

Pacific Futures Strategic Plan 2026-2028

1. Introduction

The Pacific Futures (PF) serves as the collective voice and leadership platform for emerging Pacific scholars, researchers, innovators, and knowledge holders across the Pacific region.

The PF serves as a regional platform for leadership, collaboration, knowledge exchange, mentorship, and engagement, supporting the development of future Pacific scientific leaders and strengthening emerging researchers' contributions to Pacific priorities, policy, and community wellbeing.

Aligned with PAS's vision, values, and strategic direction, the PF seeks to strengthen Pacific scientific leadership, advance Pacific-led solutions to regional challenges, and support the next generation of Pacific researchers through collaboration, mentorship, public engagement, and knowledge exchange.

The PF recognises the importance of Pacific knowledge systems, relational leadership, and community-centred approaches in shaping sustainable and inclusive futures for Pacific peoples.

The PF is strategically led by the Reference Group (RG), which provides governance oversight, coordination, implementation leadership, and strategic guidance for PF activities and priorities. Acting on behalf of the wider PF membership, the RG collaborates with the PAS Council and PAS Secretariat to ensure the PF remains aligned with PAS's mission, values, and strategic direction.

2. Vision

A thriving, connected, and influential community of Pacific emerging scholars, researchers, innovators, and knowledge holders advancing Pacific-led knowledge, leadership, and solutions for the well-being of Pacific peoples and the region.

3. Mission

To strengthen Pacific scientific leadership, collaboration, and impact by supporting emerging researchers and practitioners, promoting Indigenous and local knowledge systems, and advancing evidence-informed engagement for Pacific communities, policy, and regional priorities.

4. Guiding Principles

The PF will be guided by the following principles:

- Pacific-led leadership and decision-making
- Respect for Indigenous and local knowledge systems
- Scientific excellence and integrity
- Inclusivity and diversity across the Pacific region
- Collaboration, reciprocity, and collective advancement
- Intergenerational mentorship and stewardship
- Service to Pacific peoples and communities
- Accountability, transparency, and ethical engagement
- Respectful relationships, relational stewardship, and Pacific values that emphasise reciprocity, collective responsibility, service, and the nurturing of relationships

5. Strategic Themes and Objectives

Strategic Theme 1: Pacific Scientific Leadership

Objectives

- Strengthen leadership capabilities, opportunities, and pathways for emerging and mid-career Pacific researchers, scholars, innovators, and knowledge holders in regional and international scientific, policy, and public forums
- Promote recognition of Pacific scholarship, scientific innovation, and contributions to Pacific communities

Strategic Priorities

- Leadership workshops and professional development programmes
- Regional speaking opportunities
- PF representation at conferences and forums that increase the visibility and leadership of PF members
- Recognition and profiling of PF members

Strategic Theme 2: Indigenous and Pacific Knowledge Systems

Objectives

- Promote ethical engagement between scientific research and Indigenous knowledge systems
- Support Pacific-led approaches to research, innovation, and knowledge exchange
- Encourage culturally grounded and community-responsive research practices

- Promote the recognition, protection, and responsible use of Indigenous, traditional, and local knowledge systems

Strategic Priorities

- Indigenous Pacific methodology and methods workshops (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods)
- Professional Development workshops
- Pacific research ethics discussions
- Collaborative projects with communities and knowledge holders
- Regional dialogues on Pacific knowledge systems and scientific futures

Strategic Theme 3: Collaboration and Capacity Building

Objectives

- Strengthen interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and cross-regional collaboration among Pacific scholars, researchers, and knowledge holders
- Support mentorship, networking, and professional development opportunities
- Strengthen PF membership engagement and formalise pathways into PAS Emerging Researcher membership, including recruitment, onboarding, participation, retention, and member value
- Build sustainable partnerships across institutions and sectors

Strategic Priorities

- Regional mentorship programme
- Networking and engagement events
- Research collaboration opportunities
- Skills-based workshops and webinars
- Strategic partnerships with universities, research institutes, and regional organisations
- Digital networking and knowledge-sharing platforms for Pacific researchers (e.g., LinkedIn, virtual seminars, research directories, and collaborative online spaces)
- Knowledge-sharing and peer-learning opportunities across Pacific regions

Strategic Theme 4: Community, Policy, and Regional Impact

Objectives

- Advance Pacific science policy, education, and public engagement
- Contribute evidence-informed perspectives to Pacific priorities and regional challenges
- Strengthen communication between science, communities, and decision-makers
- Support knowledge mobilisation and the translation of research into policy, practice, and community outcomes

- Participation in regional symposia, wananga, and public engagement events that support sciences communication and knowledge mobilisation

Strategic Priorities

- Science communication initiatives
- Policy dialogue and advisory opportunities
- Community engagement activities
- Public webinars and outreach events
- PF contribution to PAS submissions and consultations
- Knowledge mobilisation initiatives that strengthen connections between research, policy, and practice

6. Key Deliverables (2026–2028)

The PF will aim to:

- Develop and implement an Annual Costed Workplan aligned with the Strategic Plan
- Establish at least three or four active PF subcommittees aligned with strategic priorities
- Deliver annual regional PF webinars/workshops or dedicated sessions within PAS events
- Support the development of a Pacific regional Mentoring Programme for emerging researchers
- Increase participation, visibility, and representation of PF members across Pacific nations and territories
- Develop and implement a PF membership engagement and transition pathway aligned with the PAS Emerging Researcher membership category
- Facilitate PF participation in PAS events and regional scientific forums
- Establish and maintain strategic partnerships that support Pacific scientific leadership, collaboration, and capacity building
- Promote PF member achievements, research outputs, and engagement activities through PAS communication platforms
- Support Pacific emerging researcher engagement in regional and international policy and advisory discussions

7. Governance and Implementation

The RG will provide strategic leadership and oversight of the Strategic Plan's implementation.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan will be operationalised through the Annual Costed Workplan that identifies priorities, activities, responsibilities, timelines, and resource requirements.

Implementation will be supported through:

- PF subcommittees
- PAS Secretariat support
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Annual workplans and reporting

Subcommittees will report regularly to the RG on progress against agreed priorities and activities.

The RG will seek to ensure sustainable and realistic implementation of activities, recognising the voluntary contributions and diverse commitments of PF members across the Pacific regions.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress against the Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated through regular reporting, reflection, and review processes to assess the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of PF activities and initiatives.

Monitoring and evaluation may include, but are not limited to:

- Progress against the Strategic Plan, annual costed workplan, and agreed priorities, deliverables, and performance indicators
- Membership growth, diversity, and regional representation across Pacific nations and territories
- Participation and engagement of PF members in activities, meetings, subcommittees, and regional initiatives
- Visibility and recognition of PF members through PAS communication platforms, scientific forums, and regional and international engagements
- Leadership development, mentorship, and capacity-building outcomes for emerging Pacific researchers, practitioners, and knowledge holders
- Partnership development and collaboration with universities, research institutes, community organisations, professional bodies, and regional and international partners
- Public science communication outputs, outreach activities, and audience engagement
- Contributions to science policy, advisory activities, consultations, and evidence-informed advocacy relevant to Pacific priorities
- Research collaborations, interdisciplinary partnerships, and knowledge-sharing initiatives
- Impact stories, case studies, and examples demonstrating benefits and outcomes for Pacific peoples and communities
- Feedback from PF members, PAS stakeholders, partners, and participating communities

9. Conclusion

The PF represents an important opportunity to strengthen Pacific-led scientific leadership and create a collaborative platform for emerging scholars across the region.

Through relational leadership, Indigenous and local knowledge systems, scientific excellence, and community-centred engagement, the PF seeks to contribute meaningfully to the well-being, resilience, sustainability, and future prosperity of Pacific peoples and communities.