

Project Proposal

Development of a ranking of refereed journals in which Australian and New Zealand nursing and midwifery researchers publish their work

1. Introduction

In 2004, the Australian Federal Government announced the establishment of a Research Quality Framework (RQF) with the aim of developing the basis for an improved assessment of the quality and impact of publicly-funded research in Australia. Similarly, in New Zealand, the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) was established to ensure that excellent research in the tertiary education sector was encouraged and rewarded. In response to the Research Quality Framework (RQF) and the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF), the Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand) (or CDNM (ANZ)) has taken a decision to fund research to develop a hierarchical ranking of refereed research journals in which Australian and New Zealand nursing and midwifery researchers publish their work.

Initial expressions of interest have been invited from suitably qualified individuals or research groups in order to identify the current level of expertise in the field.

The Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (Australia & New Zealand) now invites tenders to produce a ranking of refereed journals in which Australian and New Zealand nursing and midwifery researchers publish their work. A grant of \$30,000 is available for this project.

2. Background

Under the RQF, one of the main indicators of quality in research will be journal rankings and citations. The following extract from the CDNM (ANZ) paper, *Responding to the RQF*, highlights the need for this journal ranking project:

Many prominent nursing and midwifery researchers publish in a wide range of medical, health services, social sciences and interdisciplinary journals. These journals tend to have established reputations and present few problems for a multidisciplinary panel to make an assessment of the quality of the journal and rank the relative impact of the publication as a research output. On the other hand, not only are nursing and midwifery journals unlikely to be familiar to a multidisciplinary panel, but they are poorly served by ISI-based measures of impact and citations. The number of nursing and midwifery journals indexed by ISI is low, the impact factors unimpressive and, most importantly, the top 20 ISI indexed nursing and midwifery journals do not correlate with the best journals from the perspective of Australian nursing and midwifery. This was also the case in the UK and NZ RAEs and the ISI ranking was not included in their respective research assessment exercises. The absence of a journal

ranking list however poses potential problems for the Australian assessment. In the likely event that nursing and midwifery research will be evaluated by a broad panel, as opposed to a discipline panel, the relative quality of journal publications will be difficult for this panel to judge.... However, the limitations of such a list need to be made explicit, but like all ratings, it should be simply a guide of peer esteem and valid only for the period of this RQF and the PBRF. It would require updating every 5-6 years in time for each round of the RQF and PBRF. Should ISI broaden its list of indexed nursing and midwifery journals this may not be necessary in the future.

The proposal, therefore, for the Council to commission a project to rank the top journals for Australian and New Zealand nursing and midwifery would be an excellent means of measuring quality, under the RQF.

3. Aim

The aim of this project is to rank the refereed journals in which Australian and New Zealand nursing and midwifery researchers publish their work.

4. Specifications

4.1 The development and implementation of the project will be undertaken in accordance with the Project Outline provided in Section 5 and Project Budget in Section 6 of this document. Using this broad project outline and project budget provided as a guide, tender documents are required to provide a detailed project outline, research proposal, expected outcomes including deliverable and a budget for the proposed project with justification.

4.2 The project will be overseen by the CDN (ANZ) Research Advisory Group who will serve as an advisory panel for the project.

4.3 Outcomes from this project (e.g. report of findings) are to be made available to all Australian and New Zealand Schools of Nursing and Midwifery who have membership on CDN (ANZ). CDN (ANZ) will be responsible for disseminating outcomes to all its members.

4.4 Reporting requirements: This successful tender is required to provide a final report of the project process and outcomes at the completion of the project.

4.5 As this is a commissioned project, Intellectual Property will be transferred to CDN (ANZ) who will hold copyright on the completed project. The successful tender will enter into a contract for the project with CDN (ANZ).

4.6 Individuals, organisations or consortia submitting a tender shall meet all the costs of and incidental to the development and submission of the tender.

4.7 An Independent Assessment Panel will be appointed to complete a review and ranking of tenders. All submissions received by the Council's Executive Officer will be treated as strictly confidential.

5. Project Outline

The successful tender will:

- State the research approach to be used to rank journals within both disciplines and the rationale for using the criteria in the research proposal;
- Propose the methods by which the ranking is to be achieved;
- Identify strategies to enable all Schools of Nursing and Midwifery to access the rankings for minimal cost;
- Identify options for ongoing maintenance funding of the rankings;
- State the cost of the exercise and outline a budget with justification;
- Name the principal researcher and any collaborators, with brief CVs;
- State the timetable for the exercise, including at least one interim report and the time of the final report;
- Manage the project within budget;
- Complete the project within twelve months, and;
- Enter into a contract with CDN (ANZ) for the project.

6. Project Budget

A grant of up to \$30000 is available for this project.

7. Selection Criteria

Evaluations of tenders will be conducted by an independent Assessment Panel using the following criteria:

1. Evidence of appropriate expertise in the relevant area.
2. Evidence of experience in comparable projects.
3. Demonstrated understanding of bibliometrics.
4. Extent to which the proposal complies with the specifications.
5. Resources and management capacity to conduct the project.
6. Identified strategies to enable all Schools of Nursing and Midwifery to access the rankings for minimal cost.
7. Identified options for ongoing maintenance funding of the rankings.
8. Comprehensiveness and feasibility of project proposal to achieve stated outcomes.
9. Appropriateness and justification of budget.
10. Demonstrated research track record (including achievements and quality).

8. Format and submission of tenders

Tenders are to be submitted in A4 format, with font Times New Roman 12, single sided printing and all pages numbered.

The tender format is to include:

- a detailed project outline including methods, steps and expected outcomes;
- communication strategy;
- a detailed project budget and budget justification;
- milestones and timeline for the proposed project;
- an outline of strategies for dissemination of results and outcomes from the project, and;
- a two page resume of each of the proposed project leaders detailing name, position, qualifications, research experience, previous project outcomes and publications from the last five years.

Tender documents should be sent by email to the Council's Executive Officer, Jennifer Martin, at jmartin@deakin.edu.au. In addition, one original and four copies of the documents are to be mailed to Jennifer at the following address and should be received by 5pm, Friday 12th May 2006:

Council of Deans of Nursing & Midwifery
 c/- School Of Nursing
 Deakin University
 221 Burwood Highway
 Burwood VIC 3125

For all enquiries, please contact Professor John Daly, Chair of CDN (ANZ), on (02) 96859113 or by email at j.daly@uws.edu.au or Ms Jennifer Martin, Executive Officer of CDN (ANZ), on (03) 9244 6111 or by email at jmartin@deakin.edu.au .

References

Department of Education, Science and Training web site
http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/default.htm

NZ Tertiary Education Commission web site
<http://www.tec.govt.nz/funding/research/pbrf/pbrf.htm>

Responding to the RQF: Measuring excellence and impact in nursing and midwifery research and developing a strategic response - Discussion and recommendations by the Australian and New Zealand Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery. CDN Position Paper, September 2005