



## REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES NETWORK (RUN) SUBMISSION

### National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund Discussion Paper

#### Questions for discussion

##### Principles

1. *Do the principles provide clear guidance on what is expected of an indicator?*

A. Yes

##### Tiered indicators

2. *How many indicators (i.e. 10, 12, or 15) might universities need to meet, to achieve the outcomes of NPILF, while also accounting for university missions?*

A. The system is very complex – while the scale and flexibility are useful, are so many indicators really necessary? Could a few indicators be used to cover the metrics and demonstrators, and a short case study or narrative be used to cover the innovators? The latter approach is better suited to the innovators.

3. *Do the indicators provide enough flexibility to meet the varied needs of business?*

A. For business to respond.

4. *Do you agree with the metrics listed? Which are the most valuable? Would you add other metrics?*

A. The metrics measure quantity not quality. Quality is an important element which should be added.

The metric “improvement in graduate employment outcome overall” is likely to be more related to the overall state of the local economy, and shouldn’t be included.

The metric “increase/proportion of academic workforce actively from industry” is not practicable given AQF requirements for academics to have PhDs (but it could be accommodated via adjunct positions).

5. *To be able to measure industry linkages, is there an appetite to create a new system of data collection?*

A. No.

## Allocation methodology

6. *Is the proposed mechanism for allocation appropriate as a mechanism to incentivise new behaviours in the sector? Could re-allocation be introduced earlier/not at all?*
  - A. Suggest that the proposed mechanism is proceeded with for the first two years, then review it to see how things are working out.

## Distribution options

7. *Which distribution method (i.e. banded; per EFTSL-rate; base; loadings) makes most sense? Or can you propose another method?*
  - A. RUN supports the distribution model “per EFTSL rate + base + loading”. The loading for regional and smaller institutions takes account of thinner, regional markets.

## Priorities – WIL, STEM-skills and Industry partnerships

8. *Do you agree with the definitions of WIL, STEM+ and Industry partnerships in the context of NPILF?*
  - A. Yes. We note that the standard definition of “employment” doesn’t differentiate between “employment” and “self-employment” (e.g. developing a start-up).
9. *How does a university measure and maintain the quality of WIL activities? – consider if a current program/framework could be used broadly across the sector.*
  - A. Our universities evaluate WIL activities via surveys / debriefing activities. We don’t have a consistent framework to measure the quality of WIL activities – one would be useful.
10. *How does a university promote WIL, and the benefits of WIL (especially new, innovative or ‘remote’ approaches) to SMEs and large organisations, and is there a role for Government?*
  - A. Some RUN members promote practicums with local health care providers. Advisory boards for various courses with industry members are a useful source of connections for universities with industry.

State/territory governments can facilitate connections between individual universities and businesses.

The Commonwealth Government could have a role to raise awareness in industry, particularly SMEs, of the opportunities afforded by WIL and connections with universities.

11. *How can universities best engage industry, particularly SMEs, with WIL?*
  - A. Working with SMEs to co-create courses; state governments facilitating partnerships/industry partners for universities.
12. *How can universities help STEM+ students “think beyond the lab” and expose them to the vast employment landscape they can access?*
  - A. Students should do more than one job placement across a variety of roles e.g. health students should do work placements involving management roles. Accrediting bodies should think more progressively about what is job-ready.
13. *Are there specific challenges for SME’s in engaging with universities that need to be addressed in the framework?*
  - A. The lack of funding and people in SME’s to facilitate/supervise work placements are barriers – funding to assist WIL placements is helpful. VET providers who have better connections with SMEs than universities can help the latter make relevant connections.

There is little to incentivise start-ups to take on students in work placements.

14. *Does the framework allow sufficient knowledge sharing to enable universities and industry to build on successful models?*

A. A competitive framework doesn't encourage knowledge sharing. A co-creation model between universities and business for WIL placements is the best way to knowledge share.

### Existing practice

15. *Does your business or university have good examples of WIL, or partnerships, which can be used as exemplars?*

A. RUN member all have good examples of WIL or partnerships – contact member universities directly.

### General

16. *Does the framework sufficiently address the lifetime of learning challenge facing the workforce?*

A. Yes, to some extent.

17. *Does the 12 month NPILF cycle (as set out above) allow enough time to implement and report on activities?*

A. No. The 12 month cycle is too short to report on innovation and the development of meaningful relationships with business. e.g. Federation University Australia's partnership with IBM at the Ballarat Technology Park took 25 years to fully develop.

18. *Do you have any other feedback or comments?*

A. There is diverse engagement between regional universities and employers. It takes time to work with local industry and communities to continue to build the relevant infrastructure for engagement.