

Research Charter for Aotearoa New Zealand

Ki te kotahi te kākaho ka whati, ki te kāpuia e kore e whati Alone we can be broken. Standing together, we are invincible – Kingi Tāwhiao

Preamble

This research charter promotes the conduct of research to the highest standards of ethics and integrity to produce high-quality research findings. It recognises the importance, value and validity of multiple research practices (including kaupapa Māori, Rangahau¹ and Pacific research practice), multiple knowledge systems (including mātauranga Māori), and te reo me ōna tikanga².

It is a resource which any organisation or person can adopt or apply, in full or in part.

Values and principles

The ethical and professional values and principles relevant to the research community³ must be interpreted within a general framework that recognises human and civil rights, the principles of free enquiry and an open society, and obligations arising from the Treaty of Waitangi⁴. These principles and values share a common ground: processes for knowledge discovery, exploration and sharing between researchers, participants and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand that are respectful of people and their rights.

Researchers⁵, research organisations and funders⁶ are encouraged to regard the values and principles as working together to guide their activities⁷, as is appropriate to their specific research context. These are:

**Tika^{8,9} | Mana | Whakapapa | Manaakitanga | Pūkenga | Kaitiakitanga
Justice | Duty of care | Beneficence | Non-maleficence | Respect | Integrity**

Expectations

Responsible and high-quality research practice occurs when researchers act well, supported and encouraged by research organisations and funders that share a commitment to world-class professional standards and to supporting the public interest. In such a context, researchers should:

1. Behave with honesty and professionalism, and undertake their research diligently and carefully using appropriate methods;
2. Actively seek research excellence, demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and foster a culture of integrity;¹⁰
3. Be respectful to other people, including acting with cultural intelligence¹¹ and intellectual rigour (pūkenga), and appreciating diverse values and communities (manaakitanga);
4. Endeavour to identify and engage with stakeholders and/or affected communities (whakapapa), recognise their rights (mana), and respect their interests (tika), including intergenerational interests;
5. Where practicable, partner with mana whenua, tangata whenua, iwi, hapū or other communities for who there are reasonably foreseeable direct impacts, which may include using appropriate methodologies such as kaupapa Māori, rangahau or collaborative pathways that are co-designed and co-delivered with those partners;
6. Meet all ethical and regulatory requirements¹², and implement relevant practice standards¹³;
7. Safeguard the health, safety, well-being and rights of people involved in or affected by the conduct of their research;
8. Responsibly manage artefacts, data, samples and records they have created or collected;
9. Be mindful of the environmental effects of their research and research practices (kaitiakitanga);
10. Disclose and manage conflicts of interest;
11. Only claim competence commensurate with their expertise, knowledge and skills;

12. Correctly attribute those who have contributed to, or funded the research, and appropriately acknowledge relevant work by others;
13. Contribute to the public interest by being mindful of their obligations to society, reflecting on what the consequences of their research might be, disseminating results and findings as soon as it is appropriate to do so, and engaging responsibly with the public¹⁴.

Research organisations contribute further when they:

14. Establish and maintain good governance and management practices¹⁵ to support and encourage responsible research practice;
15. Provide appropriate amenities, support systems, and ongoing training, education or mentoring for researchers and others in relevant roles within their auspices;
16. Provide for the safe and secure storage, management and access for future use of research artefacts, data, samples and records;
17. Use good practice processes¹⁶ to receive concerns or complaints about matters of potentially poor research conduct¹⁷, investigate and determine such matters, and undertake any necessary follow-through actions¹⁸.

Funders contribute further when they:

18. Use good practice processes¹⁹ to provide assurance that, if the requested funding is provided and properly managed, sufficiently knowledgeable people will conduct the research and ethical and regulatory requirements will be met;
19. Champion equity, diversity and inclusion, seeking to increase the participation and recognition of under-represented groups in the research community of Aotearoa New Zealand;
20. Share good practice, and if a public funder, seek to harmonise requirements with other public funders to reduce the burden on funding recipients and applicants.

1. The traditional Māori process of inquiry, discovery, invention and innovation in the development of new knowledge, new ways of knowing, being and doing, from old knowledge.
2. In this context, te reo me ōna tikanga means the language, culture and protocols of Māori.
3. The research community includes funders, research organisations, individual researchers and scholars, research trainees and supporting contributors such as technicians.
4. It is recognised that the relationship between Māori and the Crown will continue to evolve, and consequentially the values and principles and responsibilities on researchers, researchers and funders set out in this charter may also need to change.
5. Researchers means those people who undertake research or scholarly activities; the people undertaking rangahau, are normally described as kairangahau.
6. Funders means agencies that invest in research, but do not normally undertake research themselves. The charter is applicable to only those parts of the agency's activities that relate to selection of recipients, and the establishment, management and completion of contractual or granting arrangements.
7. Activities means research or scholarly activities, which may include associated professional activities such as disseminating results to others.
8. Māori words have meanings that are highly context-dependent. In this context tika means acting with integrity and respecting the legitimate interests of relevant communities; mana means balancing one's own authority and the rights held by others; whakapapa acknowledges the importance of relationships with relevant communities; manaakitanga means acting with care and respecting diverse values and communities; pūkenga means acting with rigour; and kaitiakitanga means acting with responsibility and ensuring resources are managed appropriately. In this context, beneficence means acting to benefit other people, contributing to broad concepts of well-being, and balancing benefits against risks and costs; non-maleficence means not causing harm intentionally, and ensuring that the risks of harm are not outweighed by the expected benefits; justice requires that people are treated fairly and equitably, including fairly distributing the benefits and burdens of research to individuals and communities; respect for persons means respecting an individual's right to make choices and hold views, and to take actions based on their own values and beliefs; integrity refers to the trustworthiness of research due to the soundness of its methods and the honesty and accuracy of its presentation; duty of care describes the obligations that a reasonable person owes to others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
9. The Māori values were developed by a Royal Society Te Apārangi working group comprising Professor Tahu Kukutai, Associate Professor Maui Hudson, Associate Professor Maria Bargh, Associate Professor Hēmi Whaanga, Dr Hinemoa Elder, Dr Dan Hikuroa, Marino Tahī and Moe Milne for inclusion in the Society's Code of Professional Standards and Ethics. They are proposed by the Charter working group to be directly incorporated into the Charter.
10. This includes through supporting colleagues, responding positively to requests for mentoring advice, and providing opportunity to those who are early in their research career.
11. Cultural intelligence means the capability to relate, respect and work effectively across cultures.
12. Including applying the three Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) in their activities involving animals as subjects.
13. Practice standards include code of practice and differ between disciplines; in scientific disciplines appropriate standards should ensure robust and reproducible research findings.
14. The principles of responsible engagement are set out in the public engagement guidelines of Royal Society Te Apārangi (<https://royalsociety.org.nz/public-engagement-guidelines/>).
15. Including through affirmative actions that support equity, diversity and inclusion.
16. Good practice processes provide advice to those with concerns, are visible, supportive of the welfare of all parties involved, timely, effective, robust, procedurally fair, observe natural justice, separate investigative and decision making roles, and, for potentially serious matters, normally use independently appointed lay members in the decision bodies that both determine the matter and decide any follow through actions to protect the public interest.
17. Poor research conduct can include but is not limited to plagiarism, fabrication and falsification.
18. In cases of serious misconduct, good practice is that actions to protect the public interest (which may include correcting the record, informing research funders, and making disclosures to protect innocent co-workers and inform potential future employers) are decided prior to determining any employment or student enrolment consequences for the person or persons responsible for the misconduct.
19. Good practice processes usually include the use of independent peer review.