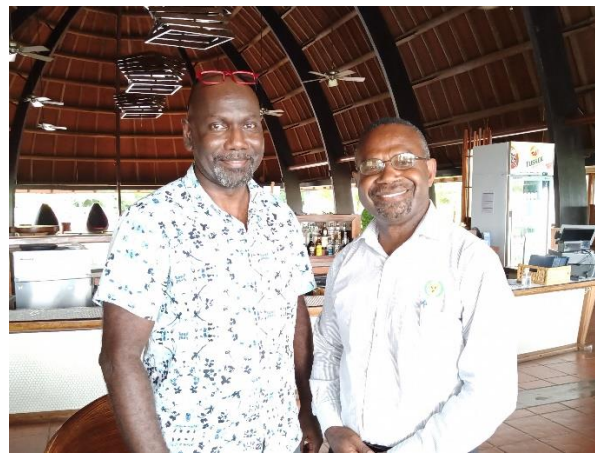


Fig. 6b: SINUs'Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (Ag) & Dean of faculty of Science and Technology Dr Eric Katovai with the Executive Director of the Vanuatu National Provident Fund.



Fig. 6c: SINUs'Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (Ag) & Dean of faculty of Science and Technology Dr Eric Katovai discusses with a member of the Melanesian SpearHead Group (MSG).

2.6.4 FALAH workshop

During May 14th to 16th, 2024, SINU hosted the FALAH workshop at its Panatina Campus. This workshop focused on food security, agriculture, and livelihood enhancement, drawing participants from various sectors to share insights and strategies pertinent to the Melanesian group; Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea (see figure 6).

Figure 7 Showing SINU hosting the the FALAH conference at Panatina Campus



Fig. 7a: Showing the banner of the FALAH conference at Panatina Campus gate



Fig. 7b: SINU Vice Chancellor Professor Transform Agorau giving Opening speech.



Fig. 7c: Professor Jean-marie Fotsing presenting his remarks



Fig. 7d: SINU-FALAH focal point Dr. John Fasi giving his remarks



Fig. 7e: A participant from University of Sydney delivering a presentation



Fig. 7f: A student from Fisheries Department of SINU explaining in a poster presentation.



Fig. 7g: A Bachelor of Nursing student of SINU answers questions during a poster presentation.



Fig. 7h: FALAH participants group photo

2.6.5: The Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle conference

In June 2024, from the 2nd to the 5th, SINU co-hosted the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) Conference in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) at the Ranadi Campus (see figure 7). This conference brought together experts and stakeholders to address the challenges posed by the CRB and to develop coordinated management and eradication strategies.

Figure 8 Showing SINU hosting the CRB conference at its Ranadi Campus



Fig. 8a: SINU's Vice Chancellor Professor Transform Agorau delivering his opening speech during the Cocconut pest conference at the Solomon Islands National University's Ranadi Campus.



Fig. 8b: Master of Ceremony to the coconut pest conference, and ORPS staff, Mr Alex Makini.



Fig. 8c: Participants of Coconut Pest conference group photo.

These events underscore SINU's commitment through the ORPS to advancing research and fostering partnerships that address critical regional and global issues.

2.7 Adjunct Professors and Senior research fellows contributions to SINU

2.7.1 Solomon Islands Theses dialogue, and policy drafting advice.

The Solomon Islands Theses Dialogue is a comprehensive collection of theses directly relevant to the Solomon Islands, encompassing works from 1883 to 2023. This valuable resource, created for the library of SINU has been meticulously prepared by Professor Clive Moore, an Adjunct Professor of SINU, in collaboration with ORPS. The bibliography includes 1,213 references of university theses and theological college diploma and degree theses that are either related to or specifically about the Solomon Islands. It is intended to be accessed primarily by SINU staff and students, providing a rich repository of academic work that supports research and scholarship within the university.

Work on the research policy and Postgraduate Degrees by Research policy is currently in progress, with significant contributions from Dr. Anouk Ride, an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at SINU. Dr. Ride has been instrumental in guiding ORPS through the drafting and reviewing stages of these policies. The suite of policies that have been drafted and are now in the consultation phase are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6 of this report, marking an essential step forward in enhancing the research framework and postgraduate research programs at SINU.

2.8 Engagement in Research

Adequate and dedicated funding is essential for academic research and significantly influences the scope of research that can be undertaken. As a relatively new university in the early stages of developing its research capacity and reputation, SINU has seized every opportunity to showcase and enhance its research expertise.

2.8.1: SPAR research project

In 2024, staff members from the Health, Education, Fisheries, and Science faculties, as well as the Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies (ORPS), have actively engaged in various research projects. A significant development has been the involvement of these staff and students in a SPAR research project, facilitated by visiting FALAH academics. These academics have collaborated closely with ORPS to organize training sessions and oversee the implementation of the project (see figure 8).

Figure 9 Showing staff engaged in research and training with external partners



Fig. 9a: FALAH academics in consultation with ORPS and FNMHS. *Left to right:* Dr Hugo Bugoro (Director, ORPS), Marineth Dereveke (Lecturer, FNMHS), Prof Jean-marie Fotsing (FALAH), Nixon Panda (HOS, Public Health), and Jonash (FALAH).



Fig. 9b: FFALAH academics in consultation with SINU academics: **Left:** FALAH academics, Prof Jean-marie Fotsing, Assoc. Prof Olivier Galy and Mr. Jonash., **Right:** Dr Patricia Rhodie (Dean FEH), Mr. Alex Makini (ORPS) and Dr Clyde (HOS, FST)



Fig. 9c: Professor Fotsing introducing the SPAR research projects to student participants



Fig. 9d: Associate Professor Oliver Galy assisting a student with the SPAR questionnaire.

2.8.2: Climate mobility project

Moreover, The Auckland University in New Zealand has partnered with SINU thru ORPS to complete a study on climate mobility, further enriching the research landscape at SINU. Figure 8 below displayed the thematic publications where SNU academics participated during the conduct of the survey.

Figure 10 Showing the thematic publication of the work on Climate mobility.

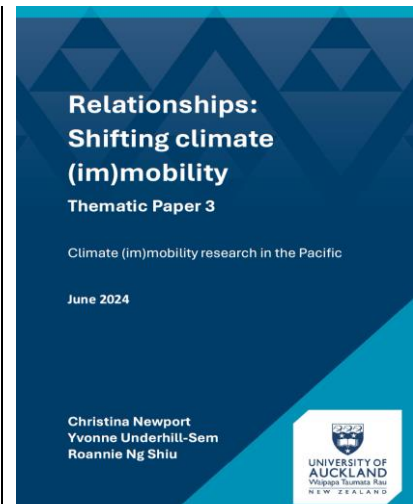
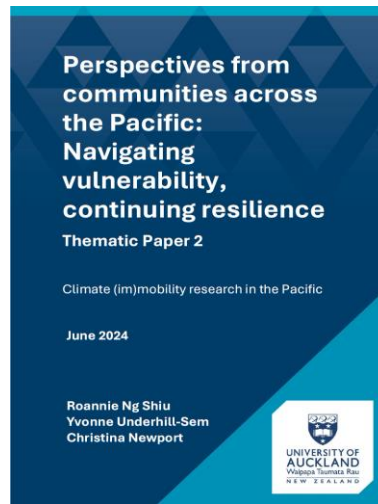
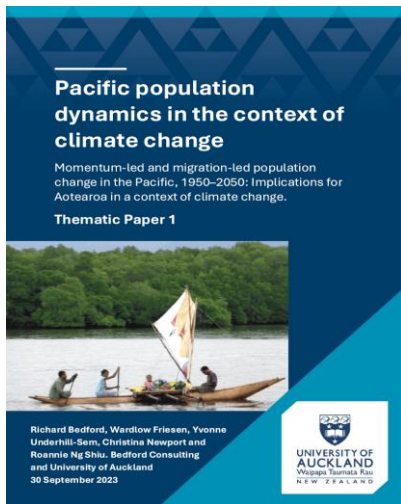


Fig. 10a: Thematic report part 1, SINU academics participated in implementing the research

Fig. 10b: Thematic report part 2, SINU academics participated in implementing the research

Fig. 10c: Thematic report part 3, SINU academics participated in implementing the research

2.8.3: The UNICEF/IPSOS project on immunization practices and challenges in rural areas

The FNMHS has successfully concluded a research initiative with UNICEF and the IPSOS group, contributing valuable insights into public health. One such research was a collaborative research carried out to find out and evaluate the routine immunization practices and challenges in three rural villages in the Biula ward in the Western province. (see figure 11).

Figure 11 Showing FNMHS academics implementing research about routine evaluation of vaccination at Biulah in the Western province.



Fig. 11a: Mr. Nixon and team on their way to Biula



Fig. 11b: FNMHS academics Mr. Nixon and Mr. Collin seeking assistance from a village at Biulah.



Fig. 11c: A researcher conducting a face to face interview with a mother.



Fig. 11d: Mr. Collin moderating a focus group discussion (FGD) with selected participants in a village in Biula

2.8.4: PEUP LMMA funded study thru SPC on the Humpback Red Snapper

The Department of Fisheries Studies (DFS) has been conducting extensive research in rural areas of the Solomon Islands, addressing critical issues pertinent to local communities. Earlier in the year (2024), DFS has travelled and documented traditional fishing methods in Makira / Ulawa, Malaita and Isabel provinces². Recently in June of 2024, academics from DFS visited Kaevanga in Isabel province. The DFS conducted a study on the Humpback Red Snapper where data on fish length, weight, otoliths and fish gonads were collected (see figure 12).

² Aohe the traditional method to catch freshwater eels in Makira/Ulawa., the Gria'a traditional fishing method to catch tuna in Isabel and Oko another traditional method to catch rabbit fish in Foueda Malaita.

Figure 12 Showing research work conducted by DFS academics during their recent visit to Isabel.



Fig. 12a: The target spp: Humpback red snapper (*Lutjanus gibbus*)



Fig. 12b: Dr. Lindon Havimana and Ms. Shirlene Hiru, collecting fish length, weight, otoliths and gonads at Sunshine Fishery, Kaevanga, Isabel Province



Fig. 12c: Extracted fish gonads are fixed in 70% alcohol ready to be shipped to Honiara.

2.8.5: Joint Australian National University (ANU) and SINU observational study on the 2024 April National General Election

The 2024 National General Election Observation on April 17th was a collaborative effort between the Australian National University (ANU) and SINU, unlike the 2014 and 2019 observations which were solely conducted by ANU. Consequently, many SINU staff participated in pre-polling, polling, and post-polling observations in the 15 sampled constituencies across the country. The data gathered from these observations is co-owned and co-managed by both universities and is being used to analyze and draft the final 2024 National Election Observers Report, which is currently in progress. The SINU team, including Dr. John Fasi, Dr. Lincy Pende, Leonora Houma, and Vhairi Devi, is responsible for helping to analyze the data and co-author the final report with ANU scholars (see fig. 13d). The report is expected to be launched by the end of November this year, 2024.

Figure 13 Showing the SINU staff participating in the 2024 national general election.



Fig 13a: Central Honiara Constituency Team members during a debrief at the Mendana Hotel

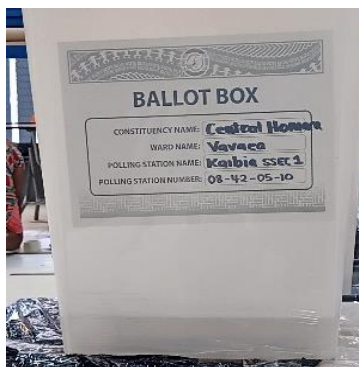


Fig 13b: A ballot box clearly labelled displaying the constituency name, ward and name of polling station



Fig 13c: Crowd of supporters during a parade in Honiara before the close of the campaign on 12:00 midnight



Fig. 13d: SINU academics jointly work with ANU in writing up the report of the NGE at ANU in Canberra.

2.8.6: Faith Based Organizations (FBO) and rural community water management project

Currently, the Solomon Islands have one of the lowest rates of access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities in rural communities. To tackle this issue, a strategy was developed to engage FBO in rural water management. Workshops to assess feasibility were conducted in Malaita, Isabel, and Western Provinces.

Figure 14 shows a workshop held in Gizo, Western Province. Key findings from the Gizo workshop included the following: participants affirmed the crucial role of the church in effective rural community water management; they now recognize the importance of the church in water management; action plans were prepared during group activities, and participants expressed eagerness to implement them promptly; and video presentations were shown, which heightened awareness and concerns about water issues.

Figure 14 Showing a FBO and rural community water management workshop in Gizo.



Fig. 14a: FBO project coordinator Solomon Islands, Dr Hugo Bugoro introducing the project to churches reps in Gizo Western province.



Fig. 14b: Participants conducting a SWOT analysis



Fig. 14c: The SDA Church presenting SWOT analysis



Fig. 14c: SSEC participants presenting their SWOT analysis



Fig. 14d: United Church participant presenting her SWOT analysis



Fig. 14e: SSEC Pastor presenting his Action plan.

2.8.7 SAGE Publishing network

The Sage Publishing, or Sage, is an independent publisher specializing in research articles, books, and scholarly content, and is a leading academic publisher worldwide. It has networked with the the Pacific Islands Universities Research Network (PIURN); and has extended to collaborate with the Solomon Islands National University. Discussions between Sage and ORPS via zoom recently looked how Sage can provide solutions and services and how it can support SINU in achieving its goals particularly on staff upskilling their research. The discussion highlighted the benefits and opportunities that the partnership with Sage can bring to the university in terms of administrative efficiency, financial management, and overall institutional development.

Sage Publishing has piloted a platform on research methodology and design in collaboration with SINU. The two-month trial was made available to all academic staff at SINU, who greatly appreciated the resource. This initiative was part of the RAMP-up strategy orchestrated by ORPS, aimed at enhancing research capacity and providing valuable tools to support the university's academic staff in their research endeavors.

Figure 15 Shows Sages' presentation to SINU



2.9 Research projects and funding

For January to June 2024, the funding generated via external signed contracts and agreements securing SINU's participation in research projects are made available in table 5. Below are some of the projects currently active.

Table 7 Showing the current active research projects

	Jan-June 2024 active research projects	Total Project Value
1	IWC/ PaCWaM-FNMHS	30,554.50
2	IWC/FBO-FNMHS	15,000.00
3	RERIPA-Call 1	314,766.50
	RERIPA-Call 3	179,765.63
	RERIPA-Call 4 (<i>pending</i>)	
4	FALAH-ORPS	37,017.90
5	IPSOS/UNICEF-FNMHS	429,125.00
6	Climate change and mobility/immobility – ORPS	
7	SPAR-Pacific - ORPS	publication
8	Urban dynamics in the Pacific – FST/FEH	NA
	TOTAL REASERCH FUNDS	1,006,229.53
	Other research projects with funds in the SINU project accounts	
9	ACIAR	170,000.00
10	SGP/GEF	239,000.00
11	Queensland Rangers	60,000.00

Other Projects	469,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	1,475,229.53

2.10 Externally funded research

1. The 3-year project through Griffith University’s International Water Centre – Progressing inclusive, resilient and sustainable SDG6 and WASH outcomes in rural Pacific: approaches to enable effective community-based water management, managed by ORPS, involves six researchers from ORPS and FNMHS and is progressing as scheduled.
2. The Faith Based approach to water management in the rural communities has been implemented in Western and Isabel provinces. Now managed by ORPS, 3 staffs from the FNMHS and ORPS are presently participating and is progressing as scheduled.
3. Enhancing research and innovation ecosystem (RERIPA) project is a PIURN supported project. Work on the proposal is being led by a consultant and supported by staff from DFS, Environment department FAFF, VCO and an adjunct fellow from ORPS. Funds for RERIPA Calls 1 and 3 have been received, while funds for Call 4 is pending. Additionally, 3 Research Assistants and an intern for Call 3, have been recruited. ORPS is managing these projects. Financial reporting to donor partners is done by the SINU finance department.
4. IPSOS/UNICEF led project has been managed by ORPS and FNMHS, and data collection was implemented by the FNMHS in late 2023 to early 2024.
5. Climate change and mobility/immobility project is an Auckland University led project that involved 2 staff from FNMHS and ORPS respectively. Funded by Auckland University, it looks at the effect of climate change on people movement in areas prone to effects of climate change.
6. SPAR-Pacific project is a FALAH led project that looks at the effect of COVID-19 on indigenous knowledge, practice and resilience in the Pacific. 5 staff are participating in the project; 2 staff from FST, 1 from FAFF, 1 from Dept. of Fisheries and 1 from ORPS.
7. Urban dynamics in the Pacific is a FALAH led project that looks at family agriculture, climate change and Health. 1 staff from FST and FEH respectively are participating in this project.

2.11 Publications

Below are publications for 2023 and 2024. I have made this available because 2023 publications were not featured in the 2023 SINU annual report.

Lincy Pendererana (2024). Geopolitical shifts and local priorities: Unpacking Solomon Islands 2024 Elections. <https://asiasociety.org/policy-institute/geopolitical-shifts-and-local-priorities-unpacking-solomon-islands-2024-elections>

Ng Shiu, R., Underhill-Sem, Y., & Newport, C. (2024). Perspectives from communities across the Pacific: Navigating vulnerability, continuing resilience. Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland. <https://www.pacific-climate-research.auckland.ac.nz>

Newport, C., Underhill-Sem, Y., & Ng Shiu, R. (2024). Relationships: Shifting climate (im)mobility. Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland. <https://pacific-climate-research.blogs.auckland.ac.nz/product-catalogue>

Bedford, R., Friesen, W., Underhill-Sem, Y., Newport, C., & Ng Shiu, R. (2023). Pacific population dynamics in the context of climate change. Bedford Consulting & Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland. <https://pacificclimate-research.blogs.auckland.ac.nz/>

Love, M., Benjamin, C., Funubo, S., Bugoro, H., Panda, N., Shrestha, S., and Souter, R.T., 2024 “A long way to go”: Decentralized rural water supply in the Pacific Islands. Country Technical – Solomon Islands. International WaterCentre; Griffith University, Nathan, Australia; Solomon Islands National University, Solomon Islands. March 2024.

Dylan Bush; Mark Love; Hugo Bugoro; Nixon Panda, Solomon Islands Oncology Unit: Sustainability in Terms of Outcomes. *JCO Global Oncology Journal*, 2024: 10; DOI: 10.1200/GO.23.00325

Regina T. Souter; Doug Ruuska; Sarah Pene; Collin Benjamin; Sheila Funubo; Cara D. Beal; Rosanna Sanderson; Suliasi Batikawai; Ana Ravai; Tema Antoinette-Wickham; Tom Rankin; Linda Peter; Heather Molitambe; Gaston Theophile; Sachita Shrestha; Krishna K. Kotra; Hugo Bugoro; Nixon Panda; Vimal Deo; Mark Love. Strengthening rural community water safety planning in Pacific Island countries: evidence and lessons from Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji. *Journal of Water and Health*, 2024: 22 (2): 467 – 486; DOI: 10.2166/wh.2024.144.

Adam Craig; Nixon Panda; Rudgard Palapu; Geoffrey Oku; Clement Lifoia; Joanna Tatalu; Nigel Beebe; Gerard Kelly; Nathan Kama Jr; Charlie Iro’ofa; Hugo Bugoro. Citizen Science for Enhanced

Dengue Vector Surveillance in Solomon Islands: A Methods Paper. *Citizen Science: Theory and Practice*, 2024: 9 (1), Page/Article: 3; DOI: 10.5334/cstp.679

Lai, Yuhua and Liang, Di and Bobogare, Albino and Yadamsuren, Buyanjargal and Yam, Esabelle and Yi, Siyan and Bugoro, Hugo and Huang, Jiayan, Fragmentations between Universal Health Coverage and Global Health Security: A Quantitative Study in the Western Pacific Region. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4609999> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4609999>

Mereia Fong-Lomavatu, Kaliova Ravuiwasa, Lilly Sar, Robert Geno, Alois Ndrewou, Lawrence Atu, Ricardo Matapaza, Michael J. Furlong, Grahame Jackson & Caroline Smith (13 Nov 2023): Plant health clinics in the Pacific region and the role of regional universities, *New Zealand Journal of Crop and Horticultural Science*, DOI: 10.1080/01140671.2023.2278789

Lydia S Kaforau Gizachew A. Tessema, Jonine Jancey, Hugo Bugoro, Gavin Pereira, ***Prevalence and risk factors associated with under-five mortality in the Solomon Islands low birth weight in Solomon islands: an investigation from the 2015 Solomon Islands demographic and health survey***, *Lancet Regional Health of Western pacific*, 2023:33:100691. DOI;10.1016/J.Janwpc.2023.100691.

Mikael Burhin, Verzilyn Isom, Divinal Ogaoga, Sue Devine, Trevor Duke, Hugo Bugoro, Mathias Tamou, Caleb Mark, Nixon Panda. ***Child Health Nurses in Solomon Islands, piloting the ‘Bachelor of Nursing: Child Health’***. *International Nursing Review*, 2023: 1-10. DOI: 10.1111/inr.12836.

Lydia S. Kaforau, Gizachew A. Tessema, Jancey. J, Bugoro. H, Pereira. G. ***Prevalence and Factors Associated with Low Birth Weight in the Solomon Islands: Evidence From the 2015 Solomon Islands Demographic and Health Survey data***, *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health* 2023: 1-9, DOI: 10.1177/10105395231158868

Burhin. M, Isom. V, Ogaoga, D, Devine. S, Duke. T, Bugoro. H, Tamou. M, Mark, C and Panda. N. ***Child health nursing in the Solomon Islands: A qualitative evaluation of the impact of the ‘Bachelor of nursing – Child health’***, *International Nursing Review*, 2023: 1-9, DOI: 10.1111/inr.12832, wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/inr

Ridwan M. Thaha, Ani Asram, Muh. Arsyad Rahman, Clement Lifoia. ***The correlation of knowledge level on stress management with mental health in Hasanuddin University students***. *Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia*, 2023: 19 (1), DOI: 10:30597/mkmi.v19i1.25435.

Benjamin, C., Bugoro, H., Love, M., & Souter, R.T. (2023). ***Factors Affecting the Lifespan of Water System in the Solomon Islands through the Experience and Perspectives of Provincial RWASH***

Officers [Abstract]. Pacific Islands University Research Network Conference, Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

Benjamin, C., Wickham, T., Funubo, S., Love, M., Shrestha, S., Ryan, S.K., Rankin, T., & Souter, R.T. (2023, February 13 – 17). *Planning for uncertain climate risks to community water: Water Security Improvement Planning in Solomon Islands* [Conference Presentation]. Water & WASH Futures Conference, Brisbane, Australia.

Benjamin, C., Wickham, T., & Souter, R.T. (2023). *Going Beyond Community-based WASH Planning* [Abstract]. World water Week Conference, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Stockholm, Sweden.

Souter, R., Love, M., Benjamin, C., Wickham, T., Funubo, S., Shrestha, S., and Rankin, T. (2023). *Community-based Water Security Planning (CWSIP) II: Planning for climate change & future risks*. Implementation Guide, Vol. 4. Honiara, Solomon Islands.

3.0 Challenges and way forward

3.1 Any challenges and issues

- **Reporting:** Financial reporting presents significant challenges. The financial report spreadsheet contains entries lacking clear descriptions, intentions for payment, and detailed information about the recipients, which are either unclear or missing. Additionally, amounts in foreign currencies have not been converted to the local currency, complicating the process of determining the remaining balance.
- **Office Space / Infrastructure:** In the first half of this year, ORPS saw an influx of external academics, underscoring the need for additional office space. The recruitment of three research assistants, along with the appointment of adjunct professors and senior research fellows, will require an office extension.
- **Vehicle:** ORPS needs a dedicated vehicle to meet its administrative and research project travel needs. We have encountered difficulties in transporting our international visitors from the airport to hotels, conference venues, site visits, field trips, and for catering and logistics support. Most of the time, ORPS has to hire public vehicles or use private cars.

- **ICT:** One of the challenges affecting ORPS is the need for a reliable and stable network connection. On average, ORPS holds 2 to 3 Zoom meetings monthly, but there have been instances where we were unable to attend due to connectivity issues. Another challenge is the outdated equipment. Most of the IT equipment is old and needs replacement. Laptop keys often do not respond, and the devices sometimes freeze or reboot on their own. The office printer, desktop, and power point projector frequently malfunction or go into freeze mode, indicating they also need to be replaced soon.
- **RAMP-up Strategy:** ORPS is implementing the RAMP-up strategy for SINU academics. To date, ORPS has approved 12 research proposals, with an additional five proposals currently under review by the SINU ethics committee. Although funds for this strategy have been allocated in the 2024 budget, it was not included in the initial approved budget. ORPS believes that investing in SINU academics is essential, as this strategy will help them gain confidence and become research-ready.

3.2 Way forward to address challenges and issues

- Procedures for proper acquittals of donor funds held by SINU are being addressed. To address these, a dedicated account for research projects was established with Bred Bank. This initiative aims to enhance ORPS's involvement in the tracking and monitoring of research funds across various projects. It also seeks to assist with timely financial acquittals, implement a robust verification mechanism, and support the preparation of accurate financial reports and reconciliation statements. We are also learning from our partner organisations in reporting, and will adopt the one that is more transparent and simple to understand.
- To work with the SINU facility and property department to identify an architect to design an extension to the current office. The architect will also be tasked to draw up a concept plan for a new research building to cater for the expanding role and increase in staffing.
- To address the transport issue, ORPS will feature this in the CAPEX 25 budget.
- It is anticipated that all ICT equipment and accessories will be replaced with new ones by 2025.
- Management to consider the funding of researches by staff and students who under the RAMP-up strategy have their research proposals approved awaiting funding.

3.3 Key priority activities for next six months are:

- a. To win additional externally funded research projects
- b. To complete management framework, systems and processes for research projects
- c. To complete policy-related documents for PDRs
- d. To complete the Teaming Agreement (TA) with World Vision (USA)
- e. To support faculties in their efforts to encourage staff research through short course training in research methodology, proposal writing and data analysis
- f. To plan with ANU on the preparation for the Panatina Seminar for 2025.
- g. To liaise with ANU on the prospect of training SINU staff to supervise PhD fellows
- h. To prepare for upcoming RERIPA workshops and conferences in October (Fiji)
- i. To prepare staff and students to attend the FALAH workshop in Fiji in October and in Vanuatu in November
- j. Coordinate staff and students who participated in the SPAR survey project to contribute to the write up and publication of the report.
- k. Annual work-plan and budget preparation for 2025.