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Message from Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research &
Innovation – **Professor Paul Iji**

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It is my pleasure to welcome you to this revived Newsletter from the Research Office. The Newsletter was paused due to a number of challenges, including COVID-19. Despite the challenges thrown by the pandemic, FNU has continued to grow its research portfolio, and I am glad to inherit such healthy growth. In only about 3 years since we commenced our higher degrees by research (HDR) programmes, we have published a lot of papers in high-quality journals and received a healthy number of grants from around the world. Our colleges continue to sign up with new partners, one of which is a large collaboration with Monash University, Australia, in the form of a research centre.

We have not only grown in our HDR programmes but also in several good-quality coursework postgraduate programmes (CPP), many of which have a strong research component. In the coming years, the Research Office will look at supporting this area of our research to spur the researchers into achieving more.

I have taken over the portfolio from a very strong researcher, Professor Roland De Marco. I would like to wish Roland all the best as he re-joins his family in Australia. I will endeavour to build on his achievements, and my team has begun to identify key areas of focus in our annual plan. A graduate school will come on stream in the next few months. We will restructure some areas of the university so that the Research Office can support the colleges more strongly.

We will review some of our policies and processes to improve our delivery and will work with other divisions, particularly HR and Finance, to streamline research-related processes. Overall, these changes will enable us to score more strongly in terms of global ranking.

Enjoy the Newsletter.

1. Highlights on our Research Portfolio

- ***Pacific Action on Climate Transitions (PACT)***

FNU's newest interdisciplinary research centre, the Pacific Action for Climate Transitions (PACT), was launched earlier in March this year. The international research centre, set up in collaboration with Monash University, Australia, will focus on the critical links between business and climate change and finding real-world solutions for communities at the frontlines of our changing environment. PACT will aid policymakers who are looking at effectively funding mitigation and adaptation measures in the Pacific region and beyond, as well as provide high-quality training and capacity building. The Centre has also welcomed a \$2 million funding commitment from the Fiji Government in the recent 2023–2024 budget announcement.



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, Professor Rebekah Brown with the Acting Vice-Chancellor of Fiji National University, Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba on the launch of PACT in March 2023

- ***Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking***

The Fiji National University (FNU) has maintained its ranking and improved its overall scores for the 2023 Times Higher Education (THE) ranking. FNU held its overall position at 801–1000 out of 1,591 global institutions in 2023, compared to 801–1000 out of 1,410 institutions in 2022. The Impact Rankings measure how an institution's research, stewardship, outreach, and

teaching deliver against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. "It is a milestone achievement for the university to be ranked in the Times Higher Education for the second time, and I congratulate every member of the FNU family who has been associated with this initiative," the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nabobo-Baba, said.

- ***Research Capacity through Training & Mentoring***

The university continues to utilise its refreshed HDR entrance and supervisor regulations, together with adjunct researcher appointment processes, to grow researcher and supervisor capacity at the university. The Research Office collaborated with the FNU Students' Association to run a university-wide induction programme, which included presentations from the PVC R&I, all Associate Deans of Research, and the Academic Office on processes, academic support, and services offered to HDR students at the university. During April, we conducted the 2023 Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, and in May 2023, we ran HDR Supervisor and Student Training workshops led by the University of Wollongong. Both projects were sponsored by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). The University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ), on behalf of ACIAR, conducted an online workshop for HDR students on how to prepare your three-minute thesis (3MT) pitch, together with a workshop on support for the mental well-being of HDR students at the university. Lastly, the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC), on behalf of ACIAR, ran workshops at the FNU Koronivia Campus for ACIAR scholarship recipients at both FNU and USP on the ACIAR Future Thinker Grants. Planning is underway to run FNU's second 3MT competition in the second half of 2023, again with the support of ACIAR.

2. Funded Research Projects

Congratulations to our colleagues who have been successfully obtaining research funds from external and internal sources to complete projects in one or more FNU research priority areas.

- ***Dr Royford Magiri*** - College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the project titled "USC/Livestock Climate Change Resilience" funded by the University of the Sunshine Coast for FJD 30,441.40
- ***Dr Odille Chang and Dr William May*** - College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences for the project titled "DFAT/Pacific Specialized Clinical" funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for FJD 1,857,946.88
- ***Dr Gade Waqa, Dr Donald Wilson and Dr William May*** - College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences for the project titled "JICA/NCDs in Fiji Phase 2" funded by Koei Research & Consulting Inc. (JICA Expert Team) for FJD 60,000.00
- ***Captain Rajitha Semage*** - Fiji Maritime Academy for the project titled "SPREP/Marine Biofouling Training" funded by SPREP for FJD 9,097.11
- ***Dr Mai Ling Perman, Vikash Sharma and Haikiu Taukave*** - College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences for the project titled "WHO/Internship Program" funded by the World Health Organization for FJD 33,729.10
- ***Dr Mereia Fong*** - College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the project titled "ACIAR/Mereia Fong" funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research for FJD 6,849.32
- ***Rashika Gounder, Numa Vera and Dr.Litia Narube*** - College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences for the project titled "Availability/Accessibility of EC_FJ" funded by Family Planning NSW for FJD 14,505.48
- ***Professor Roland De Marco*** - Research Office for the project titled "Ubercamp Sponsorship UniSC" funded by

the University of the Sunshine Coast for FJD 22,824.10

- **Dr Mumtaz Alam** - College of Humanities and Education for the project titled “Green Buildings Training FJ-GGGI” funded by Green Buildings Training FJ-GGGI for FJD 27,260.34
- **Dr Gade Waqa** - College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences for the project titled “CPOND/Disaster Resilience-Mental” funded by Anglia Ruskin University for FJD 29,375.71
- **Dr Royford Magiri** - College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the project titled “CSIRO/AMR Gap

Analysis in Fiji” funded by Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization for FJD 105,628.49

- **Hirdesh Sachan, Professor Paul Iji, Dr Deeksha Krishna, Mr Ashneel Prasad, Mr Avin Prasad, Mr Prashant Maharaj, Mr Ilisoni L.V. Leweniqila, Mr Joeli Savou and Ms Tetalo** - College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on the Industry Collaboration with Ram Sami & Sons on the project titled “Effect of Different Rates of Poultry Manure Application on the Growth and Yield of selected crops in Fiji” for FJD \$26,572.00

3. Conference Presentation

Congratulations to our esteemed academic staff members who recently presented at the following conferences. Their exceptional contributions have not only showcased their expertise but have also enhanced our institution’s reputation within the academic community.

Conference/Workshop Name	Presenter	College
1. 5th Pacific Biomedical Network	Dr Ronesh A Sharma	CEST
2. Convention for Pacific Regional Federation for Resilience Professionals	Mr Asaeli Naika	CEST
3. College of intensive care medicine (CICM) of Australia and NZ 4. Royal Brisbane Woman’s Hospital	Ms Elizabeth Bennett	CMNHS
5. Emergency Management of Severe Burns at CWMH	Dr Kenton Biribo	CMNHS
6. International Day of the Midwife Celebration 7. Maternal, Perinatal Deaths Surveillance & Response Committee 8. O&G Clinical Practice Guideline Validation	Dr Litia Narube	CMNHS
9. APAO CONGRESS – Malaysia	Dr Varanise Derenalagi	CMNHS
10. Pacific Pediatric Association	Professor Alok Kumar Dubey	CMNHS
11. Fiji College of General Practitioner Conference 12. Asia Pacific Medical Education Conference (APMEC)	Dr Vandana Krishna	CMNHS
13. Veilomani Training (GBV in the Pacific) Cultural Perspectives and Drivers of GBV and Mental Health	Dr Violet Erasito	CMNHS
14. WHO Core Expert Meeting on the Implementation of The Regional Framework For The Future Of Mental Health In The Western Pacific	Dr Odille Chang	CMNHS
15. RANZCP Virtual Consultation Forum	Dr Odille Chang	CMNHS
16. The Pacific Gut Club Online Presentation	Dr Sophagie Jepsen	CMNHS
17. Respiratory Guideline Training and Point of Care Ultrasound workshop	Mr Vikash Sharma	CMNHS
18. Ethics in a contemporary business environment	Dr Avanish Shukla	CBHTS
19. CHE’s Graduate Seminar Series. Educational responses to climate change: A Case study of the Fijian Education system. Fiji Ka Hindi Katha Sahitya - Ek Anushillan.	Dr Ravinesh Rohit Prasad Dr Subashni Lata Kumar	CHE

20. Girit Webinar Series (English and Hindi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giritiyo Ki Shiksha Giritiya Streeyo Ki Samvednaye Pt. Totaram Sanadhya Ka Yogdaan' Narratives And Counter Narratives Of Giriti In Fiji Fiji's Cultural Diversity And Inclusivity In Education Forging A New Identity In An Alien Land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kamlesh Arya Naresh Chand & Mrs. Sarita Chand Dr Subashni Kumar Khemendra Kumar Kamala Naicker Rajendra Prasad 	CHE
21. FNUSA & Vice Chancellors Leadership Conference	Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba (AVC), Dr Sakul Kundra, Dr Mumtaz Alam, Dr Sofia Ali, Mr Perry Gabriel, Ms Margaret Gabriel and Ms Jacqueline Prasad		CHE
22. 12th World Hindi Conference at Sheraton International Convention Centre	Dr Subashni Kumar		CHE
23. Fiji Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Symposium	Dr Kaliova and Dr Mereia, Dr Ashika, Dr Royford, Dr Abubakar and 5 staff that volunteered		CAFF
24. Sweet potato Pathogen-Tested (PT) technology training workshop,	Dr Mereia Fong		CAFF
25. Pacific Week of Agriculture/Regional Agriculture and Forestry Symposium	About 8-10 CAFF staff participated		CAFF
26. FNUSA & VC Leadership conference	Dr. Kaliova Ravuiwasa , Dr Shalini Singh, Dr. Mereia Fong, Dr. Ilisoni Leweniqila, Dr Royford Magiri & Mr Matthew Saukuru		CAFF
27. World Aquaculture Conference	Ms Regina Singh and Mr Sumilesh Pal		CAFF

4. Publications

Quartile 1

- Chand, R., Raghuwaiya, K., et al. (2023). Leader-Follower Based Low-Degree Formation Control of Fixed-Wing Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in 3D. *Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*, 101-118.
- Underhill, S., Kumar, S., Joshua, L., et al. (2023). Postharvest Handling Practice in the South Pacific and Its Implications on Local Food Systems. *Acta Horticulture*, 271-279.
- Paliwal, A., Sharma, N., Mohite, A. (2023). Effect of Wet Processing On the Grinding Characteristics and Functional Properties of Sorghum. *Applied Food Research*, 3(1).
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- Lal, R., Varo, J., Jana, S. (2023). Earthquake Characteristics and Ground Motions in Christchurch, New Zealand. *Lecture Notes in Civil Engineering*, 59-79
- Chand, R., Raghuwaiya, K., et al. (2023). Leader-Follower Based Control of Fixed-Wing Multi-Robot System (MRS) via Split-Rejoin Maneuvers in 3D. *Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*, 195-209

Quartile 2

- Maharaj, K., Kumar, K. (2023). Enhancing Data Warehouse Efficiency By Optimizing ETL Processing In Near Real Time Data Integration Environment. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 289-304.
- Singh, I., Nair, P., Gunathilake, D. (2023). Assessment of Capsicum Nutrient Levels Affected By Lime and Phosphorus Application in Fijian Soil. *Plant Science Today*, 10(1), 74-79.
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- Kumar, A., Shawkat Ali, A. (2023). Big Data Visualization Tools, Challenges and Web Search Popularity - An Update till Today. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 305-315.
- Maharaj, K., Kumar, K., Sharma, N. (2023). Predicting Residential Property Valuation in Major Towns and Cities on Mainland Fiji. *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, 453-468.
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- Paliwal, A., Sharma, N. (2023). Fermentation Kinetics Of Sorghum Grain And Effects Of Wet Processing On Structural And Chemical Properties Of Sorghum Flour. *Vegetos*, 36(1), 141-148.
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- Chand, R., Raghuwaiya, K., Vanualailai, J. (2023). Leader-Follower Strategy of Fixed-Wing Unmanned Aerial Vehicles via Split Rejoin Maneuvers. *Lecture Notes on Data Engineering and Communications Technologies*, 231-245.
- Towards Family Planning (FP) Among Pregnant Women in Fiji. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 27(5), 795-804.
- Schultz, H., Battley, P.F., Bury, S.J., et al. (2023). Non-Breeding Behaviour In The Brown Skua (*Stercorarius Antarcticus Lonnbergi*): Insights From Modelling Moulting Patterns And Stable Isotope Analyses. *Emu*, 123(1), 49-59.
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Quartile 3

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- Hemalatha, P., Abda, M., Shah, S., et al. (2023). Multi-Faceted CRISPR-Cas9 Strategy To Reduce Plant Based Food Loss And Waste For Sustainable Bio-Economy – A Review. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 332.
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- Singh, S., Bakare, A., Iji, P., et al. (2023). Beef Cattle Production Systems and Constraints among Subsistence Farmers Across The Fijian Windward–Leeward Divide. *Outlook on Agriculture*.
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- Shah, S., Sharma, P. (2023). Monitoring Carbon Stock Changes In Solan Forest Division Of Indian Western Himalayas. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*.
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Book Chapters

- Alam, M.A. (2023). Impact of Climate Change on Human Health and Housing: A Systematic Analysis, Notion Press, Chennai, India.
- Alam, M.A (2023). A Critical Analysis of Health Concerns of Low- and Middle-Income Countries in Sustainable Development Goals as the Successor Framework to the MDGs, Chandra, D., Saran., R.K., Yadav., R.B., Patidar., D & Yadav, YK (eds), Latest Research Concern
- Alam, M.A. (2023). Climate Change and Its Impact on Depletion of Oxygen Levels on Coastal Waters and Shallow Seas. In: Jayaraju, N., Sreenivasulu, G., Madakka, M., Manjulatha, M. (eds) Coasts, Estuaries and Lakes. Springer, Cham.
- Krishna, Deeksha & Sachan, H.K. (2023). Hazardous biomedical waste management scenario in developing countries. 10.1016/B978-0-323-90463-6.00015-4.
- Alam, M.A (2023). Climate Change and Social Vulnerability: A Study of the Design of Rights, Sahoo, A., Kulshrestha, S., Bhasin, S., Devarakonda, A., Khan, A & Yadav, YK (eds), Post Modern Research Colloquial.
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- Chatterjee, U., Bandyopadhyay, N., Setiawati, M.D., Banerjee, D. (eds) Indigenous Knowledge and Disaster Risk Reduction. Disaster Risk Reduction. Springer, Cham
- Alam, M. A., Prasad, R. R., Kundra, S. (2023). Effects of

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- Kundra, S. et al. (2023). Assessment of the Local Traditional Knowledge and Practices of Flood Risk identification Techniques: A Case Study of Nadaro Village, Tailevu, Fiji. In: Panda, G.K., Chatterjee, U., Bandyopadhyay, N., Setiawati, MD., Banerjee, D. (eds) Indigenous Knowledge and Disaster Risk Reduction. Disaster Risk Reduction. Springer, Cham

Pacific Unranked Journals

- Leweqila, I. & Roskrug, N. (2023). The Land Speaks – Indigenous Agriculture Knowledge: The Philosophy of Life and Epistemology and Relationship to Kumala Production in Ra, Journal of Interdisciplinary Research, 76(1).
- Vurebe, A., Leweqila. I. & Tuivanualevu, T. (2023). Resilience, Adaptation and Indigenous Knowledge; Engaging with Pacific Philosophy and Methodology, Journal of Interdisciplinary Research, 7(1).

Research Books

- Alam, M.A. (2023). Massawa and the Dahlak Archipelago: Bittersweet of Tourist Industry in Eritrea, First Edition, Notion Press, Chennai, India.
- Mohammed, Alam. (2023). Microfinance Scheme: A Noble Approach To Uplift The Rural Women
- Alam, M.A. (2023). Climate Change and Its Impact on Depletion of Oxygen Levels on Coastal Waters and Shallow Seas. Coasts, Estuaries and Lakes: Implications for Sustainable Development, 329-345.

Staff of the Research Office

For all research support and questions, please contact Research Office on the details provided below:

Professor Paul Iji	Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)	2046
Ms Neelam Singh	Acting ACIAR Graduate Officer	2044
Ms Varsha Dutt	HDR Coordinator	2044
Ms Reena Singh	Acting Grants & Ethics Officer	2981
Ms Raijieli Niubalavu	Research Data & Analytics Officer	2043
Ms Salesni Kumar	Research Officer	2042
Ms Rashika Kumar	Acting Senior Executive Officer	2041