Proposed Centre Director Responsibilities

Purpose of this document
This document aims to describe standard areas of responsibility and authority for Centre Directors. The document is presented as a draft as part of the Next SMI consultation process and should be read in conjunction with the Draft Program Leader responsibilities document.

Background
The Sustainable Minerals Institute (SMI) within The University of Queensland (UQ) will undergo a number of organisational changes commencing in 2015. Multiple drivers exist for these changes:

1. Time to re-vision SMI’s future direction: Strategic Plan for 2015-2019 to be developed.
2. Changing context in industry, civil society, government, and UQ.
3. Reduced revenue following industry downturn
4. Academic Board Review signalled a number of areas in need of change.
5. Organisational maturity: We are ready for change.

These Centre Director responsibilities are those expected of Centre Directors under a more compact leadership structure within SMI. There are three Centre Director positions who each oversee two of SMI’s six Centres. These Centre Directors, along with the Deputy Director Operations and the Institute Director form SMI’s Leadership team.

Primary Purpose of Position
The Centre Director is responsible for the strategic leadership of a Research Cluster (People, Production, or Environment) which contains two Centres. Centre Directors provide leadership, guidance and stewardship to the Program Leaders and a number of Programs within the two Centres, who in turn have accountability for overseeing and delivering outcomes for one of SMI’s Programs.

The Centre Director operates as a member of SMI’s leadership team. In this capacity, Centre Directors must have:

- A commitment to SMI’s strategic objectives.
- The ability to work constructively together as members of the leadership team.
- A commitment and willingness to take a leadership role in the Next SMI change process.
- A commitment to collective decision making, including the ability to make strategic investment decisions to the benefit of the Institute as a whole.
- The capacity to take a stewardship approach to Programs and discipline areas.
- The capacity to develop new business that spans discipline/Centre boundaries and the capacity to build new opportunities that will benefit another part of the organisation (one-UQ approach).
Duties

Leadership and strategy

1. The Centre Director works with the SMI Leadership Team, industry partners and Program Leaders to define the research direction and priorities of SMI, ensuring alignment with SMI and UQ’s strategic objectives.
2. The Centre Director performs as an active member of SMI’s Leadership team. This team is collectively responsible for:
   1. Building and maintaining strong industry relationships which facilitate project sponsorship in the short, medium and long terms;
   2. Setting SMI’s research direction and strategic priorities in consultation with SMI Program Leaders and staff; and
   3. Making decisions about the allocation of strategic funding in SMI to support the incubation or delivery of particular initiatives.
3. The Centre Director works with the SMI Leadership team and Program Leaders to build and maintain the external reputation and position of the Institute and its Centres through external engagement including effective communication of research capability/ideas, research outputs, Research Higher Degree student achievements, education and the impact of the Institute’s activities.
4. The Centre Director establishes and maintains effective interactions and collaborations with stakeholders from:
   1. research sponsor organisations in industry, government or the not-for-profit sector;
   2. relevant schools/faculties and other institutes across UQ; and
   3. other academic and research institutions around the world.
5. The Centre Director actively seeks and secures sponsorship from industry partners and stakeholders to support the work of SMI.

Research and Education

1. The Centre Director works with SMI Leadership, Program Leaders, collaborators, industry and other stakeholders to develop new ideas, projects and research programs that have the potential to generate significant funding and which align with SMI strategy.
2. The Centre Director works with SMI leadership to approve and set objectives, targets and budgets for all Programs across the Institute, in line with agreed and transparent criteria.
3. The Centre Director has line management responsibility for the Program Leaders within their Centre in relation to the:
   a. Research direction, education activities and priorities of the Program;
   b. Development and submission of the annual budget for the Program;
   c. Achievement of agreed objectives for their Program;
   d. Effective formation and delivery of projects throughout the project lifecycle; and
   e. People and resource management associated with their Program.

The Centre Director has a stewardship, oversight and monitoring role in relation to these activities, while the Program Leaders undertake these activities. The Centre Director does not move project budgets or resources between the Programs within their Centre; this is done at Institute level by the Leadership Team and by Program Leaders by mutual agreement. Each Program within the Centre is treated as an independent entity for budget and resourcing purposes and is responsible to the Centre Director for performance.
4. The Centre Director monitors and manages the performance, and supports the development, of the Program Leaders in their Centre.

5. The Centre Director is a point of escalation of project delivery risks and issues out of the delivery scope of the Program Leader.

6. The Centre Director can be research active, producing research publications and actively supervising Research Higher Degree Students.

7. Centre Directors may be involved in projects outside of their Centre, for example incubation projects and interdisciplinary projects.

**Delivery**

1. The Centre Director works with the Institute’s Deputy Director Operations to ensure operational support services meet the needs of Programs within Centres.

2. The Centre Director has overall responsibility for quality control of the Centre’s outputs.

3. The Centre Director has the overall responsibility for mandating to Program Leaders effective compliance with key SMI and UQ policies in relation to project budgeting, contracting, control and delivery.