

Policy Number	AC16
Approving Authority	Academic Board
Date Implemented	May 2024
Current Version	1.1
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Contact Officer	Director, Learning and Innovation
Related Policies, Procedures and Documents	Staff Code of Conduct Research Integrity Policy Research Ethics Procedures

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Research at NIDA adopts practice-related approaches that: inspires innovative directions for our art forms; provides fresh insight into our arts and teaching practices and processes; enables us to engage in industry innovations and creates opportunities to gain fresh perspectives on the role and impact of the performing arts and entertainment sectors in our cultures, our society, our industries, our economies, and our ecologies.
- 1.2. NIDA has an extraordinary community of teaching artists that contribute both to the distinctive student experience offered at NIDA and to the vitality and sustainability of the art forms and professions we are inextricably networked with. Our approach to research and scholarship supports the view that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice and through teaching (Boyer 1990, p24).
- 1.3. Fresh perspectives are realised in dialogue with artists, arts educators, alumni, audiences, and the creative and other industries, and will consider the opportunities that the latest technologies afford us in the development of our practice.
- 1.4. Our research and scholarship work across and between art-forms, including theatre, film, live events, performance, construction and making, enhanced reality, and environmental sustainability to inform our thinking and practice.
- 1.5. Our research and scholarship inform the on-going development of our curriculum and teaching practices and is key to maintaining excellence in teaching, continuing enhancement of the quality of our students' learning experience and ensuring that our education and training is aligned with current and future industry needs, shapes the future of dramatic arts, and enables successful graduate outcomes.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. This policy sets out:
- Definitions for research and scholarship that are applicable to NIDA.
 - The types of activities recognised as research at NIDA.
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 - Arrangements for supporting NIDA staff engaged in research and scholarship.
 - Governance arrangements for research and scholarship activities.

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all NIDA's research and scholarship activities.
- 3.2. This policy sets out how NIDA supports staff undertaking research and scholarship activities.
- 3.3. The Academic Board is responsible for oversight of the implementation of this policy and providing advice to the NIDA Board of Directors concerning improvements to this policy and enhancing NIDA's research and scholarship capability.
- 3.4. The NIDA Board of Directors is responsible for assuring the effective implementation of this policy, and the sustainability of NIDA's research and scholarship capability.
- 3.5. This policy does not cover activities relating to professional development.

4. Policy

Research

- 4.1 NIDA advocates **practice-related research** that has demonstrable connections with the performing arts disciplines taught at NIDA (including collaboration with other arts and non-arts disciplines) leading to new knowledge and understanding about arts-practice and/or learning and teaching practice.
- 4.2 NIDA advocates for the use of Indigenous research practices that incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing into research practices.

Recognised Research Outputs

- 4.3 NIDA is home to a community of teaching and performing artists that actively participate in creating the future of dramatic arts and arts education in Australia and beyond. Staff, through their research, pursue outcomes that have significant impact in their practice discipline and their teaching.
- 4.4 NIDA recognises research outputs which are consistent with traditional and non-traditional research outputs as described by the Australian Research Council in Excellence in Research Australia (ERA).
- 4.5 Traditional research outputs include books, chapters in a book, peer reviewed journal articles, and peer reviewed conference papers.
- 4.6 Non-traditional research outputs (NTRO) relate to any assessable creative artefacts generated through research. The research contribution needs to demonstrate the advancement or extension of knowledge and/or demonstrate innovation. The work must develop new ideas or new data, or new forms of expression. NTRO's include, for example, original or highly

experimental creative works, live performance of new texts or repertoires, new insights through new connections, or through inter-disciplinary collaborations with related and seemingly unrelated disciplines, compositions, adoption of new techniques of design, fabrication, a re-interpretation of existing works or techniques applied in different social or industry contexts, recorded creative works, curated, or produced substantial public exhibitions and events, works re-imagined for online and virtual environments that demonstrate a high degree of originality, feature emergent technologies and challenge traditions and conventions, research reports for an external body.

- 4.7 A research output produced by a staff member is valid if it is:
 - 4.7.1 Consistent with the definition of research in this policy.
 - 4.7.2 A traditional or non-traditional research output as described by the Australian Research Council in Excellence in Research Australia.
 - 4.7.3 A current research output, that is, it was produced in the most recent five years.
- 4.8 The undertaking of a higher degree by research is understood by NIDA as research training. Consequently, continuing and part time NIDA staff enrolled in higher degrees by research are understood as “research active”.
- 4.9 NIDA further recognises the completion of postgraduate research degrees whether at masters or doctoral level as valid research outputs, provided the following are met:
 - 4.9.1 The research undertaken as part of the course is consistent with the definition of research in this policy.
 - 4.9.2 The postgraduate program was completed in the most recent three years, or, in the case of a doctorate, completed in the most recent five years.
 - 4.9.3 The qualification was awarded by a registered higher education provider. The staff member submits a copy of their research output, either in electronic or written format) to the NIDA Library.

Scholarship

- 4.10 NIDA defines scholarship as systematic and purposeful activities and outputs to advance dramatic arts practice and/or advance the practice of learning and teaching in arts education. Scholarship can involve communicating existing knowledge and practices to new audiences, critical reinterpretation of existing knowledge and practices, or extending the contexts in which existing knowledge and practices are applied.
- 4.11 NIDA recognises the following types of scholarship:
 - 4.11.1 Scholarship directed towards advancing dramatic arts practice, including its inter-section with other non-dramatic arts disciplines.
 - 4.11.2 Scholarship directed towards advancing the practice of learning and teaching in arts education includes reflection on current practice, advancement of knowledge and skills in learning and teaching practice relevant to arts education and updating learning and teaching practice. Scholarship of this kind usefully informs future discourse around the design, delivery, and evolution of the curriculum.

Recognised Scholarship Activities and Outputs

- 4.12 NIDA recognises the following scholarship activities and outputs:
- 4.12.1 Led or made a substantial contribution to creative works, live performance of creative works, recorded or rendered creative works, public exhibitions and events.
 - 4.12.2 Presenter at an academic or professional conference (for example, keynote speaker or panel member).
 - 4.12.3 Editor or reviewer of an academic journal or a professional publication.
 - 4.12.4 An article in a professional publication.
 - 4.12.5 Completion of a postgraduate course such as graduate certificate, graduate diploma or coursework masters.
 - 4.12.6 A leadership role in an academic or professional organisation.
 - 4.12.7 An industry placement, secondment or residency.
 - 4.12.8 Developing improved approaches to teaching and learning dramatic arts in higher education, such as the development of new academic policies, creating new approaches to course design or delivery, or crafting teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of specific student subgroups.
 - 4.12.9 Authoring all or a substantial part of a report for a third party, such as a government body, community group, not-for-profit or a business.

Scholarship activities conducted by, and scholarship outputs produced by NIDA staff are valid if they meet the following criteria:

- 4.12.10 Are consistent with the definition and types of scholarship in this policy.
- 4.12.11 Are consistent with one or more of the recognised scholarship activities and outputs in this policy.
- 4.12.12 Are current, that is, undertaken in the most recent three years.

Research and Scholarship, and the Performance and Engagement Process

- 4.13 Research and scholarship ensure that staff have sufficient and current knowledge and skills to design, deliver and improve NIDA's higher education courses.
- 4.14 As a result, it is the responsibility of managers to engage their staff in conversations about research and scholarship (as relevant) as part of the performance and engagement process and use this to agree relevant goals that benefit from participation in research and/or scholarship.

Allocation of time for research and scholarship

- 4.15 Each academic staff member undertaking research would expect to have time allocated for this. Managers must ensure that approved research or scholarly work is commensurate with a staff member's practice and reflected in relevant budget and workload planning processes.

Internal Grants for Research and Scholarship

- 4.16 NIDA will develop an annual budget for internal research and scholarship grants sufficient to support a sustainable research and scholarship capability. This competitive fund will be used to support applications for practice-related research and scholarship awards (See further details about NIDA's Research and Scholarship Awards).

Building a Scholarly Community

4.17 A Community of Practice will be developed to support research and scholarly activity at NIDA.

5. GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 All academic staff are expected to maintain complete and accurate records of their research and scholarship activities and outputs.
- 5.2 The Director, Learning and Innovation will provide an annual report to the Research and Scholarship Committee in which the outcomes from the survey of completed research and scholarship activities and outputs are presented. Details of any investigations of research misconduct during the 12-month period before the report including the outcomes, underlying causes and actions taken.
- 5.3 The Research and Scholarship committee will make recommendations to the Academic Board for improving NIDA's research and scholarship capability.
- 5.4 The Academic Board will consider advice from the Research and Scholarship Committee, reporting by the Director, Learning and Innovation and any other relevant information to:
 - a) Obtain assurance that this policy is being implemented effectively.
 - b) Provide advice to the NIDA Board of Directors concerning improvements to this policy and NIDA's research and scholarship capability.
- 5.5 The NIDA Board of Directors are responsible for assuring that:
 - a) Research and scholarship activities are conducted consistent with this policy.
 - b) Research and scholarship activities are sufficiently supported, and that NIDA has a sustainable research and scholarship capability.

6. CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Change Description	Reason for Change	Author	Version
December 2025	Editorial change to review date	New policy review schedule approved by Academic Board October 2025	Academic Compliance Manager	1.1
01/05/2024	New policy	New policy	AC	1.0

7. BENCHMARKING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following resources have informed this policy:

- *Relating to definitions of research and scholarship*
 - a. Australian Research Council, 2022. *ERA 2023 Submission Guidelines*. https://www.arc.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/era_2023_submission_guidelines_0.pdf.
 - b. Candy, L. 2006. *Practice Based Research: A Guide*. <https://www.creativityandcognition.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/PBR-Guide-1.1-2006.pdf>.
 - c. Boyer, EL. 1990. *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

- d. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). 2022. *Guidance Note: Research and Research Training*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-research-and-research-training>.
- e. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). 2022. *Guidance Note: Scholarship*, <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-scholarship>.
- f. Kershaw B, Nicholson H et al. 2011. *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance*. Edinburgh University Press.

8. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Academic staff	Refers to employees of NIDA whose primary work is teaching or managing the teaching of higher education courses offered by NIDA.
Discipline	Refers to a generally recognised field of academic study, research or professional practice. At NIDA this includes the following: acting, costume, props and effects, design for performance, technical theatre and stage management, set construction technologies, directing, dramatic writing, and cultural leadership.
Practice related research	Has the meaning given in clause 4.1 and 4.6
Professional development	Refers to formal and informal activities undertaken by academic staff to maintain and improve their knowledge, skills and competence as dramatic arts practitioners and educators in higher education. This may include attendance at novel or innovative exhibitions or performances, conferences, lectures, completion of microcredentials or short courses, professional memberships or workshops.
Scholarship	Has the meaning given in clause 4.10