Charter - MWC Early Career (EC) Steering Committee

This Charter was drawn up in June 2021 and shall be changed wherever necessary by the agreement of the MWC EC Steering Committee Chair and the agreement of the Committee and approved by the MWC Directorate

1.   Mission Statement

1.1 The mission of the EC Steering Committee is to provide career development opportunities for early career researchers (ECRs) within the MWC. The group will develop initiatives and engage in activities that:
- reinforce connectivity and collaboration of our nationwide community of ECRs
- support research excellence
- foster diversity of the future research workforce with a focus on Māori and Pacific researchers
- provide a voice for our ECRs, working with other national ECR groups where necessary.

2.   Early Career Definition

2.1 Early Career (EC) is here intended to include all postgraduate students and researchers no more than ten years after the conferral of their PhD, with exceptional circumstances considered (e.g., paternity leave, carer's leave, and leave due to illness), and are below the level of approximately Senior Research Fellow or tenured lecturer. In most cases, all who express an interest in involvement are expected to be welcome, at the discretion of the Committee.

3.   Committee Membership

3.1 The Committee will comprise a representative group of at least six ECRs, and should aim to include representation of scientific disciplines, academic, research and clinical institutions, various career stages, genders, sexual orientations, and diverse ethnicities, including Māori and Pacific representation.

3.2 The Committee will be facilitated by a Committee Chair who will ensure the activities of the Committee align with the Mission Statement (1.0), ensure the Committee maintains an expected level of activity and liaises with other management structures within the MWC to ensure the Committee's activities align with the MWC's wider strategic directions.

3.3 The Committee Chair (or a delegated Committee member) will serve on the MWC Research Leadership Forum (RLF) and will seek to table motions that benefit the ECR community of the MWC.

3.4 The Committee Chair will be appointed by the MWC Directorate taking into account any recommendation by the Committee. In making their recommendation, the Committee may vote on their preferred nomination. The Chair should be at least at postdoctoral level or demonstrate suitable experience to lead the Committee and understand the needs of ECRs of all career stages. Any Committee members concerned with the performance of the Chair shall raise the matter with MWC Directorate.

3.5 The role of the Chair is formalised under a role description approved by the Directorate. The Chair should also ensure succession planning takes place in good time before they step down from their position.

3.6 Committee membership should rotate to permit development of new ideas and allow a wide group to gain experience from membership. Members are therefore encouraged to review their membership annually and reflect on their ability to contribute to the Committee. Rotation should ideally allow no more than half the Committee to be new members at one time.

3.7 New members can be sought at any time through an MWC-wide invitation for EOIs. Selection of new members from these applications will be done by the Committee and shall be guided by the representation described in 3.1. The Directorate will approve new members.

4. Meetings

4.1 The Committee will meet in person at least once per year (this may be co-ordinated with an MWC event to reduce costs). Regular video meetings will be conducted throughout the year as required for event and activity planning.

4.2 In the absence of Māori or Pacific representation, the committee will actively ensure Māori and Pacific voices are represented in all ECSC initiatives.

5. Reporting

5.1 The EC Steering Committee will report to the Directorate for approval of activities and initiatives as well as budgets for these.

5.2 Meeting minutes will be shared with the Directorate.

6. Activities

6.1 The Committee will aim to organise a minimum of 3 events, workshops or initiatives per year including an annual EC Research Day.

6.2 Activities can cover a range of topics but must align with the Committee's mission statement (1.0).

7. Communication

7.1 Regular communication to the MWC ECR community through a range of media including emails, social media and newsletters.

7.2 The Committee will ensure there is content relevant for MWC ECRs on the MWC main website. This will include up to date information of the Committee membership as well as listing previous members.

7.3. The Committee will seek to engage the MWC ECR community at least annually to identify the needs and wishes of the EC community.

7.4 The Committee will ensure that communications use inclusive content and platforms appropriate for the diverse ECR community, including Māori and Pacific researchers.

8. Record keeping

8.1 Committee members will all have access to a shared space to store details of past events, minutes of meetings and documents under development and complete. This resource can be

used to aid planning and document development, management of the ongoing schemes and to aid future members plan new events.

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