

POSITION DESCRIPTION**IDENTIFICATION**

Position Title: Country Director (USP Cook Islands) **Position Number:** CCC001

Section: Office of the Vice-Chancellor & President **Location:** Cook Islands Campus

Category: Professional **Level:** 3

Current Incumbent: **Date of substantive appointment:**

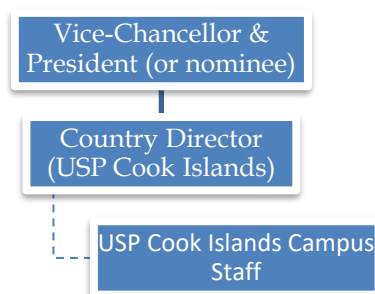
Reports To: Vice-Chancellor & President (or nominee)

Supervised by: Vice-Chancellor & President (or nominee)

ORGANIZATION CONTEXT

The University of the South Pacific (USP) is a unique, multinational university jointly owned and governed by 12 Pacific Island member countries, with Papua New Guinea on the cusp of becoming a full member. One of only two regional universities in the world, USP serves a region spanning more than 33 million square kilometres of ocean. It is a living embodiment of Pacific aspiration and a repository and promoter of knowledge about the history, cultures, and natural environments of the Pacific Islands. Guided by Pacific values of inclusive and participatory dialogue, USP's mission is to influence Pacific Islanders through the pursuit of excellence in knowledge, improving the lives of individuals and communities, and shaping the futures of generations to come.

The Country Director (USP Cook Islands) role forms part of USP's regional leadership architecture, which strengthens in-country strategic leadership through the establishment of Country Director roles across all regional member country campuses. This reflects a deliberate shift to elevate national engagement while professionalising campus operations through dedicated operational management.

Organizational Structure

POSITION DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE

The Country Director is the University's most senior representative within the host country and serves as the strategic and diplomatic interface between the University and the national government. The role is responsible for representing the University's interests, fostering strong government and stakeholder relationships, leading the delivery of USP's strategic priorities at the country level, and ensuring campus performance in alignment with institutional goals.

The position is central to building deep national partnerships, particularly with the Ministry of Education and other departments responsible for human resource planning, national development, and tertiary education.

POSITION DIMENSIONS

Staff Responsible for:

Indirectly: Cook Islands Campus Staff

Limits of Authority: As per the University Delegation Register

Financial: \$ _____

Non-Financial: _____

Key Relationships /Internal and External Contacts:

External Stakeholders

- Minister of Education and Training and senior officials
- Government ministries and departments (Labour, Finance, National Planning, Public Service, etc.)
- National Qualifications Authorities and tertiary sector bodies
- Donor agencies, development partners, and NGOs
- Industry leaders, chambers of commerce, and community organisations
- USP alumni and parents

Internal Stakeholders

- Vice-Chancellor & President and members of Senior Management
- Heads of School, and academic leadership
- Campus Manager and Shared Services Leads
- Director, Pacific TAFE

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**External Engagement and Government Relations**

- Serve as the principal liaison between the University and the host Government, especially the Minister and Ministry of Education, along with other relevant agencies (e.g., Finance, Planning, Labour, and Human Resource Development).
- Cultivate strong, strategic relationships with national authorities, donor partners, industry, alumni, and community stakeholders.
- Represent USP in national and regional forums, advising on how the University can support national development plans and human capacity goals.
- Provide regular reports and strategic insights to the Vice-Chancellor and Council on national trends, government priorities, and opportunities for USP contribution.
- Ensure the University's visibility and reputation are maintained through appropriate ceremonial, diplomatic, and public engagements.

Campus Advisory Committee Leadership and National Alignment

- Support the effective functioning of the Campus Advisory Committee (CAC) as the University's principal national advisory and engagement mechanism within the member country.
- Work closely with the Chair and members of the CAC to ensure that national priorities, workforce needs, student aspirations, and development challenges are appropriately reflected in USP's planning and activities.
- Coordinate the preparation of strategic advice, reports, and follow-up actions arising from CAC deliberations.
- Strengthen the connection between the CAC, national stakeholders, and USP Council processes.
- Ensure the University remains responsive to emerging national priorities and opportunities identified through the CAC framework.

Campus Strategy and Leadership

- Provide country-level leadership for the implementation of USP's Strategic Plan, Triennial Investment Plan, and associated initiatives.
- Guide academic and student support teams in delivering high-quality, student-centred learning experiences that respond to local needs.
- Promote USP's research and innovation agenda, particularly in relation to nationally significant themes and challenges.
- Lead or coordinate country-based projects aligned to regional priorities and externally funded initiatives.

Partnerships and Programme Delivery

POSITION DESCRIPTION

- Promote the growth of enrolment and programme offerings, ensuring alignment with national priorities and student demand.
- Strengthen engagement with schools, technical institutions, and employers to promote seamless transitions into USP.
- Coordinate industry partnerships at the country level.
- Collaborate with relevant schools and departments to ensure the quality and relevance of academic offerings.

Shared Services and Operational Oversight

- Oversee campus operations to ensure effective delivery of campus operations, services, and infrastructure maintenance.
- Provide strategic guidance on the planning and prioritisation of campus needs.
- Ensure risks are managed and reported appropriately in line with USP's risk management frameworks.
- Support the effective implementation of shared services in finance, ICT, facilities, student services, and HR through coordination with functional leads.

People and Culture

- Foster a positive and inclusive student-centred campus culture, aligned with USP values.
- Provide leadership support and coaching to staff and promote a high-performance, service-oriented culture.
- Ensure alignment with USP HR policies, including performance management and professional development.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Salary Range: USP Cook Islands Professional Salary Scale Level 3

Length of Contract: 3 years (renewable)

POSITION SPECIFICATION

Qualifications and Experience
Essential <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A postgraduate qualification in a relevant field, or equivalent senior-level leadership experience in a tertiary, public sector, or international development context

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- Proven experience in high-level stakeholder engagement, particularly within complex institutional or government environments
- Demonstrated strategic leadership, including implementing organisational priorities at a national or system level
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and relationship management skills
- Sound understanding of the tertiary education landscape and sensitivity to Pacific regional contexts

Desirable

- Experience representing an organisation at a senior national or regional level
- Familiarity with USP's regional mandate, governance structures, and development partnerships
- Proficiency and/or good working knowledge of relevant local languages, together with demonstrated cross-cultural competence

APPROVAL

Supervisor name:

Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

ACCEPTANCE

Staff Name:

Staff ID:

Staff Signature:

Date: