



University of Melbourne delegation strengthens ties with Pacific

The University of Melbourne has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Solomon Islands National University (SINU) during a visit to the Pacific to strengthen and expand its engagement and partnerships with key regional educational institutions.

Led by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement), Professor Michael Wesley, the University of Melbourne delegation visited Samoa, Fiji and joined the Australian High Commission in Honiara, in the Solomon Islands, for a range of activities.

The Memorandum of Understanding with SINU was signed on Tuesday 4th February 2025 at the Panatina Campus. The agreement formalises the relationship between the two universities and establishes a foundation for collaboration in research, teaching and professional development, supporting SINU in its evolution as a hub of academic excellence.

“We look forward to the opportunities that this engagement will bring for our students, faculty, and the region as a whole.”

“The exchange of knowledge, research collaboration and capacity-building initiatives established through this MoU will contribute immensely to the development of our university and the broader Solomon Islands community.

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The University of Melbourne and SINU also hosted the 3rd Asia and the Pacific Outlook Series, co-ordinated by Asialink, and the SINU-Australia Seminar in Honiara.

The seminar, Solomon Islands and Australia in the Evolving Global Higher Education Landscape, was jointly hosted by Professor Wesley and Dr Aqorau.

The seminar facilitated high-level dialogue and was followed by five collaborative workshops focusing on key research areas, including a new Centre for Linguistics, peace-building initiatives and developing research capacity in environmental studies.

The SINU partnership is one of the many ways the University of Melbourne is delivering on its commitment to regional partnerships and Pacific engagement, in line with the University’s Advancing Melbourne strategy.

“We are grateful for the warm reception and the robust partnerships we have formed, which are vital in our pursuit of shared and sustainable future goals,” said Professor Wesley.

The Faculty of Education and Humanities (FEH) at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) officially launched its



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement), Professor Michael Wesley of University of Melbourne and SINU Vice-Chancellor Prof, Transform Aqorau showing a copy of the signed MoU.

Professor Wesley said: “Our sustained engagement in the Pacific affirms our commitment to expanding regional educational opportunities and addressing global challenges through meaningful partnerships like the one we have with Solomon Islands National University.”

SINU Vice-Chancellor Dr Transform Aqorau welcomed the partnership. “This marks a significant milestone for SINU as we con-

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Solomon Islands National University Explores Partnership with the Baru Conservation Alliance

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is exploring a significant partnership with one of the country's most successful indigenous conservation organisations, the Baru Conservation Alliance (BCA), following a high-level meeting between SINU Vice Chancellor, Professor Transform Aqorau, and Chief Esau of the BCA.

The Baru Conservation Alliance is a coalition representing four tribal groups—Aieda, Fulanitofe, Burui, and Aifasu—who have successfully preserved their ancestral lands, biodiversity, and traditional way of life in the East Kwaio region of Malaita. The organisation was legally registered in 2019 and has been at the forefront of community-led conservation, climate resilience, education, and research initiatives. Over the years, BCA has collaborated with leading international institutions, including James Cook University and the Australian National University, in biodiversity research and indigenous ecological knowledge preservation.

During the meeting, four key areas of collaboration were discussed, reflecting SINU's commitment to strengthening indigenous knowledge systems, research collaboration, and community empowerment:

1. Education & Teacher Training – Developing a tailored training programme for untrained teachers in East Kwaio, delivered in Auki, to support quality education within indigenous communities.
2. Research & Indigenous Curriculum Development – Establishing a partnership with SINU's Centre for Islands Futures as a Living Lab, fostering applied research in biodiversity conservation, indigenous environmental management, and sustainable development.
3. Archival & Knowledge Integration – Exploring ways to digitise and integrate the vast collection of Kwaio historical and cultural research housed within BCA into SINU's library and research resources, as well as providing archival and knowledge management training for BCA members.
4. National Reconciliation Initiative – Collaborating with BCA to support a Solomon Islands-wide reconciliation process, building upon previous efforts in 2018

(Australia), 2019 (Kwaio communities), and 2021 (Malaita-wide). This could potentially be incorporated within SINU's Peacebuilding Initiative in partnership with the University of Melbourne.

Speaking on the importance of partnering with indigenous communities, Professor Transform Aqorau, Vice Chancellor of SINU, emphasised the transformative impact of integrating indigenous knowledge into academic and policy frameworks:

"The Baru Conservation Alliance represents a truly inspiring model of indigenous leadership in conservation and sustainable development. Their commitment to protecting the environment while maintaining cultural integrity aligns with SINU's vision of promoting community-driven, locally relevant education and research. By working together, we can create impactful programmes that not only empower indigenous communities but also contribute to national development and global knowledge."

Reflecting on the significance of the meeting, Professor Aqorau highlighted the broader implications for both SINU and Solomon Islands:

"This partnership represents an opportunity to bridge the gap between academia and indigenous communities, ensuring that research and education are not just theoretical but directly benefit the people of Solomon Islands. We are keen to explore how SINU can support BCA's initiatives and, in turn, learn from their vast experience in conservation and indigenous governance. I look forward to working with my colleagues at SINU to develop practical and meaningful collaborations in the areas discussed."

SINU will now engage faculty members and relevant stakeholders to assess potential academic, research, and policy collaboration mechanisms with BCA. A formal working group is expected to be established to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining the scope of collaboration.

Suspension and Termination of SINU Librarian

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) wishes to inform the public of the regrettable but necessary decision to terminate the employment of a foreign Associate Professor, who formerly served as the University Librarian. This decision follows a comprehensive internal audit and investigation, which uncovered significant breaches of procurement policies, financial mismanagement, and misconduct in relation to the acquisition of books for the University's library.

The findings of the investigation revealed that procurement procedures were not followed, with suppliers being handpicked without due process. Payments amounting to over SBD 2.6 million were made for books that were either never delivered or partially supplied. Additionally, there was clear evidence of conflict of interest, price inflation, duplicate invoicing, and fraudulent activity involving external suppliers. The financial loss suffered by the University as a result of these irregularities is substantial, prompting immediate action to safeguard the institution's integrity.

In light of the seriousness of these findings, the University librarian was suspended to allow for a fair investigation. Following due process, and after providing him the opportunity to respond to the allegations, the University Council has now taken the firm decision to terminate his employment in accordance with the Solomon Islands National University's Code of Conduct and financial regulations.

Vice Chancellor of SINU, Professor Transform Aqorau, stated, "This is a regrettable situation, and it is never an easy decision to suspend or terminate an academic professional. However, as the national university, we have a duty to uphold the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability. Institutions of higher learning must set an example for integrity and trust. This incident underscores the importance of strengthening our financial and procurement processes to prevent such breaches from happening again."

The University has implemented several immediate measures to strengthen financial governance and prevent similar incidents in the fu-

ture:

1. Procurement and Financial Reforms – SINU has revised its procurement policies to include stricter financial controls, independent oversight, and phased payments based on verified deliveries.
2. Legal Action and Financial Recovery – The University is actively pursuing legal avenues to recover lost funds and has terminated agreements with the implicated suppliers. Efforts are underway to blacklist these entities from any future dealings with SINU.
3. Enhanced Auditing and Compliance Measures – An external audit has been commissioned to assess and improve compliance mechanisms, ensuring stronger internal controls.
4. Training and Capacity Building – Relevant staff will undergo procurement and financial management training to ensure full adherence to ethical and procedural standards.
5. Governance Strengthening – SINU will establish a task force dedicated to financial oversight and risk assessment, reporting directly to the University Council.

SINU remains committed to its mission of providing quality education and research while maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. This incident serves as a reminder that accountability and due diligence must remain at the core of institutional operations.

We assure students, staff, and the wider public that the University will continue working diligently to uphold the values of integrity and transparency as we build a stronger, more accountable institution for the future.

Faculty of Education and Humanities Launches Self-Review Initiative

Self-Review Initiative on 20th February 2025 at the Panatina Campus, marking a significant step towards strengthening its academic programmes and enhancing educational quality.

The event, held at Room PG2, Panatina Campus, was attended by the SINU Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (PVCA) Associate Professor Dr Eric Katovai as the official guest and academic leaders and staff of FEH committed to the continuous improvement of education at SINU.

The ceremony began with an opening remarks from Dr. Patricia Rodie, Dean of Faculty.

In her address, Dr. Rodie highlighted the importance of the self-review process in ensuring that FEH's academic offerings remain relevant, rigorous, and aligned with both local and international educational standards.

She emphasised that this initiative is a key priority in the Faculty's 2025 Annual Work Plan, aimed at assessing and redeveloping existing programs while preparing for the introduction of new undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

The SINU PVCA, Associate Professor Dr. Eric Katovai, officiated at the event and officially launched the initiative, reaffirming the university's commitment to quality assurance and academic excellence.

Associate Professor Katovai commended FEH for taking the lead to implement its self-review programme and assured the Dean-FEH and Faculty staff of his support towards the initiative.

Following the launch, Dr. Rodie provided an overview of the self-review process, outlining its structured framework, which includes curriculum evaluation, student performance assessments, stakeholder feedback analysis, and alignment with institutional goals.

A key component of the initiative is the development of a comprehensive Self-Review Report, which will serve as a foundation for future academic planning and decision-making.

The Faculty also aims to leverage the findings from this review to seek technical and funding support for the enhancement of its Teacher Education Programmes.

The launch of the FEH Self-Review Initiative marks a proactive step towards academic excellence, ensuring that SINU's Faculty of Education and Humanities continues to provide high-quality education that meets the evolving needs of students and stakeholders.



Faculty of Education and Humanities (FEH) Staff with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic gather for a group photo.

International Mother Language Day Celebrated at SINU in Collaboration with SITAG

In celebration of International Mother Language Day, an event was held on Friday 21 February at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) Panatina Campus.

The event also recognized the UNESCO International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032).

It was organized by the Solomon Islands Translation Advisory Group (SITAG) and co-hosted by SINU.

The program was attended by the Minister of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), Hon. Tozen Leokana, Permanent Secretary Dr. Franco Rodie, SIL Global Executive Director Dr. Michel Kenmogne, SINU staff and students, representatives from the San Isidro Care Centre, MEHRD representatives, and members of the general public.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Kenmogne, who holds a PhD in Linguistics and is a minority language speaker from Cameroon. The program featured stories about languages in the Solomon Islands, the Pacific, and globally.

As a critical partner in initiatives like today's event, the University plays a key role in the conservation, maintenance, and support of efforts to preserve our languages for the future. We assure you that we will continue to collaborate and promote partnerships that align with the University's vision for the protection and promotion of our diverse mother tongues."

Dr. Parairato also acknowledged the commitment of the organizing team in ensuring the success of the event and for their efforts in maintaining and preserving different languages.



Dr William Parairato, Pro Vice-Chancellor Corporate (PVCC) delivering his welcome remarks at the event.

The event began today at 10:00 am at the SINU Panatina Pavilion, where displays and interactive language-related activities were available for students, faculty, and the public. In the afternoon, from 2:30 to 4:00 pm, a formal program was held at the SINU FEH Lecture Theatre.

Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor Corporate Dr. William Parairato welcomed guests and attendees. He highlighted the significance of the theme "Boldly Taking Our Language into the Future", emphasizing that languages are a vital part of identity and culture.

"For many of us, our mother tongue is the most important part of our lives, enabling us to communicate with family, relatives, and our communities.

It is an essential part of our daily interactions with people and the environment.

On behalf of the University, I would like to thank the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Humanities, Dr. Patricia, and her team for collaborating with our stakeholder, especially the Indigenous language teams, on this important occasion.

I also extend a warm welcome to all our stakeholders who are part of this celebration.



Dr. Michel Kenmogne SIL Global Executive Director.



Hon. Tozen Leokana, Minister of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD).

Staff Profile

Name: Darius Darlyn Ramo

Province: Malaita Province

Age: 51

Work Station: Kukum Campus

Department: Institutional Planning & Development

Job title: Director of Institutional Planning & Development

Qualification: Master of Business Administration (MBA), Postgrad Diploma Business Admin, Postgrad Certificate Business Admin, Bachelor of Education (BED), Cert.IV Project Management.

How long have you been working here? Four years.

Tell us about your job: I currently serve as the Director of Institutional Planning & Development at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU). In this capacity, I lead the coordination, development, and monitoring of the University's Strategic and Institutional Plans, working closely with Faculties, Departments, and stakeholders to align planning processes with SINU's long-term vision and development priorities.

What do you like about SINU and your job?

Being part of a growing national institution that plays a vital role in shaping the future of education and development in Solomon Islands.



Collaborating with diverse teams across faculties and departments — each day brings new challenges and opportunities.

Using my national planning expertise to influence institutional development at a higher level.

The sense of purpose — knowing my work directly contributes to the university's growth and the nation's human resource development.

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Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is the Prime and ONLY National University of Solomon Islands.

Founded in 2013, SINU is striving to be one of the Best Education and Research Institute in the Region.

Our VISION: "A quality National University, raising Standards of education and applied research in the Pacific Region."

Our Mission: "Championing the pursuit of knowledge, skills, academic inquiry and applied research to transform lives through higher education and training, inclusive of diverse communities, while providing relevant solutions for the Solomon Islands."