

SINU launches new DFL centre in Marovo

On Thursday, March 21, 2024, Solomon Islands National University (SINU) Centre for Distance and Flexible Learning (DFL) successfully launched a new center at the Snyder Rini (SR) Academy in the Marovo Lagoon, Western Province."

The launching of the DFL centre at the SR Academy came about following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SINU and Snyder Rini Education Authority (SREA) in June 2023.

Speaking during the launching on Friday, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Humanities (FEH) Dr. Patricia Rodie said the launching of the SINU DFL at SR Academy is a significant milestone in the pursuit of accessible and quality education presenting opportunities for the grassroots of Marovo.

Dr. Rodie said the partnership between SINU and SR Academy is a testament to their shared vision of empowering communities

and accessibility, ensuring that quality education is not a privilege confined to urban centres but a right available to all individuals in the Solomon Islands, including the far-reaching communities in Marovo."

"As we embark on this journey together, we are not just opening



Dr. Patricia Rodie and Obed Zutu cut the ribbon to officially launch the DFL Centre at SR Academy



SINU team arrived at Telina for the launch of the SR Academy DFL Centre.

doors to academic pursuits; we are nurturing the seeds of community development, economic growth, and social transformation."

"Through the DFL Centre, learners in Marovo and surrounding areas will have the opportunity to access a wide range of academic and vocational programs, equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to the sustainable development of their communities and the nation at large."

"Education is the cornerstone of progress and development in any society."

"It empowers individuals, enhances their skills, and unlocks their true potential."

"However, the path to education is not always accessible, particularly in remote areas such as Marovo."

"It is our collective responsibility to bridge this gap and ensure that every individual, regardless of their background or geographical location, has equal access to quality education."

through education.

"The establishment of the DFL Centre here at the SR Academy is a pioneering step towards dismantling the barriers of distance and time that have historically impeded access to higher education in remote areas."

"By leveraging technology and innovative teaching methodologies, we aim to provide flexible, student-centered learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs of our learners, irrespective of their geographical location."

"Our collaboration with the Snyder Rini Education Authority is a cornerstone in our mission to foster a culture of lifelong learning."

"This initiative aligns with SINU's strategic goals of inclusivity

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According to Dr. Rodie, through the establishment of the DFL Centre here in Marovo, SINU and the Snyder Rini Education Authority are joining forces to extend the reach of education to the grassroots communities in Marovo.

She said the partnership symbolizes a shared vision and a commitment to providing educational opportunities that will uplift the lives of countless individuals.

She said SINU recognizes that education is not just a privilege but a fundamental right, and we are determined to make this right a reality for all.

With that, she said the partnership between SINU and the Snyder Rini Education Authority is a visionary endeavour that promises to transform the educational landscape of Marovo.

She then commended the dedication and foresight of the Snyder Rini Education Authority for its unwavering commitment to the betterment of education in Marovo.

Speaking on behalf of SREA Kenny Jerry thanked SINU for sign-



SINU staff and SR Academy staff during the launching program.



DFL Director Acting Obed Zutu and SR Academy School Principal Detke Posala.

“By bringing educational resources and facilities closer to the residents of Marovo, we are not only making learning more accessible but also tailoring it to meet the unique needs and aspirations of this community.”

“The benefits of this initiative are manifold and far-reaching, extending beyond the classroom walls to touch every aspect of community life.” Further-

ing the MoU with SREA last year where he also congratulated both parties for the milestone reached with the successful launching.

Mr. Jerry said with the DFL Centre at SR Academy it helps bring tertiary education closer to the people of Marovo and presents an opportunity to address the education dilemma faced by SR Academy which is lack of access to quality education opportunity.

Also speaking at the launching event, SR Academy School Principal Detke Posala said the collaboration is an exciting one which comes with its own challenges.



SR Academy students displays a welcome slogan to welcome SINU team on arrival.



Warriors welcome SINU team on arrival at the SR Academy.

more, she said the DFL Centre will act as a catalyst for economic development, the availability of higher education in Marovo through the DFL Centre will promote social mobility, the DFL Centre will enhance social cohesion and community empowerment, and the DFL Centre will contribute to the preservation and promotion of local culture and traditions.

Not only that, but she said the establishment of the SINU DFL Centre in Marovo is a transformative initiative that promises to bring about a multitude of benefits for the community.

Mr. Posala said the challenge now is for them to work hard to meet the expected standard.

The event was attended and witnessed by SR Academy students, staff, parents and guardians.

The event started at 11 am and concluded at 2pm.

SINU to collaborate with Arizona State University, Indigenous Knowledge Institute, and Nia Tero as SINU and US Ambassador to SI Ann Marie Yastishock meet

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is excited to unveil a pioneering partnership that they are working on with Arizona State University (ASU), the Indigenous Knowledge Institute (IKI), and Nia Tero, a U.S.-based non-profit organisation.

This collaboration is set to launch the Institute of Islands Futures, a bold initiative aimed at promoting sustainable development and resilience in island communities through an integration of indigenous knowledge and academic research.

Additionally, the collaboration will see the development of postgraduate diploma and master's programs that feature in-situ learning and "living lab" community hubs, facilitating hands-on and community-engaged education.

The inclusion of Nia Tero in this partnership underscores a shared commitment to the stewardship of our planet, aligning with the non-profit's mission to support indigenous guardianship of earth's resources.

This collaboration is not just a milestone for academic and research



SINU team and US embassy team pose for a photo after a meeting at the Kukum Lecture Theatre on 15-03-2024.

This was discussed with US Ambassador to Solomon Islands, Her Excellency Ann Marie Yastishock at the Kukum Campus on Friday 15th March.

The collaboration will encompass a broad range of activities including joint research projects, the organisation of master classes in Island Knowledge and Island Futures, and the development of innovative educational content. These initiatives are designed to attract global attention and foster a shared understanding of island ecosystems' unique challenges and opportunities.

A central element of this partnership is the establishment of the Centre for Islands Futures at SINU.

This centre will focus on transdisciplinary research and education, addressing vital areas such as climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and socio-economic development within island contexts.

excellence but also serves as a bridge, enhancing the diplomatic and educational ties between the Solomon Islands and the United States, and showcasing a collective dedication to nurturing resilient and thriving island communities across the globe.

Professor Transform Aqorau, Vice Chancellor of SINU, expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, stating, "Our collaboration with ASU, IKI, and Nia Tero represents a pivotal moment in our pursuit of creating a sustainable and resilient future for island nations.

This partnership not only strengthens our academic and research capabilities but also deepens the ties between the Solomon Islands and the United States, highlighting our joint commitment to environmental stewardship and educational innovation."

The Institute of Islands Futures is set to become a beacon of innovation, signifying a new era of collaboration and shared knowledge that will benefit island nations worldwide.

SINU signs a landmark partnership MoU with DFAT

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) today signed a landmark Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

SINU Vice-Chancellor (VC) Professor Transform Aqorau and Australian High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands His Excellency (H.E) Rod Hilton signed the historical MoU at the Lokol Fusion at Kukum Campus witnessed by staff and guests from both parties.



Australian High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands, His Excellency (H.E) Rod Hilton, and SINU VC Prof. Transform Aqorau are pictured with a copy of the signed MoU.

The MoU has three objectives which the two parties will work towards achieving in the next five to ten years.

The first objective is to develop sustainable and mutually beneficial linkages between SINU and Australian universities to strengthen university governance and academic quality, encourage civil society engagement, and support SINU to become an internationally recognised institution.

The second objective is to foster linkages between SINU and Australia's security and development cooperation efforts in the Solomon Islands.

And the third objective is to encourage collaboration to create an inclusive, sustainable and accountable SINU, to ensure all students can participate equally while minimising SINU's climate impacts.

Speaking at the MoU signing, SINU VC Prof. Aqorau described the MoU as the way forward "Forging a Brighter Future," adding, that the MoU allows SINU to strengthen the partnership between the two parties.

Prof. Aqorau said this event is a testament to a decade-long journey of collaboration, a reaffirmation of our shared values, and a significant step towards a future brimming with promise and potential, as we strive to enhance the social and economic fabric of the Solomon Islands through education, research, and innovation.

"Today, as we formalise our partnership with DFAT, we are not only celebrating the signing of this MoU but also the collective efforts of the SINU community that have brought us to this pivotal moment."

"It is a reflection of the vision I set out for the University during my inauguration - a vision of an institution that can be a beacon of hope, an oasis of learning, and a leader in innovation."

"We aspire to develop a University that espouses zero tolerance for abuse and corrosion of systems, with a keen interest in emerging technologies and the power of ICT to achieve efficiencies, improve the efficacy of teaching, and enhance all processes within the organisation."

"We aim to explore the power of collaboration and develop strong public-private sector partnerships in research, publications, and collaborative research programs with overseas universities."

"We also seek to provide a space for discourse on public policy issues, serving as an interface between academia, government, industry, NGOs, and the community."

"My vision for SINU is to provide a world-class education to our students, to foster an environment of inclusivity and respect, and to be a leader in research and innovation."

"We strive to create a campus culture that is open and welcoming to all, regardless of background or identity."

"To achieve these goals, we need the support of donors to invest in our programs, and we must ensure that we have the governance systems in place that meet their due diligence requirements."

"I am committed to undertaking a review to enhance, improve, and strengthen the overall governance, financial, and administrative systems of the University."

"This will enable us to develop programs that can be accredited by SITESA and overseas accreditation bodies, and to develop joint degree, master's, and PhD programs with overseas universities, thereby giving SINU international recognition, credibility, and growing our research capacity."

"I am therefore pleased to say that through this partnership that we will be signing today, we can now afford to begin the work on what we set out to do."

"This MoU represents not just a formalisation of our collaboration but a tangible step forward in realising the ambitious goals we have laid out for the Solomon Islands National University."

"It is a catalyst that will enable us to translate our vision into action, to harness the potential of our students and faculty, and to make a meaningful impact on our community and beyond."

"Today, we embark on a journey of transformation and growth, fuelled by the support and partnership of DFAT, and I am filled with optimism for the bright future that lies ahead for SINU."

"As we embark on this new chapter, we do so with a sense of purpose and optimism. This MoU is more than just an agreement; it is a roadmap for the future."

"It is a commitment to excellence, to innovation, and to making a tangible difference in the lives of our students and our communities."

The VC said the MoU will further strengthen the robust network and collaboration that already exist with Australian universities.

"For instance, we have been working closely with the University of Wollongong on the development of a regional program that has already commenced with a graduate certificate in fisheries management and development."

"Additionally, this week we were delighted to host a team from the University of Queensland who conducted a highly successful workshop on research methodology."

"Our collaborations extend to the University of Wollongong, University of Adelaide, and Queensland University of Technology in developing programs in security and policing."

"We are also collaborating with the Australian National University (ANU) on organizing the Panatina Seminar, which we are proud to be hosting early next year."

"Our partnership with Griffith University has been ongoing, and through our appointment of Australians as Adjunct Staff of SINU, we have achieved a significant milestone with the creation of the "Solomon Islands Thesis Catalogue," a comprehensive 414-page document curated by Emeritus Professor Clive Moore."

"Furthermore, we are working closely with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology to develop joint programs in natural-based solutions to buildings."

"These existing partnerships are a testament to our commitment to international collaboration and will be significantly bolstered by this new partnership with DFAT."

Staff Profile

Name : Leila Laurish Ross

Province: Western Province

Age: 58

Work station: Kukum campus

Department: Nursing Specialty

Job title: Lecturer in Midwifery . **Qualification:** Master in Science – Nursing (Maternal Health)

How long have you been working here? : 14 years



Tell us about your job : I am a Registered Nurse, a Nurse Practitioner and a Registered Midwife by profession. I love to share my knowledge with my students. Currently I teach across the Diploma of Nursing, Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Acute Nursing. I am also involved in supervising both Diploma and Degree students during their clinical practices at NRH and in the Provinces. Despite the challenges faced, I love my job in imparting knowledge to my students and I will continue to do so.

What do you like about SINU and your job? : SINU is not the first tertiary Institution I have worked in. I have worked in 2 other Pacific countries as lecturer (Fiji and Papua New Guinea) so coming to work here is not a new experience. Working as a lecturer at SINU has allowed me to share my experiences which has added value to what I do. I like SINU because it is my home and sharing my knowledge with my fellow citizens is a passion that I will always cherish. Seeing students complete their training and seeing them getting a job is what I am proud of.

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The VC said the significance of the partnership extends beyond the confines of SINU walls where he said it is a symbol of the enduring friendship and mutual respect of Solomon Islands and Australia.

The VC pointed out, “The MoU is a testament to our collective belief in the transformative power of education and our commitment to nurturing the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and innovators.”

“SINU plays a pivotal role in the social and economic fabric of the Solomon Islands. As an institution of higher learning, SINU is not just a center for academic excellence, but also a catalyst for positive change and development. Investing in SINU is akin to investing in an economic reform program for the future of our country.”

“It is an investment in the potential of our youth, the capabilities of our workforce, and the resilience of our communities.”

With that, he said SINU serves as the intellectual powerhouse of the Solomon Islands, tasked with the crucial responsibility of seeking answers and clarity to the myriad social and development challenges that our nation faces.

“These challenges include issues related to governance, healthcare, educa-

tion, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification. As the intellectual heart of the country, SINU is uniquely positioned to conduct research, foster innovation, and develop solutions that address these pressing issues.”

The SINU VC highlighted that the enduring relationship between Solomon Islands and Australia is a testament to the strength of our bonds and the depth of our shared values.

“As we move forward, let us continue to nurture and strengthen these ties, for they are the foundation upon which our common future will be built,” he added.

Speaking during the signing ceremony H.E. the Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands Rod Hilton said Australia is proud to deepen the longstanding relationship between Australia and Solomon Islands in strengthening the education sector.

He said Australia is very privileged to work with the education sector in the Solomon Islands at all levels from basic right through to tertiary level.

He said it is only through education that individuals are empowered to reach their full potential and its societies and nations can grow and flourish where he said the two countries share a strong commitment to learning and we recognized the transformative power of education to drive economic growth, innovation, and for supporting the developing a strong and effective civil society.

With that, the Australian High Commissioner also pays tribute to the SINU VC's extraordinary leadership where he said Australia is intensely proud to partner with SINU.

Also witnessing the MoU signing today is the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) Dr Franco Rodie.

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Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is the Prime and ONLY National University of Solomon Islands.

Founded in 2013, SINU is striving to be one of the Best Education and Research Institute in the Region.

Our VISION: “A quality National University, raising Standards of education and applied research in the Pacific Region.”

Our Mission: “Championing the pursuit of knowledge, skills, academic inquiry and applied research to transform lives through higher education and training, inclusive of diverse communities, while providing relevant solutions for the Solomon Islands.