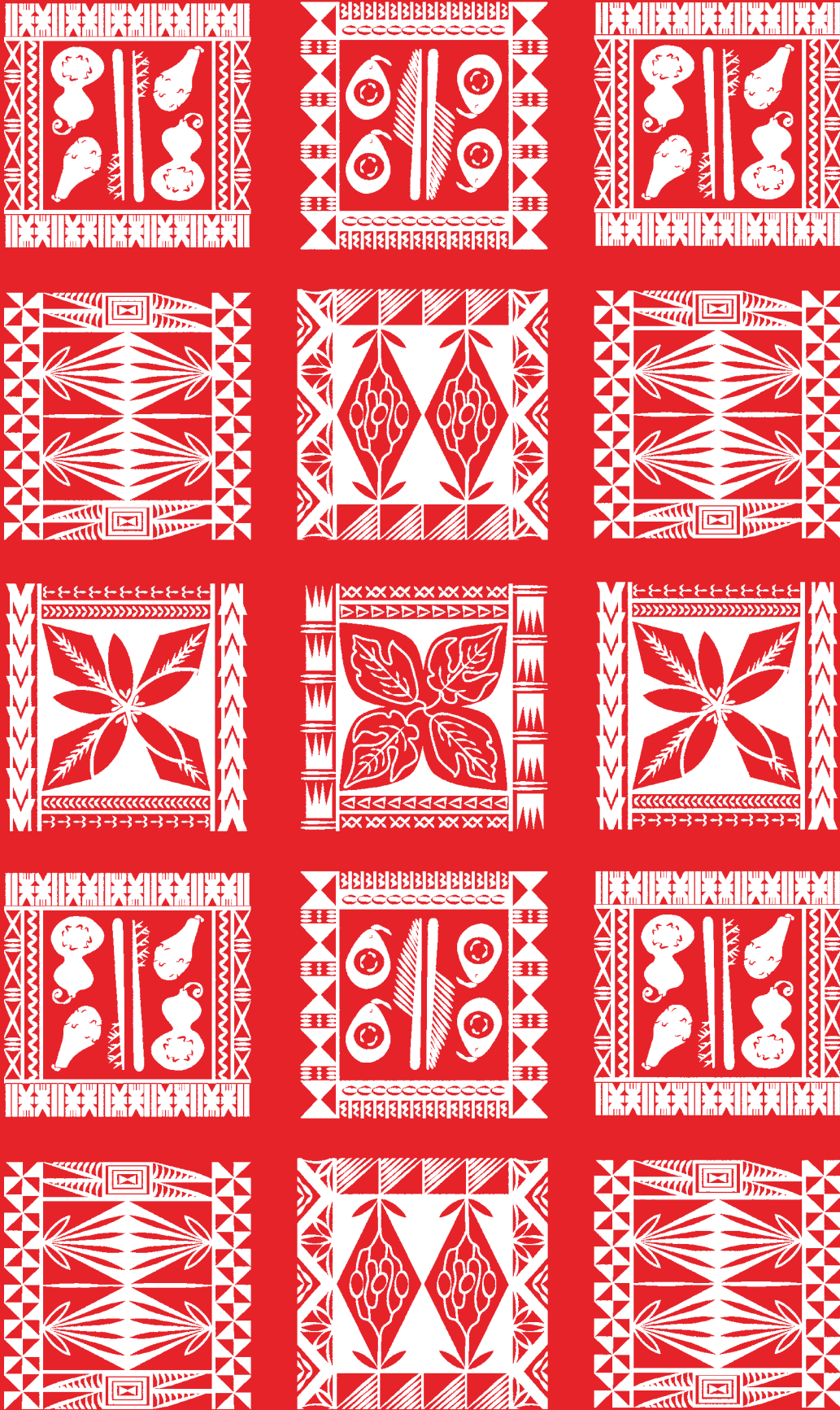


Reshaping our oceanic horizon and constellation





“These patterns are inspired by different plants from across the Pacific islands. The history of these flora are interconnected with the histories of our Pacific voyagers. Like our ancestors, many of these species were carried by sea or wind to new environments, where they learnt to adapt and thrive. In our designs, these natural resources represent the resilience, strength and knowledge of our Pacific communities.”

– Jade Wilson, Artist

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Artefacts featured in this booklet have been gifted to the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.





Framing the oceanic cosmology: The horizon, the constellations

The *Pacific Strategy* is guided by the Oceanic cosmological wisdom represented by the horizon (paerangi, vunilagi, tafālagi, iōnga, uquna noka) and constellation (kalokalo, whetū, pupunga fetu’u, taulaiga o fetu). The horizon has for centuries defined the cultures, destinations and dreams of Pacific peoples from East to West and North to South. Rather than being seen as the edge of the world, the horizon was understood as the beginning of a much larger universe with limitless destinations and boundless opportunities by our great ancestral navigators who traversed the largest ocean in the world using the constellation of stars. The constellations, together with the horizon, have shaped the transcultural Oceanic identity, cultural world views, destiny and dreams which connected with our people, land, ocean, cosmology and indigenous knowledge.

Recognition of diversity and common Pacific values

We recognize the diversity of Pacific cultures and their values and we outline here some which are broadly common but may be named, framed and understood differently in different places but form the guiding cultural lighthouse for the strategy.

Reciprocity: Giving, receiving, sharing in good faith

Relationships: Enriching cultural and social connects and networks

Service: Self-less commitment to others' wellbeing

Empathy: Recognizing and engaging with the humanity in others

Sustainability: Ensure continuity and community benefits

Respect: Recognition of mana, values and integrity of others

Humility: Being humble, simple, and appreciative of others above self

Spirituality: Connection with land, ancestral cosmology and divinity



Introduction

The *Pacific Strategy* provides the vision to enhance Pacific innovation and engagement within the university and beyond from 2024 to 2030. It aligns with and contributes to the University of Canterbury *Strategic Vision, Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha, Engaged, Empowered, Making a Difference*.

The first two *Pacific Strategies*, 2014 to 2018 and 2019 to 2023 provided a firm foundation for a unified Pacific approach and this *Pacific Strategy* builds on these as it responds to the fast changing circumstances inside and outside the University which have put more demands on Pacific students and staff as well as provide direction for future development. The term of the *Pacific Strategy* has been extended from four to six years (until 2030) to ensure that it is aligned with the time frame of both the UC *Strategic Vision* and the *Te Rautaki Māori, Strategy for Māori Development*.

Aotearoa New Zealand and the University of Canterbury (UC) are located within the broader Pacific region and indeed define themselves as part of Oceania. Thus it is indeed relevant that the university should have a strong Pacific focus and connection.

Ngāi Tahu, the University's Treaty Partner, has deep historical, cultural and cosmological roots and connections with the Pacific, which goes back for centuries and this makes UC part of the broader trans-Pacific cosmology. The Pacific community is committed to co-existing with and engaging with Te Tiriti and Māori community at UC.

The University has been a place where a number of very prominent Pacific leaders, scholars and professionals have been nurtured. While at times overlooked by the university, they continue to maintain sporting, cultural and economic ties between the Canterbury region and continue to thrive in their different fields.

The *Pacific Strategy* synthesises the main ideas outlined in a number of strategic documents put together by teams of Pacific staff at the university since PAKC was established in 2023.



Our vision: Beyond the horizon

Enrichment, empowerment, and enhancement of academic excellence; attainment of meaningful Pacific cultural experience; and transformative and impactful community engagement in a changing and challenging environment.

Our mission: Deepening our horizons, enlightening our constellations

The Pacific Knowledge and Culture hub will provide inspiring and transformative leadership and support in:

- Enriching teaching and learning
- Delivery of innovative student services
- Sustainable and empowering cultural practices
- World class Pacific-focused interdisciplinary research
- Promotion and articulation of Pacific indigenous knowledge
- Advancement of ideas and practices which safeguard our wellbeing, environment and planet
- Transforming the university environment to be more structurally, academically and socially aligned with Pacific peoples' interests and aspirations in an equitable and inclusive manner.

1 Our home, our constellation: Towards a common future

Tākanga 'enau fohé

There is strength in unity

(Tongan saying)

The Pacific Knowledge and Culture Hub (PAKC), under the leadership of the of Pro-Vice Chancellor Pacific provides the home for Pacific academic, research, students services and engagement programs at the university. PAKC is the umbrella configuration under which all the Pacific entities including the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies (MBC), the Pacific Development Team (PDT and the newly established Pacific Studies Program (PSP) come under.

- 1.1 Achieve excellence in interdisciplinary research and world leader in knowledge making, critical thinking and publication on Pacific issues.
- 1.2 Enhance and enrich teaching on Pacific courses and aim to be a leader in the area in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 1.3 Enrich learning, research, cultural values, leadership, communication, and trans-cultural engagement skills in our PAKC staff and students.

- 1.4 Develop and use innovative ways of increasing enrolment, retention and completion of Pacific students at UC based on annual targets.
- 1.5 Carry out high quality and evidence-based student mentorship, support, and professional services to enhance their academic achievements and cultural experience.
- 1.6 Support and facilitate professional and academic development of Pacific staff in the most effective way.
- 1.7 Engage with and have positive impact on local, national, regional and international communities of Pacific peoples, governments, civil society organizations, universities, and community groups.



2 Excellence in education: Accessible, flexible, future focused

Te reirei bon te matau ae kookona

Education is a magic hook and key to knowledge

(I-Kiribati saying)

Modern education demands greater accessibility, flexibility and forward-looking approaches in the curriculum, pedagogy, philosophy and practice in ways which enrich knowledge, enhance intellectual capacity and develop professional skills necessary for the future transformation and wellbeing of society.

- 2.1 Ensure that PACS courses are designed and taught using effective pedagogies and curriculum which ensure enrichment of students critical thinking, understanding of other cultures, enhancement of globalized understanding and development of human empathy towards others.
- 2.2 Develop and support diverse and relevant teaching approaches which are accessible, flexible, future-focused, culturally responsive and interdisciplinary as well as engage with other Pacific scholars and entities from within and outside the university for provision of teaching and other resources.
- 2.3 Integrate teaching and research to weave together both theoretical and applied knowledge of the world, bearing in mind the diversity of Pacific cultures from East to West and North to South of the Oceanic continent, as basis for an inclusive, equity-based and innovative approach to Pacific Studies.
- 2.4 Design and implement the use of distance digital learning using various virtual medium together with community-based teaching to facilitate accessibility to various sections of the community within New Zealand, the Pacific region and internationally.
- 2.5 Collaborate with other universities in New Zealand, Pacific and internationally for external delivery of PACS courses.
- 2.6 Incorporate Pacific indigenous knowledge and worldviews into teaching with recognition of its significance in the modern world and work together with other faculties to do the same.
- 2.7 Recognition of the diversity of Pacific cultures from East to West and North to South of the Oceanic continent as basis for an inclusive, equity-based and innovative approach to Pacific Studies.
- 2.8 Make diverse resources (library, digital, physical) for teaching and learning readily available and easily accessible to lecturers and students.
- 2.9 Create space for community knowledge makers to be involved in relevant sections of the PACS courses.



3 Research: Impact in a changing world

Fakatili te lologa fou

Plant it, so its roots are firm and sustainable

(Tuvalu saying)

Guided by the PAKC Research Strategy, to promote, develop, enhance, support, and expand Pacific community research expertise, knowledge development, publication and impact in Aotearoa, in the Pacific and globally in various research environments including the cyber space. Indigenous knowledge sovereignty emphasizes the self-determination of Pacific communities in preserving, revitalising, and transmitting their cultural heritage and knowledge from one generation to another.

- 3.1 Promote and protect Pacific indigenous knowledge sovereignty and intellectual property rights to avoid biopiracy and ensure that communities have the authority to control the use, access, and dissemination of their knowledge.
- 3.2 Contribute to the transformation of the community, national, regional and international applied policy thinking and practice through the setting up of Pacific-led and focused research entities such as the Global-Pacific People and Climate Observatory (GPCO) and Pacific Regional Security Hub.
- 3.3 Actively engage in publications in interdisciplinary issues of relevance and significance to the researchers, community, region and globally.
- 3.4 Actively seek external resources for research and project funding to supplement the university budgetary allocation.
- 3.5 Attain high level and world class research through Pacific culture-based innovation and creative exploration.
- 3.6 Uphold a culture of research excellence amongst Pacific researchers.
- 3.7 Provide professional and research mentorship for emerging Pacific researchers (including non-Pacific scholars doing Pacific research), enhance capacity for supervision and help provide an academic pathway program for Pacific scholars in the university.
- 3.8 Encourage and support Pacific postgraduate research through mentoring, funding, and skills development.
- 3.9 Advance and build networks, partnerships and collaborations amongst Pacific researchers and beyond, nationally, regionally and internationally.
- 3.10 Promote interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research on Pacific-based and other issues.
- 3.11 Connect with Pacific communities to ensure a dynamic and constructive link between research and policy at the community level as well as other levels of governance, development, and wellbeing.



4 People: Nurturing staff, thriving students

E felelei manu, ae mapu i o latou ofaga

Birds migrate to environments where they survive and thrive

(Samoan saying)

Staff development

To make a difference for the Pacific community, a safe cultural environment and enriching work culture to support staff and students wellbeing are important. Also a need for staff to be innovative and smart thinking about future plans, targets, strategies and outcomes in the context of changing circumstances and demands.

- 4.1 Establishment of the Pacific Knowledge and Culture Hub (PAKC) under the Pro-Vice Chancellor Pacific to incorporate all the major aspects of activities and support for the Pacific community at UC including the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, Pacific Development Team, and Pacific Studies Program.
- 4.2 PAKC will engage with the Faculties and other university entities, Pacific community and other relevant stakeholders to increase the overall number of Pacific staff by 6-8% of the Pacific FTE in the period to 2030.
- 4.3 Develop initiatives to increase the number of Pacific professors to five by 2027 and increase the number of Pacific academics in faculties by 6-8% in the next 3 years.
- 4.4 Establish a comprehensive and well targeted Pacific staff development program to ensure that Pacific and non-Pacific staff members continue to develop their professional, skills and intercultural understanding regularly to the highest level.

Student participation

Facilitate and support student participation and empowerment.

- 4.5 Ensure representation of students voices and interests through the Pacific Students Advisory Team and other means and Pacific student groups as well as postgraduate students in committees and decision-making processes within PAKC.
- 4.6 Provide support and professional input for activities and programs organised by the Pacific student body and other student groups.
- 4.7 Collaborate with the Pacific Students Advisory Team and other Pacific student groups in programs to enhance students' academic performance, cultural enrichment and wellbeing.
- 4.8 Work closely with the Pacific Students Association and other Pacific student groups to address students concerns, views and suggestions.



5 Making a difference: Recruitment and retention

Igofoa hokralatamo, lemowhatihuto kwahuvo.

Whati nosena li'gmilinayave

If you plant a tree, look after it well, it will then give you good fruit

(Papua New Guinea saying)

Recruitment and retention play a pivotal role in ensuring academic sustainability and achievement thus there is a need for considerable focus on ensuring increase in these areas.

- 5.1 Expand recruitment and retention efforts based on the *PAKC Recruitment and Retention Strategy* to ensure an annual increase of 10% of the Pacific student numbers to 2030.
- 5.2 Concerted effort to be made in the pastoral, support, academic programs and reporting tools to ensure an increase of 3% retention rate by 2026.

- 5.3 Continue to work closely with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and faculties to engage and support an evidence approach for retention and equity that is relevant and culturally responsive for Pacific students.
- 5.4 Work closely with external scholarship providers and sponsors to ensure a sustainable level of funding and resourcing for Pacific students recruitment and retention.
- 5.6 Work closely with Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and other relevant university entities to provide support and engage in co-designing smart and targeted strategies in relation to mentoring, tutoring, support service and wellbeing to increase enrolment and retention.
- 5.7 Develop a targeted approach to enhancing transition of Pacific students (national and international) from pre-undergraduate to undergraduate and from undergraduate to postgraduate as well as transition into employment.



6 Making a difference: Student academic achievement

**Ka aalo auloa e vaka, to holo hako moe
tonu, ati hoko mafiti ke he atu moana**

**When everyone rows together, the canoe will stay true
to its course and reach its destination successfully**

(Niue saying)

Provide the enriching environment, strategies and incentives to enhance academic performance to achieve higher goals.

- 6.1 Implement and periodically review the *PAKC Enhancement Strategy* in collaboration with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Executive Deans and their Faculties, Schools, Departments, students, Pacific Development Team and Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies to reach the target of 78% completion rate by 2030.
- 6.2 Provide and fundraise annual contested scholarships for students at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels.
- 6.3 Offer awards and prizes for academic and cultural achievements to help recognize and incentivize students' performance.
- 6.4 Organize and facilitate international exchanges, networks and mentorships.



7 Strengthening our connections: Engagement in a diverse and changing environment

Solesolevaki sa itakele ni duavata

Shared work is the keel of unity

(Fijian saying)

Provide strategic, effective and transformative connections locally, nationally, regionally and internationally to promote and enhance Pacific engagements and achievements in a diverse, changing and challenging environment.

7.1 Strengthen connections and collaborations with Pacific community groups and organizations within Canterbury and South Island in relation to provision of support and expertise in area of sustainability, education, health and other aspects of wellbeing.

7.2 Establish a Pacific Community hub within PAKC as outlined in the *PAKC Community Engagement Strategy*, as part of the “bring the community to the university and take the university to the community” initiative.

7.3 Enhance relationships with Pacific community groups and organizations in New Zealand through support and expertise in area of sustainability, education, health and other aspects of wellbeing.

7.4 Develop and maintain relationships with schools around Canterbury, South Island, New Zealand and the Pacific to help facilitate community development partnership, educational outreach as well as student recruitment to UC.

7.5 Expand and deepen engagement with Pacific staff in New Zealand universities and research institutions for collaborative research projects, publication, joint teaching, staff exchange and resources sharing.

7.6 Deepen and expand relationship with universities in the Pacific region through joint publications, research, teaching, projects and community engagements.

7.7 Establish and sustain community networks with different countries around the Pacific region to help facilitate research, projects, recruitment and engagement with governments, regional organizations, local communities and civil society organizations.

7.8 Enhance connections with Pacific diaspora communities around the world and organize annual events to connect them.

7.9 Ensure strategic and effective representation of Pacific voices and interests in committees, faculties and other entities within the university as well as committees, boards and bodies outside the university in local, national, regional and international spaces.

7.10 Consolidate and enrich internal engagement of Pacific staff and students at UC through teaching, research, collective programs and collaborative projects and joint activities.

7.11 Consolidate and widen external Pacific community participation in the university through expansion of advisory committee members to include representatives from Christchurch and greater Canterbury, New Zealand and the Pacific.

7.12 Strengthen relationship and partnership with the Alumni including engaging and incorporating them in PAKC activities and projects.

8 Creative Pacific: Enriched cultural horizon

Ko toku tokiga e mau ai toku hikohikomaga

Culture and knowledge consolidate learning environments

(Tokelau saying)

Creativity and culture are important components of students and staff experience to balance and enrich academic work.

8.1 Through a network of former MBC Artist in Residence, set up a network of creative practitioners to promote Pacific art and artists to weave artistic and creative work into Pacific Studies teaching and research.

8.2 Initiate and support cultural programs for staff and students on campus to connect the different Pacific cultural groups and their respective cultural practices and worldviews.

8.3 Provide support for Pacific artists pursuing a career in creative arts including digital arts and other forms of artistic expressions.

8.4 Ensure increased visibility of Pacific art on the university campus to help create a culturally stimulating and enriching learning environment.



9 Sustainable and empowered Pacific futures: Beyond the horizon

**Ka tomo te vaka i te 'atu amga ngaru.
Karē ra te rangatira tiratira e maremo**

The canoe might sink in the breaking waves, but the wise navigator will not drown. Good navigators stay focused and make wise decisions even during challenging times

(Cook Islands saying)

Empowerment and sustainability of the Pacific aspirations and interests is the cornerstone of how they engage with the future. This requires an environment where they feel safe, included and appreciated in a diverse and unpredictable environment.

- 9.1 Actively promote equity in the areas of knowledge, academic life, employment, representation, cultural engagement and social relationships for Pacific and minority communities at the university and beyond.
- 9.2 Promote cultural enlightenment amongst academic and professional staff as well as the student body to address potential subconscious academic bias and implicit cultural prejudice which may undermine performance of Pacific students and staff.
- 9.3 Strengthen the process of inclusion of Pacific and minority knowledge systems, cultural values, collective interests and aspirations in university life and beyond.
- 9.4 Enrichment of intellectual and cultural values amongst our Pacific students and staff and sharing these with others to strengthen diversity within the university community.
- 9.5 Encourage and facilitate the use of Pacific cultural values in smart, creative, innovative and transformative ways to advance academic achievement of Pacific students.
- 9.6 Contribute meaningfully to cultural diversity, tolerance and understanding at the university and the community in general as well as contribute to good relationship through culturally responsive conflict resolution measures.
- 9.7 Promote sustainability ideas and practices to empower the Pacific community at UC and beyond in the context of the university's sustainability strategies as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- 9.8 Expand and deepen research, teaching and support activities which lead to positive transformation and empowerment of the Pacific community as well as the university and the outside community in general.
- 9.9 Ensure that UC research contributes to resolving Pacific and global sustainability challenges.
- 9.10 Grow and leverage our Pacific community, regional and global sustainability networks to generate new innovative thinking so we can share and learn from each other.
- 9.11 Engage in genuine, transparent and meaningful service to Pacific students and staff as well as to the university generally to promote empowerment.
- 9.12 Provision of support and resources by the university to facilitate the above in a meaningful and sustainable way.





