

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

1. RATIONALIZE AND SIMPLIFY THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Link to the Charter Principles

The key principles in the Research Charter to which these actions apply is **Principle 1, *putting research at the heart of SMDC*** and **Principle 3, *to foster and grow research talent***.

However, many of the actions described are also part of **Principle 2; *cherishing academic freedom, diversity of research and the pursuit of truth***, and **Principle 7; *developing the skills to communicate with our community***.

Key Actions

The main actions are described here with more fine detail in implementation plans that will drive the execution of the strategy.

1.1 Drive a major college wide initiative that delivers a single point of access to all research related training and upskilling

1.2. Simplify practices around research administration

1.3. Build a deeper culture of support for research career development

1.4 Providing pre- and post- grant award support for researchers

1.5. Rethink time, space and infrastructure

1.6 Make it easier for large-scale research initiatives to work within our structures

1.7. Increase opportunities for undergraduates to engage in research

2. FOSTER AND CULTIVATE STRATEGIC RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

Link to the Charter Principles

The key principle to which these actions apply is **Principle 4, *to harness our collective expertise for the greater good***. The actions described are also part of **Principle 3, *fostering and growing research talent***, as the collaborative initiatives described here both provide environments which can be supportive of staff and also attract new staff. Moreover, large-scale and highly visible initiatives, as well as initiatives that focus on societal challenges, contribute to **Principle 6 of *expanding impact locally and globally***.

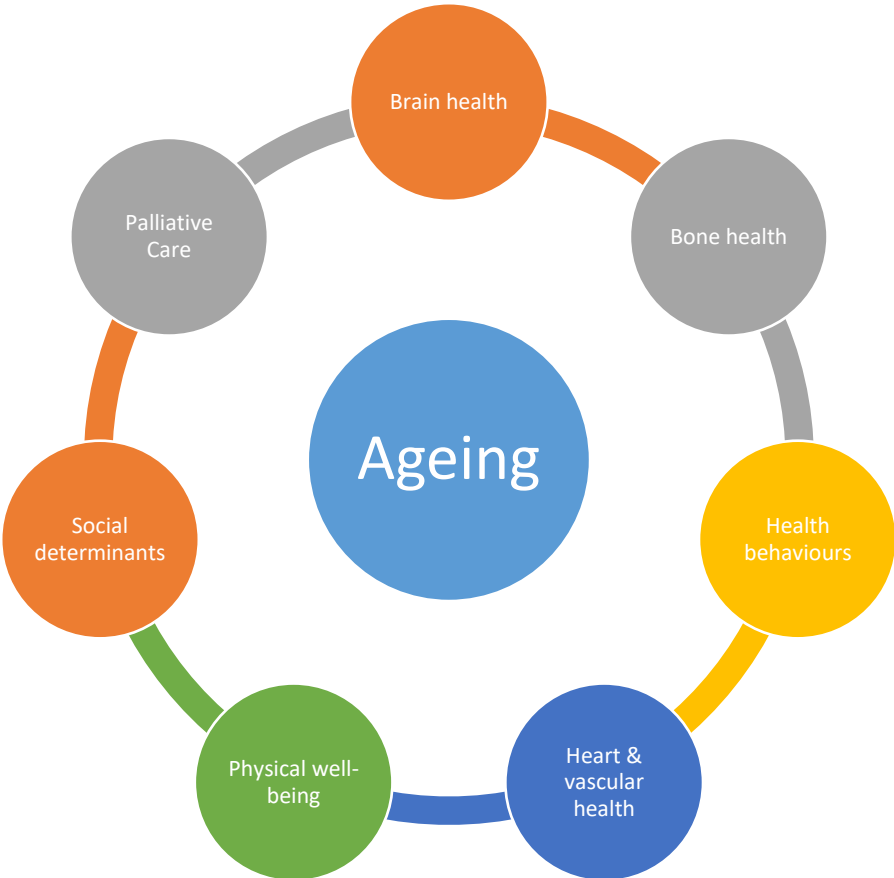
Key Actions

2.1. Systematically develop, advance and refresh our collaborative research initiatives

PROPOSED MAIN RESEARCH THEMES

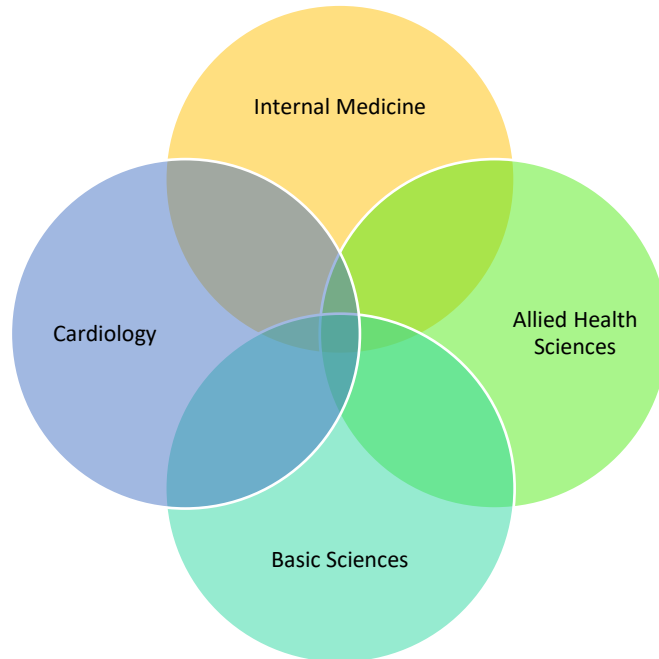
Ageing	Cancer	Genomics	Life-style & social determinants
Immunology, inflammation & infection	Neuroscience	Chronic Diseases	Medicines
Smart sustainable planet	Trauma & injury prevention	Digital health	Global health

PROPOSED SUBTHEMES E.G., FOR AGEING RESEARCH



PROPOSED RESEARCH CLUSTERS

e.g., Determinants of early vascular ageing



EXAMPLES OF RESEARCH CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE



2.2 Possible Initiatives to Build Institutional Collaborations

- I. We can understand existing plans and commitments to future endeavours (Cardiovascular, Diabetes, and Cancer) and see where they fit.
- II. We can identify gaps and areas that are primed for expansion and growth particularly where we already have expertise, have people willing to take on leadership, and in which there are opportunities for supporting growth.
- III. We can use existing entities as foundations for building initiatives at greater scale. For example, departments which resonate with each other might form some kind of cluster and, over time, develop into a theme or an institute as appropriate.
- IV. We can pair researchers from different fields to spark new ideas. We can define clear mechanisms that allow ideas to percolate upwards, and that support all interested staff and students to make suggestions and take the lead.
- V. We can regularly challenge and refresh existing initiatives. Collaborative initiatives take time to establish and grow. They require commitment and dedication. It is, however, important that we stand back at intervals and look at the ongoing initiatives to ensure they are still relevant, excellent and cutting-edge.
- VI. We also need to close down activities that are not functioning, and look for new opportunities or reinvent themselves.
- VII. Bring the identified initiatives to fruition in an open and collaborative manner.
- VIII. Build the wider collaborative networks we need to do our research.

3. SECURE THE NECESSARY FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Link to the Charter Principles

The actions here have implications **for all seven of the principles** and **high-level goals** in the Charter.

Key Actions

- 3.1. Work with Research & Innovation to set targets for research funding and maximise our ability to deliver.
- 3.2. Expand the base of eligible researchers applying for funding through external hires as well as from within.
- 3.3. Identify mechanisms for growing internal research funding.
- 3.4. Work to increase available resources in the research system in Pakistan.

4. RADICALLY REVISE HOW WE DO RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS

Link to Charter Principles

The main principle of focus here is **Principle 6**, to ***engage profoundly with our publics***. However, all of the other principles call for better communications

Key Actions

- 4.1. Overhaul our digital research presence e.g., a Research Story Curation Team.
- 4.2. Harness the power of the wider community to communicate research.
- 4.3. Ensure that face-to-face communications remains part of how we work.
- 4.4. Design and deliver strategic communications campaigns as required.
- 4.5. Initiate a series of flagship communications projects.
- 4.6. Secure an additional communication resource for the Office of Research

5. JOIN THE DOTS ON ALL POLICIES RELATING TO OUR RESEARCH

Link to the Charter Principles

They are related to the type of professional supports needed for **Principle 1** of *cherishing academic freedom, diversity of research and the pursuit of truth*. They also very much *relate to positioning research at the heart of SMDC*, and they have implications for **Principle 3, to foster and grow research talent**.

Key Actions:

- 5.1. Develop a system for oversight of all research policy.
- 5.2. Initiate new or update existing research policies to align with external drivers.
- 5.3. Overhaul existing policies to better align with a research-intensive institution.

6. BE BOLD IN PLANNING OUR LONG-TERM RESEARCH FUTURE

Link to the Charter Principles

All of the principles in the Research Charter are connected with this section, hence the actions here are relevant for all principles.

Key Actions

- 6.1 Create a SMDC Research Foresight Initiative
- 6.2. Understand what we can do in the Open Scholarship future
- 6.3. Understand how new forms of engaged research and research co-creation can drive discovery
- 6.4. Explore how new ideas around impact can be embedded in the institution
- 6.5. Understand how the future of work may change how we do research
- 6.6. Analyse and plan in better ways

Conclusions

This dynamic Research Excellence Strategy will encompass a set of clearly defined actions categorized within different areas. Furthermore, it will incorporate emerging actions that necessitate further research and discussion to crystallize. Ideally, it will expand to include novel concepts that encourage us to approach things in a profoundly different manner.

Balancing objectives is imperative.

In an increasingly complex and demanding research landscape, we must create more avenues for both our faculty and students to seamlessly engage in their research and excel.

Simultaneously, we must ensure, to borrow a well-worn but apt phrase, that the entirety of our activities transcends the mere sum of their individual components. This holistic approach is particularly crucial in a fiercely competitive research environment.