



Summary

Architecture research contributes to the development of new knowledge in the discipline and results in substantial social, cultural and environmental impacts that are of significant benefit to all Australians. The Institute encourages and supports architecture research within the profession and within universities. The Institute promotes and supports collaborative research that links the profession, the construction industry, universities and government. The Institute upholds the importance of Australian research understood within a global research context.



Background

Architecture and its practice is a diverse endeavour. It is a discipline that deals with a wide range of issues in the built and cultural environments. Therefore the Institute embraces a range of research methodologies and a variety of research approaches including creative works, technology and building science, business and management, history, theory, sociology and behavioral science. The Institute recognises the value of both professional and academic journals in the publication of research outputs.

In 2010, following trials in 2009, the Federal Government will implement the new Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) process for identifying research quality and esteem. The ERA will include measures for creative works - an important policy development for the discipline of architecture.

The Institute supports in this policy, the Australian Research Council's (ARC) definition of research developed for the purposes of the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) initiative:

*the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.*¹

¹ Based on the Frascati definition of research as per the Frascati Manual: Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development, OECD: Paris. (2002). Cited in Australian Government, Australian Research Council ERA Indicator Descriptors 29 December 2008, p. 1.



The ARC's definition of research is consistent with the broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise applications.²

The ARC's definition of research is also consistent with the architecture research definition upheld by the Institute;

Research in architecture is the systemic inquiry for new knowledge about the creation and maintenance of the built environment. The process of identifying new knowledge involves making a clear statement of the research goals and intent of the research, implementing credible and systematic modes of inquiry, and documenting the findings in a form that is publicly verifiable and open to peer appraisal.

This Research Policy updates the Institute's 2004 Research Policy to take into account the Federal Government's ERA initiative.

Discipline-specific measures of research quality and esteem are essential in identifying leading research and researchers. Recognition of leading research and researchers through discipline specific measures facilitates relevant career opportunities and pathways within academia and provides relevant evidence for assessing and awarding government research grants.

² *ibid.*



What Government and Universities need to do

- provide discipline-specific measures of research including creative works in the assessment of Australian research
- support joint research initiatives between industry and academia through grants

What Institute members need to do

- undertake practice-based research
- participate in/support practice-based higher degree study as part of continuing professional development
- support research endeavors as participants in research projects provide material and information to researchers (recognising appropriate measures for the protection of commercially sensitive intellectual property)

What all members of the community can do

- support access to property, both physical and intellectual, that is of significance to the furthering of research in architecture (recognising appropriate measures for the protection of commercially sensitive intellectual property and privacy)



Institute related initiatives and activities

- Submissions have been made to:
 - the Bradley Review on Higher Education 2008
 - the National Innovation System 2006
 - the Productivity Commission re Standard Setting and Laboratory accreditation 2006,
 - the Department of Education, Science and Training re the
- Bolonga Process and Australia 2006
- Supports two CRC bids as an active participant: the Cooperative Research Centre for Embedded Design Practice, and the Cooperative Research Centre for By-Product Utilisation
- provision of the Neville Quarry Education Medal in recognition of a career contribution to architecture education (the award can be made in recognition of contributions to research)



Further Information and Links

- Australian Research Council and the Excellence in Research Australia initiative <http://www.arc.gov.au/>
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) <http://www.architecture.com/TheRIBA/WhatTheRIBADoes/ResearchAndDevelopment/ResearchAndDevelopment.aspx>