WPI

INTERACTIVE QUALIFYING PROJECT
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# Strengthening WPI's Presence in the Pacific: A Plan to Launch the Oceania Hub

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*This work represents the work of one or more WPI undergraduate students submitted to the faculty as evidence of completion of a degree requirement. WPI routienly publishes these reports on its site without editorial or peer review*

# Abstract

The goal of this project was to aid the directors of the Hawai'i, Australia, and New Zealand project centers in launching the Oceania Hub. To do this, the team conducted semi-structured interviews with the leaders of regional programs inside and outside of WPI and developed an action plan for the Oceania Hub based on what the team learned about their programs. Based on research, the team also authored a monograph on Oceania that emphasizes the theme of Indigenous knowledge and identity, while covering the geography, history, culture, and environmental issues of Oceania. The project center directors will use the monograph to deepen their understanding of the region.

# Executive Summary

The term "Oceania" refers to a region of the world located in the Pacific consisting of five areas: Australasia, New Zealand, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) currently has three project centers in the region: Hawai'i, USA, Melbourne Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand. The goal of our project was to create a plan for an "Oceania Hub" that incorporates the existing project centers in Oceania.

With the world becoming more connected, universities have been putting more effort into teaching their students global competency and providing them opportunities to travel abroad and be immersed in other cultures. Today, many international studies programs have a regional emphasis. Examples include the Center for the Study of Asia (BUCSA) in Boston University's Pardee School of Global Studies and the Center for Contemporary South Asia (CCSA) at Brown University. Regional studies programs at WPI include the Latin America and Caribbean Studies Program and the China Hub. There are also examples of regional studies programs that emphasize Oceania, including the University of Hawai'i's Center for Pacific Island Studies and the University of Utah's Pacific Island Studies Initiative.

In order to complete the goal of our project, the team identified three objectives:

1. Aid sponsors and other readers in developing a basic understanding of Oceania.
2. Evaluate existing area studies programs within WPI and outside of WPI.
3. Design a strategic plan for the Oceania Hub.

The primary methodology the team used to complete our objectives was semi-structured interviews with relevant experts. The team conducted interviews with relevant members of WPI's faculty, including regional program leaders such as Professor Jennifer Rudolph, the director of the China Hub, and Professors John Galante and Aarti Madan of the Latin America and Caribbean Studies program. The team interviewed Professor Holger Droessler, the only member of WPI's faculty who does research in Oceania, and a proponent for establishing a fourth project center in Oceania in either Fiji or Samoa. The team also conducted interviews with Dr. Winston Soboyejo, the Provost of WPI, and Kent Rissmiller, the interim Dean of the Global School, as well as other faculty members who have experience with WPI's mission overseas. In order to learn more about the approach taken to regional learning in area studies programs that specifically are focused on Oceania, the team interviewed relevant external experts such as Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, the director of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i Mānoa, and Dr. Mary Hattori, the acting director of the East-West Center's Pacific Islands Development Program.

Information for objective 1 was collected through both the aforementioned interviews, and independent research of the region. Based on the understanding of the region obtained through completing objective 1, the team authored a monograph on Oceania that emphasizes the themes of Indigenous knowledge and identity. The project sponsors, the directors of the three project centers in Oceania, will use the monograph to deepen their understanding of the region, the issues facing it, and gain insight on how those problems can be addressed through collaboration between WPI and the local communities in a manner that is respectful to the Indigenous population. Information for objective 2 was collected primarily through interviews, but also through research the team conducted on other regional studies programs. The strategic plan the team developed for objective 3 was based on the evaluations completed in objective 2.

There was a wealth of information collected in our interviews, and the team found many useful themes and advice. Interviewees emphasized the importance of WPI's presence being respectful to the Indigenous peoples of Oceania. The team also found that the more developed programs owed much of their accomplishments to grant money, and all emphasized the importance of forming partnerships, either with overseas organizations or with local community groups tied to the region (for example Pacific Islander diaspora groups in Utah). Our interviews with WPI faculty helped the team learn more about how WPI develops its international programs and maintains a unique focus on STEM in a field usually dominated by social science and humanities.

The team developed several recommendations from our research and believes that the Oceania Hub should pursue grant funding to build itself, acknowledging that the missions of the Hub may be changed to match the requirements of a given grant. The team recommends that the Hub should be promoted both on social media and on-campus through events, such as outdoor events on the Quad or conferences and seminars with guest speakers. The team also acknowledges that the Hub will benefit from robust partnerships with organizations in Oceania and it would be beneficial to form a regional alumni association that will be able to fundraise for the Hub. Finally, the team recommends that the Hub emphasize how Indigenous knowledge can be incorporated with STEM to solve the issues facing Oceania through projects, curriculum, research, and other events.

# Acknowledgements

The team would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance in this project:

- Dr. Robert Traver and Professor Jason Davis, our ID 2050 instructors, for providing invaluable assistance in writing our project proposal.
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- Professors Lorraine Higgins, Michael Elmes, and Ingrid Shockey, for taking the time to sponsor the project and provide guidance that was relevant to their project centers.
- Professors Holger Droessler, Jennifer Rudolph, John Galante, Aarti Madan, Peter Hansen, and Robert Krueger, Interim Dean Kent Rissmiller, and Provost Winston Soboyejo for allowing themselves to be interviewed and providing illuminating responses to our numerous questions.
- Gabbi Lee of the Smithsonian Institution for providing knowledge on the history and Indigenous culture of Hawai'i during an interview.
- Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka of the University of Hawai'i, for an interview in which he deepened our understanding of how to study Oceania as a region and taught us about the approach his program takes to regional studies.
- Dr. Mary Hattori of the Pacific Islands Development Program at the East-West Center, for providing a perspective on Oceania from a prestigious research institute that intersects academia, the private sector, and government.
- Moana Uluave-Hafoka and Dr. Hōkūlani K. Aikau of the University of Utah, for an interview on how they developed their University's Pacific Islands program and engaged Pacific Islander students.
- All the students at WPI who completed our survey.

# Authorship

Each member of the team contributed equally to the authorship and editing of all parts of this report, including the monograph. Feedback was provided by Professors Lauren Mathews, Kate McIntyre, Stephen McCauley, and Esther Boucher-Yip.

# Table of Contents

# Table of Contents (cont.)

# 1 Background

Studies show that participation in global studies programs improves students' abilities to succeed in an increasingly global community (Kitsantas, 2004). A 2012 study found that study abroad trips as short as nine days can improve students' cross-cultural adaptability (Mapp, 2012). Such a mindset is more important than ever, especially in school-sponsored study abroad programs. In 1974, WPI created the foundation for the Global Projects Program. Since then, the Global Projects Program has expanded to six of the seven continents and now encompasses over 50 project centers across the world. At these centers, students collaborate with outside organizations in a project-based environment.

WPI has three project centers in Oceania: Hawai'i, USA, Melbourne Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand. The directors for the project sites located in Oceania, who are the sponsors of this project, seek to organize a hub for regional studies. Currently, the Oceania Hub is in the earliest stages of development and exists as an agreement among the interested parties, including the project center directors and the WPI Provost. The project center directors were inspired by WPI's China and Latin America programs and believe a structured hub would help develop stronger curriculums and foster new and robust exchange programs with partners in Oceania (I. Shockey, personal communication, 2021). To develop the foundation of the Oceania Hub, IQP teams from both the Hawai'i and the Melbourne project sites will be collaborating together in a first-of-its-kind partnership among the project centers. This collaboration will ensure that the Oceania Hub meets the needs of each individual project center.

The goal of this project is to provide guidance to our project sponsors in the beginning stages of development in the Oceania Hub that will connect the three project centers. There are two deliverables: a strategic plan for the Oceania Hub and a monograph on Oceania. The strategic plan, which consists of the entirety of this document, includes a detailed model for the Oceania Hub, helping to offer a proposed path to its establishment. This will advance it from its earliest developmental stages to an achievable program that can partner with the Global School of WPI. The monograph will be used by the sponsors as a resource to develop a deeper understanding of the region and serve as a guide for potential project topics.

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The team developed an action plan for the program that is both academically rigorous and respectful of Oceania's cultures. The following sections in this chapter detail relevant information on Oceania to serve as an introduction to the region. The team will review these topics in greater detail as part of the monograph centered on Oceania. The full monograph can be found in Appendix N. Additionally, this chapter delves into area studies centers at WPI and similar programs at other institutions, because they can be used as models on which to base aspects of the Oceania Hub.

# 1.1 Defining Oceania

Oceania is a geopolitical region of islands located in the Pacific Ocean. Though definitions of Oceania vary, the United Nations defines Oceania to comprise five different regions: Australasia, New Zealand, Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia (United Nations: Statistical Division, 2017). Delineations of the region vary depending on whether the definition is founded on geopolitical designations or historical and geographic factors. While most definitions of Oceania typically consider islands like Hawai'i, Easter Island, and the Bonin Islands as part of the Oceania Region, the United Nations does not recognize these islands as part of the region because they are not independent political entities (United Nations, 2017). Though politically, Hawai'i and other islands may not be considered part of the Oceania region, for the project's and WPI's definition of Oceania, they will be considered as such because of their geographical location and shared history of migration. Figure 1 shows a map outlining the regions included in Oceania as our team has chosen to define it, with Hawai'i included in Polynesia. To date, WPI's formal involvement in the region of Oceania consists of projects completed at three project centers located in Melbourne, Australia, Wellington, New Zealand, and Hawai'i, USA. Professor Holger Droessler, a WPI faculty member whose research centers in Oceania, intends to establish another center in Fiji or Samoa at an indeterminate point in the future.

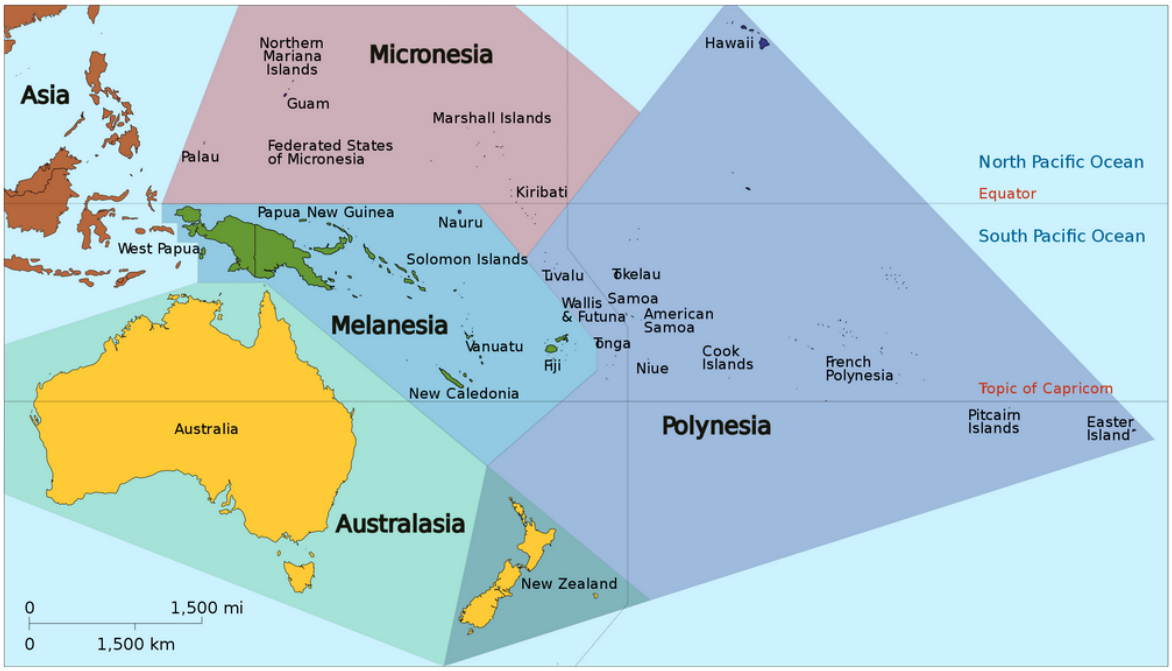


*Figure 1: The five regions of Oceania (UN Geoscheme Regions, 2020)*

# 1.2 The Global School

In 1974, WPI created the initiative that would later evolve into the Global Projects Program (Mell & Baron, 2017). The Global Projects Program affords students the opportunity to complete projects around the world. All WPI students complete an Interactive Qualifying Project, or IQP, during their time as an undergraduate. Most IQPs are completed at a WPI project center and are typically focused on working collaboratively with outside organizations on problems at the intersection of science, engineering, or technology with society. As of 2020, the Global Program has over fifty project centers around the world (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2020), three of which are currently in Oceania. The Global Projects Program has recently advanced with the establishment of the Global School in October of 2020. The Global School's project centers form local partnerships that work closely with the School to maximize collaboration with local communities to "define issues and co-produce solutions" (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2020). There are already a few regional programs at WPI, most notably the China Hub and the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program. These centers help organize WPI events, including conferences, seminars, and film series, with respect to different regions of the world (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2020).

The China Hub, founded in 2013, works closely with the Global School and promotes programs and collaboration ventures between WPI, Chinese partners, and Worcester's business community. The program focuses on both on-campus and off-campus projects and activities, such as hosting guest speakers for seminars and conferences, holding film events, and fostering joint degree opportunities for students at WPI with public and private universities in China (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2013). While the China Hub is alone at WPI in using the label of "hub," there are other institutions and programs at the school that are rooted in connecting international project centers by region. WPI's Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program develops curriculums for study programs, promotes relevant student organizations, and hosts on-campus events. The program also helps to facilitate collaboration between the Latin America project centers (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2018).

## 1.3 Regional Studies Centers and Programs Outside of WPI

Regional programs are not a new concept in higher education in the United States. They exist in institutions across the country. Examples include the Center for the Study of Asia (BUCSA), housed within Boston University's Pardee School of Global Studies, and the Center for Contemporary South Asia (CCSA) housed within the Watson Institute at Brown University. Centers like these are often research-based programs that focus on education in "humanities and social sciences" (Boston University, n.d.). A similar program is Harvard University's Asia Center, which is structured similarly to BUSCA and CCSA. It has a Director of Finance and Administration, as well as over 100 people on the faculty and staff (Harvard University, 2021). Some, like the CCSA, build their curriculum and research programs around themes. Some themes at the CCSA include inequality, development, urbanization, democracy, pluralism, and diversity (Brown University, n.d.). The administrative structures of these centers are also similar, often including a faculty board or steering committee responsible for the decision making involving items such as applying for grants and allocating funds to programs. These schools are large and have large budgets of funds and resources that can be allocated to these centers.

Oceania, sometimes referred to as the Pacific Islands, is not commonly included as a regional center at many universities' global initiatives. Boston University, Brown University, and Harvard University, as previously mentioned, do not have any type of Pacific Islands or Oceania regional center. There are, however, programs and centers for Oceania outside of higher education. One example is the East-West Center, located in

Honolulu, HI. It was founded by Congress in 1960 (East-West Center, n.d.) to encourage understanding and better relations between Asia, the Pacific, and the United States through research, studies, and dialogue (East-West Center, n.d.). The East-West Center is research-based like many of the centers in academia, however it operates at a much larger scale. The Center has a network of over 1,100 partners, ranging from charity organizations to academic programs, and a 21-acre campus in Honolulu, HI that includes housing accommodations and conference halls as well as areas for research. It also has an office in Washington D.C (East-West Center, n.d.).

One example of a center for Oceania in higher education is the Center for Pacific Islands Studies (CPIS) at the University of Hawai'i. This center dates back to 1950 but was not official until 1978 (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, n.d.). This program has a focus on research-based education in humanities and social sciences In addition, it brings to light issues that Pacific Islanders face, such as the effects of climate change and identity. It encourages a deeper understanding of the Islands through many initiatives. Some of the initiatives include the Pacific Islands Monograph Series (PCIMS), conferences and seminars, *The Contemporary Pacific*, a journal aimed at discussing contemporary topics across the region, and a "Teaching Oceania" publication series that addresses the need for educational materials on the region for undergraduate students (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, n.d.). The Center is structured and operates in a similar manner to BUSCA, CCPA, and other regional centers at universities, meaning it has a board of faculty and other staff that help to make administrative decisions regarding funding and other decisions like curriculum. Interestingly, this center is also supported by the United States Department of Education and recognized as a National Resource Center (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, n.d.). With over 40 regional specialists on the staff, this program is the biggest Pacific Islands studies programs in the country (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, n.d.); while WPI will not be able to host a program of this size, the general concept and structure of this program is similar to the vision that the project center directors have.

While the concept of a regional center at a university is not new, Oceania is not often considered, especially on the East Coast. This is due to the large distance between the East Coast and Oceania, as well as the lack of Pacific Islander population. Additionally, the structure of these programs are often built around humanities, history, and/or social science. While this is very successful at some schools, that specific academic focus will not be as successful at WPI because of the school's strong focus in STEM. It is important to understand how these centers function and what types of initiatives and events they sponsor, because this information will help the team figure out what kind of area studies initiative will contribute to the mission of a STEM university.

# 2 Methodology

The goal of this project was to provide guidance to our sponsors in the beginning stages of development in the Oceania Hub. The purpose of this methodology chapter is to describe the process that the team used to accomplish this goal, along with the following three objectives:

1. Aid sponsors and other readers in developing a basic understanding of the region.
2. Evaluate existing area studies programs within WPI and outside of WPI.
3. Design a strategic plan for the Oceania Hub.

The team collected information through secondary research of other regional programs and Oceania. The majority of information collected for the monograph was from published scholarly sources. Semi-structured interviews with WPI faculty involved with international study programs and outside experts who work in the region were used to shape the design of the Oceania Hub. The team analyzed the interview responses and searched for similar themes that would aid in the creation of the monograph and similar structures and recommendations for the Hub. The results of this research were used to develop an action plan for the Hub.

## 2.1 Objective 1: Aid Sponsors and Other Readers in Developing a Basic Understanding of the Region

In order to help our sponsors, other project center directors, and students develop a deeper understanding of Oceania, the team created a monograph on the region. The monograph gives a geographical overview and broad history of the region while examining the themes of Indigenous knowledge and identity and how they can be used to address the issues found in Oceania today. The first steps in creating this monograph began by researching a variety of broad topics surrounding Oceania.

The original concept for this paper did not include an overarching theme of Indigenous knowledge and identity, so the beginning stages of the paper focused solely on learning facts about the region by searching though scholarly articles, as well as current events and news stories. After learning more about the scope of the region through research and

interviews, the team made the decision to focus on Indigenous knowledge and identity because of the captivating nature of the topic as well as interest from our sponsors.

To gain more information on the region and the specific topics covered in our monograph, the team conducted semi-structured interviews of recognized scholars whose research specializes on the region of Oceania. The first expert that the team spoke to was Professor Holger Droessler, who does research in Oceania for WPI. Professor Droessler has been researching the Pacific Islands for over 10 years and is currently writing a book about Samoa called "Coconut Colonialism." He is also in the early stages of developing a new project center in either Fiji or Samoa. This project center would also be included in the Oceania Hub. The team identified Professor Droessler as an important person to interview after talking to our sponsors, of whom he is a colleague, and attending the Oceania launch event for the Global School.

The next semi-structured interview that the team conducted was with Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, the director of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. He is an Associate Professor and political scientist who has written extensively on the geopolitics of Oceania, with a focus on the Solomon Islands. Dr. Kabutaulaka is also the editor of the Pacific Islands Monograph Series (PIMS) and has been researching the Oceania region for over 20 years. The team identified Dr. Kabutaulaka as someone to interview while researching and identifying Pacific Island studies programs. The responses from Droessler's and Kabutaulaka interviews were also used to achieve objective 2, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Following the interview with Dr. Kabutaulaka, the team interviewed Gabbi Lee, a Native Hawaiian Cultural Interpreter from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. Gabbi Lee was born and raised in Kailua, Hawai'i, and is the first Native Hawaiian Cultural Interpreter at the Smithsonian. One of the team members has a personal connection to her, which is how she was identified as someone to interview.

The team asked relatively similar questions to all of the interviewees regarding contents for our monograph. Some of these questions included asking about how they became involved in their research in the region, as well as what their specific areas of interests are. The team also inquired about important themes of Oceania, and about Indigeneity and identity in the region. For full scripts and responses of these interviews, see Appendices F through H. While the monograph's intended purpose is to help our sponsors become more familiar about common issues in the region, the team found that it may also serve as inspiration for future projects that may take place in Oceania.

## 2.2 Objective 2: Evaluate Existing Area Studies Programs Within WPI and Outside of WPI

An understanding of area studies programs, inside and outside of WPI, was critical in proposing a concept for the Oceania Hub. The team started the process by analyzing the websites of regional centers found at other universities and cataloging the programs and activities that they had. This included information on the academic structure, like a faculty board, and any event, activity, or fellowship that each center offered. To further explore these programs, the team conducted interviews with directors of various area studies programs that focus on Oceania.

In addition to conducting research of regional studies centers outside of WPI, the team researched current hubs and regional studies programs within WPI to situate the Oceania Hub within the broader global initiatives of the school. The first centers that the team researched were the China Hub and the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program. The team started by reviewing and analyzing the websites for each program. From there, the team contacted the respective directors of each program to set up an interview. Professor Jennifer Rudolph is the current director of the China Hub. The China Hub is currently the only "hub" at WPI, so gaining information on this program was critical for learning more about WPI's "hubs". The team interviewed Professors Aarti Madan and John Galante for information on the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program. The goal of these interviews were to gain information on the structure and faculty board, as well as any event, activity, or fellowship that each center offered. For the interview scripts and responses, see appendices A and B.

The team spoke to the Interim Dean of the Global School, Kent Rissmiller, to gain insight on his perspective on the relationships between WPI's hubs and the Global School. The team also spoke to Professor Peter Hansen, the director of WPI's Copenhagen, Denmark Project Center, to gain insight on any potential efforts for a European Hub and information about his role as a project center director. Afterwards, the team spoke to Professor Rob Krueger, the director of WPI's Ghana Project Center and the Institute of Science and Technology for Development (InSTeD), to learn more about InSTeD and the regional focus in Africa. For scripts and responses of these interviews, please see appendices C through E.

The team also conducted semi-structured interviews with two program directors from the University of Utah: Dr. Hōkūlani K. Aikau, the director of their Pacific Islands Studies Initiative, and Moana Uluave-Hafoka, the director of their Pacific Islands Bridge Program. The team also used the same interview format when speaking with Dr. Mary Hattori, the acting director of the East-West Center's Pacific Islands Development Program. The team sought out Dr. Hattori to gain a perspective from a regional program that operates outside of academia and could, nonetheless, provide the team with useful advice. For these interview scripts and responses, please see Appendices I and K.

The team interviewed Dr. Winston Soboyejo, the Provost at WPI, after hearing about his involvement in the launch of the Global School and potential vision for regional studies as a part of the Global School. For his interview responses, see Appendix J.
Table 1 on the next page lists all of the team's interviewees, for both objectives, as well as their position, when they were interviewed, and the reason for their interview.

| Name | Affiliation | Reason for Interview | Date Interviewed |
|---|---|---|---|
| Professor Jennifer Rudolph | Director of the China Hub | Experience in Hubs at WPI | February 12th |
| Professor Aarti Madan | Co-director of the Latin America and Caribbean Studies Program | Experience in Global Studies at WPI | February 11th (interviewed simultaneously with Professor Galante) |
| Professor John Galante | Co-director of the Latin America and Caribbean Studies Program | Experience in Global Studies at WPI | February 11th (interviewed simultaneously with Professor Madan) |
| Professor Kent Rissmiller | Interim Dean of the Global School | Experience in the Global School at WPI | February 15th |
| Professor Peter Hansen | Copenhagen Project Center Director | Experience in operating as well as creating project centers | February 15th |
| Professor Holger Droessler | WPI Professor | Expert on Oceania region | February 15th |
| Gabbi Lee | Native Hawaiian Cultural Interpreter | Expert on Native Hawaiian culture | February 18th |
| Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka | Director of the Center of Pacific Islands Studies at University of Hawai'i at Manoa | Expert on Oceania Region and pacific island studies program director | February 16th |
| Provost Winston (Wole) Soboyejo | Provost of WPI | Knowledgeable about the Global School and regional hubs | February 26th |
| Professor Rob Krueger | Director of the Institute of Science and Technology for development (InSTeD)<br>Director of the Ghana Project Center | Knowledgeable on global studies at WPI. Experience in operating project centers. Experience in InSTeD. | February 17th |
| Dr. Mary Hattori | Director of the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) at the East-West Center | Expert in Oceania Region. Involvement in community development in the region. Knowledgeable on Pacific Island research programs. | March 6th |
| Dr. Hōkūlani Aikau | Director of Pacific Islands Studies Initiative at the University of Utah | Expert on Oceania Region and experience with Pacific Islands study program | March 3rd (interviewed simultaneously with Moana Uluave-Hafkoa) |
| Professor Moana Uluave-Hafoka | Bridge Program Director of the Pacific Island Studies Initiative at the University of Utah | Expert on Oceania Region and experience with Pacific Islands study program | March 3rd (interviewed simultaneously with Dr. Aikau) |

*Table 1: List of interviewees throughout our project*

# 2.3 Objective 3: Design a Strategic Plan for the Oceania Hub

Based on the research and interviews that were conducted, the team created a strategic plan for the Oceania Hub. The plan identifies programs, events, and connections that the Hub can include, and also recommends a model for the administrative structure of the Hub that best fits the needs of the project center directors, in a proposed action plan. The strategic plan comprises this entire document, which consists of a background chapter, methods chapter, findings chapter, and the action plan. The Findings chapter details a stakeholder analysis, as well as a strategic analysis. The methods for the stakeholder analysis are detailed in section 2.2, and partially in section 2.3.2. The action plan consists of a description of the Oceania Hub, as well as an ordered list of steps that can be implemented to further develop the Oceania Hub. Currently, there are three WPI project centers in Oceania, which are highlighted in Figure 2 below.

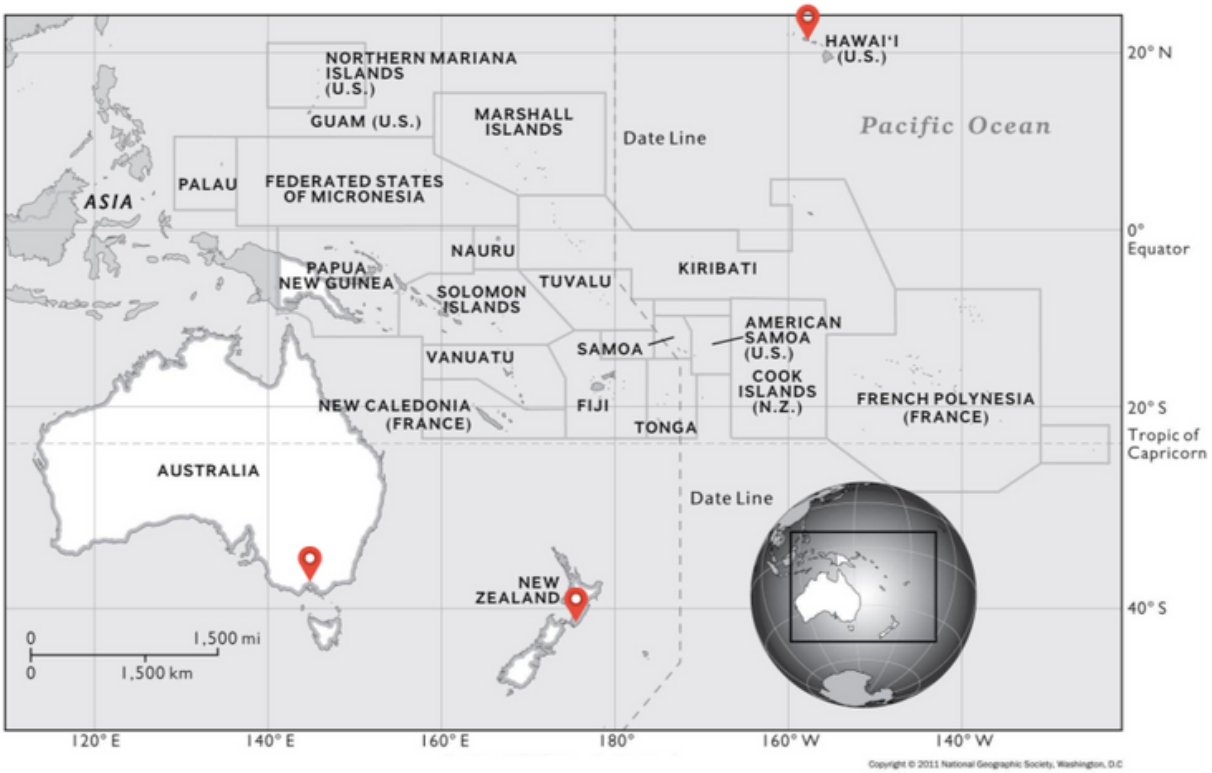


*Figure 2: Oceania Map with Project Centers marked (from left to right: Melbourne, Australia, Wellington, New Zealand, and Honolulu, Hawai'i) (Boudreau et al., 2012).*

To best understand the needs of the project sponsors, the team hosted a focus group with the project center directors to prompt a discussion about their individual visions for the Oceania Hub. The team also presented information gathered from interviews and research for the sponsors to review. The focus group allowed for the team to gain an understanding of the priorities and needs of the project sponsors, which was fundamental in shaping and creating the strategic plan.

The team then analyzed this information using a SWOT analysis in order to create the action plan. A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning technique in which strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats are identified and categorized. Strengths and weaknesses are considered to be "internal" factors that arise solely from within an organization, in this case WPI. Opportunities and threats are "external," rooted outside the organization yet affecting the viability of the plan analyzed by the SWOT analysis. Based on research, the team identified factors that could affect the Oceania Hub, and placed them in one of the four categories in the SWOT analysis. The following subsections detail the process of creating this action plan, organized by three components: the mission of the Hub, key features of the Hub, and the administrative structure of the Hub.

## 2.3.1 Defining an Overarching Mission for the Oceania Hub

One of the initial steps to conceptualize the Oceania Hub was to create a mission statement that summarizes the program's goals and values. A mission statement can unify the efforts of faculty and students working on the Hub and provide an understanding of the Hub's purpose for people not affiliated with the Oceania Hub, or WPI. There are three major components that go into creating a mission statement (Holland, 2007). The first step is to identify the audience before drafting any statement. The second is to determine the contributions of the organization. Contributions for a commercial business may include a company's product or service; however, in the case of the Oceania Hub, contributions can include programs that the Hub fosters, such as research opportunities, graduate courses, alumni networks, and more. Finally, the third component is to distinguish what makes the Oceania Hub unique compared to other regional studies programs both inside and outside of WPI.

To begin developing the mission statement for the Oceania Hub, the team gathered and analyzed the mission statements of similar organizations for inspiration and to determine if there is a general format. The analyses included examining the statements from regional studies programs such as the East-West Center, as well as regional centers at other universities, such as the Pacific Islands Studies Initiative at the University of Utah. The team frequently met with the project sponsors to discuss ideas about the mission of the Oceania Hub. After these meetings, the team drafted three potential mission statements and presented them to the sponsors. The sponsors then gave feedback on these mission statements, which were then edited based off of this feedback. The mission statements are included in the Action Plan chapter.

## 2.3.2 Identifying Key Features that the Oceania Hub Should Incorporate

Using responses from interviews, as well weekly meetings and a focus group with the project center directors (project sponsors), the team identified key programs and activities that will be coordinated by the Oceania Hub. WPI's existing hubs, as well as regional programs and centers outside of WPI, were used as resources for how to structure the Hub, as discussed in section 2.2. Semi-structured interviews were used as the method of data collection, because it allowed the experts to better share their knowledge of the topic and provide focused information they see as most fitting to the project (Berg, 2009). The interviews inquired about the administrative organization of the programs, their priorities, decision-making, events, activities they stage and funding.

At the recommendation of the project sponsors, the team also reached out to Karen Bean and Jennifer Daigle, both from the WPI Advancement office, in order to obtain a list of WPI alumni who currently live in Oceania. During our meetings with the sponsors, it was made clear that an alumni network was a common goal. This list serves as a starting point in forming an alumni network where alumni will aid in projects, funding, and attend events.

To gauge student interest in Oceania, and to identify on-campus events that WPI students want to participate in, the team created a survey using Qualtrics. Qualtrics is a website that allows its users to create detailed surveys. The survey was distributed to the student body via the WPI Reddit forum, an unofficial WPI Discord chatroom, our personal Snapchat stories, one fraternity (Lambda Chi Alpha), one sorority (Phi Sigma Sigma), WPI's Air Force ROTC Detachment, WPI's Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, and WPI's Christian Bible Fellowship. The survey questions can be found in Appendix L.

## 2.3.3 Determining the Administrative Structure of the Oceania Hub

To determine the administrative structure of the Oceania Hub, the team started by conducting interviews with relevant faculty from WPI, specifically those with experience designing and maintaining regional programs. The team found that Professors John Galante and Aarti Madan, the directors of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program, were helpful in providing useful information about their program that could be applied to the Oceania Hub's structure. The team consolidated the notes taken from this interview into a single document (Appendix B) and analyzed it line by line, ensuring that every topic covered during the interview was discussed in context of the Oceania Hub. Through these discussions, the team began to conceptualize the potential structure of the Hub. This process was repeated for other interviews with relevant faculty and experts. Weekly meetings with faculty advisors, daily meetings between the team members, and the focus group between sponsors all helped the team to conceptualize a structure for the Hub. The opinions and input given by each of these groups were considered and recorded in meeting minutes.

# 3 Findings

The team hosted meetings with the project sponsors and completed semi-structured interviews with relevant WPI faculty who have expertise in regional studies programs as well as regional experts both from WPI and other institutions. Utilizing the information gathered from these interviews and meetings the team has put together the following findings that summarize the information learned throughout the project term.

Many area studies programs were analyzed to determine what the best course of action is for the Oceania Hub. This included both programs within WPI that focus on different regions of the world as well as external programs that focus on the Oceania region. This allowed the team to see what each program does and what makes it successful, so that those aspects could be integrated into the action plan for the Oceania Hub.

A SWOT analysis was created for the Oceania Hub to provide a deeper analysis of the content and its relation to the Oceania Hub. The team found that the strengths of the Hub include WPI's positive reputation and support at WPI among administrators such as the Provost, committed faculty, and the expansion of the Global School. The weaknesses of the Hub include the lack of faculty who are experts on the region and the dearth of Pacific Islander representation on campus. Some of the opportunities that the analysis revealed are the possibilities for expanding partnerships, the increased overall interest in global studies, and the diversity of the Oceania region. Finally, some threats to the success of the Hub are the need to hire new staff, and the distance between WPI and Oceania.

Also included in the findings is a section that involves an analysis of mission statements. This analysis was mainly based on responses from questions in interviews that pertained to mission statements, such as Dr. Aikau's response about how mission statements should always reflect the values of the program it is representing.

# 3.1 Stakeholder Analysis

In order to gain a better understanding of what the Oceania Hub could be, the team researched similar programs to see what makes each one successful. The analysis of these programs is broken into two separate sections: area studies programs inside WPI, and area studies programs outside of WPI covering Oceania. The team also conducted a survey of over 100 undergraduate students to gain insight on the student perspective of the Oceania Hub. A summary of this survey is included in this section.

## 3.1.1 Area Studies Programs Inside of WPI

The China Hub - Interview Conducted with Professor Rudolph, Director

The China Hub is a primarily curricular initiative focused on creating a broader Chinese curriculum on campus. The Hub was able to develop more Chinese classes on campus and create a Chinese studies minor. While this Hub is grounded in curriculum, it is not only a curricular initiative, and also includes a China Hub film and speaker series, and facilitates events with visiting scholars, researchers, and engineers.

Interviewing Professor Rudolph allowed the team to learn a lot about what it means to be a "hub" and why the China Hub is the only regional program currently called a "hub" at WPI. The use of the word "hub" was decided by a committee that included Professor Rudolph that decided what criteria would be necessary for a program to be called a "hub" at WPI. The team learned that much of the success of the China Hub comes directly from Professor Rudolph's dedication to it. The program keeps strong ties with student organizations related to the program on campus and supports faculty traveling to China to either work with Chinese scholars, or simply to visit. This helps to both increase interest in the region and strengthens and potentially creates new relationships with Chinese scholars. Full interview responses for this interview can be found in Appendix A.

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program - Interview Conducted with Professors Galante and Madan, Program Leaders

The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program is similar to the China Hub in many ways and is partly based on that initiative. This program includes a minor in Spanish and involves related student organizations on campus. The program also maintains a close relationship with the project centers in Latin America and the Caribbean and hosts event series including guest speakers and painters from the region.

During the interviews with Professors Galante and Madan they emphasized the importance of in-person events when promoting a regional program. They found that their program thrived when they had speakers, artists or musicians from the region visit campus to promote their culture. They also highlighted that students and faculty are far more likely to show up for these events when they have received a personalized invite, ideally in person, rather than a flyer or mass email. For the structure of the Latin American Studies program, a faculty steering committee was used in order to make decisions about the program. They also discussed the eight to ten member student advisory board that they formed to engage with undergraduate students and allow them to have a voice in the program. Full responses for this interview can be found in Appendix B.

InSTeD - Interview conducted with Professor Robert Krueger, Director

The Institute of Science and Technology for Development (InSTeD), is a global initiative at WPI that is focused on solving pressing global problems using the combined knowledge of WPI and communities from across the world. InSTeD brings together a variety of transformative ideas from many academic perspectives to create unique and innovative solutions to global issues. From the interview with Professor Krueger, founder of InSTeD and the Ghana project center director, the team learned that the program currently focuses primarily on Africa because that falls under his area of expertise; however, it is open to collaborating with any region of the world in the future. While the Global School is involved with InSTeD, it's important to note that InSTeD is housed within the Arts and Sciences department until the structure of the Global School is finalized. Full interview responses can be found in Appendix E.

## 3.1.2 Area Studies Programs Outside of WPI

The University of Utah, Pacific Island Studies Program and Pacific Islands Bridge Program in the School for Cultural and Social Transformation - Interview with Dr. Hōkūlani Aikau and Moana Uluave-Hafoka, Directors

The Pacific Islands Studies Initiative at the University of Utah is committed to recruiting and retaining Pacific Islander students by supporting them in curriculum, mentoring, and career planning. The program focuses on the intersection of indigeneity and diaspora and allows Pacific Islander students to learn about culture and heritage. They believe that indigeneity and diaspora are not competing points on a trajectory, but rather overlapping points that work together. This is relevant to Utah because a large population of Pacific Islanders now live there as a result of missionary outreach from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints. According to Dr. Aikau, a major goal of the Pacific Islands Studies Initiative is to bring more Pacific Islanders to the University, which has historically neglected them, outside of recruiting islanders into its athletic programs.

Dr. Aikau hopes to attract Pacific Islanders for academics, and one way they do this is through their Bridge Program. Moana Uluave-Hafoka is the co-creator of the Bridge Program and stated that the goals of this program are to provide outreach to the local high schools and community colleges around campus to transition students into the University of Utah. The Bridge Program has three parts. The first is a summer program where 12-15 students from the community stay at the university for five days of immersive learning. This "bridges" the community to higher education. The second part is the Pasifika Archive, a YouTube channel to which they upload relevant recordings and interviews so that students have access to these educational materials. The third part is the Graduate Institute, which facilitates and promotes graduate opportunities for current students at the University of Utah, "bridging" the undergraduate and graduate students. These three programs give more opportunities for the Pacific Islander communities in Utah to have access to and be encouraged to pursue higher education starting from high school, and continuing through their undergraduate and graduate studies.

University of Hawai'i, Center for Pacific Island Studies - Interview conducted with Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, Director

The Center for Pacific Island Studies (CPIS) was initially created to help Americans learn about the rich culture of Pacific Islanders, however the program has attracted many Pacific Islanders who wish to learn about their own heritage. The program contains two entities: a purely academic entity which includes a master's program, and the National Resource Center (NRC), which collaborates with Pacific Islanders and helps immigrants by linking them with service providers.

From the interview with Dr. Kabutaulaka, the team learned that much of the program's academic curriculum is tailored towards the interests of students of Pacific Islander descent, who make up a majority of the students enrolled in the program. He also noted that the program's current priority is increasing enrollment, but COVID-19 has forced them to find ways for students to complete the program remotely because "Pacific Islands studies relies heavily on social interaction." Dr. Kabutaulaka also emphasized the importance of relationships within the region, a sentiment that was echoed in many other interviews.

East-West Center, Pacific Islands Development Program - Interview with Dr. Mary Hattori, Acting Director

The Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) is a large, government funded organization that is committed to improving the quality of life in the Pacific Islands. The program aims to assist Pacific Islanders in achieving and maintaining social equality and economic development (East-West Center. n.d.). It runs a variety of activities to achieve this goal, including awarding grants to those whose research supports their vision

facilitating research in the region and hosting conferences between Pacific leaders (East-West Center. n.d.). The East-West Center also has a program called the Pacific Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments which supports Pacific nations in adapting to climate change.

From the interview with Dr. Hattori, the team learned that a regional program is only as strong as its relationships with the people living there. She emphasized the importance of moving forward with the Fiji project center and looking to expand, as the three current project centers that WPI currently has do not represent Oceania as a whole, and exclude less populous islands. She noted that because the team reached out to Dr. Kabutaulaka and other experts in the region, herself included, anyone they connect you with will most likely be willing to collaborate because of that relationship.

University of California Berkeley, Critical Pacific Island Studies

The Pacific Islander Initiative, part of the Critical Pacific Island Studies at the University of California Berkeley, is "a student-centered program started through student activism… that serves the changing needs of Pacific Islander communities" (Berkeley Library, n.d.). The program was recommended to the team by Gabbi Lee, from the Smithsonian, who stated that the program was a good example of culturally respectful education on the Pacific Islands.

University of Canterbury, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies

The Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies (MBC) is focused on interdisciplinary research on the Pacific. The center publishes scholarship on a wide range of issues related to Pacific Islanders and is able to accomplish this because of their strength in public outreach. The MBC also hosts the Global Research and Innovation Hub in the Pacific and leads a number of global projects in the region.

City College of San Francisco, Critical Pacific Islander and Oceania Studies

Critical Pacific Islander and Oceania Studies is a curriculum that explores a variety of topics relating to the Pacific peoples, such as diaspora, social movements, and immigration. The college offers a certificate program and encourages those who complete the program to complete further education.

### 3.1.3 Student Survey and Interview Reccomendations

Students at WPI will play a valuable role in the Oceania Hub. Therefore, their ideas and opinions are inherently important as the team considers how the Hub will operate. Through the survey of over 100 WPI students, the team found the types of events that students are most interested in from most interested to least interested are: food related events, outdoor events, and events focused on arts and culture. The team found that students were interested in all topics listed in the survey but that climate and sustainability, Indigenous knowledge, and cuisine, ranked highest, all within four points of each other. To view the full survey questions, see Appendix L, and to view the data and results see Appendix M.

The team also asked each interviewee to give general recommendations for the beginning stages of the Oceania Hub. Professor Droessler, Dr. Aikau, and Professor Hansen recommended the team to look at Indigenous perspectives. Other recommendations included forming strong and valued partnerships so teams can co-collaborate with local communities; Professor Droessler emphasized this by stating that "Islanders don't want to be told about their future by Americans." Provost Winston Soboyejo reiterated this sentiment, stating that local ownership of the proposed solutions is vital and that "We are not just taking technology widgets to people without understanding their needs. We understand needs and empower people to solve their own problems."

## 3.2 Strategic Analysis

Strategic analysis is an essential component to consider when formulating a strategic plan. Performing a strategic analysis will promote discussion about the merits and challenges in place when creating the Oceania Hub, which will aid in smooth decision making for the program.

### 3.2.1 SWOT Analysis

The following section includes the team's SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for the Oceania Hub to perform a strategic analysis.

Strengths

*Positive Reputation of WPI*

WPI is the nation's third oldest engineering and technological university and is also a global leader in project-based learning (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2015). WPI's motto "Theory and Practice" gives a heightened experience to the STEM curriculum by converting classroom concepts to real-world impact. According to Provost Soboyejo, the "theory and practice" approach to problem solving is unique to WPI, and can therefore be one of the driving forces behind the impact WPI makes internally and externally. WPI has a positive reputation among people outside of the university; this sentiment is reflected by Dr. Aikau, who said she is "inspired by [WPI's] project-based curriculum" approach. This is a strength for the Oceania Hub potential partners will know the school's reputation as the Hub launches and may be more inclined to work with its students and faculty.

*Committed Faculty Interest*

An important aspect of the Oceania Hub will be those who are involved with it. Currently, the staff of the Oceania Hub consists of the directors of the three project centers that WPI has in Oceania: Honolulu, Hawai'i, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand. These faculty members all share interest and experience in the region because of their project centers and are committed to operating and growing with the Oceania Hub. As the Interim Dean of the Global School, Kent Rissmiller, emphasized that creating international programs requires faculty that are both committed to the program and connected to the area. The faculty of the Oceania Hub have both as they already run project centers in the region.

*University Support for Mission*

WPI's mission is to create, discover, and convey knowledge at the frontiers of technological academic inquiry for the betterment of society (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2015). On WPI's *Mission and Goals* webpage, it states that WPI's future vision is to be a global leader in project-based learning and demonstrate a positive impact on the planet and communities around the world. This vision supports the mission of the Oceania Hub, which is listed in sections above. It's a strength that the mission of WPI and the mission of the Oceania Hub support each other, because it shows unification and consistency throughout the university.

*Global School Expansion*

In October of 2020, WPI officially launched the new Global School. The Global School emphasizes overarching themes promoting climate action, decolonized narratives, science communication as well as topics aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the "Grand Challenges" domain. The model for the Global School enables undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty to work directly with regional partners, including businesses, non-government organizations (NGOs), other colleges, government agencies, and more (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2020). As the Global School continues to grow and expand, the Oceania Hub's relationship with the School will become clearer. Dean Rissmiller pointed out that funding for programs, such as the Oceania Hub, within WPI is decided annually and there is potential to fund the regional hubs through the Global School. This is because the Global School is an important aspect of the institution that they are working towards expanding. The growth of the Global School is a strength to the Oceania Hub because, as the Global School develops, more resources will be available for the Oceania Hub and it will be able to grow as well.

<u>Weaknesses</u>

*Lack of Expert Faculty*

From interviews, the team has found that curriculum is usually an important factor when building regional programs; however, it will be hard for the Oceania Hub to formulate such a curriculum about the Pacific Islands when the Institute lacks experts on Oceania. Currently, the only faculty whose expertise focuses on Oceania is Professor Holger Droessler, although other professors such as David Spanagel have academic interests that intersect with the region. Professor Droessler has been researching the Pacific Islands for over 10 years and is currently writing a book about Samoa called "Coconut Colonialism." He also teaches a class on oceans, with the main focus being the Pacific Ocean and Pacific Islands (HI 3344). Professor Spanagel teaches a general class on Ocean navigation (HI 3335). While Professors Droessler and Spanagel are great resources for the Oceania Hub, there is still a deficit of experts on the region at WPI. This is a weakness for the Hub if it wishes to develop a curriculum about the region.

*Lack of Islander Representation*

A quality that WPI lacks is representation from the Pacific Islander community. There is no faculty from the region involved with the Hub, and only a small number of students at WPI who are from the region. While this issue can be resolved by hiring faculty from the region, it will be a setback. If the Oceania Hub is to develop curriculum based on Pacific Island studies, it will be important to get the perspectives of those from the region by

hiring experts from Oceania. In her interview, Dr. Hattori reiterated the importance of having representation in programs and building relationships in the region that will allow for the Pacific Islander perspective to be intertwined into the Hub's programming. Making such hires could be especially beneficial if the Hub is to build a strong degree-granting program within WPI, although the team emphasizes that this path for the Hub is not strictly necessary. Pacific Islander representation on campus can also be gained through collaboration with other organizations or universities, but it is still a weakness for the Oceania Hub because that would require more outreach and partnership than solely hiring faculty.

*Need for Outside Funding*

After speaking with the directors of other regional studies programs here at WPI, specifically Professor Rudolph from the China Hub and Professors Galante and Madan from the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program, it has become clear that outside funding through grants is essential for operation of the Hub. Securing funding will be an obstacle because it requires extensive research about grants and finding which grant would be best suited for the Oceania hub. It will also take time and active effort to find and apply for the grant(s), which is why this is a weakness to the Hub.

*Increased Responsibilities for Involved Staff*

The staff of the Oceania Hub will consist of the project center directors from Honolulu, Hawai'i, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand as well as any expert on Oceania at WPI who would like to be involved. While the faculty involved seem to be very committed to the idea of the Hub, operating the Hub will involve taking on more responsibilities. Some faculty members may want compensation for this work, and they may feel more inclined to spend time on improving the Hub if there were added benefits. This is a threat if funding from WPI or outside grants can not easily be secured or are insufficient, and if the value the university places on the Hub's activities is not proportional to the time faculty members spend on planning the Hub's activities.

<u>Opportunities</u>

*Increased Interest in Global Studies and Initiatives*

In New England, Oceania is not a common area of interest because the two are geographically separated and few Pacific Islanders live in New England states, as was reflected by Dr. Kabutaulaka who was initially surprised by our interest in creating a program focusing on Oceania on the East Coast. However, the new Global School will promote regional studies programs at WPI, and give Oceania more exposure on campus,

so now is an ideal time to create a designated program for learning about the Oceania Region. Since Oceania is rarely studied in the northeast, especially in higher institutions focused on STEM, the Oceania Hub will be able to make a name for itself and lead New England in involvement in the region.

*Diversity in Region*

WPI lacks Pacific Islanders in our community, especially compared to institutions with developed Pacific Island Programs and high percentages of Islanders in their communities, such as the University of Utah's Pacific Island Studies Initiative and the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa. As the Oceania Hub increases interactions between WPI and the Pacific Islander community in the region, it leaves lots of opportunities to bring islanders to WPI. By offering an exchange of students or hiring more faculty from the region, WPI can create a more diverse student and faculty body. That will in turn attract more students and faculty from the region because they will see that the school provides a community for Pacific Islanders on campus, improving the Oceania Hub and the school as a whole.

*Oceania Alumni*

According to Interim Global School Dean Kent Rissmiller, in the years 2007-2008, a strategic plan was drafted to create alumni associations built around individual project centers. These alumni associations were created with the primary goal of allowing fundraising opportunities for the university. According to Provost Winston Soboyejo, alumni are often willing to donate to research at WPI, especially when approached about specific topics they are passionate about. At the time, six international alumni associations were created, including in Panama, Switzerland, Hong Kong and London. With a list of alumni who participated in Oceania projects or who live in the region available from WPI's advancement offices through Karen Bean, WPI has a robust base of former students who could be used in developing the Hub.

<u>Threats</u>

*Need to Hire More Faculty and Staff*

As mentioned previously, many visions for the Hub, especially ones that aim to eventually develop it into a curricular program, will require new hires at WPI, particularly experts on the region. The hiring process is a threat because it will be difficult to find experts on Oceania whose vision matches that of the Hub and the school. Hiring faculty and staff that are experts on Oceania for a STEM university in New England is not an easy task, and WPI has to approve of any decision made. In our interview with Dr. Aikau, she

emphasized “how important [Pacific Islander] staff are” and recommended that any and all staff be included in conversations regarding programming. Although new hires will be needed for some visions of what the Hub could be, some courses can be taught without needing new hires. For example, as previously mentioned Professor Holger Droessler and Professor David Spanagel both instruct courses at WPI that are relevant to Oceania.; however, expanding on this foundation would require more staff.

*Distance from Region*

A final important threat to consider is the geographical distance between WPI and Oceania. Being on the East Coast makes interacting with partners in the region especially hard, as well as the time zone difference. Hawai’i is five hours behind Worcester, Melbourne is sixteen hours ahead of Worcester, and Wellington is eighteen hours ahead of Worcester. This makes communication more difficult and may deter people from working with us. The geographical distance could also stymie interest.

## 3.2.2 Mission Statement Analysis

To create a mission statement, the team analyzed the mission statements of other regional programs to see how they formed them and what criteria were used.

The Latin American and Caribbean studies program created their mission statement through the use of their steering committee. This steering committee consisted of Professors John Galante, Aarti Madan, William San Martin, Angel Rivera, and Laureen Elgerts. They worked collaboratively, going through the potential directions the program could take based on the collective strengths of the members involved. They knew that their primary audience would be WPI students and faculty. Therefore, the focus of their mission statement was connecting the WPI community to Latin America. Professor Madan pointed out that a good mission statement will highlight the values of the program and its reason for existence. This allows the program to have form, but also be fluid as the aim of the program changes with time. Dr. Aikau, the director of the Pacific Islands Studies program at the University of Utah, described mission statements as “living, breathing documents” that reflect values and describes how the mission reflects that, as well as how the program faculty will implement it. The University of Utah’s own mission statement for its Oceania program changed after its hiring initiative brought on four Pacific Islander faculty, who led ongoing conversations at retreats to develop new mission statements.

In the proposed action plan, the team has provided three options for the mission statement and an analysis of each. The team also provides a recommendation of which statement fits best with the mission and goals of the proposed Hub.

# 4 Proposed Action Plan

The following is a proposed action plan created by the team for the directors of the Hawai'i, Australia, and New Zealand Project Centers. These recommendations were created from interviews conducted with directors of other regional programs inside and outside of WPI, as well as weekly meetings with the project center directors. The recommendations will be useful for the project center directors when they officially launch the Oceania Hub.

## 4.1 Oceania Hub Description

From the interview with Provost Soboyejo, the team learned that he envisions the WPI Global School breaking up the world into different regions, with each geographical area covered by "hubs" where WPI can use STEM to impact the world. This would also be a method to expand the interactions throughout those regions with alumni, universities, regional non-government organizations (NGOs), and businesses, as well as between the project centers themselves. The Hub will facilitate collaboration for creating shared projects between project centers based on the key themes of the region. The Oceania Hub will also play a role in organizing and coordinating courses either on campus or through modules that help students prepare for their project center experience. This includes helping students gain an understanding of the region's culture, history, economy, and environment. The full interview with Provost Soboyejo can be found in Appendix J.

The Oceania Hub currently includes three project centers: Melbourne, Australia, Wellington, New Zealand, and Honolulu, Hawai'i, with plans to create a new project center in Fiji or Samoa. The Hub will be focused on the key themes of identity, sustainability, and climate. This will allow the project center directors and the many sponsors that they work with to collaborate on projects relating to the themes of the Hub and allow for more innovation in the projects done at each center.

# 4.2 Action Plan

1. **Solidify Current Faculty Board**

The project center directors for the project sites in Oceania will form a faculty advisory board for the Oceania Hub. The team recommends that the board consists of the five project center directors and Professor Holger Droessler, who is in the beginning stages of developing a fourth project center in the region. This board will make decisions for the Hub, plan events and activities, and allocate funding of any grants that the Hub receives.

There are many potential ways that this faculty board can organize itself. Typically there is a director, however this is not necessary, especially at the beginning stages. The director of the program will have heightened responsibilities, and thus may be entitled to increased compensation (L. Mathews, personal communication, 2021). Some grants may require there to be a director or a point person of contact (usually tenured). If the faculty choose to forgo a designated director, this may make delegating tasks easier because everyone will have an equal say. Regardless, it is important to solidify this information before launching the Hub.

The following figure shows a possible structure of the Oceania Hub, with an optional director. The other positions on this diagram will be discussed further later in this section.

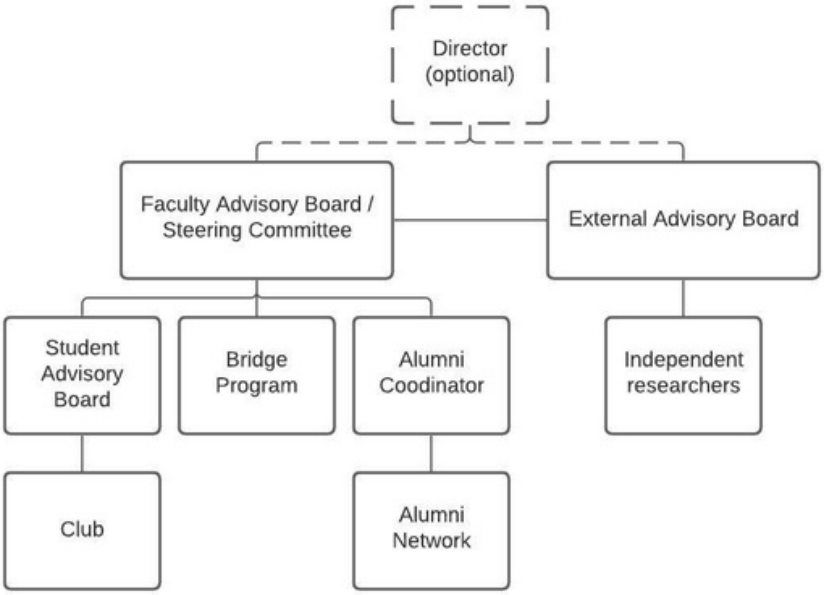


*Figure 3: Hub Structure with an optional director.*

2. **Adopt a Mission Statement**

The importance of mission statements was emphasized in interviews the team conducted throughout the term. The University of Utah program directors discussed how mission statements should be allowed to change and grow as a program does, while still reflecting its core values. The team developed three potential mission statements:

- *The mission of the Oceania Hub is to develop a critical understanding of the Oceania region through project-based learning, hands-on community development, and curriculum-based learning and research. The Oceania Hub serves as an interdisciplinary workspace where faculty, students, and members of the Oceania community can work as partners in solving problems ranging from social sciences to STEM.*
- *The Oceania Hub serves as an intellectual hub for the WPI community to encourage interest in the Oceania region and find areas for WPI involvement. The mission of the Hub is to provide opportunities for education and participation in the WPI community by hosting events on campus and fostering connections between WPI and members of Oceania's communities through project-based learning.*
- *The mission of the Oceania Hub is to help all current and future project centers in Oceania focus their intellectual activities around three key themes: identity, sustainability, and climate. These areas utilize WPI's academic strengths in STEM, while also encouraging WPI students and faculty to collaborate with and learn from the local communities. This collaboration will foster intellectual and cultural exchanges between WPI and the region, which will enhance WPI's commitment to global learning.*

Each mission statement has different qualities that are stressed in the phrasing. For example, the first mission statement focuses on curriculum and hands-on learning to solve problems. The second focuses on building relationships and providing educational opportunities, with an emphasis on project-based learning. The third is unique because it strengthens the notion that projects in Oceania will focus on important themes in the region, while also collaborating with local partners and focusing on WPI's core strength of STEM. Based on feedback from the sponsors during the sponsor focus group and regular meetings, the team strongly recommends the Oceania Hub adopt the third mission statement. During the focus group, the sponsors agreed that the third statement best reflects their united vision for what the Hub will become once it is officially launched and the goals that they will strive for.

3. **Expand Partnerships**

Through interviews, the team found that partnerships are one of the most important aspects of a regional program. The team recommends that the project center directors reach out to universities at each of the project center locations and form partnerships and memorandums of understandings (MOUs), akin to the MOU that exists with Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. This would allow for more collaboration and the possibility for an exchange program.

Additionally, based on our interview with Professor Robert Krueger, the team recommends that the project center directors reach out to Professor Krueger to learn more about the Institute of Science and Technology for Development (InSTeD) and forming a relationship between the school and the Oceania Hub. InSTeD works in regions around the world with central themes that match the goals of the Oceania Hub, such as climate and sustainability.

4. **Apply for Grant(s) for Funding**

Plans for the Oceania Hub will be heavily dependent on finding outside grants. Typically, grants are given to programs with a specific vision in mind; therefore, the vision of the Oceania Hub must be aligned with the vision of the grant. It is important to note that the vision of the grant may be different from the vision of the project center directors; however, grant funding is crucial if the Hub wants to develop new initiatives. Therefore, the project center directors need to be flexible with their vision of the Hub. Though the specific activities of the Hub are still to be developed, it is clear that any activities are likely to incur costs. The team recommends that the Oceania Hub first develop programs and activities that conform to specific grants so that they can apply for those grants. An example of an organization the Hub could apply for grants from is the Andrew Mellon Foundation, which is a private grant-giving foundation with a focus on higher education and conservation as well as arts and humanities (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, n.d.). This foundation appears to be a good fit for the Oceania Hub because of its focus on culture and program building. Grants given from this foundation range from less than $50,000 to greater than $5,000,000 (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, n.d.).

The Pacific Islands Studies Program received a $600,000 grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation in 2018 to support growth and outreach in the multidisciplinary Pacific Islander Studies Program for 39 months (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2018). The University of California at Santa Barbara also received a $175,000 grant from the foundation in 2012 to support a seminar series on the Pacific region (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2018).

Aside from the two programs supported above, the Andrew Mellon Foundation has given out 63 grants, summing just under $40,000,000, to other programs that support global studies initiatives, as well as 13 grants, summing over $3,000,000, to programs on regional studies (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2018). WPI has never received a Mellon Grant, so this would be a first-of-its-kind at the Institute.

5. **With Grants, Hire New Faculty**

In order for the Oceania Hub to thrive, WPI needs more faculty with expertise in the region. Therefore, faculty involved with the Oceania Hub will utilize some of the grant money they receive to hire new faculty who have experience and expertise in the Oceania. If there are insufficient funds to hire an expert in the region there could be a visiting faculty member from Oceania, and if that's not feasible then they could even hire a virtual faculty member who can work within the Hub but lives in Oceania. By doing so, the Hub will be able to build a greater educational foundation in WPI. Presently, WPI's only resident expert on Oceania is Professor Droessler. Future staff of the Oceania Hub can either: teach or plan new courses on the Pacific Islands here at WPI, conduct their own research in Oceania, or create new programs through the Oceania Hub, such as an alumni network or a high school and/or community college "bridge" program to gain interest in Oceania studies from a younger age (both described in the following steps).

6. **Create an Alumni Network**

According to the Office of Alumni Relations at WPI, there are currently 114 WPI alumni residing or working in the Oceania region, with the most popular residences being Australia and Hawai`i. Alumni could potentially play a major role in the Oceania Hub by providing connections to regional partners such as businesses, non-profits, government agencies, and universities. With 114 alumni in the region, it will not be difficult to contact these people in order to gauge their interests in participating in or having involvement with the Oceania Hub. These alumni connections will also promote more involvement in the region because it is easier to work with connections that are already formed and make new connections through them rather than make entirely new connections all together.

The team collected the names and contact information of the WPI alumni who live in Oceania. Using this list, the faculty members of the Oceania Hub will contact alumni and gauge their interest in being involved in the Hub.

The team also recommends the Hub create a WPI Oceania Alumni Facebook group. By doing so, alumni living in Oceania and abroad will have a way to connect and communicate. This will make it easier to contact alumni from the region and give them a

pace to network. It may be useful to have an alumni coordinator position within the Hub. Their job would be to keep alumni updated on everything that the Hub is doing, set up networking events, bring past students together, and create a platform where alumni can feel connected to their peers.

An alumni network is important not only because it provides insight to the Oceania Hub on interests in the area, but also gives long-term value to the Hub by giving alumni a chance to continue to learn from each other even after leaving WPI. Since the team was unable to explore alumni outreach depth, the team strongly recommends having a future IQP team build off our work and focus specifically on alumni outreach in Oceania and creating and alumni network for the Hub.

7. **Develop a Website and Social Media Accounts**

Based on interviews with the leaders of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program and the China Hub at WPI, the team recommends that the Oceania Hub develop a website. A website would increase the Hub's visibility and their presence online. This will promote connections with people who are interested in the Hub and increase the Hub's credibility.

Based on the development of the websites for WPI's existing programs and ongoing efforts to improve them, the team recommends that the Oceania Hub project center directors reach out to the marketing department at WPI and inquire about a potential website. The design for the website will feature a landing page that outlines everything students and faculty should know about the Hub, including its mission statement, structure, and objectives. It will also have an "About" page that displays all of the faculty involved and provides their contact information, as well as projects the Hub has been involved with.

The site could include short videos that showcase the work being done in the region and the partners the Hub works with. Additionally, the team recommends that the Oceania Hub be represented on social media, such as Instagram and Facebook, because it will increase the Hub's visibility online and could even connect with the Alumni Facebook page. The Hub can use its social media pages to promote their programs and activities. The social media accounts will be maintained by the Student Advisory Board, mentioned later in this section

8. **Create an External Advisory Board**

The Oceania Hub will be the focal point of the project centers in the region, as well as all work and research WPI undertakes in it. The Hub will foster many connections through alumni and regional partners such as businesses, NGOs, universities, and research institutions. To strengthen the Hub's connection with the region and have an outside, expert perspective, an external advisory board should be formed.

The external advisory board will consist of regional partners who are particularly interested in working with WPI, such as alumni, their families and past or current project sponsors. While this advisory board will not be associated with the Institute, it is important to always have an outside perspective on any and all operations that the Hub does. This advisory board will not be a full time or official position but will instead be staffed by volunteers who are interested in the success of the Oceania Hub.

It's important to note that the regional studies programs inside WPI and outside of WPI that the team interviewed did not have external advisory boards because they had adequate representation and expertise from the region, whereas the Oceania Hub lacks on-campus representation from the region. The team highly recommends that a future IQP team focus on developing an external advisory board for the Hub by reaching out to relevant experts and building off and maintaining the relationships the team formed in our project.

9. **Form a Student Advisory Board**

The team recommends that the Oceania Hub incorporate a student advisory board. The members on this board will be tasked with creating and maintaining an Oceania Student Club. Both Professor Rudolph of the China Hub and Professors Galante and Madan of the Latin America and Caribbean Studies Program work intimately with student organizations in their programs. The Latin America and Caribbean Studies Program has an eight to ten member student advisory council, and the program was actually created in part to unite student organizations such as the Brazilian Student Association and Hispanic and Caribbean Student Association with project centers. Professor Rudolph said that organizations such as the Chinese Student Association are responsible for organizing many on-campus events. As the Oceania Hub will serve the education of students at WPI, the team believes it is important they have a voice in it, and the close relationships between WPI's existing regional programs and student organizations means the team feel confident recommending a student club and advisory board.

The Oceania Student Association (OSA) will focus on the themes of sustainability and climate. This decision is based on student surveys which indicated these themes as the most popular. OSA can host student-led discussions and sessions based on that theme and will allow students with interest in the region to have a community on campus. The club can also host in-person events that promote the culture, food, and arts of Oceania and could possibly collaborate with similar student organizations outside of WPI. In addition to the club, the advisory board will occasionally meet with the faculty board to provide their thoughts and feedback from students. Finally, the student advisory board will be responsible for maintaining the Hub's social media accounts.

10. **Create a Bridge Program**

The University of Utah's Pacific Islands Study Initiative has attracted many students interested in Pacific Islands studies by actively engaging community organizations (although it should be emphasized that Utah has a significant Pacific Islander community that Massachusetts does not have).

In Dr. Aikau and Moana Uluave-Hafoka's interview, the team learned that on-campus outreach is just as important as outreach in the region for generating student interest and spreading awareness of the program. Based on this, the team recommends that the Oceania Hub sponsors a bridge program, similar to that of the University of Utah, that will target high schoolers and/or community colleges to show them WPI's involvement in Oceania and educate them about the region. This will work to generate more interest and possibly attract more students with Pacific Islander heritage to WPI while also creating more passion for the projects that the Hub will sponsor. The team recommends the Bridge Program reach out to the Massachusetts Academy of Math & Science at WPI to foster high school involvement in global learning because there is already a relationship.

While local involvement is important, community outreach in the Oceania region is equally so. The team recommends that the Bridge Program reach out to communities in Oceania to attract high school students to potentially study at WPI. This can be done by contacting universities in Oceania and partnering with their high school outreach programs. By having involvement in the communities of Oceania, WPI will strengthen the connections that have already been made in the region and potentially diversify its student population by attracting students from Oceania.

11. **Organize Events to Gain Student Interest**

The Oceania Hub will need to host events on-campus to promote the programs that will be offered. These programs will be directed at students and other faculty. An official launch event could be "Oceania Day on the Quad." This event would host local restaurants that serve food from the region, offer educational activities about the arts and culture from the region, have guest speakers and artists, and celebrate the culture of Oceania. This would spread awareness of the culture and people of the region and capture student interest because WPI does not have a large population of Pacific Islander students.

Other events that the Oceania Hub could stage include conferences and seminars with guest speakers from the region and smaller cultural events that focus on common themes throughout the region like Indigenous knowledge, sustainability and climate. These could be held during Arts and Sciences Week, which is held every fall at WPI. Despite the survey showing that events on the Quad and food-based experiences are most popular with the student body, the team still believes that these hold an important place in the Oceania Hub. Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka described how any regional studies program should ensure that the people native to it are "not just subjects we study." Centering Indigenous perspectives, especially by inviting them to campus if possible, can help promote student interest while being culturally respectful.

12. **Monitor and Evaluate Progress**

Monitoring the success of the Oceania Hub will be based on how well the Hub is able to follow the action plan that has been put into place and capitalize on the opportunities that are available. A great advantage of the monitoring and evaluation process is that it will allow the hub to follow the established direction set up throughout the strategic plan. To accomplish the monitoring process, the Hub should regularly hold meetings with involved faculty to observe the progress that the Hub has made. This will allow for open discussion and for honest reflection on what areas the Hub is doing well in, and what areas could use improvement. For example, the Hub may be successful in holding joint projects between the project centers, while failing to have much alumni outreach. These are things that should be made clear as the evaluation of the Hub begins.

The evaluation process is where the Hub will be able to look at both the original strategic plan, and what the Hub has already done, and evaluate whether the goals set forth by the Hub originally are still relevant and what goals need to be prioritized over the others. The evaluators should ask questions such as:

- Are the goals and objectives still realistic?
- Should the priorities of the Hub change to focus on achieving certain goals?
- Does the Hub have adequate personnel and resources?
- Are there new goals that the Hub would like to achieve?

It should be expected that the goals of the Hub will change over time as certain aspects of the Hub may become impossible to achieve and new opportunities arise. The strategic plan for the Hub serves as a guideline and not a strict roadmap, so it should be expected that the Hub will see many changes to its original plan over time.

# 5 Conclusion

The objectives of this project were to aid sponsors and other readers in developing a basic understanding of the region, evaluate existing area studies programs within and outside of WPI, and design a strategic plan for the Oceania Hub. By writing a monograph and strategic plan, the project center directors of the Hawai'i, New Zealand, and Australia are one step closer to officially launching the Oceania Hub. The monograph presents a narrative of Oceania with an emphasis on Indigenous knowledge and identity that can be used to develop an understanding of the region through a specific lens, while the proposed action plan uses information collected about other regional studies programs to provide a roadmap that will allow the Oceania Hub to be realized. The team is confident in the work we have done, and hope that it will be useful to our sponsors as they fulfill their goal of a fully realized Oceania Hub.

We faced some unique challenges this term. Work was done remotely and two separate IQP teams had to combine to complete the project. However, these challenges were taken in stride. We believes the future of the Hub is bright and we are extremely grateful to have been involved in the beginning stages of its creation.

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# Appendix A

**Interview script for China Hub Director, Professor Jennifer Rudolph:**

*Hello, our names are (introduce the team) and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to launch the Oceania Hub, a similar concept to the China Hub, which is why we would like to ask you some questions about your program. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about the other existing regional programs at WPI. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?*

1. Did you play a role in the creation of the China Hub?

   Yes. Professor Rudolph came to WPI with the intention of creating a China program. It started with an MQP center in China with no original plans of going beyond that, but eventually shifted into a program with more of a presence on campus. They received 3 federal grants, a business and education grant, and undergraduate foreign language and international studies grants to create a broader Chinese curriculum on campus, where the China hub was written into one of the grant plans. They also developed more classes on China and created a Chinese studies minor. She had administrative support at the department level, but less so at the higher levels. Eventually, in 2013, the administration was on board because of the success of the program from the grant funding, so the China Hub was officially established.

   The China Hub is still a small program. Most of this was funded through the 4 grants that were given to the program. Professor Rudolph led 3 of them. All together, they've brought in about $1 million in grants to build the program, not for research.

   a. Who else was involved?

      Professor Rudolph and Amy Zhang were the two mainly involved, however Kevin Rung in the Mechanical Engineering department and Jennifer DeWinter also contributed.

      They still don't have much China expertise on campus, but they do teach the language and have enough for the minor. They adapted materials from a case study on entrepreneurship in china into a business class.

2. When the Hub was established, was there a five-year goal?

   Because the China Hub would be funded from outside sources like grants, they aligned their goals to match the grant. Most grants are for 2-3 years, and they have not been able to secure internal funding from WPI. The Hub cannot grow without more staff; currently there are only 3 people working on the China Hub.

   a. How did you come up with the initial plan?

      To come up with the plan, Professor Rudolph focused on grant priorities, aligning the China Hub's goals with grant goals to try to secure funding. If the China Hub

could've been internally funded through WPI, Professor Rudolph says she would've done a lot of things differently.

b. What is your vision for the program for the next five years?

The China Hub is looking to get more advanced Chinese language classes. They want students fluent enough to be able to work internships in China or to have an exchange program.

There is so much potential growth that can happen through the new Global School but they need resources to grow. They need more staff, funding, and programs. There is a lot of potential with the Trans-Regional Studies Program with Professor Galante and Professor Madan. This program will align STEM with regional studies in a way that hasn't been done before. Rudolph thinks it's a very cool idea, but most people involved have full plates already, so it's hard to get and use all of the resources needed.

3. From reading the mission of the China Hub, it is stated that some goals are to "enhance the experience, knowledge, skill sets, and capabilities of students, faculty, staff and the business community with respect to China." What are some examples of events that have helped to facilitate this mission?

The China Hub is university wide and is grounded in a curricular initiative, but they also facilitated events like the China Hub film and speaker series, having visiting scholars, researchers, and engineers. Events on campus also include the China town hall and working with Chinese student organizations on campus. She also created a Chinese studies minor.

4. How much of the China Hub budget is funded by WPI and how much is funded by grants?

The China Hub needs outside grants to operate. It gets a lot of funding from outside grants, and some (but not all that it wants) from WPI. Funding has been a challenge for the China Hub and has prevented them from doing some of the things that they want.

a. How do you decide which programs and events are prioritized when it comes to allocating the funds?

Much of what the China Hub does is determined by external funding. External grants are typically contingent on the organization completing a certain task or supporting a cause. This has resulted in the China Hub having to change certain aspects of their goals and objectives to align with the funding that they receive. Money prioritizes objectives.

5. What do you find is the most effective way to communicate what the program is doing?

While it is not a worry in a pandemic, the China Hub maintains close relationships with student organizations, has a film series and accommodates faculty who want to visit China or work with Chinese scholars (welcoming visiting scholars from China), but they

don’t promote as much as the Latin America and Caribbean Initiative because of limited manpower.

6. What sort of student interest have you experienced with regard to the China Hub?

   A lot of students are interested. They offer 13 different language classes, so they probably have around 40-50 students in the beginning Chinese language classes every year. A lot stop taking it after filling the HUA recruitments. About 15 students in any given year are working on the Chinese minor. 70-75 students work on a Chinese project center every year. Filling these centers is not a problem. They do not advertise because they do not have the staff and funding to accommodate more students.

7. Have you considered trying to make a graduate program?

   The Trans-Regional Studies Program will be a graduate course. This will be based on multiple reasons and take a more thematic approach such as looking at power struggle and Anthropocene.

   a. If so, what are the obstacles you've encountered in that process?

      The Global School needs global content, but the China Hub needs expertise to have it. They currently don’t have too much expertise in some areas.

8. Were there any initiatives in the China Hub that did not work the way you initially planned?

   The China Hub wanted an international engineering program that combines the University of Rhode Island's 5-year intensive approach and WPI’s approach because WPI’s approach doesn’t allow for deep engagement with the culture of language or the formation of long term connections. WPI would need a tenure track language professor and funding. A lot of grants and programs can only be created with professors who are tenured. There is a lot more the Hub can do, but it needs more faculty and money. The China Hub has to prioritize what it currently does, rather than everything it wants to do.

9. Are there any regional studies programs outside of WPI that inspired you in developing your program?

   Professor Rudolph taught at SUNY Albany and was inspired by their East Asian studies department. For WPI, there aren’t many models they could copy (i.e. not much integration of Chinese into STEM). They came up with the model of modules, hub, IQP centers, and minors mostly independently (as they wanted a global structure to hang regional ones off of, which would be realized in the Global School). However, they are excited that Regional Studies is evolving from history and language to integrating new disciplines (Her sister-in-law combines Chinese + urban planning in her work, for example).

10. Do you have any suggestions for the Oceania Hub or a new hub in general?

There are lots of documents that say what “Hub” means made by our committees, but they are not publicly available.
The team should read the IQP report for Japan’s centers. There have been reports on establishing centers (ex. New Zealand). Don’t structure the hub around regional experts because we don’t have enough at WPI; focus on thematic expertise (ex. infrastructure development, energy) and a climate adaptability program.

# Appendix B

**Interview questions for Latin America and Caribbean Studies program Heads, Professor John Galante and Professor Aarti Madan:**

*Hello, our names are (introduce the team) and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to launch the Oceania Hub, a similar concept to the Latin America and Caribbean Studies program, which is why we would like to ask you some questions about your program. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about the other existing regional programs at WPI. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?*

1. Did you play a role in the creation of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program?

   The idea of how to create a center for community interest in Latin America was created by four people: John Galante, Aarti Madan, William San Martin, and Angel Rivera back in 2018. They wanted to unite interest across multiple disciplines (HUA, HIS, LANG) and involve Project centers as well as related student organizations on campus.

   a. If so, what role?

      Professor Galante acts as director but he isn't officially the director. He keeps the program running, organizes when2meets, and leads a grant project they received.

   b. When was it founded?

      Fall of 2018

2. Do you have a board of faculty for the program?

   Steering Committee of five people: the four founders and Laureen Elgerts, who was added after.
   Faculty Advisory Council: project center directors and researchers
   Student advisory Council: 8-10 students that engage with the faculty to aid in developing programs that students are interested in. It consists of student organizations on campus related to Latin America and Caribbean Studies.
   Professor Galante mentioned that it is a "loose structure, and no one is in charge; all decisions are made by consensus."

3. When the program was established, was there a five-year goal?

   There was no firm goal of this kind, (it came together over time) but the program may have benefitted from having one. After the grant was allocated, they structured a 3-year plan. They recommended being flexible and nimble, taking opportunities when presented.

   a. What is your vision for the program for the next five years?

There is a plan for the next 3 years because of the grant proposal. They want to create an “intellectual community” focused on Latin American studies on campus. Some of these goals include: creating a minor, hosting event series, and establishing funding. With the grant they would like to expand on project centers, build curriculum, and create a community of external scholars and post docs that could come to WPI. For the project centers, they hope to create HUA centers and expand IQP centers into MQP centers as. They also want to apply for external funding.

4. Has the program received grants for funding?

   They received a grant for their Spanish language program from the government and an internal grant from the Morgan Teaching center. In the summer of 2019, they received a stipend from the arts and science department so they could continue to work on the development. For arts and science week, they used funding to bring artists, musicians, and experts to host talks on Latin American studies. The Useful Grant from the US department of education is the primary source of funds now.
5. What do you find is the most effective way to communicate what the program is doing?

   Personalized communication with faculty and telling students about events during classes are far more effective than fliers and emails.

   a. How much use is the website to you, your partners, and audience?

      Diane O'Keefe is helping to develop the website to be more dynamic than the current landing page. They already have many things to populate a website, such as testimonials, lightning videos, etc. This just needs to be organized.
      So far, the website has mostly been used internally, and maybe by students looking at WPI.
      The website was made initially as a landing page for students so that, when they read our flyers, they had a place to see what the program is about and what it is doing.

6. What relationship do you see the Global School having with the regional hubs and programs?

   Currently, they are talking with Professor Rudolph about creating a Masters of Transregional Studies. As of now, Latin American studies and Asian studies are under this, but they are planning a phased approach to start to incorporate other regions such as Oceania, Africa and the Middle East. They started this in early 2020 and got a market analysis in August of 2020. They are working to solidify this in the next few months. There are more graduate program opportunities, such as some with interests in climate change.

   a. How will the Hubs and programs interact with one another?

      There is hope for connections. Each “hub” will be similar and different. Hubs will look different in every region due to WPI interest in the area. There is no real way

to define a hub because of this. The Global School might serve to be the unifying force of the Hubs.

7. What are some formal relationships the program has formed with regional partners?

   Regional relationships consist of the relationships that the different project centers have formed. The plans to create new relationships using a robust international travel budget were put on hold by COVID.

   a. How did you initially form these relationships?

      They haven't done this quite yet. They got most of these relationships from the individual project centers. COVID has pushed gaining relationships behind.

8. Are you familiar with the work that the China Hub does?

   Yes, they have worked closely with professor Rudolph.

   a. Was it a conscious decision not to use the word “hub” in the title of your program?

      The main reason why they didn’t choose the word “hub” is because they didn’t know what they wanted to do, which is why they intentionally chose the vague term “initiative.” It was a placeholder name for their arts and science event. Now they may want to change their name to “Hub”.

   b. What would you say are the main differences between your program and the China Hub?

      The China Hub has a line item in the WPI annual budget, meaning it gets a set yearly funding, so it can operate steadily even without grant money; the Latin American and Caribbean program does not have this (but it is something they are slowly working towards).

9. Are there any regional studies programs outside of WPI that inspired you in developing your program?

   Both Professors Galante and Madan got PhDs at Pittsburgh and leaned on them for developing ideas based on their robust Latin American study programs. They suggested looking at other programs’ websites for guidance. While they suggested masters’ programs at Columbia and trans-Atlantic programs in general, they say WPI is eclectic and copying existing programs is not sufficient. They also said that there might be some programs at schools in California that the team could use as inspiration.

10. Do you have any suggestions for the Oceania Hub or a new hub/program in general?

    The Oceania Hub should find some themes that the program can focus on and find a way to bring in students and get them interested in the program; indigeneity might be a good theme to use because WPI doesn’t focus on that much right now and it is a common theme across Oceania. It may also be a topic of interest among students. Climate change

would also be good to focus on, especially with the launch of a climate program in Global School. They said that to succeed, the Hub will need to create an audience that may not entirely be rooted in the region itself and figure out how to get students that are not just part of the project centers interested in the program.

# Appendix C

**Interview questions for Interim Dean for the Global School, Professor Kent Rissmiller:**

*Hello, our names are _____ and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub, which will partner with the Global School. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about the other existing regional programs at WPI and the Global School. First, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. What role did you play in establishing the Global School?

   Professor Rissmiller became Associate Dean of IGSD in 2006. In 2016, he became the interim dean of the Global School. In 2018, he planned to reorganize the “Global Impact Division” (GPS + global studies) so it could be a hub for international partnerships. The idea was to raise the visibility of global programs at WPI, including IQPs, MQPs, and HUA’s, so they can have a more enduring impact.
   This led to the formation of a committee with ten people on it, The Global Impact Division Advisory Group worked for a year to bring a proposal to faculty for The Global School. The following September (w/ a new provost who wanted a major role), the committee continued to meet, and by spring of 2019, the proposal was well-developed. Provost Soboyeko wanted to define the mission for Global School in a more ambitious manner. In late spring of 2019, the proposal was formally approved. The current committee for the Global School includes department heads and program leads. This includes Professors Rudolph and Krueger.

2. What role do you, as the Dean, have in decision-making at the Global School?

   As Dean, he manages faculty, and is responsible for international travel decisions since the pandemic.
   The major thing that they’ve created is a new graduate program that has a high degree of consensus and the support of the provost.
   They have had a search for the permanent dean position that began late last spring. Professor Rissmiller is tied to the search committee but is not on it. They identified 10 candidates, narrowed it down to 6, then 3 in October. A couple of the candidates withdrew and took other positions, so they started over in December. They have 80-90 candidates, with a timeline of having someone in place by august 1st.

3. When the program was established, was there a five-year goal? What’s your vision for the next five years?

   They have been trying to accomplish a strategic plan goal called “global projects for all” which was established in 2016. This included the $5,000 scholarship given to students for global projects. There are about 11,000 students a year in the GPP, so providing enough project opportunities is and has been one of the top priorities of the global school.
   The main goals are:

- Maintaining the undergraduate program (can't raise tuition and can't bring in more students)
- Building a solid grad program (because they need to fund the school, but can't make undergrad bigger)
- Develop connections that would enable more participation for grad and undergrad. They are interested in expanding opportunities for more impactful project work and more collaborative faculty research with universities and businesses around the world (ex. center for global public safety). The ability to fund grants and faculty research that would raise visibility of WPI as a research institute and provide opportunities to WPI faculty is a slow process.

4. Does the global school have a formal definition of a regional hub? If so, what is it?

   No, there is not one. Our international programs are very decentralized (the China Hub is the most successful) and most places are different. The "hub" word first came forward in 2007-08 as part of an early strategic plan, not led by people in IGSD. It was the brainchild of the previous Dean of Arts and Sciences and Advancement. It asked if there were some locations where they had IQP/MQP centers with enough alumni such that they could fundraise to support global work to build collaborative partnerships. They established 6 international alumni associations: including Switzerland, Panama, Thailand, Hong Kong (where Rudolph was invaluable) and London. While these created partnerships, not all efforts have been successful. The London chapter has been rather inactive, and Panama has not been supplied with an expected stream of graduate students. There is no firm definition of "hub", and there have been active discussions about retiring the term.

   a. What do you expect the roles of the Regional Hubs at WPI to be?

      They want to get beyond IQP centers. Oceania project sites (Aus, NZ, HI) are all popular destinations for undergraduate students, but they don't have an alumni base. Joint collaborative projects for students outside of IQPs is the goal.

      New Zealand is a decent example of having connections with faculty, and it has developed networks with sponsor organizations. Also, Switzerland, which Professor Burnham directs, is a good example of an alumni program. Panama is a good example of things that didn't work. He recommended talking with Professor Sakulich about that.

5. How will the newly introduced regional hubs at WPI be funded; will the school support them, or will they primarily be reliant on outside grants?

   Professor Rissmiller doesn't know how they will be funded because they make decisions on an annual basis. There have been huge budget cuts across the university and a hiring freeze since May. They haven't had a routine budget process in the last year and a half and are looking forward to putting something in place. He has the responsibility for preparing materials for budget meetings and asking for resources. There is some opportunity for funding because they are involved in another strategic planning exercise

and they want the global aspect to be a big part of WPI. This plan will require funding, which will go toward building partnerships. Other funding will come from fundraising efforts in the capital campaign to fund certain elements. This strategic plan for global efforts should be decided upon by the end of the academic year, and the hubs are part of what they are planning for WPI.

6. Is there a formal process in place to have a regional hub recognized by the Global School?

   There is still no recognized formal definition of a Hub at WPI. This was going to be worked on more in 2020 but has been delayed due to the pandemic.

7. How does the Global School build international partnerships?

   He believes that it takes a champion. Many of WPI's most successful initiatives were created by faculty who volunteered to help. Faculty with connections to places around the globe have helped the Global School immensely to open new project centers. The Copenhagen project center exists because Peter Peterson and Tom Thompson were both from Copenhagen and met at WPI and volunteered to start the project center out of interest in creating more opportunities. In order to build international partnerships, the school needs faculty that are willing to put in the work and who have connections.

8. Do you have any recommendations for the Oceania Hub in or a new hub in general?

   He thinks the team talked to the right people.
   Rissmiller has seen efforts put into Panama that have not necessarily succeeded.
   He thinks the team reached most of the people that are the relevant players. He wants to see our final presentation.

# Appendix D

**Interview script for Professor Peter Hansen, Copenhagen, Denmark Project Center Director and connected with the European Hub.**

*Hello, our names are _____ and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub which is part of the Global School. As project center director of Copenhagen, Denmark we wanted to find out more information on your plans for the European Hub to aid in our development of the Oceania Hub. First, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. What are your responsibilities in your role as director of the Copenhagen center?

   Hansen is responsible for identifying projects for IQP students; determining the term and identifying sponsors and places to live during the term are his duties. He joined the project center as the co-director, once it had already been started. The Copenhagen project center is over 25 years old, so other people have found places to stay as well as a network of sponsors that they continue to work with. The range of the projects changes overtime though. There is a memorandum of understanding with a university in Denmark that provides housing in exchange for sending students to WPI.

   He also plays a role in the identification and placement of students to project centers. Each application is read by 2 people and ranked based on writing skills and academics. They then match the student to a project center. The project center directors do not get to pick who goes to their center.

   a. What are your priorities when looking for possible projects?

      It is a combination of looking at prevalent issues and what the sponsors want. Typically, one has about three central issues and tries to focus the projects on these issues. Copenhagen has twelve projects a year, which is a lot of work because each project is free standing from others.

2. Have you ever been involved in building a new project center?

   Yes, he helped to develop the Leon, France project center. WPI did not have an IQP center in France prior to this. He worked with Professor Miller and went to Leon in fall 2018 and had students there in summer 2019. They tried to identify who was interested and had a few people who were well connected in the local community who helped the project center get in touch with the necessary professionals. Students on IQP there stayed in dormitories.
   Housing plays a big role in whether or not project centers work. If housing is too expensive or not available, the IQP center will not work.

3. Are you affiliated with the global school?

The Global School is, in theory, a cross-unit organization. This means that it is collaborative between all academic departments at WPI. However, most of the faculty that are involved in the Global School directly (i.e. a project center advisor) are from the HUA department.

4. Do you have plans to develop a European Hub?

   There are plans to coordinate the European project centers more closely; however, it would not necessarily be a hub; the only thing that has been a hub is the China Hub. While the term is over ten years old, there is still no single formal definition for a hub. While the Latin America and Caribbean Studies program certainly is similar, no program has truly copied the China Hub. Because Europe is a continent with a large number of languages and nations, creating a hub is much more difficult than it is for China, which has a common language, government and culture. Europe is even more disadvantaged relative to Africa because the quantity of project centers is much higher. WPI wants to get more involved with France. While a hub may have lots of potential, taking so many diverse locations and coordinating them will be tough.

5. Are there any specific aspects or programs that you feel would be important for us to include in our final recommendation for the Hub to the directors of the 3 project centers?

   Look at Native perspectives. Australia and New Zealand are technically still colonies. Like in Canada, South Africa, or the U.S. Native perspectives can be a good focus for projects. Since the Global School is taking a thematic approach rather than a strictly regional approach, looking at projects in Europe and trying to apply them to projects in Oceania can be helpful. He believes that the team must think of connections across the network as a whole.

## Appendix E

**Interview script for Professor Robert Krueger, Ghana Project Center Director, founder of InSTed, and connected with the Africa Hub.**

*Hello, our names are _____ and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub which is part of the Global School. As project center director of Ghana, we wanted to find out more information on your plans for the Africa Hub to aid in our development of the Oceania Hub. First, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. What is the relationship between InSTeD and the Global School?

   InSTed stands for the Institute of Science and Technology Development. It is focused on Africa because that is my area of interest, but it is open to any region around the world.

   InSTed also has a new master's program that is housed in WPI's arts and sciences department. It has affiliations with 11 or more different programs and departments at WPI and 40+ affiliated faculty. InSTed is global in nature and campus wide. The school of engineering and the WPI's Global School are also involved in InSTed. However it's important to note that, although the Global School is affiliated with InSTed, it will be housed in the global sciences department until the structure of the Global school is finalized.

2. How will the Pan-African Flower model, or something similar that WPI does, work? What is your vision for how the project centers will interact?

   The typical project center experience has the project center advisor enter knowing nothing about the projects and advising students on how to think critically about them. He used to advise projects in Thailand where they were doing projects on pharmacy design, helping Buddhists understand their pathway to death using drugs to help them be comfortable. However, he is a geographer that studies urban sustainability and he knew nothing about the projects. Therefore, he wanted to create something that utilizes his expertise and where he could be more involved. In Ghana, the projects have a very strong commitment to co-design and collaboration where the communities are partners and participate in the production of knowledge, problem-solving, and solution formulation.

   They have been trying to hone in on that process and refine it. That kind of thinking is what will guide WPI through the Africa initiative. He has received funding from Intel to study e-waste and he is going to do a project based on the needs of the local people and the environments they live in and identify how to improve it. In Africa, it's about identifying what the public's safety needs are and then coming up with a solution collaboratively.

3. The Provost has talked a lot about moving from these sorts of small experimental lab work projects into big industrial projects that can create wealth for the people of the area; how does this transition happen?

One way to start doing that is to rid yourself of the assumption that you need a large industrial project to do anything. There is lab science, but also the science of life. While it doesn't bear the "actual scientific discovery," it does solve problems. For example, Africa was used to be an imperial colony of many European countries including Portugal, Spain, England, France, Belgium, Germany, and to a smaller extent Italy.

During colonialism, they tried to wage war and defeat the Indigeonous tribes. In Zimbabwe, the tribes figured out they were immune to the bite of a certain type of insect, but the soldiers of the colonial army were not. So this tribe decided to take the soldiers through the areas that had high concentrations of these insects to kill/weaken them without actually fighting.

Trying to find a way that works within the customs of the culture that you're working in, doesn't necessarily mean that industrialism can be applied successfully. In Zimbabwe and Ghana, the people are setting up small scale workshops to help waste creators figure out new ways to deal with it.

4. Have you found the idea of Indigenous identity and/or tradition to be a problem when pushing for the development of science and technology in these areas and if so, how have you overcome this problem?

   It's not a problem because WPI doesn't push anything. They do things with the people living there. They are our partners and are part of the entire process from the research, design, and implementation. They are treated like experts and equals. The idea that development is top-down is wrong. To be successful, programs have to work with the people and come up with solutions that are important to the people.

**5.** Any recommendations for our hub or a new hub in general?

   The Hub should use the same process with the center directors that I use with the projects I do with the local people. This new hub is something that has to emerge out of faculty interest, not something they have been told to do, or else it won't happen.

   If there is interest there, there has to be sessions for socializing and getting to know each other. You have to focus on a trans-disciplinary approach that brings together all your ideas so you can learn from each other and approach the problem together, in order to make the hub a reality. That is the model I follow, and the way things should be done in academia.

## Appendix F

**Interview script for WPI Professor Holger Droessler, who studies imperialism, capitalism, and the Pacific Ocean, and is planning on starting a Fiji or Samoa Project Center.**

*Hello, our names are _____ and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub, which the Fiji and Samoa project centers will be part of. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about the other existing regional programs at WPI and producing a monograph on Oceania which we wanted to get you input on. First, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. Why are you interested in the specific topics you research in Oceania?

   He is actually writing a book about Oceania called “Coconut Colonialism.” His interest in the region actually started by accident. As a student in Germany, he was always interested in U.S. history because he wanted to learn history from a trans-Atlantic perspective. He ended up studying in the U.S. as a post-grad at Harvard; he wanted to compare Germany and the United States. One day, he remembered a lecture on the South Pacific he attended and it later became his area of study. After graduate school in 2009, he began his research on Oceania in 2010. He spent some time in the South Pacific, starting in Samoa and later “radiating out.”

   a. Do you do any work in collaboration with existing project centers in the region?

      Not yet, as he is only in his second year at WPI and has not advised a project center. He does have a plan to launch a new project center in the near future. The Oceania launch event was interesting and motivated him to push forward with this idea. There is a bias in current WPI centers toward English-speaking states and he sees the language barrier as a future issue for Oceania Hub. Someone can get around with English just fine, but there are hundreds of languages in the region.

2. How far along are you with the development of a project center in Fiji or Samoa?

   As of February 2021, he is not far along, and still at the “sending email” phase. The new center does not have a timeline yet, and he still needs to talk to stakeholders at WPI and outside WPI, including his family and the HUA department heads.

   He has sent emails to the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji and Samoa. They seem at least superficially interested. The Oceania Hub might be helpful with this. The center’s viability will also be dependent on the Dean of the Global School. However, he is currently concerned with contacting USP, which has currently seen corruption among officials connected to Fijian government and the deportation of its Vice-Chancellor. However, the school’s main campus might move back to Samoa, which would be good.

3. Do you have a vision of how your new project center will eventually fit into the Oceania Hub or a vision of just the Oceania Hub in general?

He doesn't have a vision yet because he is still in the very early stages of launching a new project center and needs to talk with all the stakeholders including his family. He also needs to have a conversation with the department heads to get support from HUA. He has started sending emails to potential partners including the University of South Pacific (USP), who has 12 campuses across the region. They seem like a natural partner because they already have a vast infrastructure built across multiple islands. The only concern is the ongoing political turmoil.The Samoan campus might be better even though it's not as large, but it may become the main campus in the future.

He has also spoken with Professor Elmes who talked about when he launched the Wellington Project Center. He gave him advice about launching his project center and mentioned that he had help from an IQP team, where they scouted the area beforehand. Having an IQP team to help him would be great and once COVID is over with actually visiting Fiji or Samoa to scout the area would be ideal. The plan right now is to do the same process as Professor Elmes once he has a firmer timeline.

4. Do you think that corruption is prevalent in secondary education in the region?

   The corruption in higher parts of the government is a widespread problem around the globe. Having said that, Fiji has some authoritarian tendencies. The decolonial leaders in the 1960's and 1970's established the University of the South Pacific as a training ground for Pacific Islander elites.

5. Do you feel that "Oceania" is a proper term for the region it describes? Should the region even be defined as one entity at all?

   That is a big question, especially for WPI. To what degree do people outside a region get to define a region? Mele Wendt mentioned that all the names made for the region are by Europeans like the "Pacific," which was created by Magellan and translates to "peaceful" because the ocean was relatively peaceful after sailing from the Atlantic, The term "Oceania" was invented by a Frenchman in the 18th century and rediscovered by Mele's father Albert Wendt. It is not a new term but part of a cultural islander renaissance; all the "nesia's" (polynesia, melanesia, and micronesia) were invented by another Frenchman.

   Today the region is very Polynesian centric, however, all those categories are problematic; many islands adopt these terms for their purpose and give them new meaning that needs to be taken seriously as well. The term "Moana" has a Polynesian focus but discriminates against Micronesians and Melanesian because the term is not present in their language and they can't relate. WPI wants to avoid symbolic violence because the region is so large.

   Outsiders to Oceania see it as a strategic place for economic investment, tourism, military and power projection. So, focusing on the larger, more dominant countries like Australia and New Zealand needs to be avoided and the global community needs to come up with a name that encompasses all the islands.
6. How can collaborative programs (like the one we're developing) best be respectful of Native cultures when they are composed of individuals from other regions who will only be staying in Oceania temporarily?

The first thing to do is not refer to them as “native”. They should be referred to as islanders. The team has to be careful as the issue is addressed, WPI is very far away from islanders geographically and mentally. There has to be a lot of listening on our end and the team must pay attention to the viewpoints of the islanders. Students should be expected to proactively learn about the culture. It will take a lot of preparing, learning, and planning before the team is able to launch the Oceania Hub, so there is no easy answer to this question.

7. How did western colonization of the islands play a role in how Native islanders interact with the countries’ respective governments today?

   Western colonization has played a large role in the way islanders interact with their government. Political tensions derive from long and complicated histories. In reality, Oceania has yet to be decolonized. The U.S., China, and European countries like France still maintain a hold on Oceania. The U.S. in particular has territories like Hawai‘i, Guam and American Samoa. Hawai‘i in particular has had its original government violently overthrown by the U.S. WPI students and faculty coming into the region are coming from a place of colonial power, and they will be perceived as such.

   Today China is a big player in Oceania. China is claiming a lot of the transpacific area and many of the local governments are in favor of it. They like it because help is not coming from the U.S. China does a lot to help the islands such as building infrastructure like docks, airports, and other useful buildings, which the governments of the smaller islands love. China does it all and the small islands do not have to pay or lift a finger and because China is an authoritarian government, they don't pressure the islanders to change their politics like the US does. Essentially, China’s help doesn’t come with strings attached while the help from the U.S. historically has come with many strings attached.

8. Do you know of any resources that would be helpful for us to look into for our monograph?

   He will send them to us. The team should focus on a specific aspect because writing a monograph on the region can be very long.

9. When writing a monograph on Oceania for our sponsors (the Oceania project site directors), what are the topics/themes you think the team should prioritize?

   Prioritize a specific theme rather than giving a broad, superficial diorama. Focus on what islanders are saying. The environment has particular resonance in Oceania, especially because of the rising sea levels. A quote I like is “We’re not in the same boat, we’re in the same storm.” Islanders don’t want to be told about their future by Americans. You may want to focus on:

   - Political and economic relationships and how they might affect a global project.
   - Define what global stands for because wealthy people have something to say all over the world, and islanders don’t want to be told what to do like they’ve been doing all their history.

# Appendix G

**Interview questions for Smithsonian Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawai‘ian) Cultural Interpreter, Gabbi Lee:**

*Hello, our names are (introduce ourselves) and we are currently working on our junior year capstone project at WPI. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub, which will serve as a center for WPI's involvement in Oceania. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about Oceania so we can learn more about the region and conceptualize our Hub's potential role in the region. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions/comments before we start the interview?*

1. As a cultural interpreter, what would you consider to be your area of expertise?

   She studied anthropology and linguistics in undergrad and education for her Master's.

   a. What are your responsibilities in this role?

      Due to COVID, she only worked in the museum for about 6 weeks. She joined at the end of January and was responsible for giving tours and organizing school programs. She has continued to help with school programs since COVID hit.

2. Our school has 3 project centers in the region: Hawai‘i, New Zealand, and Australia (in future Fiji and Samoa). To develop the Oceania Hub, we are trying to equally represent each project center. This includes the project center we have in Hawai‘i. What are some of the themes that we should focus on to ensure Hawai‘i is best represented in our program?

   Lee argues that the history of the U.S. and Hawai‘i must be examined in order to understand our impact being there. Understanding of the environment is essential: the land division, region, history of region, ecosystems. Lee emphasized place-based knowledge - the best place to get this is through experience, (i.e. being in and developing a relationship with the land). This may include surfing, meditating, etc. in order to see yourself as part of the environment; that is Indigenous thinking. She believes that one must take care of the land as one would take care of oneself. Ahupuaa land division means helping the environment do what it does best. It's different for every culture. Everyone's way of life is very different based on their environment.

   The overthrow of Hawai‘i was illegal as it came about from private individuals. Annexation followed. The U.S. passed a law through congress declaring Hawai‘i as part of America. It didn't make sense. There were lots of protests about this because there was no consultation with Hawai‘i about the overthrow. King Kamehameha united the 8 islands of Hawai‘i. In 1820 the islands were united, with the northwestern island being sparsely populated. When the US annexed the islands, there was no treaty to define the Hawaiian islands. This is why some islanders don't recognize Hawai‘i as part of the United States. They view it as a long-term occupation. There is a huge military presence in Hawai‘i - Oahu is the most populated island despite not being the biggest. There is a

huge homeless problem among native populations. It's a huge issue that they are homeless in their own land. Technically, the sovereignty of Hawai‘i never ended because the annexation violation national law.

3. Is Oceania the correct term to classify this region?

   She did not have a strong opinion about this, but did note that it is useful to encompass AU and NZ. Pasifika is another word. She liked the term Moana - but it's a Polynesian term. Lee believes that Oceania is a good “catch all”.

4. Are you aware of any regional study programs focused on Oceania, similar to the program at the University of Hawai‘i (Center for Pacific Island Studies), that you would consider good examples of cultural respect and education?

   “Critical Pacific Island Studies,” at UC Berkeley.

5. Are there any people you know who are knowledgeable on other Native cultures in Oceania that we could interview (e.g., Maori, Aboriginal Australians, Hawai‘ian, Samoan, Fijian, Tongan, etc.)?

   There is the Youth in Action webinar here at the Smithsonian. It is a panel discussion that will be pre-recorded and available on the website in May. It is having discussions about food sovereignty, native women and law and environmental work. The museum has only confirmed one panelist for the last topic, a fellow student. Shoreline erosion is a topic Lee has studied. Climate change will also be part of the discussion, an issue which affects Pacific Islanders disproportionately. Entire islands may disappear, and it is scary to their inhabitants.

6. Do you have connections to people with experience in navigation techniques in relation to settlement history in the region?

   In the Smithsonian, there aren’t many people who focus on the Pacific (most people know about Native American culture rather than Pacific Islander), but there is someone Lee knows named Haunani Kane, who also studies geography and is a navigator and researcher. Lee remembers they used birds, wind, and stars.

# Appendix H

**Interview script for University of Hawai‘i Mānoa Director of the Center for Pacific Island Studies, Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka:**

*Hello, our names are (introduce ourselves) and we are currently working on our junior year capstone project at WPI. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub which will serve as a center for WPI's involvement in Oceania. WPI currently has three project centers in the region located in Honolulu, HI, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, NZ; the Oceania Hub will unite these project centers to collaborate on bigger issues facing the region. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about other existing regional programs outside of our school to aid us in its development. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. What inspired you to start your research in geopolitics, economic development, and conflict and international interventions in the pacific islands?

   Part of the reason is because the Pacific covers ⅓ of the world's surface area. Because it is huge, it is important globally as a transit hub between major markets in Europe and Asia and later the Americas. During the 2nd World War, it was geopolitically important because of the war against Japan. After, it remained important as a conflict zone between the Soviets and the US. While there was a lull following the end of the Cold War, China's rise has made it a hot zone again and that has piqued my interest.

2. How did you get involved with the University of Hawai‘i?

   Dr. Kabutaulaka has not always been interested in geopolitics (he was an undergraduate in literature but later learned political science). One day, in 2003, someone walked into his office and asked if he would like to work at the East-West center. He worked there for 6 years. After getting bored, he took a job at the University of Hawai‘i, across the street.

3. You refer to your program as the Center for Pacific Island Studies specifically, not using the term Oceania. What is your opinion on the name Oceania for the region? Is "Pacific Islands" a better term to use when describing the region? Does Pacific Islands include Australia and New Zealand, or is it more focused on the smaller islands?

   The use of the term Oceania is debated in the region itself. It is difficult to find a name that encompasses the entire region due to linguistic diversity (Papua New Guinea has over 800 languages alone). Polynesians like the term "Moana," (lit. "ocean"). Some object to Pacific Islands because it focuses on islands rather than connections. Many Islanders want to think of the region as connected by the highway of the ocean, rather than a series of remote islands. This is why many like "Oceania." Pacific Islands studies came out of area studies from the US, who wanted to learn more about other cultures after the Cold War. When they were first set up, "Pacific Islands," was the widely used term, rather than Oceania.
   *"I think Oceania is the right choice: encompassing and widely used"*

4. How does the Center for Pacific Island Studies serve the students at the University of Hawai‘i and the communities of Oceania?

The initial idea behind area studies was providing information to the US; the target was Americans. Increasingly, more Pacific Island immigrants in Hawai‘i and the West Coast and their descendants want to learn about the region; programs increasingly educate them. The program has two identities: academic (including a Masters' program over 70 years old and an undergrad one started in 2011) and the National Resource Center (funded via grants). The NRC works with PI communities and collaborates with universities and helps immigrants (ex. by linking them with service providers). It also hosts journal and monograph series, as well as a Teaching Oceania Series for undergrad students (esp. freshmen).

5. If we wanted to partner, how would we?

   Dr. Kabutaulaka's program has partnered with colleges in San Mateo, San Francisco and a university in New Zealand. Admins talk to each other and sign a Memorandum of Understanding and make agreements; faculty then take over and do actual work.

6. As Director, what would you say your short-term and long-term goals for the program are?

   Right now, the most important goal is to increase the number of students involved in the program. The program needs to determine how this can be done and whether it can be done online and if students are able to obtain degrees in Pacific Island Studies without actually going there. Pacific island studies rely heavily on social interaction, and it must be determined whether this can be done virtually.

7. How do you decide what programs and initiatives are important to implement or include in the Center?

   In terms of the academic program, it depends on the types of students the University has. If they have students that want to find out about the culture of the places their parents and grandparents come from, then you have to tailor some classes to that.
   A lot of people enrolled are doing political science and geography, which is ok because they are serving the needs of students, but most of his students are of Pacific Islander descent, so they are more interested in identity and culture.
   The publication program is an attempt to focus on contemporary issues in the pacific. One journal does stuff with history, another does stuff with geography, so they look to see what they can publish where others aren't publishing.

8. What would you say your priorities are when educating people on the region?

   The primary goal nowadays in growing enrollment. How can the program do it online? Can students obtain a degree without physically attending university? Pacific studies also rely on social interaction; can the program teach them without that? The University is also America-centric; while it has partnerships with the Islands, recruitment from the islands is low. The University wants to strengthen the recruitment in both directions. Pacific Islanders are "*not just subjects we study, but people we have genuine relationships with*."

9. What are the common themes of the region that we should focus on when conducting our research?

   Dr. Kabutaulaka believes that the team has come up with what is important. His advice is to not try to make it too broad. Come up with a set of questions for the monograph to answer; be specific. An open-ended monograph will suffer from scope creep. A monograph could focus on some broad facts (island population) and at least one specific focus. Even Indigenous knowledge is very broad; for example, study knowledge and navigation, then read and watch films. His students were reading the other week about wave navigation in the Marshall Islands, and collaborations between scholars and islanders. Most navigation is celestial (watch Papa Mau/Wayfinder), but there are other methods (wave navigation: you sit in a canoe and tell where land is based on the waves). This could be relevant to engineering students. He will send the team an author's emails.

10. Any recommendations for us starting a new program focused on Oceania at our university?

    No recommendations, because he doesn't know much about our school. The East Coast is far away, and he is fascinated that the team is interested in the pacific. There aren't too many places on the East Coast that do Pacific related stuff, which is a good place to start and build the knowledge base.

# Appendix I

**Interview script for University of Utah Director of the Pacific Islands Studies Initiative and Bridge Program in the School for Cultural & Social Transformation, Dr. Hōkūlani K. Aikau and Moana Uluave-Hafoka.**

*Hello, our names are (introduce ourselves) and we are currently working on our junior year capstone project at WPI. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub which will serve as a center for WPI's involvement in Oceania. WPI currently has three project centers in the region located in Honolulu, HI, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, NZ; the Oceania Hub will unite these project centers to collaborate on bigger issues facing the region. To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about other existing regional programs outside of our school to aid us in its development. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. Dr. Aikau, can you tell us a bit about your program and what it represents in the Transform school at University of Utah?

   Dr. Aikau lives in Salt Lake City and moved from HI, where she taught Indigenous politics at UH.
   They are in the early stages of Pacific Island Studies Program focusing on "intersection of Indigeneity and Diaspora" (Utah is a hub for Pacific Islanders due to the LDS church). Indigeneity and Diaspora are not competing points on a trajectory, but overlapping. It is only in recent years that the University of Utah has started to properly recognize Pacific Islanders in the community.

   Dr. Aikau knows Karen Oates from WPI and is inspired by our project-based curriculum. The WPI centers (HI, AUS, NZ) are at what Mary Louise Pratt calls the "contact zones" between people.

2. Moana, is the Bridge Program that you direct synonymous with the Pasifika Scholars Institute? What does the program do? Specifically, what types of events and programs does the program host to engage and interest students?

   Moana was born and raised in Utah and grew up in Samoan and Tongan communities. She was hired 3 years ago to help build the Pasifika Scholars Institute. She co-created a curriculum that would "bridge" students from high schools and community colleges to the University of Utah.

   The program has three parts: the first is a summer program where 12-15 students from the community (high school and community college) come to University of Utah for 5 days to learn. This bridges the community and higher education. The second piece is the Pasifika Archive, where they are putting recordings and interviews for access by students to make sure that it outlives the current faculty and staff. The last piece is the graduate institute, which teaches students about graduate opportunities at the University of Utah. This "bridges" undergrad and graduate students. It includes seminars about graduate schools and lessons on how to write personal statements.

3. Are you familiar with Global U and the global programs? Why is your Pacific Island Studies Initiative not listed under Global U?

   Dr. Aikau: The Pacific Islands Studies initiative is not a formal part of the Global U. They have had conversations about what the program might look like if they wanted to expand it to have more of a global learning/study abroad focus, but they haven't gotten there with their programming. Their current priority is to establish programming on campus. Eventually, there is the potential for global work.

   In 2019, faculty went to New Zealand to start the conversation about global work and a possible exchange program, but they haven't been able to pursue this any further because of the pandemic. It is something they are interested in and it is on the agenda to explore it eventually. However, their Pacific Islands curriculum does contribute to the University's global initiative and the Pacific diaspora are a good example of that relationship.

4. How did you come up with your mission statement?

   Dr. Aikau: The mission statement has evolved over time. There was one for the hiring initiative in 2015-16 (with two staff members hired in 2017 and another two hired in 2018). After the hiring, they had a series of retreats where they created task forces; the mission statement revision came out of those ongoing conversations. "I can't say enough about how important staff are." She recommends they be included in the conversation. In 5 years, they could relaunch their statement; they say a mission statement should always reflect your values.

5. How is your program funded?

   Dr. Aikau: Faculty hiring was funded with initiative by the Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs and later President Ruth Watkins as part of a broad diversity initiative. The Transformation School has also provided financial and institutional support (specifically with their certificate and programs being hosted within the Transformation School). All of the programs were initially made possible through a grant from Andrew Mellon foundation; they support "humanistic" work. They received a $600,000 grant; they are currently in the last calendar year of the grant and are going to apply for a renewal of the grant to reinforce and expand their current programs and possibly make new ones.

6. Do you have any suggestions for us on gaining student interest in Oceania at WPI?

   Dr. Aikau: The team would be surprised about where the Pacific Islander population might be. Hawaiians have been in New England for a very long time.
   One way to gain student interest is to think about partnering and reaching out to other institutions of higher learning in New England. Moana is a member of Harvard Alumni for Oceania. At UMASS and Brown there are Pacific Islanders. She recommends that the team reaches out to the other institutions and identify the student groups and use those as a support for the program. There are folks around that are connected to communities. Find one person and that will connect the team to communities. The Hawaiian Civic

Club, dance, and performance groups would be good to reach out to. That is how she would approach it. Reach out to students, but also cultural communities.

Moana found local groups and communities in Boston at Harvard and national groups as well. The Harvard Alumni for Oceania (HAO) is fairly new, but Dartmouth and Brown have groups too. She can help connect us to the Harvard one and see what they are doing on campus.

Dr. Aikau: Dartmouth, Yale and Brown all do outreach to Hawai‘i. The team should track colonial legacies and will find people that way too.

7. Do you have any general suggestions on how to launch a new program focused on this region?

   They recommend that the team reach out to the Pacific studies program at Victoria University in Wellington, NZ. They would be a great partner in thinking about the Oceania Hub. They have a strong mission/vision. April Henderson, and a Hawai‘ian woman named Emalani Case who has a book called *Everything that is Old is Once New* would be fantastic partners in building our program. In Melbourne, the museum Indigenous curator is fantastic. There are a lot of folks in Melbourne doing this work. It is not one of the biggest Pacific Islander communities, but it is an important one.

   Remember that there is an Indigenous Pacific that needs to be a part of these conversations and the political discourse of the Pacific Rim is dominated by discussions of the edgess. Remember that we are following the paths of many generations of Pacific Islanders.

# Appendix J

**Interview script for Provost Winston Soboyejo:**

*Hello, our names are _____ and we are currently working on our IQPs in the Australia and* Hawai‘i *project centers. Our project is to help launch the Oceania Hub. You are an important member of WPI's administration, and we were told by our advisors that you have taken a specific interest in the Oceania Hub's development. We therefore believe interviewing you would be beneficial to our project. First, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted and/or recorded? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. How do you envision the relationship between the potential Hubs and the Global School being?

   In his mind he sees the Global School breaking up the world into different regions, where the "hubs" cover different geographical areas where the Institute can use STEM to impact the world. He sees the Hubs as the driving factors of this. Hub is not necessarily the word that suggests that, but it is a region of the world where we have interests, such as Oceania.

2. What sort of events do you believe would be useful for promoting a new hub on campus after its formal launch and what approval process, if any, is there for such an event?

   They would like to engage students, faculty and staff, alumni, and global partners. Each requires different types of events to get people together and talk to each other. There needs to be different interactions among students to see what they want in a hub like this and what activities and projects they would like to do.

   We should network, listen to people, and integrate those ideas into projects that we will then start to implement. Eventually, projects will not be in a single project center but will extend across a region, focusing on the same themes.

3. What sorts of relationships with sponsors outside of WPI do you hope to form through the new Hubs?

   Just as an example, we can look at WPI's presence in Australia and Hawai‘i. In Australia, we have relationships with universities and other organizations with similar goals. They would like these relationships to extend across the region for projects that engage STEM as solutions for local problems. They want to build the impact of WPI's work so it can get larger funds from organizations. This is to build the impact and range of our projects that address local needs and attract funding.

4. Aside from outside grants, how much funding, if any, does WPI provide to international programs? How is this funding allocated?

   WPI internally funds professors that do the projects and they have alumni sponsors that fund new initiatives that allow the school to go over and above what they are capable of

funding. They are going to fund what they currently do, but they will leverage the programs to do more impactful things to get more funding from things like USCID.

a. Do you actively seek alumni for specific reasons or is it general funding?

   The school actively seeks alumni for specific reasons that they are passionate about. They invest the money into things they are interested in. Alumni are the ready donors for the school.

5. What would you consider an ideal mission statement for WPI's overseas programs?

   WPI is an institution that is committed to working with global partners to co-create solutions to global challenges. They work together to identify problems and create solutions. Their mission is to use stem-driven culturally sensitive programs to solve global challenges.

6. Would you include the emphasis on stem in a mission statement?

   He would include STEM, but emphasize that it is STEM plus the understanding of culture, which is fused into an approach that has local ownership. We are not just taking technological widgets to people without understanding their needs. We understand needs and empower people to solve their own problems. The students develop solutions that are sustainable by collaborating with local people.

7. Is hub the right term for our program? If not, what is?

   He's learned to be humble about what you call things. Hub gives the idea of a center that is located in one place. He hopes the community will come up with a way of naming that describes the network of regional collaborations that they aim to have. What's important is they have a region of the world with common problems where they can learn more across the region. He says to have the community figure it out. eventually a name that fits will develop organically. There are a few examples that he's found, but he said eventually it will get renamed and we should be open to the process.

8. What is your view about the Latin American studies program and China Hub?

   The China Hub is focused on China and they've done good projects and increased awareness of China. The Latin American and Caribbean Studies program has done a great job of bringing culture into projects. They have shown that you can do projects that address challenges in the environment and community with great cultural sensitivity. The school does have opportunities to build on what they have done that has a great impact. What is the next level of activity that they might pursue? They had an event with thr Latin American and Caribbean Studies program where a Nobel prize winner was the keynote speaker, and he was talking about developing a sustainability ecosystem that is informed by what the school does and what the school can learn. The program is framed in a STEM background but addresses deeper problems.

Similarly, the China Hub is another area that he is hoping the school can build a deeper understanding of China. His personal visits to China were transformative to see the scale of what is going on in China. He believes it's important for every American to understand what is going on in the world, so he would like to build on what we have.

9. Do you have any recommendations for the Oceania Hub in or a new hub in general?

   He shared a personal story where he prepared some slides showing attractive tourist destinations and the beauty of Oceania. The audience of professors said this is the classic view of Oceania, but not what is going to change. What WPI brings to the region is STEM culture, in a culturally sensitive manner. A focus on Indigenous knowledge and science and what we can do to transform the lives of people is important. What we know at WPI in terms of STEM is widely available to everyone, but theory and practice is not. If we take this and impact the STEM that people can do for themselves in Oceania and across the world, we are spreading WPI's "secret sauce." If WPI empowers people to use these methods, people will see value in the WPI approach.
   He is excited about the different regions in the world where students will be working with professors and partners to build the model out to other parts of the world.

# Appendix K

**Interview script for Mary Hattori, Acting Director, Pacific Islands Development Program at the East-West Center**

*Hello, our names are (introduce ourselves). We are from a small STEM school in Worcester, MA called WPI conducting our junior year capstone project. Our project is to help launch our school's "Oceania Hub" which will serve as a center for WPI's involvement in the region. WPI currently has three project centers in the region located in Honolulu, HI, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, NZ; the Oceania Hub will unite these project centers to collaborate on bigger issues facing the region.*
*To launch the Oceania Hub, we are gathering information about other existing regional programs outside of our school to aid us in its development. Before we begin, we want to ask you if you are comfortable with being quoted? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?*

1. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do?

   Dr. Hattori is originally from Guam.
   She told the team to look at the University of Guam Marine Science Program; they have millions of dollars in grants and do innovative research. They would be a good place for a connection in the region. She worked as an administrator at the ALOHA Net laboratory in the early days of web designs. She also worked at Hawaii Community college and managed the IT department for 12 years. At the time, all 10 campuses had the only technology department that was centrally managed. She then moved to the Center of Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawaii Manoa, the only federally funded program of the sort, after her 12 year stint.
   Hattori then moved to Shamanon University, a private Catholic school with a large Pacific Islander student body and an emphasis on infusing Pacific values and traditions into their curriculum, including Indigenous research methods. There she taught courses on advanced Indigenous research.
   There is a lot of good work that is being done out there by Indigenous researchers, like if technology can be infused with Indigenous consciousness.
   The Computer and the Canoe is another body of work around Indigenous representation in the World Wide Web.
   She also founded the Micronesian Film Festival.
   Brett Leavy, for example, does virtual Songlines, Aboriginals map the world through Songlines, so he created a VR space using Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous experts. It creates an immersive experience, founded on Indigenous wisdom and knowledge. The original program wasn't created by Aboriginal people, so he hired experts to train Aboriginal people to create it, so it would be created entirely by Aboriginal people. The expectation is that outside companies would train Maori students to create their own programs in these VR environments.
   Pacific RISA is another program to look at.Victoria Keener runs the center, and it is one of the primary research centers for climate change in this part of the region. Keener also has a lot of contacts inside of Oceania as well.

2. How did you get involved with the Pacific Islands Development Program? As Director, what are your primary responsibilities?

   The PIDP is very unique; it has three identities: 1) stand-alone program in the Center's think tank which provides them information about Oceania 2) The Secretariat for the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders, which includes 20 nations and some territories (they will convene this summer, with Hattori serving as acting director. She still needs to be approved by the nations, territories, and state of Hawai'i). The Conference discusses issues at the regional level 3) PIDP is one of only 9 Councils of Regional Organization across the Pacific (CROP), and the only one in the United States; Hattori answers to the leaders of the board, the heads of state, and the Pacific Islands Forum.

   Her main focus at the PIDP is capacity-building and research. They have a large grant from the Asian Development bank, and a large number of students (as well as a $50,000 research grant). They are trying to create a research pipeline through an apprenticeship. The program also has a state-funded scholarship program for Pacific Islanders (USSP).

3. How does the Pacific Islands Development Program collaborate with the communities of the Oceania Region?

   PIDP is in the process of creating a new position: Regional Engagement Officer (to form MOU/MOAs that will generate funding for research and collaborate with other parts of the Center, including research and professional development, like the Pacific Islanders leadership program from Taiwan, which was originally part of the PIDP). They recently interviewed the current and former heads of state from Palau and the FSM to learn more about Indigenous methods of leadership.

4. You have experience hosting many cultural events. What have you found is the best way to go about educating people who have no connection to the Pacific Islands in a way that is respectful and informative?

   They ask, "how do you make it relevant to people in your area?"
   Some ideas: The growing presence of China in the Pacific should be a concern to Americans. There is also the Compacts of Free Association, the quadulen (tip of the spear) in Pacific, and the Pacific acts as a buffer for national security for America.
   The other way to raise interest is through climate change and environmental concerns. "Islanders are not from tiny islands in a far sea, we are from a sea of islands." and view environmental issues holistically (Look at Micronesian milestones). Indigenous people work to be careful stewards; look at fishponds and Green Banana Paper. For example, any visitor to Palau must sign a commitment to the children of Palau not to have a negative impact on their legacy. Sustainable tourism is important, and Palau is the regional leader, with a $50 impact fee for each visitor (which only goes to conservation) as well as a mandatory 30 minutes or so of community service.

5. Do you have any general recommendations for a new program that focuses on the Pacific Islands?

   She thinks our team is off to a good start. Throughout the Pacific, relationships are primary. Place and relationships are important. Your effectiveness is only as strong as

your relationship with people in the areas. Currently, WPI has project centers in colonial environments and the Pacific Identity in Hawai‘i is a controversial view because it is a state. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are classified separately because of the colonization of the state, which hinders development. AUS, NZ, and US provide aid to the region, but is it used to build capacity or build dependence? There are a lot of conversations around the roles of these big countries getting involved in the region, leadership, tensions, and harmony across the region. Where the school positions the project centers says a lot about the school and the program. Move forward with the Fiji project center and then expand to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and University of the South Pacific. In response to COVID-19, RMI shut down their border and have held onto it firmly. They have had an aggressive COVID-19 vaccination plan and have been great in terms of management and protection.

Palau Community College would also be an amazing connection. They have a great program around tourism and a navigation program that educates about navigation methods. The Hawaiian Renaissance around navigation is due to Papa Mau’s assistance and his son works at the Palau community college.

In the East-West Center, Hattori is one of the top employees on the technology side. She has connections to people of our generation around the region that are doing work around technology in Oceania. Develop relationships like those because they will get the program far. Also, leverage the relationships the school already has. For many of the connections, she recommends that the team finds someone to introduce them, because they will not respond to a cold call if they don’t know who the group is connected to, so existing relationships should be used as leverage.

There are many non-Pacific scholars and experts, but it’s important to reach out to the Indigenous scholars first because there are many out there in all subjects. The program’s network should be built through native scholars, which will help them to grow as well so it will be a mutual relationship. She can list some of the native scholars and they have a great network of allies, so it will extend.

In terms of technology, the team should look at how to honor Indigenous ways of communication through the internet as well. How are native people using and changing the internet and technologies online to sustain their culture? Brett Leavy is one example. The celebrated Micronesia festival was all virtual last year. Groups revised their programs for Zoom. She is working with a company called Learning times, that is sponsoring an international conference, the TTC worldwide conference, which has been debated whether it will use meeting format or webinar format. They have had one tract of focus for Pacific Islanders and people across the Pacific. It is something people don’t talk about and they have tips for using zoom and webinars, but they don’t have tips for Indigenous communities.

The East-West Center provides lodging for groups of students in programs like ours. She's offered to make a deal about that and maybe sponsor a program or something. PIDP would be happy to host students and work with us on pricing as well.

They have affiliate scholars and a student affiliate program, if the team is going further in our studies that are sponsored by the UH.

# Appendix L

The student survey the team created for WPI students was sent out to the members of one sorority, one fraternity, WPI's Air Force ROTC Detachment, WPI's Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers, and WPI's Christian Bible Fellowship. It was also uploaded to the Snapchat stories of various team members, as well as posted on the WPI subreddit (r/WPI) and the WPI Discord chatroom.
Below are the introduction of our project included with the survey and the questions included in the survey:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! It should only take about 3-5 minutes of your time.
We are a team completing an IQP on launching an Oceania Hub for WPI's Global School that will work to connect the three project centers in the region: Honolulu, HI, Wellington, NZ, and Melbourne, AUS and also host on campus events to educate students about the region. This survey is to gauge student interest in learning about the region, understand what types of events students are likely to attend, and determine students' interest to participate in projects in the region.

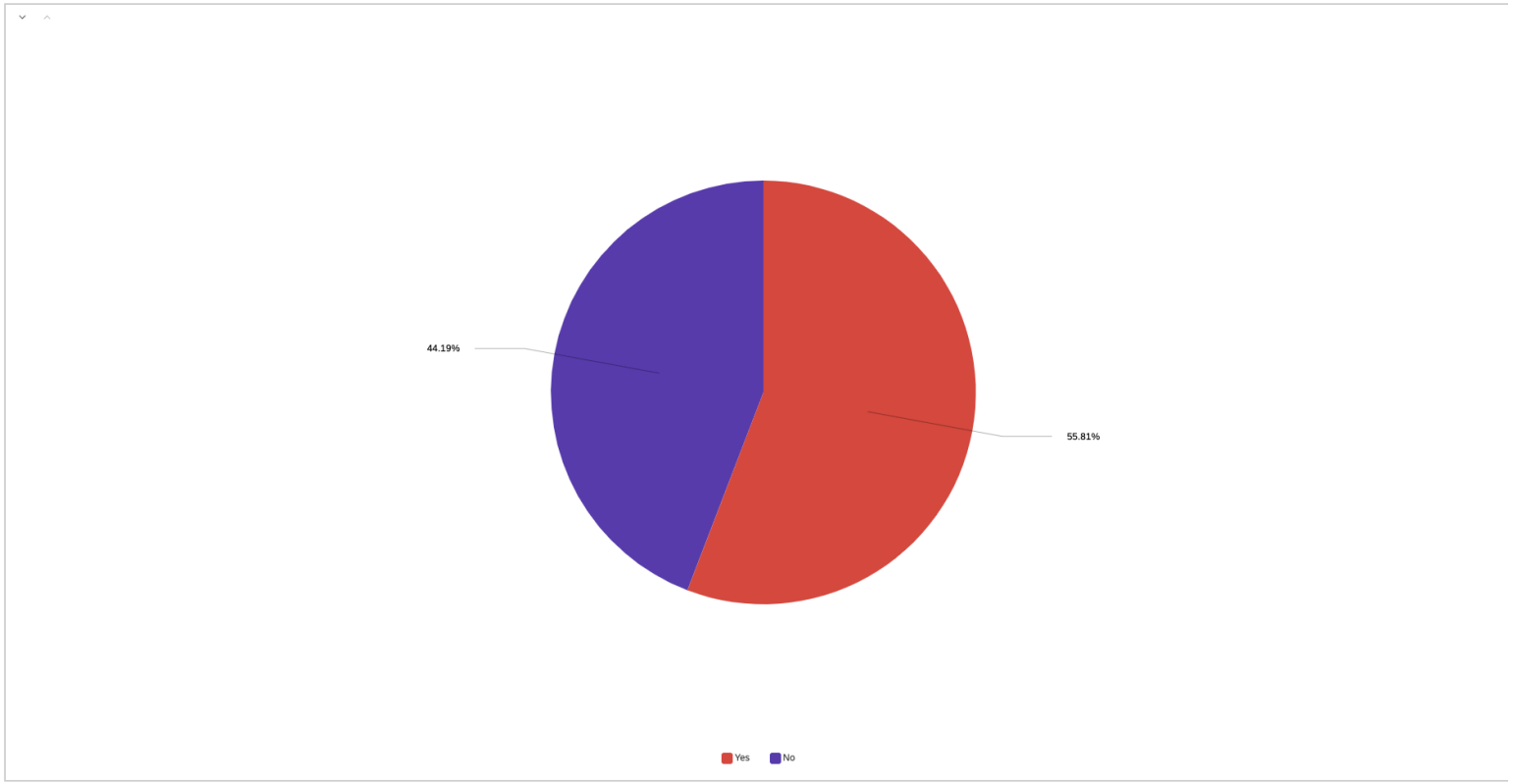
1. Did you apply to or are you planning on applying to any of these IQP project centers? Check all that apply.
    a. Melbourne, Australia
    b. Wellington, New Zealand
    c. Honolulu, Hawaii
2. If you checked any project centers in the previous question, why did you want to travel there for IQP?
3. What types of on campus events are you interested in for learning about Oceania? Rank in order from most interest to least interested:
    a. Lecture/Guest speaker
    b. Q & A w/ panel of experts
    c. Event/Activities on the Quad
    d. Event with or about food
    e. Film Series
4. What topics would you be interested in learning about? Check all that apply:
    a. How Indigenous Knowledge relates to STEM
    b. Indigenous Ocean Navigation
    c. Climate and Sustainability in Oceania
    d. Arts and culture in Oceania (music, dance, sports, art, food, language, and history)
    e. Other ___
5. Do you have any types of events or ideas for topics that were not listed? Please specify.
6. What is your class year?
    a. 2021
    b. 2022
    c. 2023
    d. 2024
    e. Other, please specify

## Appendix M

The images below are raw data that the team got from the results of the survey.

Q3 - Did you apply/are you planning on applying to any of the IQP centers in Oceania? This includes Hawaii, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand.

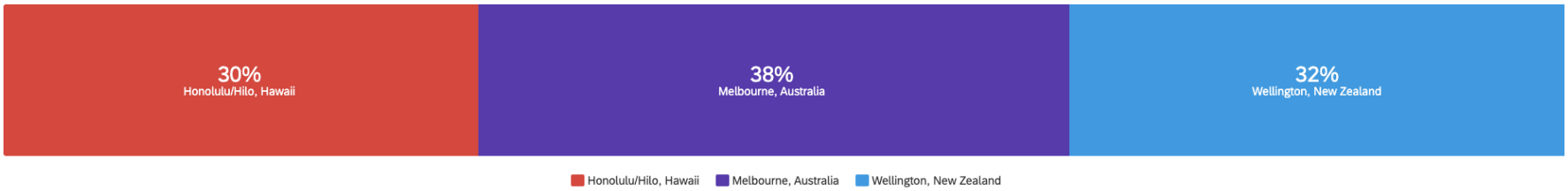
Page Options




| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Did you apply/are you planning on applying to any of the IQP centers in Oceania? This includes Hawaii, Melbourne, Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand. | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.44 | 0.50 | 0.25 | 129 |

Q4 - If yes, please select which project center(s) you considered.

Page Options




| # | Field | Choice Count | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Honolulu/Hilo, Hawaii | 30.25% | 36 |
| 2 | Melbourne, Australia | 37.82% | 45 |
| 3 | Wellington, New Zealand | 31.93% | 38 |
| | | | 119 |

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Q10 - Why did you consider these project centers?

Page Options

| Why did you consider these project centers? |
| --- |
| past projects, environment |
| i wanted to go abroad to a place i wouldn't otherwise |
| english speaking and ive always wanted to travel here |
| always wanted to travel to Australia, heard its nice lol |
| Warm, beach, exotic, safe, English speaking yet different enough from mainland U.S |
| Thought it would be a nice place to go |
| They're all cool places and would be fun to spend 7 weeks in. |
| They seemed like they would be nice places to be, particularly in the winter in C term when I really wanted to go. |
| They have nice weather and speak english |
| They are the furthest away and seem to have good weather |
| They all had project topics that interested me and are locations I have always wanted to visit. |
| These locations were that I've always wanted to visit and IQP seemed like a great opportunity to fulfill this. |
| There cool |
| The projects |

| |
|---|
| The project centers are beautiful and the projects themselves seemed interesting |
| The places are exotic and beautiful and seemed fun to travel to. |
| The locations are places I am unlikely to travel to in my life and therefore are unique experiences. |
| The locations are all beautiful, and also has a good amount of English speakers. They are also very far away from New England-- the furthest I would have likely ever travelled from here. |
| The area, the language, and overall safety. |
| New Zealand seemed super cool and I wish I lived there |
| Its across the world, I'll likely never have many chances to go |
| It's warm, far from WPI, has beaches, and has rich cultures that aren't talked about much |
| It would have been nice to be in Hawaii |
| It was in D-term |
| It seemed like an amazing experience |
| It is a location I wanted to have a chance to visit |
| I've always wanted to travel to the opposite side of the world but don't know any other languages |
| I've always wanted to go to Australia, NZ and Hawaii and IQP offered the perfect opportunity to visit these countries. |
| I was interested because I wanted to immerse myself in a culture completely different than what I am used to. I was drawn to their way of life and wanted to experience it first hand. |
| I wanted to spend C-Term on the beach |
| I wanted to skip the worcester winter and go to the beach for 7 weeks |
| I wanted to learn about Hawaii and their sustainability efforts. |
| I wanted to go to Hawaii. |
| I wanted to go somewhere that wasn't an easy place to vacation to! |

| |
|---|
| I want to use my IQP to gain work experience in countries I probably wouldn't be able to work otherwise. Oceania is as far away as possible my from my home continent, Europe, which excites me. |
| I want to travel to the area and think that the projects offered are very interesting |
| I thought they'd be cool places that I wouldn't get the chance to live in either |
| I thought New Zealand culture would be interesting to explore; I wanted to travel halfway around the world |
| I really really wanted to visit this region of the world |
| I really enjoyed traveling and learning new things. |
| I needed to stay in the US but wanted to experience something "abroad" - so Hawaii! |
| I liked the environmental aspect of the project |
| I just really like the project description |
| I have family in Melbourne so I would have been able to visit them if if was either of those project sites. |
| I considered all the international locations that took place during C and D term |
| I considered Australia. I liked it because there is a lot of stuff to do there, it is somewhere I probably wouldn't travel too unless it was with school (too expensive), it is on the opposite side of the world, and they speak English. |
| I choose to apply to Melbourne, Australia because I thought it would be a place like the United States but also has it number of differences that really make it interesting. Plus when it is in the year its like you can get an extended summer weather season. For Honolulu, Hawaii I thought it would just be really cool to go to Hawaii and be on the opposite side of the United States from Massachusetts, but also again the warm weather in the middle of winter in Massachusetts. |
| Far away, Unique study abroad, |
| Environmental projects |
| Environment unique only to that region of the world, wanted to experience something different |
| Beautiful location |
| Beautiful areas, great weather, New Zealand is also a pretty unique location that many people don't get the chance to travel to |
| Beaches - ive also never been to this area |
| Aesthetic |

Q5 - What types of events are you most likely to participate in for learning about Oceania? Please rank in order from 1 (most likely) to 5 (least likely).

Page Options

| # | Field | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std Deviation | Variance | Count |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Listening to Guest Speakers | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.69 | 1.08 | 1.16 | 101 |
| 2 | Q&A with Panel | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.25 | 1.09 | 1.20 | 101 |
| 3 | Outdoor events on the Quad | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.31 | 1.06 | 1.12 | 101 |
| 4 | Food Related Events | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.04 | 1.27 | 1.60 | 101 |
| 5 | Display of arts and culture | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.71 | 1.18 | 1.39 | 101 |

| # | Field | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Listening to Guest Speakers | 5.94% 6 | 8.91% 9 | 15.84% 16 | 48.51% 49 | 20.79% 21 | 101 |
| 2 | Q&A with Panel | 5.94% 6 | 1.98% 2 | 8.91% 9 | 27.72% 28 | 55.45% 56 | 101 |
| 3 | Outdoor events on the Quad | 24.75% 25 | 36.63% 37 | 25.74% 26 | 8.91% 9 | 3.96% 4 | 101 |
| 4 | Food Related Events | 44.55% 45 | 30.69% 31 | 10.89% 11 | 3.96% 4 | 9.90% 10 | 101 |
| 5 | Display of arts and culture | 18.81% 19 | 21.78% 22 | 38.61% 39 | 10.89% 11 | 9.90% 10 | 101 |

Showing rows 1 - 5 of 5

Q6 - What topics would you be most interested in learning about in regards to Oceania? Please check all that apply.

Page Options

| # | Field | Choice Count |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How Indigenous knowledge relates to STEM | 17.94% 68 |
| 2 | Ocean Navigation | 14.51% 55 |
| 3 | Climate and Sustainability | 18.21% 69 |
| 4 | Arts and Culture in Oceania (music, dance, sports, art) | 16.89% 64 |
| 5 | Pacific Island Cuisine | 17.41% 66 |
| 6 | Language and History | 13.98% 53 |
| 7 | Other | 1.06% 4 |
| | | 379 |

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

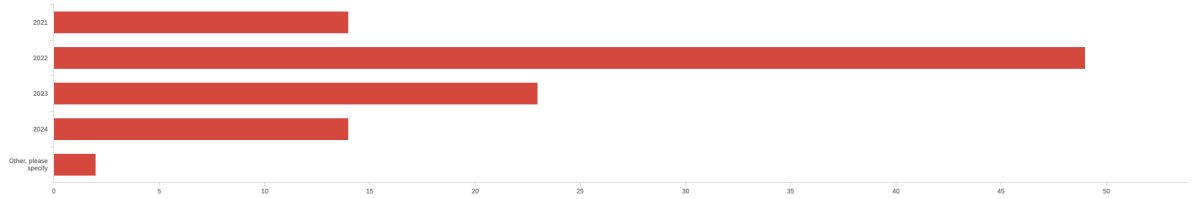
Q9 - If you have any ideas for events that you would be interested in or topics that you would like to learn about that aren't listed above, please list them here:

Page Options

| If you have any ideas for events that you would be interested in or topics... |
|---|
| How China affects the pacific |
| Maybe something involving a game, like kahoot? |
| Plants and animals of the region - maybe like edible/poisonous plant identification |
| I think hosting a beach clean up would be something cool! I dont know about travel logistics if its not an actuallQP, |
| how to surf |
| sustainable tourism |
| maybe organizing a community service trip that doesnt have anything to do with the project centers |
| Indigenous wildlife in Oceania! |

Q8 - What is your class year?

Page Options



## Appendix N

Using the information collected from experts on Oceania and thorough research from scholarly articles, the team decided that the narrative of the monograph would be on Indigenous knowledge and identity. This was a theme that was brought up in multiple interviews, including those with Gabbi Lee, Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, Dr. Mary Hattori and the University of Utah program leaders, Dr. Aikau and Moana Uluave-Hafoka, and is crucial to consider when looking to gain an understanding of the entire region. The sponsors requested a general overview of the geography of the region in order to get a clear definition of Oceania, so the monograph begins with a chapter on Oceania and its geography, from physical location to formation of the islands. It then covers the history of the region chronologically starting with the initial migration and settlement of the islands, where Indigenous ocean navigation, marine knowledge, and agriculture and land use are described in detail.

The paper then moves onto western colonialism and the impact that it had on Pacific Islanders and their culture. It also describes movements in arts and culture that happened in response to colonialism and its effects. The last section of the paper discusses the climate and issues that Pacific Islanders face today regarding climate change and natural disasters, such as the rising sea levels. This is included because it is a major theme across the region and an area that WPI can become more involved in. The paper concludes with a synthesis of what WPI (or other institutions, organizations, or people) can take away from the region and the use of Indigenous knowledge and how variations of this knowledge can be used to create sustainable, innovative, solutions for problems faced by the Pacific Islanders and people around the world.

The complete monograph is included in the following pages.

WPI

MARCH 18, 2021

# Indigenous Knowledge & Identity Throughout the History of Oceania: A Monograph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## Table of Contents

## Introduction

Global declines in the health of our oceans and land require innovative solutions that can be found by examining Indigenous knowledge and practices, which in the past have helped the people of Oceania to live sustainably in the most isolated environments in the world. Indigenous knowledge is community-based and considers topics such as agriculture, sustainability, natural resource management, and local law (Friedlander, 2018). The resurgence of this knowledge, which has been part of their identity for millennia, has shown promise in many locations throughout the Pacific. However, a complete return to past practices is not implementable on its own because of the loss of Indigenous cultures due to their colonization history, centralized governmental structures, economic development, and globalization (Reid & Rout, 2017). However, hybrid systems that incorporate elements of traditional knowledge and contemporary knowledge can overcome some of these limitations and lead to the implementation of successful resource management, greater food security, cultural revival, and the creation of an adaptive system that can potentially mitigate the effects of climate change and other stressors (Friedlander, 2018).

This monograph provides a basic depiction of Oceania and its rich history and culture. The paper follows a chronological series of events starting at formation of the islands in the Pacific followed by the settlement and colonization history. It then moves through traditional arts and culture revitalization projects and events and climate efforts and sustainability. It concludes with a synthesis of the paper and how this information can be used to enhance WPI's Oceania curriculum, find areas that WPI can be involved in, and strengthen the impact that WPI can have on the region.

## 1 Brief Description of The Region

Oceania is a region made up of thousands of islands throughout the Central and South Pacific Ocean. It is commonly defined to include the regions of Australia, New Zealand, Micronesia, Polynesia, and Melanesia (United Nations: Statistical Division, 2017). Some descriptions of the region use Australasia, which includes Australia and New Zealand, rather than listing out both countries (Nag, 2017), but the region is geographically the same in all definitions. For the purposes of consistency, the definition used throughout this report is taken from the United Nations: Statistical Division.

### 1.1 Geography of Oceania

There are three main types of islands in Oceania: continental islands, high or volcanic islands, and atolls or low islands (Boudreau et al., 2012). The geologic processes that formed the islands of Oceania vary greatly. The Pacific Plate, which makes up most of Oceania, is an oceanic tectonic plate that lies beneath the Pacific Ocean. It is the largest tectonic plate (Boudreau et al., 2012) and contains interior "hotspots" that formed many of the volcanic islands including the Hawaiian Island chain. It is moving at a rate of seven centimeters per year northwest and originated at the triple junction of the three main oceanic plates of Panthalassa, the Farallon, Phoenix, and Izanagi Plates, around 190 million years ago (Torsvik et al, 2017).

Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea are continental islands situated on the Indo-Australian Plate, which is to the West of the Pacific Plate. Australia lies in the middle of the Indo-Australian tectonic plate and therefore has no active volcanism and is fairly flat (Boudreau et al., 2012). New Zealand, another continental island, is part of the microcontinent of Zealandia on the border of the Indo-Australian and the Pacific Plates. This is the reason behind its towering mountains and frequent tectonic and geothermal activity. A microcontinent is a landmass that has broken off from a main continent. Zealandia broke off from Antarctica about 100 million years ago, and then from Australia about 80 million years ago (Micalizio, 2011). Papua New Guinea's magnificent and varied scenery resulted from the collision of the northward-moving Australian Plate with the westward-moving Pacific Plate about 100 million years ago (Jackson, n.d.). All continental islands were once attached to continents before sea level changes and tectonic activity isolated them; they usually have a variety of physical features from plains to glaciers and mountains (Figure 1), whereas high and low islands are fairly uniform (Boudreau et al., 2012).

Many of the smaller islands in Oceania are volcanic islands, or high islands, including Hawai‘i, Samoa, Fiji, and most of Melanesia. High islands are the youngest landmasses in Oceania because they are created as volcanic eruptions build up over time. These eruptions begin underwater, when hot magma is cooled and hardened by the ocean. Over time, this creates islands with a steep central peak, hence the name "high island" (Boudreau et al., 2012). Ridges and valleys radiate outward from the peak toward the coastline (Figure 1).

Atolls, or low islands, make up the remaining islands in Oceania and are the smallest kinds of islands, usually lacking fresh groundwater, making them less habitable. They are made of the skeletons and living bodies of small marine animals called corals that accumulate around a

sunken volcanic island which formed over ancient hot spots. This makes low islands some of the oldest landmasses in Oceania (Boudreau et al., 2012). The coral reef usually surrounds a small strip of land around an inner lagoon (Figure 1).

*Figure 1. Top left: Continental island from New Zealand; top right: Continental island from Australia; bottom left: Volcanic or high island from Kaui, HI, USA; bottom right: Atoll or low island, unknown example (Unsplash, n.d.)*

**2 The Initial Settlement of Oceania**

Oceania was first settled by humans over the course of thousands of years, starting early in humanity's migration from Africa more than 50,000 years ago and continuing until less than a thousand years ago, primarily from Asia. This settlement is generally accepted to have taken place in two waves, the second of which pushed into "remote Oceania", which includes Polynesia (Sheppard, 2011).

With limited data upon which to draw, historians have many questions about the early settlement of Oceania. There have been vigorous debates about whether the establishment of civilization on the islands of Oceania was a result of deliberate settlement or shipwrecked seafarers becoming stranded (Martins, 2020). In the late 19th century, a common view among European and colonial scholars such as New Zealand's Edward Tregear was that Polynesians

were Caucasian, an argument which rested upon supposed phonetic links between their languages and Sanskrit (Herman, 2014). This is supposedly demonstrated by similarities such as the Māori word for cuttlefish ('*wheke*') being akin to the Sanskrit word for frog ('*bheka*') (Ray, 1914). In the mid-1900s, Thor Heyerdahl, a Norwegian explorer, proposed that Oceania had been settled from the Americas, based on regional stories about "war canoes," and evidence of South American culture in sculpture and art in the Pacific (Heyerdahl, 1950). To demonstrate the viability of this theory, he created a hand-built raft and set out from South America with a small crew, drifting to the Tuamotu Islands in Polynesia (Herman, 2014). While these theories are intriguing, they are widely discredited. *Kon Tiki* is an excellent adventure story, but a woefully inadequate study of ethnography that was rejected by the scholars of its day, even though recent evidence of contact between Polynesians and South Americans has come to light (Conniff, 2014). Tregear was strongly criticized even by some contemporaries for ignoring dissimilarities between Sanskrit and Polynesian grammar that demonstrated flaws in his theories (Ray, 1914).

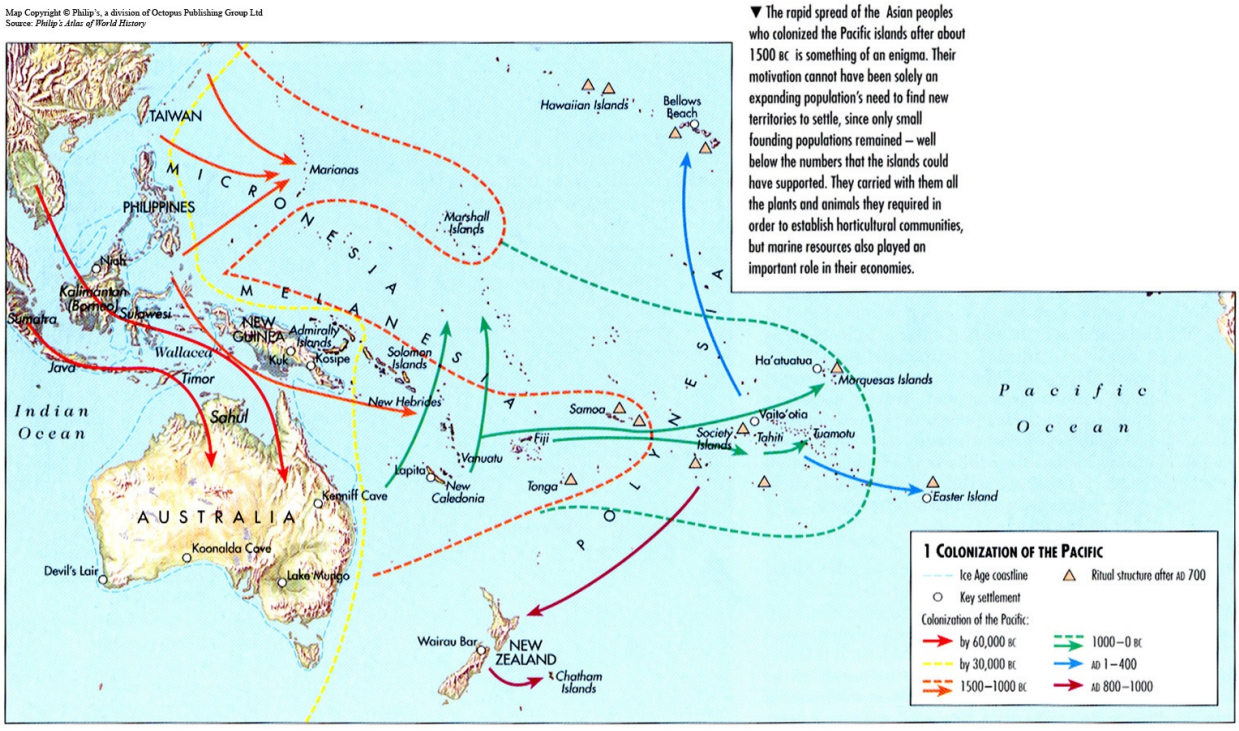


*Figure 2. Migration history of Oceania (Moore, 1999).*

It is nearly uniformly agreed upon that Oceania was settled primarily from East Asia. The first parts of Oceania to be settled were Australia and Papua New Guinea. Neanderthals could

still be found in Europe at this time. Initial human settlement of Australia is long believed to have occurred between 50,000 and 60,000 years ago by the ancestors of today's Aboriginal people (Australian Government, 2018), although a rock shelter in Arnhem Land dating back to 65,000 years ago has cast some doubt on this date (Cooper et al., 2018). While Australia was settled no later than 5,000 years after modern humans migrated from Africa, this initial "first wave" of migration has not conclusively been shown to have travelled further than the Solomon Islands (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000).

The next group of people to settle Oceania were the Lapita, who are widely accepted to have been the ancestors of many Oceanian people, primarily in Polynesia (Martins, 2020). After settling the islands off of Southeast Asia, they began to spread into Melanesia, Micronesia, and later Polynesia. This "second wave" of migration into "remote Oceania" is believed to have occurred around 1500 BCE, with the settlers reaching Tonga within a few years of 826 BCE, and Samoa shortly after. Some Lapita also settled Micronesia from Melanesia (Sheppard, 2011). Migration slowed in the subsequent years despite the initial explosive settlement from Papua New Guinea. Rapa Nui (also known as Easter Island), an easternmost marker for the Polynesian civilization, was settled between 800 CE and 1200 CE (Dangerfield, 2007). DNA tests also suggest that there was some contact between Polynesians and Native Americans in South America, as does the cultivation of the American sweet potato in the region prior to European contact. It is unknown which group initiated contact and how sustained their interactions were (Wallin, 2020). The islands of Hawai‘i were long believed to have been settled between 300 and 800 CE, but advancements in carbon dating point towards a more recent period of 1000 to 1200 CE (Kirch, 2011). Aotearoa (a Maori term for New Zealand, especially its North Island, which means "white cloud") was settled between 1200 and 1300 CE, supposedly discovered by a navigator known as Kupa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020).

Scholars continue to debate the specifics of these migrations, but the broad strokes of two waves of migration from East Asia are generally accepted, the first encompassing the settlement of Australia and New Guinea, and the second the remainder of the region (Sheppard, 2011). Oceania is a diverse region, and the history of its settlement reflects that; it includes both ancient civilizations in Australia and some of the youngest in the world in Aotearoa (Immigration New Zealand, 2020). The settlement of these islands is all the more fascinating because the scientific community agrees that it was a result of deliberate exploration by Polynesian people, rejecting

the notion of accidental drift as a result of shipwrecks and stranding (Martins, 2020). In order for this to be true, the people of Oceania must have possessed a strong understanding of navigation despite not having the instruments of Europeans. When James Cook first explored the region, he wrote:

> …these people sail in those Seas from Island to Island for several hundred Leagues, the Sun serving them for a Compass by day, and the Moon and Stars by night. When this comes to be proved, we shall be no longer at a loss to know how the Islands lying in those Seas came to be peopled (Cook, 1821).

The mere fact that Oceania was settled points to remarkable feats of ingenuity on the part of its original settlers, a fact that has not always been acknowledged (Martins, 2020). Historian Andrew Sharp persuasively argued the settlement of Oceania was a result of wrecks and rare navigational errors and his arguments were respected even by those who disagreed with his views (Richey, 1974). However, more recent scholarship and attempts to engage with Polynesian culture have shown that their journeys were very much possible, and likely deliberate. The assumption made by Heyerdahl that prevailing trade winds would have prevented the settlement of Oceania from the west was badly weakened by the revelation that the trade winds occasionally weaken or even reverse direction (Evenari, 2000). David Lewis, a scholar, sailed across the Atlantic with Indigenous navigator Hipour for thousands of miles and observed his techniques. He and Thomas Gladwin, who introduced Lewis and Hipour, wrote of the techniques used by the remaining navigators. They observed that these navigational techniques were purely observational, as shown by the expertise of Hipour, who could not read or write. Gladwin wrote that “waves, winds, clouds; stars, Sun, Moon, birds, fish and the water itself comprise about all there is to be seen, felt, heard or smelt” and served as the guides for Oceanian navigators (Richey, 1974). More than anything, the navigators relied on the stars, memorizing “star courses” between islands. The voyage of the Hōkūleʻa shortly after these works were published demonstrated that Oceania could have been settled and navigated deliberately, with remarkable prowess of observation (Anthony, 2010).

**3 Indigenous Knowledge of the Land and Ocean**

The small island populations of Oceania are among the most resourceful, innovative, and adaptive people in the world. These are the attributes that have allowed islanders to settle and thrive, often in geographically isolated and inhospitable locations (Curtis, 2011). However, the

people of Oceania believe the islands are not insular in the sense of being isolated. The late Fijian and Tongan writer Epeli Hau'ofa wrote "Oceania is vast… Oceania is us" it is a "sea of islands" and rather than separating them, the ocean as the medium for voyaging, has served to connect islands with each other as well as with the continents (Hau'ofa, 1994). From the earliest open ocean voyages the islands have been places of encounter, exchange, and knowledge (Curtis, 2011). Once settled, the Indigenous people were met with many challenges and had to develop innovative solutions. Their response to these challenges, rooted in small island innovation and resourcefulness, provide lessons of relevance to us all. Although it is not possible to fully convey the wealth of knowledge and information found within this vast region, attempts were made to cover some examples. This section will explore the methods that the Indigenous people of Oceania used to survive on these isolated islands in the Pacific and how they were able to live sustainably for so long.

Early Melanesian explorers of Oceania came first to the region and found plenty of arable land for growing crops (Friedlander, 2018). The soil of the high islands was rich in nutrients from the volcanic origins of the islands, and there were abundant natural resources in the oceans and forests (Bellwood, 1980). In contrast, the resource-poor low islands of Polynesia and Micronesia provided the incentive for extensive sea travel and expansion into the outer edges of the Pacific (Sheppard, 2011). Low islands lacked the resources vital for survival because of their small size, absence of fresh groundwater, and extremely low elevation. When the islands of Oceania were initially settled, the settlers may have been able to exist for months living on wild birds and seafood, but the success of any long-term establishment that could support larger populations would have necessitated transporting crop plants, such as taro and yam, as well as domestic animals (Friedlander, 2018). The knowledge acquired as these islanders crossed this vast region led to the creation of social systems that fostered sustainable use of the marine and agricultural environments (Friedlander, 2018).

While there is evidence that the regions that make up Oceania had diverse cultures owing in part to variable environments and island size (Sand, 2002), many communities throughout the Pacific share a common set of basic resource conservation principles that are the result of centuries of continuing experimentation and innovation (Wilhelm et al., 2014). Localized adaptive management of the environment was based on customary knowledge and practices and

was responsive to changes in the local environmental and social conditions (Ruddle, 1996; Johannes, 1998a).

Perhaps the best example of land management was found in ancient Hawai‘i where the concept of private property was unknown. Instead, they followed a complex system of land division. All land was controlled by the highest chief or king, who held it in trust for the whole population (Pogue, 1978). A supervisor of the land was designated by the king based on rank and standing (Pogue, 1978). Each of the eight main islands or *mokupuni*, were divided into smaller parts, down to a basic unit belonging to a single *‘ohana* (family) (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.). Each *mokupuni* was divided into several *moku*, the largest units within each island, usually wedge-shaped and running from the *mauka to makai* (mountains to the sea) (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.). O`ahu was divided into six *moku* (Figure 3).

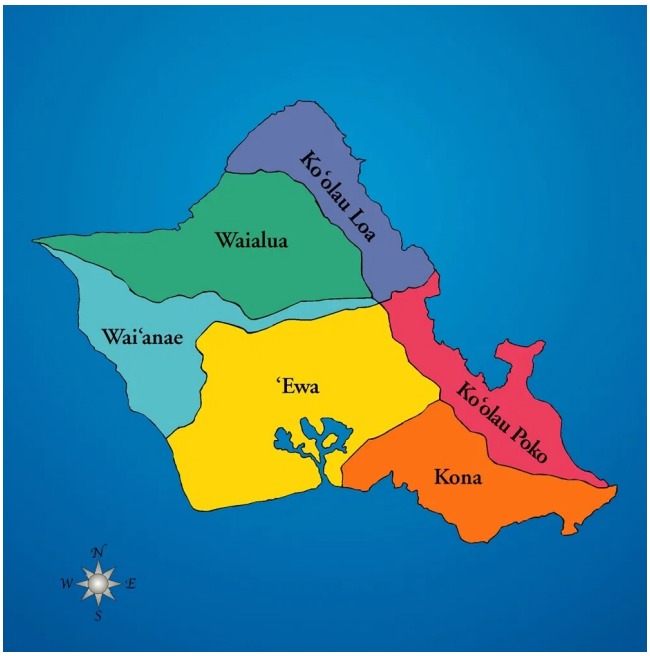


*Figure 3. The island of Oahu (mokupuni) divided into six moku (Historic_Moku_of_Oahu-Ksbe-Map.Jpg (1000×1004), 2021)*

Each *moku* was further divided into *ahupua`a*, narrower wedge-shaped land sections that ran from the mountains to the sea (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.). The size of the *ahupua`a* depended on the resources of the area with poorer agricultural regions split into larger ahupua`a to compensate for the relative lack of natural abundance (Pogue, 1978). Each *ahupua`a* was ruled by an *ali`i* or local chief (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.).

The *ahupua`a* was self-sufficient and contained all the resources the community needed, from fish and salt from the sea, to fertile land for farming taro or sweet potato, to koa and other trees growing in upslope areas (Pogue, 1978). Villagers near the coast traded fish for other foods or for wood to build canoes and houses with villagers further inland (Pogue, 1978). Specialized knowledge and resources unique to an area were also shared (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.).

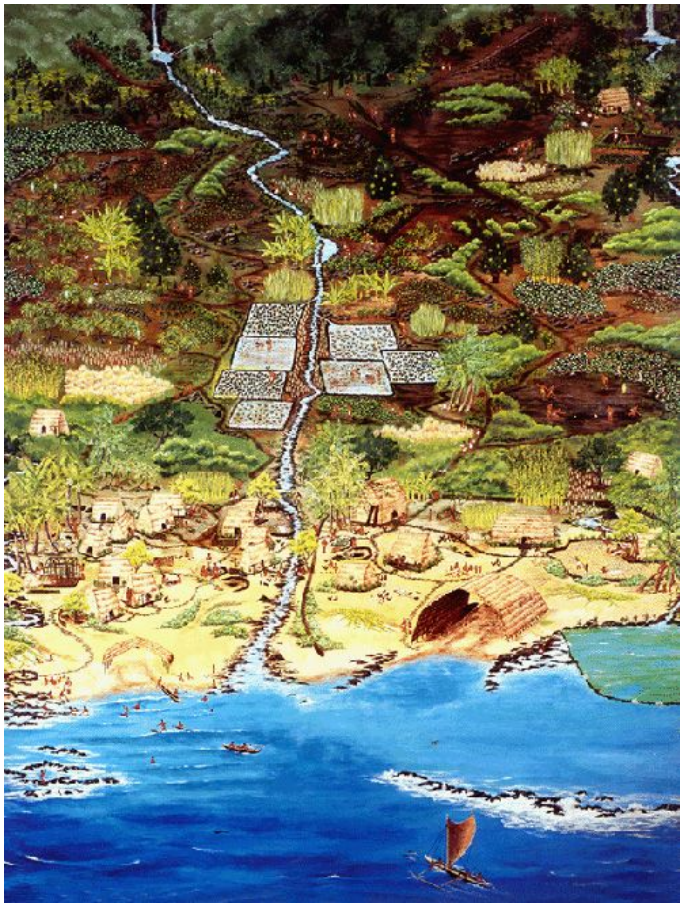

*Figure 4. Ahupua`a - a wedge shaped area of land running from the mountains to the sea, Waimea Valley, Oahu, Hawai`i. (Waimea Valley, n.d.)*

For aquaculture *loko i'a* or fishponds were located near the shore of the ahupua`a (Figure 5). Areas of brackish water where fresh water streams met the sea were surrounded by *pohaku* (rocks) carried from the mountains by the villagers (Pogue, 1978). *Limu* (seaweed) flourishes in the shallow, brackish water of these ponds attracting fish such as mullet, which would swim through the cracks in the walls or slats in a gate system to feed (Gies, 2019). Once they grew too

large to escape, the fish were gathered. This form of aquatic farming continues to be practiced today (Gies, 2019).

*Figure 5. Hawaiian loko i‘a or fishpond (Gies, 2019)*

The ahupua‘a was further divided into *‘ili* or *‘ili ‘āina* (strips of land), assigned to the *‘ohana*. The *‘ili* could be all of one piece, *‘ili pa‘a* (complete), or it could be *‘ili lele* (separated, leaping) with pieces of land both near the sea and in the mountains (Pogue, 1978). The intent was to provide the *‘ohana* with access to the resources from both the mountains and the sea, including planting opportunities for wet taro, dry taro, sweet potatoes and yams, within the *ahupua‘a* (Pogue, 1978). The *‘ohana* then had a continuity of residence, cultivation and connection with the land within an *ahupua‘a*, that was passed on through generations (HawaiiHistory.org, n.d.). In certain cases, when resources existed only far away, an *‘ohana* would have access to certain pieces of land located in another *ahupua‘a* (Pogue, 1978). It is because of their persistence on the land for generations that many Hawaiians feel comfortable in taking the initiative for cultural restoration in their own ahupua‘a (Pogue, 1978). On the other hand, they may be reluctant to do so for other districts; they feel that it is up to those Hawaiians residing there to decide (Pogue, 1978). What emerges is a strong sense of identity with the place of residence based on the knowledge of its resources (Pogue, 1978), this concept of a duty to

preserve the land and its natural resources is not just true for Hawaiians but for other Indigenous people of Oceania as well (Stevenson, 1996).

In Australia the Indigenous community has cared for the land for over 50,000 years by using land management techniques that worked with their environment (Gillies, 2019). Through the use of traditional burning, fishing traps, and sowing and storing plants, they were able to create a system that was sustainable and supplied them with the food they needed (Gillies, 2019). One example of a technique used for sustaining their environment is traditional Aboriginal fire management. The Aboriginal Australians used fire "for one of three outcomes. The first, to encourage native grasses to regenerate and produce new feed, the second to reduce scrub and fuel to prevent intense bushfires, and thirdly to promote biodiversity" (Gammage, 2014).

*Figure 6. The Warlpiri people burn spinifex to promote growth in Tanami Desert, Northern Territory, Australia (Beck, 2020)*

They were able to harness fire to control their environment by acting proactively, whereas Western-style controlled burning, also called hazard reduction burning, is reactive (Gillies, 2019). Aboriginal Australian fire burning practices are already used extensively across the country, but particularly in the north where native grasses grow more extensively in summer and need to be controlled, and where Indigenous communities actively manage the land (Gillies, 2019). However, the adoption of this traditional method of burning requires a sound understanding of local conditions to ensure it is effective and safe and an understanding of how plants relate to fire (Gammage, 2014). The "local conditions, climate, plants, and animals, all

matter and have to be taken into consideration" when using the fire stick farming (Gammage, 2014).

The concept of land in Oceania is usually closest to the scientific notion of "ecosystem" rather than to the western concept of "land" (Berkers et al., 1998). However, it differs in that the perception of the land by most Indigenous people is also based on the idea that everything in the environment has life and a spirit (Berkers et al., 1998), in Melanesia and Polynesia this life force is called *mana* (Augustyn, 1998). In Aotearoa the beliefs and values of the Māori are based on their relationship with the natural environment and their influence on management. Primary values associated with land include: *tikanga* (customs) and *whakapapa* (genealogy), which form the basis of any *kaupapa Māori* (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society) (Marsden, 1992). Other Māori environmental concepts such as *mouri* (life force), *wairua* (spiritual health and wellbeing), *kaitiaki* (guardians), and *ahi kā* (unbroken connections) are important concepts used in environmental management to essentially monitor the state of the environment (Marsden, 1992). In Australia the Aboriginal peoples developed complex songlines, also called dreaming tracks, that enable them to navigate the land and retain detailed knowledge of their environment (Wroth, 2020). Songlines are a vital part of Aboriginal culture, connecting the people to their land and allowing them to thrive in the harsh conditions of the Australian Outback for millennia (Wroth, 2020). Although spirituality has been traditionally excluded from any scientific approach, "all traditional societies that have succeeded in managing resources well, over time, have done it in part through religious or ritual representation of resource management. The key is not religion *per se*, but the use of emotionally powerful cultural symbols to sell particular moral codes and management systems" (Anderson, 1996).

Throughout Oceania nature has been woven into all aspects of the lives of the Indigenous people, from their cultural identity, daily practices, ecology, economy, knowledge and belief systems (Feiring, 2013). The Indigenous people of Oceania were able to create some of the richest sets of ecosystem applications in the world, where the key characteristics defining the land as an ecosystem were: (1) a unit of land with the height of land between adjacent valleys serving as the biophysical boundary often running from the highlands to the sea; (2) the recognition of land and sea space as a continuum that is interconnected and in a symbiotic relationship with each other; and (3) the presence of a social and ethical mechanism for integrating humans and nature through a unifying belief systems, where elders and leaders could

encourage the responsibility and stewardship of the land within a system of conservation and sustainability (Berkers et al.,1998).

## 4 European Colonization of the Pacific Islands and the Loss of Indigenous Culture

European colonization of Oceania was as swift as the original settlement was gradual, with most of it taking place in less than a hundred years during the nineteenth century. Most of the region was placed under colonial administration, motivated by commercial opportunities and a desire to spread Christianity. Though the region was decolonized in the 1900s, some territories remain colonies, and colonization left deep marks on the region.

Oceania was discovered by Europeans recently in human history. The first European to set sight on the Pacific Ocean was the Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa in 1513. The Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan would circumvent the globe a few years later and sail through the Pacific after passing Cape Horn (Linda Hall Library, 2021). Much as they were the first to explore the Americas, the Spanish were the first Europeans to make their mark in the Pacific, as they established a trade route between the Philippines and Mexico (La Follette & Deur, 2018). However, the Spanish did not permanently settle in the region. While the Spanish laid claim to the Pacific, their empire was largely imaginary, and they found it easier to acquire wealth and spread Christianity in the Philippines and the Americas than in the far-flung islands of Oceania (Archer, 1986). The Dutch also explored the region and found little that interested them. The Dutch explorer Willem Janszoon became the first European to set eyes on Australia in 1606, while expeditions in 1615 and 1642 in search of a southern continent in the South Pacific landed on islands such as Fiji, Tonga, and New Zealand, the latter believed to be part of the nonexistent continent. The Dutch were primarily interested in commerce and found bartering with the Indigenous people of the islands to be less profitable than trading in the Americas and East Indies (Kjellgren, 2004). These early forays into Oceania laid the groundwork for later colonization, even if they were not especially consequential on their own.

The 18th century would see greater European infringement in the region by the English, although a Dutch admiral did discover Easter Island and other remote Pacific locations during a Trans-Pacific voyage in 1722 (Dangerfield, 2007). The buccaneer William Dampier, who explored the region in the early 18th century, became the first Englishman to set foot in Australia

and is often considered the first natural historian of the island (National Museum of Australia, 2020).

Inspired by these endeavors, Oceania was thoroughly explored by a European during the three voyages of James Cook. Cook became the first European to circumnavigate New Zealand (Shaw, 2018), and he proved that the Pacific did not contain a hidden continent. His exploration of eastern Australia would prove to be directly responsible for the establishment of English settlements there. Cook also became the first European to reach the Hawaiian Islands; there, he was killed in an altercation with the natives. This event happened after Cook attempted to ransom the Hawaiian king following the theft of one of his boats and is memorialized in the famous painting *Death of Captain Cook*, which inaccurately depicts Cook attempting to defuse the confrontation between the natives and his men after the fighting had started (Kennedy, 2004). Numerous theories about the behavior of the natives have been proposed, including a hypothesis that Cook's death was premeditated by the future King Kamehameha (Wake, 2003). Cook's voyages "essentially completed the map of major groups" of Oceania's islands, and gave Europeans a firm grasp of the region's geography (Flexner, 2014).

While Cook's voyages were invaluable in building Western knowledge of Oceania, they also demonstrated that Europeans approached the islands with the same view as they did the rest of the world: through a Eurocentric lens. In his extensive journals, Cook wrote admiringly of the Indigenous people for their ingenuity in navigation, and also recognized that the limited resources of the islands, especially the lack of arable land, constrained the islanders (Cook, 1821). However, he expressed puzzlement at how the people of Oceania, ingenious in so many ways, lacked tools such as bow and arrows that should have been reproducible with their resources. He ultimately distinguished the people he encountered on his voyages from those of "ruder nations" while still labeling them as "poor savages" (Cook, 1821), with an overbearingly patronizing tone. Margaret Jolly, an Australian anthropologist, has written about the work of J. R. Forster, who served as a naturalist on the second of Cook's voyages and engaged in an illuminating ethnography of the native people of Oceania. Forster divided the people into two rough groups of individuals, one a fair-skinned race of a "fine size, and a kind benevolent temper," and another blacker, with "slender figures and brisk tempers" (Jolly, 2007). Forster proposed that some Indigenous people, such as New Zealand's Maori, were more savage than their counterparts in New Zealand due to the harsher weather of the southern islands (Jolly,

2007). Jolly argued that these categorizations Forster established would later be honed by European anthropologists, who developed definitions by which to differentiate the people of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. According to Jolly's argument, these examinations demonstrate that the European approach to the exploration of the islands was founded on dubious stereotypes wrapped in the language of unbiased observation and engaged in aggressive categorization that was simultaneously too broad to capture the character of the people of each island, but too specific to examine Oceania as a collective region (Jolly, 2007).

The colonization of Oceania began in the late 1700s and continued into the 1800s, driven by the French, Dutch, British and Spanish establishing patchwork settlements such as the English penal colony in what is today the Australian state of New South Wales (New South Wales Government, n.d.). European shipping in the region also scattered Europeans throughout the islands; in 1789, English mutineers from the HMS *Bounty* ingratiated themselves into the society of Tahiti. These mutineers would later settle the Pitcairn Islands (Linder, 2004). Missionaries began to aggressively pursue the natives of Oceania in order to convert them to Christianity; those who did were often politically supported by European powers and given explicit political support over those who followed traditional ways. Europeans finally developed a commercial interest in the region, although their harvesting of resources such as sandalwood was often unsustainable, forcing traders to move from island to island in search of new sources. Europeans initially hunted native resources such as sandalwood and the whale population, but gradually settled down and established agricultural plantations (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004). The first part of Oceania to be formally colonized was Tahiti, which was placed under French rule in 1843; New Caledonia followed a decade later, becoming a penal colony. Britain formalized control of Fiji in 1874 (Thurn, 1915). Melanesia was slower to be colonized, but it too fell victim to European colonization (New Guinea was divided between the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom in 1883) (Thurn, 1915). Colonial competition between Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom sprouted in the region; after its defeat in the Spanish-American War in 1898, Spain ceded Guam to the United States, which also annexed Hawai‘i and acquired a territory in Samoa during the decade (Thurn, 1915). Of course, not every island experienced colonization; Tonga became a British protectorate in 1900 with the willing collaboration of several chiefs, an arrangement which granted it military protection in exchange for British access to its natural resources (Stanford University, 2014).

The European colonial period was widely destructive towards Indigenous culture, identity, and knowledge. This process is evident in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i where in 1896, after overthrowing the Hawaiian monarchy, the United States banned *‘Ōlelo Hawai`i* (Hawaiian language) from public instruction. This act swiftly rendered the language near-extinct and paved the way for more of Hawaiian culture to be stripped away. In the words of Larry Kimura, a Hawaiian language activist, “language is the first aspect of a people to vanish" (Goo, 2019). When one considers Oceania, a region in which 93 percent of languages are endangered if one assumes a viability threshold of 10,000 speakers, this sentiment becomes extremely poignant (Romaine, 2007). Spoken language is especially important in the cultures of the Indigenous people of the Pacific, who have a long history of remarkably accurate oral tradition; for one example, the Hawaiian oral history of the first king of the island of Hawai‘i was long presumed to be mythological by Western historians, but recent scholarship favors it instead being true (Flexner, 2014). The inability to pass on oral traditions contributed to the loss of knowledge such as that of traditional Oceanian exploration techniques (Anthony, 2010). This decline in culture can be seen even before annexation in many places. King Kamehameha II forbade the worship of the traditional Hawaiian gods in 1819 and destroyed the *kapu* system of social taboos by dining with a woman; missionaries arrived on the island in 1820 to fill the religious void. The queen regent who succeeded him forbade public performances of hula (The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa*,* 2020). In Tahiti, colonial administrators even forbade islanders from sailing without Western navigational tools such as compasses (Evenari, 2000). This broad suppression of Indigenous knowledge and customs was especially harmful due to the reliance of Pacific Island cultures on oral traditions and resulted in a rapid deterioration of cultural identity over the course of only a few generations (Flexner, 2014).

Australia became an independent commonwealth via the merger of the disparate British colonies on the island in 1901, while New Zealand became independent in 1907. The independence of the rest of Oceania largely took place following World War II, alongside similar efforts in Africa and Asia. Hawai‘i became a full member of the United States in 1959 following an overwhelming vote by referendum, while most of the other islands in Oceania slowly became independent from colonial powers (including Australia and New Zealand as well as the European empires). The most recent nation in Oceania to become independent was Palau in 1994, achieving its independence from the United States (Stanford University, 2014). French

Polynesia, Wallis and Fatuna, and New Caledonia remain under the control of France (France Tourism Development Agency, 2020). Guam and American Samoa remain United States territories without full voting rights.

The remaining overseas territories in Oceania have adopted different attitudes about their own sovereignty. The government of Guam has lobbied against its current status as a U.S. territory and a government commission has engaged in a public awareness campaign calling for self-determination (UNPO, 2020). The current government of Guam has also made implicit calls for full representation in the United States' federal government by drawing a comparison between its current status and that of the District of Columbia while passing a resolution in favor of D.C. Statehood; Tina Rose Muña Barnes, the Speaker of the Legislature stated that the two jurisdictions "share a lot in common" (UNPO, 2020). The government of American Samoa, meanwhile, is supportive of its current status, and the state government even filed an appeal of a court decision that would grant its inhabitants citizenship. Samoan citizenship would endanger the territory's legal requirement that those who purchase land be at least half-Samoan, which violates federal anti-discrimination laws (Law360*,* 2020). Several nations, including Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia, remain in a Compact of Free Association (COFA) with the United States which allows the United States certain operating rights (namely the presence of military bases) in exchange for economic assistance, participation in US government programs and the right for their citizens to serve in the U.S. military (US Department of the Interior: Office of Insular Affairs, 2020). Oceanian independence movements were generally less bloody than their counterparts in Africa and Asia (Stanford University, 2014). It is clear that Oceania bears the marks of its conquest by Europe, and that the region's politics are not yet settled; New Caledonia is currently conducting a series of three referenda to determine if the island supports independence from France. In 2020, the second vote in this series found only a narrow majority favored remaining an overseas territory of France (Rosemain, 2020). However, the Indigenous Kanaks clearly favored independence; in the Loyalty Islands Province, which is 95 percent Kanak, the referendum passed with 84 percent of the vote. In the North Province, which is majority Kanak, it passed with 78 percent. However, the referendum still failed due to strong opposition from the diverse and well-developed South Province, which is plurality European, but also has large populations of not only Kanaks, but also Asians and Pacific Islanders from other countries (Haut-Commissariat De La République en Nouvelle Calédonie, 2020).

It should also be noted that independence does not necessarily result in the dismantling of inequality perpetuated during colonialism. For example, in Australia, the Aboriginal people were determined by a government inquiry to be "between two and three times worse off than non-Indigenous people in Australia," with even high-earning Aboriginal people suffering from high incarceration rates and long-term health problems (Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee, 2004).

The complications of contemporary political movements in the Pacific are clearly on display, represented by the diverse actions taken by overseas territories in their interactions with colonial powers. However, the decolonization of the region and the concerted efforts to revive Indigenous culture and heritage, described in later sections, demonstrate that there is broad support among the native people of Oceania to recover their sovereignty; even attempts to move territories more closely into the orbit of colonial powers adopt language calling for respect of their people. European colonization was clearly harmful to Indigenous culture, but it did not exterminate it, and the region's desire to determine its own future cannot be ignored.

**5 Revival of Arts and Culture**

Identity is one of the core concepts to consider when reviving and understanding culture and traditions, especially in the Pacific Islands, where culture and indigeneity have deep histories (Genz, 2011). Because of colonization, many of these cultures were repressed and Indigenous knowledge and identity were nearly lost. Many strides have been taken to save the Indigenous cultures of the Pacific Islands after colonization, specifically in festivals to celebrate the vast array of cultural traditions, like the Festival of Pacific Arts (The Pacific Community, 2016) and the Pasifika Festival (Auckland Unlimited, 2021), and the Hawaiian Cultural Renaissance of the late 20th century. Traditional methods of ocean navigation have also been preserved with the efforts of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, founded in 1973 (Kubota, 2017). These "emerging revitalization projects aim to document and preserve this knowledge in ways that are appropriate, respectful, and beneficial to the communities and individuals that possess that knowledge" (Genz, 2011), and they are motivated by the desire to save important cultures with rich histories that help to define the Indigenous people today, while also bridge the gap between modern and traditional cultures.

### 5.1 Festivals in the Pacific and the Revitalization of Indigenous Cultures

Festivals, while designed as social events, can be used to drive movements of "(re)establishing a sense of cultural identity, as well as reviving and maintaining traditional cultures" (Buch et al., 2011). This has been a popular tactic in reviving and embracing traditions and cultures in Oceania. After World War II, the number of festivals significantly increased; today in New Zealand, for example, there are over 25 different festivals annually that celebrate Pacific Island cultures (Mackley-Crump, 2016). This aligns with a dramatic increase in the migration of Pacific Islanders from other islands to New Zealand in the 1960s, with festivals that focused on Pacific Island diaspora booming during the 1970s (Mackley-Crump, 2013). Festivals about culture can showcase "heritage, traditions, ethnic backgrounds, and cultural landscapes" (Buch et al., 2011) of a specific area or community. The biggest cultural festival in New Zealand is the Auckland Pasifika Festival (Auckland Unlimited, 2021), which was founded in 1993 by Roy Vaughan, a former reporter for the New Zealand Herald Pacific, and Pasifika community leaders. Pasifika is a term that is used to describe Pacific Islanders and diaspora from the region, but it has also been coined in New Zealand as a term used to describe anything that has Pacific origin, including "music, fashion, art, design or style" (Buch et al., 2011). The Pasifika Festival has representation from 11 different Islands in the Pacific in the form of "villages": Aotearoa (New Zealand), Cook Islands, Fiji, Hawai'i, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Solomon Islands (Auckland Unlimited, 2021). The "villages" were introduced in 1998 to demonstrate the diversity of cultures across the Pacific and "ensure cultural integrity" (Auckland Unlimited, 2021). The Festival celebrates the different cultures of the South Pacific through events, including music, dance, food, arts, and performances and live acts.

Another festival that functions as an "arena" to support the efforts of cultural revitalization and preservation in the Pacific is the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture, or FESTPAC (d'Hauteserre, 2011). In 1972, the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture was founded in order to unify the islands of the Pacific through culture and arts celebration, preservation, and practice (The Pacific Community, 2020). The Festival is held once every four years (but was cancelled in 2020 due to the onset of the pandemic) on a different Pacific Island nation (The Pacific Community, 2016). Diversity, inclusion, and representation is ensured in the Festival through the participation of 28 different Pacific Islands Nations. The Festival features many events ranging from live performances and cultural workshops to storytelling and conversations

about “urgent issues Pacific Islanders face—from rising sea levels to widening social inequality” (The Pacific Community, 2020). The 13th Festival will be held in Hawai‘i in June 2024. In figure 7 below, the countries that will be participating in the festival are listed.


*Figure 7: List of the Oceanic Nations that will participate in FESTPAC 2024 (The Pacific Community, 2020)*

One important result of these festivals has been “the creation of national and cultural identities through the arts” (Stevenson, 2002). The Pacific Community is an organization that

comprises various island nations' governments across the Pacific; it seeks to encourage an overarching cultural identity for Pacific Islanders that reinforces traditional practices that are central to individual communities' identities (Giles et al., 2019). This motivated the Pacific Community to create the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture. Through music, dance, food, and arts the festival embraces and revitalizes Indigenous cultures, while also bridging the gap between modernization and tradition (Giles et al., 2019). Aimed at locals and tourists, these events showcase performers, artists, musicians, and other experts as well as scholars in order to reestablish and establish cultures, while educating and preserving knowledge from the past.

**5.2 The Hawaiian Cultural Renaissance**

One of the most well-known cultural revival movements during the Pacific Renaissance is known as the Hawaiian Renaissance, which began in the late 1900s (Gon & Winter, 2019). This resurgence of culture began with the people of Hawai‘i embracing Hawaiian music in the late 1960s (Lewis, 1987). Music is an integral part of most cultures and reinforces common values and social identities of the people through lyrics, style, and performance (Lewis, 1987). Before this revival of traditional Hawaiian music, the music in Hawai‘i was heavily influenced by the American recording industry and was commercialized, which trivialized the Hawaiian identity in multiple ways, including the creation of "phony" Hawaiian music geared towards mass consumption on the mainland United States and the rearrangement of classic Hawaiian music to fit with mainland music culture at the time (Lewis, 1987). The commercialized "Hawaiian" music was often produced by non-Hawaiians and consisted of English lyrics. When the tourism industry in Hawai`i began in the early 1900s, this commercialized, English-language music was performed on stages and with dances in Hawaii. The music was heavily influenced by other genres, like Ragtime, blues, and jazz. Ultimately, this type of commercialized music was defined by the people on the mainland and some Hawaiians as authentic Hawaiian music, which created a false "cultural identity" in which this "empty" music was the core (Lewis, 1987). In the 1960s, partially influenced by the civil rights movement on the mainland United States, the Hawaiian Cultural Renaissance began. The movement was spearheaded by a new wave of traditional Hawaiian music that was directly influenced from ancient Hawaiian forms and challenged the commercialized identity that was thought to be the Hawaiian culture (Lewis, 1987). When this new version of traditional Hawaiian music was embraced on the Islands, it

helped to recognize the importance of Hawaiian culture and sparked motivation to revive it (Gon & Winter, 2019).

The Merrie Monarch Festival, which is the largest *hula* (the dance of Hawaiian people) festival in the world, is dedicated to the memory of King David Laʻamea Kalākaua, known as the "Merrie Monarch" for his flamboyant and fun-loving ways (Merrie Monarch, 2021). Kalākaua was elected king of the Hawaiian Nation in 1874 and was a patron of the arts, especially music and dance (Merrie Monarch, 2021).

Ancient Hawaiians had no written language, but relied on oral traditions like chant and hula to record such things as genealogy, mythology, history, and religion. Hula was one means by which culture was expressed and chronicled in Hawaiʻi (Merrie Monarch, 2021). The King not only relied on these traditional forms of documentation, but during a time of heightened literacy in the islands, Kalākaua spoke with *kūpuna*, elders, eventually compiling their stories into a book, "Legends and Myths of Hawaiʻi" (Merrie Monarch, 2021). By supporting the practice and expression of Hawaiian knowledge, Kalākaua ensured that Hawaiian culture would be perpetuated for future generations (Merrie Monarch, 2021).

Language is one of the most important aspects of culture, especially in Oceania where the Indigenous people have recorded their histories orally for thousands of years. It is their "primary tool for expression and communication" (Shashkevich, 2019) and plays a major role in defining communities and people through behavior and communication. The revival of the Hawaiian language has been a major catalyst in the Hawaiian Renaissance. After the Hawaiian language was banned from schools and discouraged in society in 1896, the Hawaiian language almost died out completely in the 20th century (Warschauer, Donaghy, & Kuamoÿo, 1997). By the 1980s, there were fewer than 2,000 Native Hawaiian speakers (Warschauer et al., 1997). Eventually, the importance of the language was recognized and movements to teach and use the language were created as an effort to save it from dying out. Larry Kimura, now known as the grandfather of the revitalization of the Hawaiian language, led this effort by starting a radio show called Ka Leo Hawaiʻi that aired from 1972-1988 (Hughes, 2016), where he interviewed all of the native speakers that he could find (Goo, 2019). This sparked new interest and an ambitious movement was created to "create an entirely new generation of Hawaiian language speakers" (Goo, 2019). This movement led the revocation of the law of 1896 that banned the language in schools, the recognition of Hawaiian as one of the official languages of the state in 1978 (Galla, 2018), and

the creation of fully immersive school programs starting as early as pre-school and going all the way through 12th grade (Warschauer et al., 1997). As of 2021, there are 25 public schools in the state of Hawai‘i where the *ʻŌlelo Hawai‘i* (the Hawaiian language) is the primary language taught and spoken in school immersively; English is not taught in these schools until 5th grade (Hawai‘i DOE, n.d.). This immersive program and widespread cultural movement to save the Hawaiian language led to a reemergence of Hawaiian culture and was the driving force of the Hawaiian Cultural Renaissance.


*Figure 8: An illustration of Hōkūle‘a’s first voyage in 1976 by Herb Kane, one of the founders of the Polynesian Voyaging Society (Kane, n.d.)*

**5.3 Voyaging: Wave-Piloting and Wayfinding Revitalization**

Interest in ancient methods of navigation was initially sparked by the debate of whether or not the voyages that populated Polynesia were accidental or deliberate (Richey, 1974). The revitalization of ancient methods of ocean navigation was a major movement that worked to bring back and educate about the traditional cultures in the Pacific Islands. This type of revival happened throughout the regions in the Pacific starting with Polynesia and Micronesia. The Polynesian Voyaging Society was founded by Ben Finney, Tommy Holmes, and Herb Kane in

1973. Finney is one of the scholars responsible for demonstrating that the scientific theory that the settlement of Hawai‘i was just accidental by drifting is false, and that ancient methods of ocean navigation can be used for navigating vast distances (Kubota, 2017). The Society sponsored Hōkūle‘a, a replica of the traditional canoes used to navigate the Pacific, which was navigated using the traditional method of wayfinding, using the stars as the primary tool (Clark, 2000). The navigator for the ship's first voyage in 1976 was Mau Piailug, a Micronesian from Satawal who worked to preserve traditional navigation techniques in the face of Westernization. Piailug said that "Polynesians cannot survive without navigation" (Anthony, 2010), reflecting his belief in the importance of navigation to the cultural identity of Oceania's communities. His first voyage in 1976 inspired others to follow in his footsteps, including Nainoa Thompson, a Hawaiian, and Alson Kelen, who is Marshallese (Evenari, 2000). Later in his life, Piailug expressed disappointment at the native inhabitants of Micronesia for losing their connection to their historical heritage; however, he praised Hawaiian efforts to rediscover it (Anthony, 2010). The piece of the Hawaiian Renaissance known as the Hawaiian voyaging renaissance continues to the present day (Metzgar, 2019).

In Micronesia, the movement to educate and revive ocean navigation started in the Marshall Islands, where Alson Kelen worked to revive wave-piloting in 2010, another traditional method for navigation (Tingley, 2016). Wave-piloting uses wave patterns created by the atolls to track orientation of the ship and help to navigate the water (Richey, 1974). Kelen led a voyage to an island called Aur in the Marshall Islands in an attempt to demonstrate that this complex method of navigation, wave-piloting, still existed and was possible to teach and revive (Tingley, 2016). Kelon also participated in a study with scientists, where he demonstrated wave-piloting and they attempted to explain it scientifically. As the navigators in this study explained the wave patterns that they were following, the scientists used Western instruments to find them. One pattern that the navigators were using did not translate to a wave transformation process that the scientists were familiar with, which implied that the navigators of the Marshall Islands (also known as Marshallese navigators) used concepts to navigate that cannot be easily explained in scientific, oceanographic terms (Genz et al., 2009). In an interview, Dr. Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, the director of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai‘i, discussed this study and the Indigenous navigational methods and their importance to Indigenous culture and knowledge. He spoke about ancient navigation and its connection to STEM and engineering,

because while it does not use Western instrumentation, the methods themselves are innovative and scientific in their own sense (T. Kabutaulaka, personal communication, 2021).

## 6 Environmental Issues faced in the Pacific Islands

Oceania faces significant environmental issues spanning across the region. These issues include high rates of extinction, rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and the prevalence of natural disasters. Although these are common issues faced by many parts of the world, they are particularly severe in Oceania due to the region's geography. Most of these issues are anthropogenic and require systemic change to solve. If left unchecked, these problems will continue to grow, affecting more and more islanders. Indigenous knowledge can help inform society as it grapples with the effects of a warming climate.

### 6.1 Biodiversity Conservation and Extinction

One of the most pressing issues that Oceania faces is the ongoing threat of extinction events. Extinction has been a widespread problem in the region for centuries. Most small islands in Oceania are extremely isolated, resulting in fragile ecosystems that are carefully calibrated for and adapted to their exact locations. Therefore, any new species introduced to these islands pose a significant threat to the balance of the ecosystems. With the advancement of human transportation comes the increased risk that invasive species from other parts of the world are purposefully or accidentally introduced into Oceania's island ecosystems. Species extinction hurts the biodiversity of Oceania and can have wide-ranging consequences. A specific example of this can be found in Australia. *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, an invasive fungus that causes rotting in many species of plants, has been a widespread environmental problem across the country. Likely introduced during the time of European colonization, today it harms many of Australia's native flora and fauna and has been a significant problem for Australia's agriculture industry. Scientists and environmentalists have not yet found a solution to this issue (Cahill, 2008). Another interesting example of this can be found when examining the biodiversity of parrots. Oceania is home to 42 percent of the world's parrot species, including half of the world's critically endangered parrot species (Olah, 2018). A 2018 study was designed to discover how different factors such as employment rates and invasive species affected the extinction risk of Oceania's parrot species. The study found that, although socio-economic factors played a role in

the extinction threat of parrots in Oceania, the presence of invasive species is an “especially severe threat to the parrots of Oceania” (Olah, 2018).

Many environmental scientists are warning that extinction will only become more prevalent in Oceania as time progresses. University of New South Wales professor Richard Kingsford, a conservation biologist, explains that “[Oceania] has the notorious distinction of having possibly the worst extinction record on earth...this is predicted to continue without serious changes to the way we conserve our environments and dependent organisms” (Beale, 2009).

### 6.2 Coastal Erosion and Rising Sea Levels

Rising sea levels and coastal erosion pose significant threats to the people of Oceania. Oceania has seen an increase in coastal flooding, shoreline erosion and groundwater salinization over the past 200 years (Nunn, 2013). In Papua New Guinea, coastal erosion has posed a threat to coastal communities. One report found that at least 30 to 35 communities had islanders who were forced to move away or lose their homes due to erosion within a one-year span (Caritas Oceania, 2017). Other islands are facing similar struggles. As sea levels rise and changes in the Earth’s climate result in more frequent storms, Oceania’s island coastlines continue to steadily erode.

*Figure 9: A home in Australia is on the brink of collapse after a storm erodes the land underneath (Yeung, 2020)*

Due to its geography, Oceania is a region of the world that is particularly affected by coastal erosion. A 2002 study conducted by the Environmental Research Center in Taiwan found that the annual rate of coastal erosion in Northern Taiwan, already 18 times higher than the global mean, increased "more than tenfold" after a coastal road construction project was completed (Kao, 2002). Although it is debated whether or not Taiwan is considered part of Oceania, it is a Pacific island that is geographically similar to many of the islands found in Oceania. Pacific islands are already at a greater risk of harmful erosion, leaving them especially damaged by societal change such as the construction of new roadways.

## 7 Sustainability Efforts and Indigenous Knowledge in the Western World

Indigenous approaches that have worked on smaller scales could be effective on regional or even global scales. The Western world has historically ignored the relevance of Indigenous knowledge as it relates to solving global issues. Indigenous perspectives offer a holistic, ethical, and moral approach to sustainability using methodology that often contrasts with Western ways of thinking (Reid & Rout, 2017). To understand the true value that Indigenous knowledge has to offer, the history of sustainability efforts in Western societies must briefly be explored. Sustainability research and tracking in Western society began in the mid-twentieth century. The motivation for this research originated from the realization that human society, specifically industry and population growth, is limited by the resources available on earth. Therefore, at the core of traditional research and tracking of environmental sustainability is an anthropocentric motive to serve humanity (Reid & Rout, 2017). In contrast, Indigenous knowledge pertaining to sustainability and the environment is often holistic, focusing on the health of both the environment and humanity, but not prioritizing one over the other. All Indigenous peoples in Oceania interconnect the health of the environment with the health of oneself. This means protecting parts of the environment that humans may not necessarily see as being beneficial or necessary for survival. An example of this can be found when examining the cultures of the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These islanders are known for being heavily involved in sustainability efforts in the region because they value the environment and want to see it preserved. These efforts include assisting in biodiversity monitoring, weed control,

and restoration of wetlands, among many other challenges (Jenkins et al., 2018). In Western society, it is not common for environmental protection to be so heavily intertwined with culture. This is not to say that there are no people in Western societies who work to advance similar environmental philosophies, only to highlight the fact that Indigenous society typically sees these philosophies as foundational.

A deep-rooted societal commitment to sustainable living is not the only instructive aspect of Oceania's Indigenous culture. Their knowledge offers an informed perspective on the land and how to care for it. A good example of this in practice can be found in the Kuka Kanyini wildlife management project. Since 2003, the project has been improving habitats for threatened species in remote central Australia using an approach that combines Indigenous and scientific knowledge. The project aims to restore Indigenous land management practices and develop new ones. These include patch burning, a traditional practice that involves utilizing fire and grazing to achieve agricultural goals, waterhole cleaning and controlling feral animals (Wilson, et al., 2004).

A combination approach to sustainability, in which Indigenous knowledge is used in tandem with Western scientific advancements, has proven to be effective. In order to address sustainability issues in Oceania, society must consult Indigenous knowledge and history.

## 8 Conclusion

The culture and knowledge of Oceania's Indigenous people is a valuable lens through which to examine its rich history. With environmental degradation threatening the islands, Indigenous perspectives, and the knowledge they possess, can be an invaluable tool in protecting Oceania for future generations.

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