

Policies & Procedures

Strategic Partnerships and Development Assistance Policy

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Responsible Officer: Director, Strategic Partnerships, Advancement & Communications (D/SPAC)
Policy Editor/Contact: Development Manager
Approving Authority: Vice-Chancellor and President
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Related Policies:

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 **Provide** clarity on USP's requirements for establishing Strategic Partnerships with external agencies and institutions through Partnership Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and Letter of Agreements (LOAs), for the purpose of (a) obtaining assistance from Development Partners and other funding agencies; and (b) establishing linkages with external partners, such as universities and organisations.
- 1.2 **Affirm** that the development of Strategic Partnerships and the leveraging of Development Assistance should support USP to achieve its publicly stated goals in terms of tertiary education, research and key issues facing the Pacific Islands region, rather than supporting the interests of individual members of staff.
- 1.3 **Explain** the procedures and requirements, binding on all Faculties, Schools, Sections, Institutes/Centres and Campuses within the University, relating to all interactions with any Partner or prospective Partner, including but not limited to discussions and documentation of collaboration.
- 1.4 **Deliver** clear information on the roles and responsibilities of the respective parties at USP vis-à-vis the process of mobilising Development Assistance and establishing Strategic Partnerships.

2.0 Objective

- 2.1 **Clarify** the value of Strategic Partnerships and Development Assistance, ensure that adequate processes and procedures are set up to streamline the current practice, and support its consistency with the principles, values and priorities set out in the current (and future) Strategic Plans.

3.0 Statement of Policy

- 3.1 The University of the South Pacific (USP) is an outward-looking public university, which seeks to engage positively with local, regional and international communities. USP has, since its inception, received core funding and project funding from its Member Countries and from other countries, organisations, and individuals. The University has also received non-financial support from its Development and Strategic Partners, including mentoring, management

advice, and opportunities for student, staff exchanges and research. Such assistance has usually been governed by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and/ or Letters of Agreement (LOAs).

- 3.2 All Development Assistance, including financial grants, loans, and in-kind contributions, is a valuable source of income and support to the University, and complements the core funding provided by its Member Countries. In 2016, this represented 27% of USP's total funding.
- 3.3 The Vice-Chancellor and President is USP's official Point of Contact for offers of Development Assistance and Partnerships with external parties. The Director, Strategic Partnerships, Advancement & Communications (D/SPAC) provides practical support and guidance for this aspect of the Vice-Chancellor and President's role.
- 3.4 Staff members may engage in negotiations on behalf of the University in consultation with their respective Senior Management Team (SMT) member and the SPAC Office. In cases where policy guidance is required, the Vice-Chancellor and President's prior approval is mandatory.
- 3.5 The SPAC Office should be notified of any offers of Development Assistance pledged to or received by members of USP staff in the course of their work. The SPAC Office will then assess this information and proceed accordingly while keeping the relevant sections involved and updated. The SPAC Office's oversight of Development Assistance negotiations ensures that all parties comply with established procedures. Its role in the facilitation, monitoring, and evaluation of all development Agreements, and the conduct of periodic reviews, is made easier by early and full involvement in all contact between USP and Development or Strategic Partners.
- 3.6 The SPAC Office assesses offers of Development Assistance, facilitates negotiations with the Strategic Partners, and organises the signature of all Partnerships and Agreements. The SPAC Office is responsible for maintaining and establishing relationships with the international community, developing links within the region, managing all aspects of MOUs and Agreements (including the provision of agreement templates, communication with External Organisations (EOs) relating to changes, arrangement of signing ceremonies or exchange of documents, implementation management and monitoring, evaluating agreement value and outcomes, and official reporting to Development and Strategic Partners and the Vice-Chancellor and President on the responsible use of development assistance and its impact). It also facilitates mutually agreeable amendments and addendums to all existing Partnerships, MOUs and Agreements.
- 3.7 Financial grants will be accepted by the University provided the following conditions are met:
 - a) They are donated as core funding, or for the implementation of a specific project or component of the USP Strategic Plan;
 - b) They carry no conditions of usage which contravene the provisions of the University Charter, Statutes, Regulations or Policies;
 - c) The specifics, including payment dates and acquittal requirements, are clearly set out in one or more signed documents or agreements; and

- d) The provider or offering body has given funds to the University previously or are found, through a due diligence exercise, to be morally upstanding and have no links with terrorism, and the funds will be of benefit to the University. In summary, the University will not accept funds, if such acceptance will bring it into disrepute.

3.8 The University may still accept the financial grant even if one of the first three conditions is not met, as outlined in clause 3.7, provided the request is proposed and approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President and does not bring any disrepute to the University. It is necessary that the assistance provided does not in any way put additional financial pressure on University funds. All prospective Development and Strategic Partners must meet the fourth condition of clause 3.8.

3.9 Development Assistance will be accepted provided that all of the following conditions are met:

- a. All conditions attached to financial grants are satisfied;
- b. The University has the capacity to accept and implement the assistance; and
- c. In the judgement of the Vice-Chancellor and President, the assistance that has been requested by a USP staff member or offered by an outside body is beneficial to the functions of the University and will assist it to carry out its mission.

3.10 The Vice-Chancellor and President has the right to decline any offer of Development Assistance and may provide a justification to the D/SPAC and the line SMT member for the refusal, if this is deemed to be appropriate.

3.11 Offers of Development Assistance that meet all of the conditions aforementioned may still be presented to the University Executive Committee for a decision in cases where the Vice-Chancellor and President deems this to be advisable.

3.12 Final decisions on all offers of Development Assistance will be communicated to the offering agency by the Vice-Chancellor and President or, if delegated, by the D/SPAC.

3.13 The Vice-Chancellor and President is the only authority to sign Partnerships and Agreements and may delegate this responsibility to a member of the SMT or to the D/SPAC, where deemed appropriate.

3.14 The University will not accept funding or donations from individuals or organisations which seek to exercise undue influence over its activities, which do not support its Vision, Mission, or Strategic Plan, which support terrorism, or which undermine the public morals that are shared in the Pacific Islands. USP is a non-religious public university that is committed to equity and justice and is interested in assistance from countries, organisations, and individuals that share the same worldview.

3.15 The University is proud that it enjoys the support of a wide number of countries and organisations, and publicly acknowledges, where possible, all such assistance, through events and activities which are covered by the media, in relevant official statements, at relevant locations within the University, and in communications materials (i.e. posters, pamphlets, newsletters, brochures, web site). Development and Strategic Partners have the right to

request anonymity, provided their proposed donations meet the University's requirements and conditions as outlined in this Policy.

4.0 Scope

- 4.1 The SPAC Office leads the implementation of this Policy, which binds all University staff members. This policy applies to all efforts geared towards the mobilisation of financial and non-financial resources for the University through formal relationships between USP and local, regional and international institutions, hereafter referred to as "Development Partners".
- 4.2 Unless permitted otherwise by the written approval of the Vice-Chancellor and President, all University staff must abide by this policy.
- 4.3 The Policy clearly defines the responsibilities of all relevant actors within the University to ensure that its obligations are fulfilled in relation to Strategic Partnerships and Development Assistance.

5.0 Definitions

- **Development Assistance:** Any donation, either financial or non-financial, made to the University. [*Offers of donations (research, scholarships, travel and per-diem, etc.) to individuals employed by the University is not covered by this policy. Any personal donations to USP staff members, without prior authorisation from the Vice-Chancellor and President is not acceptable in order to avoid corruption and undue influence through third parties.*]
- **Strategic Partnership:** A strategic partnership is a relationship that the University develops with any other University or external agency in order to undertake joint initiatives or engage in any collaboration. Such partnerships are usually formalised by Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Agreement, or other contractual arrangements.
- **Development Partner:** A non-Member Country or organisation that gives USP core funding and other types of funding, and engages with the University as an equal, in that it accepts the University's priorities rather than imposing its own.
- **Strategic Partner:** Any university or external agency that enters into a partnership with USP.
- **Partnership Agreement:** An agreement, with a Development Partner, that provides core funding to the University.
- **Project Funding:** Funding provided by any Development or Strategic Partner for the delivery of a specific project(s).
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** General agreement (not legally binding) between USP and any other university, institution, organisation, or individual to undertake mutually agreed tasks.

- **Letter of Agreement (LOA):** Specific agreements (legally binding) between USP and any other university and institution that include deliverables with set timeframes. Such Agreements are based on financial commitments to undertake agreed tasks and responsibilities.
- **SPAC:** The Strategic Partnerships, Advancement and Communications Office, which is the University's official Point of Contact for liaison with Development and Strategic Partners. While all formal offers of assistance must be provided in writing and addressed to the Vice-Chancellor and President as the official Point of Contact, the SPAC Office is the official Point of Contact for enquires, documentation queries, signature ceremonies, and post-signature management of the Agreement or the relationship between USP and its Development and Strategic Partners.
- **Responsible (or Line) Senior Management Team (SMT) Member:** Member of the SMT directly responsible for the overall supervision and implementation of initiatives funded by Development and Strategic Partners.
- **Focal Point:** Any senior official who is named the Point of Contact and is responsible for technical and operational-level engagement with the partner institution.

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 Vice-Chancellor and President

- 6.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor and President has ultimate authority within the University to endorse or reject any proposals for Development Assistance or linkages with Strategic Partners. The Vice-Chancellor and President is mandated to sign-off on all Agreements related to Development Assistance, as well as the MOUs and LOAs pertaining to Strategic Partnerships.

6.2 Director, Strategic Partnerships, Advancement and Communications (SPAC) Office (D/SPAC)

- 6.2.1 Responsibility for compliance with this Policy rests with the D/SPAC. D/SPAC is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is up-to-date, relevant, useful, and accessible, and for overseeing the implementation of the Policy at the University. Any violations of this Policy will be reported to the Vice-Chancellor and President by the D/SPAC, who will take necessary action as per the appropriate staff regulations.

6.3 Responsible Senior Management Team (SMT) Member(s)

- 6.3.1 The Members of the Senior Management Team are involved in all phases of project management, including project design, clearances and approval of project proposals, budget formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, outcome-based reporting, and project closure. Their clearance and approvals are pre-requisites for any final endorsements by the Vice-Chancellor and President.

6.4 Project Coordinators/Managers

6.4.1 The Project Coordinators/Managers are primarily responsible for the oversight and management of project operations. Project Coordinators/Managers are also referred to as “Project Implementers”. They are the owners of the vote-code and are therefore obligated to ensure that the projects are implemented effectively, the outcomes are delivered efficiently, and that project funds are acquitted in a manner that is both permissible under the signed Project Agreement and based on agreed timelines. The Project Coordinators/Managers are responsible for the provision of regular updates to their line SMT member and to the SPAC Office on the issues, outcomes and achievements of their respective projects or activities. The Project Coordinators/Managers will be held accountable for the proper and timely implementation of projects.

7.0 Review of the Policy

7.1 The Director Strategic Partnerships, Advancement and Communications (D/SPAC) is responsible for ensuring that the Policy is reviewed on a regular three (3) year cycle as part of the regular reviews of University-wide management and administration.

8.0 Related Documents

- a) [Development Assistance Project and Research Management Procedure](#)
- b) [Sub-Delegations Policy](#)

Strategic Partnerships, Development Assistance Guidelines and Procedures for USP Staff

1.0 Identifying Offers of Development Assistance

- 1.1 Staff members frequently interact with representatives of donor country governments and multilateral organisations at official meetings and events, and there is often scope for discussing possible development assistance in the margins of these meetings. Staff members are encouraged to discuss their own research and possible project work with development partner representatives and to informally enquire about any funding opportunities available.

USP staff should keep the SPAC Office informed of any such discussions, and must advise the donor that 1) all correspondence from them should be addressed to the Vice-Chancellor and President and submitted to the VC through the SPAC Office, and 2) all correspondence from USP to the (prospective) donor will be routed through the SPAC Office

- 1.2 If, during informal discussions, a staff member receives information on funding opportunities, or is invited to submit a formal proposal, they should discuss this information with their supervisor/line SMT member, D/SPAC, or the Manager Development Cooperation as soon as possible. Staff members can also look into possible private sector funding opportunities as per their work and needs. The SPAC office will assist the staff member to follow-up, either by putting together a professional proposal or by monitoring official announcements from that country or organisation relating to their Development Assistance programmes. The SPAC Office will offer advice, guidance and comments on draft proposals and provide necessary templates as and when required for the preparation of project proposals and agreements (MOU/LOA).
- 1.3 The SPAC Office regularly liaises with development partners as per their funding priorities and changing government policies that may impact funding for scholarly research and projects under USP's priority areas. Frequent conversations with D/SPAC or the Manager Development Cooperation will therefore greatly assist staff members who are seeking funding.

2.0 Thinking Beyond Projects: Toward Strategic Development

- 2.1 USP staff members are encouraged to consider looking for long-term Development Assistance in their area of expertise, rather than simply thinking along the lines of, and searching for, project-based funding. Staff members who are part of the Strategic Research Themes (SRT), for example, are well-advised to develop large, multi-disciplinary and multi-year funding proposals.
- 2.2 All staff members should consider developing proposals that would have a sustained impact in their area of work at particular campuses or centres, and should try to develop higher-level or more accessible programmes. Staff members are urged to align their work to the Strategic Plan, and to think about sustainable and quantifiable impacts when considering how to win additional funding or secure donations from new countries or organisations.

2.3 The SPAC Office will review, edit and assess proposals from any USP staff member, provided their supervisor and SMT member has already endorsed the proposal. Frequent conversations with the Manager Development Cooperation will help staff develop more professional, appealing proposals that will attract funding. For all research related proposals, staff need to work in close consultation with Director Research under the ambit of the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and International (DVC RII). Upon clearance and approval by DVC RII, the proposal will be submitted for prospective funding through the appropriate channel facilitated by the SPAC Office.

3.0 Effectively Searching for Development Assistance

3.1 Staff members can either first develop a proposal before looking for suitable funding options, or may identify possible funding opportunities first and then develop targeted proposals. Regardless, early consultations with the Manager Development Cooperation will save considerable time and avoid confusion.

3.2 There are many different types of assistance that can be accessed, including funding for scholarships, staff exchanges, equipment, travel, conference attendance and projects. Research initiatives are often funded through the Strategic Research Themes (SRT) funds, but staff members are encouraged to work with fellow scholars in other countries (especially Europe and other ACP countries) to have the best chance at securing multi-year funding arrangements.

3.3 The SPAC Office can advise staff members on the funding that is currently available from major development partners and will assist staff members in their searches for other sources of funding. It also works to identify funding sources for projects that have already been developed by USP staff. It is important to note that not all projects or ideas will be funded, and that the search for funding may take some time.

3.4 Some very good ideas do not fit into available funding envelopes, and some Development Partners take more than a year before they release funds for successful proposals. If it seems that there is no funding available for a particular topic, then sometimes small changes can be made, or a different perspective taken, that will result in the topic becoming relevant for available funding opportunities.

4.0 Responsibilities related to Development Assistance

4.1 Staff members interested in securing Development Assistance must be honest and realistic with the SPAC Office about their capacity (in terms of staff knowledge, available time, and office space) and understanding as related to the management of development funds. If shortfalls in capacity are an issue, then the SPAC Office can provide training and may suggest cooperation with relevant staff members and sections to give projects the best chance of success.

4.2 Project spending must be restricted to allowable expenses, should be fully acquitted, and must be adequately reported on a timely basis. The securing of funding is not itself the end goal. All funded projects and programmes must be managed skillfully, completed on time, and reflect positively on both the University and the Development Partner. Whilst not all projects progress according to plan, the implementers must work diligently and keep the SPAC Office

and their supervisors informed of project achievements and any challenges encountered. The performance of staff who manage projects will be taken into account in their performance assessments undertaken annually by Human Resource Department.

- 4.3 **The SPAC Office** is responsible for alerting the Senior Management Team and relevant sections within the University of confirmed or probable funding opportunities. It also informs staff of academic topics and activities in which interest has been expressed by external partners. In addition, the Office monitors and evaluates funded projects and ensures that timely and outcome-based narrative and financial reporting is produced. This reporting must be submitted to the SPAC Office, which will finalise the documentation and submit it, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and President, to the Development Partner which has provided the funding.
- 4.4 On receipt of external funding, the Finance Section contacts the SPAC Office for approval and confirmation. The SPAC Office must confirm that 1) project funds have been acquired as per the procedure and; 2) that it facilitated the signature of the final Agreement. The SPAC Office will provide this confirmation to Finance for projects that have been created and funded through its processes and signed by the Vice-Chancellor and President or his delegate. The SPAC Office will not confirm funding and the creation of a vote-code if due process was not followed.
- 4.5 **The line SMT member** responsible for the implementation of the Agreement is obligated to ensure that all project-based staff are recruited only for the permissible life of the project. It is essential that the contracts of project-based staff explicitly state that their validity extends only for the duration of the project; such contracts are only renewable subject to project extensions and the availability of funds and their satisfactory performance. It is prudent for the SMT member responsible to involve both the HR and the SPAC Office to ensure that the University abides by all necessary requirements.
- 4.6 The line SMT member is also obligated to work with the HR Section to ensure that staff departing from projects are replaced in a timely manner, thus avoiding disruptions to project implementation. Similarly, the SMT member is responsible for ensuring that departing project staff provide all necessary handover notes and project reports to enable the smooth transition and induction of new appointees.
- 4.7 Besides being responsible for the overall delivery of the project outcomes and efficient acquittal of project funds, the **Project Coordinators/Managers** must ensure that reports are prepared and submitted in a timely manner. The reports must include both progress updates and information on project finances. All reports, endorsed by the relevant SMT member, are subject to review by the SPAC Office prior to submission to the funding agency. Reporting deadlines are clearly stipulated in Agreements, and Project Coordinators/Managers are also regularly reminded of deadlines by the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer in the SPAC Office. The MOU and other reporting templates can be accessed from <https://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php?id=21871>
- 4.8 The Project Coordinator/Manager should produce reports that are results-focused and outcomes-based. Any report that is simple activity-based narratives will be returned by the SPAC Office for revision. Good reports highlight achievements and forward-looking strategies for the project. The financial reports should be presented in a manner that depicts the planned expenditure for the reporting period and makes a clear comparison to the actual

budget of the Project. Where there has been a deviation from the approved project budgets, the Project Coordinator is required to provide justifications and strategies to address these.

- 4.9 For information on the sub-delegation of funds received through development assistance, refer to the Sub-Delegation Policy and Procedure (Policy No. 6.33.21).

5.0 Processes and Timeframe

- 5.1 Staff should adhere as closely as possible to the following steps and timeframes when soliciting, documenting, and managing funding assistance from Development Partners:

5.1.1 The SPAC Office receives notification from a current or prospective Development Partner on Calls/Requests for Proposals and determines if this is relevant to USP's Strategic Priority areas. The SPAC Office disseminates the key information with relevant templates and deadlines to the SMT, who in turn are required to share the information with relevant schools, sections, institutes /centres and campuses.

5.1.2 A draft proposal, including a budget, is developed in consultation with the Line Manager and the relevant SMT member. Once cleared by the SMT member, the draft proposal is submitted to the SPAC Office. All proposals must be aligned with the Priority Areas under the University's Strategic Plan. The budget should reflect a minimum 20% management fee/overhead on the total project cost. If a Development Partner will only fund management fees of less than 20% of the total budget figure, then the Faculty/Section responsible should request a waiver from the Vice-Chancellor and President through their respective SMT. A waiver is not guaranteed and depends on overall benefits to the University as determined by the Vice-Chancellor and President.

5.1.3 The SPAC Office will review the draft proposal and its budget in a timely manner, and feedback will be provided to the drafters through the responsible SMT member within five working days. A final proposal and budget (cleared by the SMT member) should be returned to the SPAC Office within five working days. Although five working days is the timeframe to which the SPAC Office attempts to adhere, circumstances such as the necessity of obtaining legal opinion may cause delays. Should the advice of the University lawyers be required, then this must be facilitated by the requesting unit.

5.1.4 The D/SPAC submits the proposal to the Vice-Chancellor and President with supporting documentation and proof of approval from the line SMT for endorsement. The proposal is submitted to the respective Development Partner as soon as possible after it has been endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor and President (with a target of five working days).

The time it takes for a Development Partner to review a proposal varies greatly. The SPAC Office will liaise with the Development Partner, if appropriate, during the decision-making process. If the Development Partner decides to fund the project, then the SPAC Office will immediately notify the relevant SMT member. The staff earmarked to implement the project will work with the SPAC Office to modify the template Funding Agreement or assess and amend the template provided by the Development Partner. The Funding Agreement, generated or edited by USP, must then be approved by the line SMT within three working days.

- 5.1.6 It is very important at this stage to carefully consider risks, and to ensure that these are adequately addressed so that the University is not exposed to any liabilities. If there are any legal implications and binding clauses in the Agreement, then it must also be reviewed by the Director Assurance and Compliance. If there is a further need for external legal opinion/vetting, the requesting Faculty/Section/Institute/Campus will need to access the services of the USP lawyers. The cost of the legal advice is to be borne by the requesting Faculty/Section/ Institute/Campus (with a target completion time of ten working days).
- 5.1.7 Once the Agreement has been legally vetted and cleared by the Development Partner and the line SMT member, the Agreement and any supporting documents are submitted to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President through the SPAC Office for endorsement (within five working days). The signed original Agreement is then forwarded to the funding agency for signature.
- 5.1.8 Upon receipt of the original countersigned version of the Agreement from the Development Partner, one original copy is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President and one copy is retained by the SPAC Office. A copy is given to the implementer of the project, together with a cover letter highlighting important deadlines and actions. The Development Finance Officer facilitates the creation of vote codes for projects and communicates with the Project Implementer to generate an invoice for payment, as per the Schedule of Payments in the Agreement (with a target of three working days for completion of this stage).

Refer to Appendix 1 for Processes and Timeframes for Seeking Development Assistance (Proposal Development, Contracts, Reporting and Project Management)

6.0 Enforcement

- 6.1 In cases where a member of staff is found to have breached this Policy, then that staff member's supervisor should discuss the situation with the D/SPAC. They will then inform the Vice-Chancellor and President and recommend appropriate action. In extreme cases, the matter will be brought before the Staff Disciplinary Committee.

7.0 Contact

- 7.1 Development Assistance is crucial to the implementation of the current USP Strategic Plan 2013-2018 and will be integral to the New Strategic Plan 2019-2024. All staff members are encouraged to work with the SPAC Office to source Development Assistance that will support achievements within their areas of work. For further information, queries or concerns regarding this Policy or Guidelines, please visit the Development Web Site at <http://www.usp.ac.fj/dmca/development> or contact the Manager Development Cooperation on (679) 323 2142 or via email at iresh.lal@usp.ac.fj.

Procedure for USP Staff on Establishment of Strategic Partnerships

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The SPAC Office is responsible for the coordination and development of Strategic Partnerships through MOUs, LOAs and other agreements that govern relations between USP and other universities, institutions, and agencies. In instances where the SPAC Office is contacted directly by interested external agencies, it will identify relevant focal points within USP and connect them with key focal points at the requesting agency.
- 1.2 MOUs are general agreements between USP and institutions and universities that affirm the parties' interest in and commitment to various types of cooperation, and may include academic collaboration, research cooperation, joint technical activities, and other activities. It is essential that a MOU is signed before a LOA is developed. The LOA identifies more specific activities to be jointly implemented, and commits funds and other resources to support the undertaking of those specific agreed activities within a given time period. LOAs may relate to collaboration such as joint research, the exchange of staff and/or students, joint academic programmes, joint seminars and workshops, and technical-level cooperation. Many types of collaboration are possible, provided they are specified in the Agreement.
- 1.3 There is a key difference between MOUs and LOAs. The MOU is generally a non-legal binding agreement between USP and another institution, but it is not intended to include financial agreements, arrangements that imply a financial risk to USP, or service level agreements. Such arrangements must be stipulated and documented in a LOA, which is a legally binding document.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 This procedure and guidelines set out the steps and timelines relating to liaison with Strategic Partners on possible funding and collaboration. It is meant to assist USP staff as they manage the required exchange of information and documentation by ensuring that they have all the information needed to work confidently and efficiently. Adherence to these procedure and guidelines will help staff to work professionally and transparently, thereby reflecting positively on the University.

3.0 Signatories of MOUs and Agreements

- 3.1 All MOUs and Agreements must be cleared by the SPAC Office before these are forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor and President with a recommendation for signature. It should be noted that only the Vice-Chancellor and President has the authority to sign documents on behalf of the University. However, the Vice-Chancellor and President can delegate this authority, as appropriate. Any MOU or institutional-based agreement signed on behalf of the University which has not been authorised by the Vice-Chancellor and President is considered null and void. Where the Vice-Chancellor and President deems that the project is large or complex, or likely to impose larger risks than normal, s/he will direct that the proposal be considered by the Executive Committee of the Council.

4.0 Renewal of MOUs

- 4.1 MOUs are valid for a specific period mutually agreed by the parties. Six months prior to the expiration of a MOU, the key focal point for the respective MOU should, through the responsible SMT member, provide the SPAC Office with a report on the achievements of the project, lessons learnt, challenges faced, and justifications for the renewal of the MOU. The focal point should also contact their Strategic Partners to ascertain their interest in the renewal. The report to the SPAC Office will require a clear recommendation from the line SMT member relating to the cessation or renewal of the MOU. This recommendation will form the basis of D/SPAC's advice to the Vice-Chancellor and President for his consideration and decision.
- 4.2 If all documentation is in order, and the Strategic Partner has expressed strong interest in renewing the MOU, the SPAC Office will prepare the necessary paperwork and will facilitate the signature of the MOU with the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President.
- 4.3 MOUs should be renewed (where appropriate) within the current term of the MOU to ensure continuity of engagement and strategic level cooperation. All efforts should be made to ensure that effective MOU arrangements are not allowed to expire.

5.0 Amendments/Addendums to Agreements

- 5.1 Any amendments to Agreements pertaining to the scope of activities or financial commitment will need to be approved by the line SMT member and agreed by the Strategic Partner. The SPAC Office will then review the proposed amendment and make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor and President for his consideration and signature.

6.0 Termination of Agreements/Contracts

- 6.1 All Agreements have termination clauses that state the conditions under which either party can terminate the Agreement. In the case of any proposed termination, it is imperative that the Focal Points have done everything possible to resolve the issues in good faith.
- 6.2 In cases where termination is required, the MOU Focal Point, with the approval of the line SMT member, should provide the Vice-Chancellor and President with a detailed report on the issues and the remediation strategies that were used. A sufficient notice period must be given to the partner agency or institution. If the termination is justified, and the line SMT member agrees, then the SPAC Office will recommend that the Vice-Chancellor and President sign the Termination Letter.

7.0 Processes and Timeframe for New MOUs

- 7.1 USP staff must adhere to the following guidelines and timeframes when developing and processing a MOU:
 - 7.1.1 The staff member contacts the Strategic Partner regarding the development of an MOU/LOA for strategic and/or technical collaboration and simultaneously, with approval from the line SMT member, contacts the SPAC Office to provide details of the Strategic Partner and draft text for inclusion in the MOU.

- 7.1.2 The SPAC Office reviews the draft MOU and shares it with the staff member for their comments and feedback (three working days). When approved by the SPAC Office, the staff member shares the revised draft MOU with the Strategic Partner Focal Point for their perusal and necessary endorsements (ten working days is allowed for this step).
- 7.1.3 If the Strategic Partner agrees to the amendments, the Head of the Strategic Partner Organisation signs two copies of the document and forwards these to USP for signature. Alternatively, USP signs two copies and shares these with the Strategic Partner for signature. In either case, the SPAC Office will write a memo to the Vice-Chancellor and President explaining the details of the MOU and attaching two copies of the document for signature. This will be submitted with approval from the Strategic Partner and the line SMT member (three working days). It is mandatory that Vice-Chancellor and President is allowed 5 days to review and sign the documents. There are possibilities of enquiries from his end which may require time to answer or resolve.
- 7.1.4 Once the signed MOU is received from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, the SPAC Office sends original versions of the signed document to the Strategic Partner by courier for countersignature; this is accompanied by a written cover letter from the D/SPAC (three working days). An e-copy of this is also sent to the USP staff member and Strategic Partner so that they are aware that hard copies are being couriered for countersignature.
- 7.1.5 Upon receipt of the original countersigned version of the document from the Strategic Partner, one original copy is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, and one copy is kept at the SPAC Office. The details of the MOU are updated online and a soft copy is provided to the Project Implementer and the line SMT member (two working days).
- 7.1.6 The MOU Focal Point is responsible for the provision of quarterly updates to the SPAC Office relating to progress achieved and ongoing work related to the signed MOU.

Note: (1) The same process will apply for any Letters of Agreement. However, the reporting requirements will be as per the reporting schedule. Amendments will be handled in the same manner as outlined above (7.2-7.6). **(2)** The list of all signed MOUs, LOAs and other Agreements is the SPAC Office web site.

Refer to Appendix 2 for Processes and Timeframes for Development of MOUS and LOAs.

8.0 Contact

- 8.1 If you would like to learn more, or have any queries or concerns regarding this Policy or Guidelines, please visit the SPAC Web Site at <http://www.usp.ac.fj/dmca/development> or contact the Manager Development Cooperation (679) 323 2142, or email: iresh.lal@usp.ac.fj.