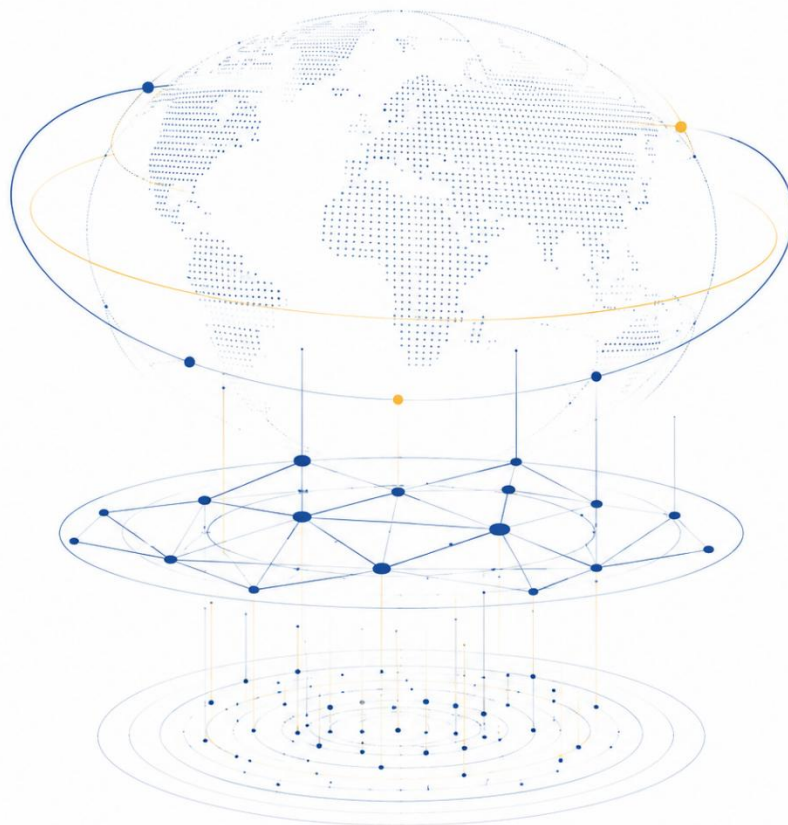


Research at WVPU: How Change Shapes the World

Research Profile, Culture, and Practice at Webster Vienna Private University



Endorsed by the University Senate: May 22, 2026.

Table of Contents

Foreword by the Chief Academic Officer	3
How to Use This Guide	3
Part I: Research Identity	5
1. How Change Shapes the World.....	5
2. The Core Research Proposition	5
3. Why Change?	7
4. Science, Not Advocacy	8
5. WVPU's Institutional Position	8
Part II: Research Clusters as Communities of Inquiry	10
6. From Research Profile to Research Communities	10
7. How WVPU's Research Clusters Work.....	10
8. The Five Research Clusters.....	11
Part III: Research Culture and Public Communication	23
9. Research Culture at WVPU.....	23
10. Research Communication, Seminars, and Public Exchange	24
11. The Public Research Platform	26
Part IV: Research-Led Teaching, Mentorship, and Student Inquiry	27
12. Research-Led Teaching and Academic Formation.....	27
13. Student Research, Theses, and Supervision	28
14. Mentorship and Academic Development	29
Part V: Research Practice, Outputs, and Expectations	31
15. Publications, Scholarly Outputs, and Research Contribution	31
16. External Funding and Research Competitiveness	33
17. International Visibility, Cooperation, and Research Networks	36
18. Public Outreach, Third Mission, and Societal Engagement	38
19. Research Services, Infrastructure, and Project Support	39
20. Research Integrity, Ethics Review, and Good Scientific Practice	40
21. Responsible AI in Research	42
22. Research Governance, Quality Assurance, and Academic Leadership	44
23. Performance Agreements, NAPOLM, and Research Reporting	46
24. Research Careers and the European Research-Career Framework	48
25. Researcher Development, Mobility, and Scholarly Capacity	49
26. Building the Next Stage of WVPU's Research Environment.....	51
End Notes	53

Copyright Notice

© 2026 Webster Vienna Private University. All rights reserved.

This document is an institutional guide of Webster Vienna Private University. It may be used, cited, and circulated for academic, institutional, accreditation, and research-development purposes with appropriate attribution. No part of this document may be reproduced, modified, or distributed for commercial purposes without prior written permission from Webster Vienna Private University.

Foreword by the Chief Academic Officer

This guide presents the research profile, culture, and practice through which Webster Vienna Private University develops its identity as a focused, research-led private university in Vienna. It is written for faculty, students, researchers, research support staff, academic leaders, prospective colleagues, external partners, reviewers, and public audiences who wish to understand how research at WVPU is organized, supported, evaluated, communicated, and developed.

WVPU is a university of focused scale and international orientation. Its scholarly strength lies in intellectual openness, methodological pluralism, close academic guidance, and the ability to connect research with teaching, mentorship, public relevance, and institutional development. As an Austrian private university with American institutional roots, WVPU occupies a distinctive position. It operates within a European framework of scientific freedom, quality assurance, and academic standards, while drawing selectively on an institutional tradition of small classes, access to faculty, and mentorship.

This position requires clarity. WVPU's research environment must be appropriate to its size, grounded in its Vienna location, aligned with its Austrian accreditation status, and built around the scholarly strengths of its faculty. Its development depends on turning these conditions into a coherent research profile, visible scholarly work, and reliable institutional support.

This guide serves both as an internal account of WVPU's research environment and as an external statement of its research identity. It explains what WVPU studies, how research is supported and assessed, how research is communicated, and how the university is building its next stage of research development.

Its central claim is simple: WVPU is a research-led private university whose research profile is organized around economic and socio-political change across interconnected levels of analysis. WVPU research explains how change unfolds, identifies its underlying causal mechanisms, and assesses its implications for individuals, organizations, societies, and global orders.

How to Use This Guide

The guide addresses both internal and external audiences.

Internally, it provides a common framework for WVPU's research profile, clusters, research-led teaching, faculty expectations, reporting, support structures, and research governance.

Externally, it presents WVPU as an Austrian private university with a clear research profile and international orientation. It allows prospective faculty, research partners, reviewers, collaborators, students, and public audiences to understand the scholarly community WVPU is building and the questions around which that community is organized.

The guide proceeds through four connected layers: the intellectual profile; the institutional structures that support it; the procedures through which research is planned, reported, evaluated, and communicated; and the strategic movement from individual research activity toward a more coherent and externally recognizable institutional research profile. The guide does not reproduce internal policies. Where formal policies, templates, external standards, or procedural documents are relevant, they are referenced through footnotes so that internal readers can consult the current official version, and external readers can understand the governing framework without being burdened by internal documentation.

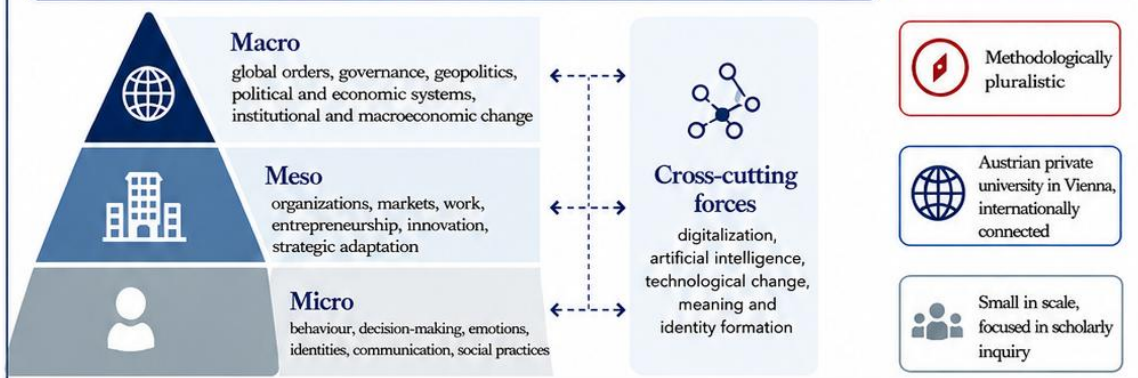
Research at WVPU

From Research Identity to Research Environment

A concise visual summary of the WVPU research guide

I. Research Identity

Research at WVPU takes economic and socio-political change as its point of departure. It examines how change unfolds, why it takes particular forms, and what its implications are for individuals, organizations, societies, and global orders.



II. Research Communities

Current clusters provide intellectual structure and remain open to development over time.



III. Research Culture and Visibility

- Seminars, workshops, visiting scholars, and cluster exchange
- WVPU Research Talks
- IR Research Seminars
- The Empirical Edge
- Public lectures and research.webster.ac.at
- Research culture through exchange, critique, and visibility

IV. Research-Led Teaching and Student Formation

- Academic formation through inquiry
- Undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral research differ by level and subject matter
- Methods, logic, causal reasoning, and hypothesis testing
- Supervision, independent research skills, and ethical responsibility
- Faculty scholarship and practice-informed teaching reinforce one another

V. Outputs, Support, and Scholarly Development



- Publications and recognized scholarly outputs
- External funding as the university's highest research priority
- International visibility, collaboration, and consortia
- Public outreach and third mission
- Research Services and multi-year planning
- NAPOLM research reporting
- Laboratories, R and SQL servers, datasets, media support
- Research integrity, ethics review, and responsible AI

VI. Governance and Quality Assurance



Research quality is guided through academic leadership, Senate participation, external review, multi-year Performance Agreements, annual performance discussions, and clear institutional support.

WVPU's research environment combines intellectual focus, methodological pluralism, institutional support, and public visibility. Its development depends on stronger funding, sustained publication, international cooperation, rigorous standards, and a clear research identity.

Part I: Research Identity

1. How Change Shapes the World

What happens when global orders shift faster than institutions can adapt? How should economic development be measured when productivity, demographic change, foreign investment, financial flows, and inequality no longer fit inherited assumptions? How do organizations make decisions when markets, technologies, and expectations change at once? How do they respond when old assumptions no longer explain new realities? How do people make decisions, form identities, and build relationships under conditions of uncertainty? How do individuals experience that uncertainty through work, communication, and belonging? How does artificial intelligence alter power, coordination, institutional authority, and the conditions under which knowledge itself is produced?

Change is rarely confined to one place or a single level of social life. It moves through institutions, markets, organizations, technologies, identities, and decisions. It is visible in the restructuring of global orders, the adaptation of organizations, the reconfiguration of work, the emergence of digital systems, and the ways individuals understand themselves and others. Its causes, mechanisms, and consequences often cross disciplinary boundaries and levels of analysis. Studying them without reducing complexity to ideological claims or single explanations is a shared intellectual concern.

Research at WVPU takes the multi-level character of change and the complexity of the world around us as its point of departure. It examines how change unfolds, why it takes particular forms, and what its implications are for individuals, organizations, societies, and global orders. It does so through theoretically informed, methodologically pluralistic, and internationally oriented scholarship.

At the macro level, WVPU scholars examine global orders, governance, geopolitics, political and economic systems, and institutional change. At the meso level, they study organizations, markets, innovation, work, and strategic adaptation. At the micro level, they investigate behaviour, decision-making, emotional responses, identities, communication, and social practices. Across these levels, digitalization and artificial intelligence operate as cross-cutting forces that reshape agency, coordination, power, institutional authority, and the production of knowledge itself.

2. The Core Research Proposition

WVPU research is organized around a clear intellectual proposition: **economic and socio-political change can be understood only when studied across interconnected levels of analysis.**

This proposition gives WVPU's research environment its coherence. It allows scholars to work from different disciplines, methods, and theoretical traditions while contributing to a shared institutional profile. Research at WVPU begins with the recognition that the most important changes shaping contemporary life move across scales. They connect global orders and institutional structures with organizations, markets, technologies, communities, identities, and individual experience.

This multi-level perspective is essential because change rarely remains contained. A geopolitical shift may alter markets, supply chains, energy systems, public narratives, and institutional trust. Changes in monetary and fiscal policy may affect investment, inflation, employment, public capacity, household security, and the distribution of risk across society.

A new technology may reshape organizational strategy, labour practices, governance arrangements, and individual behaviour. Entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial activity may carry ideas, practices, and

processes from individuals or small groups into organizations, markets, technological use, and, at times, political life. Changes in identity, emotion, communication, or belonging may appear personal, yet they are often connected to wider social, political, and economic conditions, as well as to the meanings and values through which individuals and groups interpret the world and locate themselves within it. Conversely, institutions and systems are sustained, challenged, and changed through the actions, expectations, perceptions, interpretations, and decisions of individuals and groups.

WVPU's research profile therefore rests on the relationship between three levels of analysis.

At the **macro level**, research at WVPU examines global orders, governance, geopolitics, political and economic systems, international institutions, security, climate politics, migration, sovereignty, economic development, monetary and fiscal policy, and large-scale institutional change. This level asks how systems are organized, how power and resources are distributed, how development is measured, how policy choices affect economic stability and social outcomes, how institutions adapt, and how global or regional orders become stable, contested, or reconfigured.

At the **meso level**, research at WVPU studies organizations, markets, innovation, entrepreneurship, work, strategic adaptation, institutional dynamics, and changing forms of coordination. This level asks how organizations respond to uncertainty, how markets and institutions evolve, how technological and social change affects organizational life, and how new practices emerge within professional, economic, and institutional settings.

At the **micro level**, research at WVPU investigates behaviour, decision-making, emotional responses, communication, social practices, memory, health, identity, and lived experience. This level asks how individuals and groups interpret change, how they respond to uncertainty, how identities develop, and how human experience is shaped by broader economic, political, technological, and cultural conditions.

The effectiveness of this framework lies in the connections among these levels. WVPU research is concerned with the movement of change across them: from global orders to institutions, from institutions to organizations, from organizations to individual lives, and from individual and collective behaviour back into systems, markets, and public life. This allows WVPU scholars to examine causal mechanisms, trace consequences, and identify patterns that remain hidden when research is confined to a single analytical level.

Digitalization and artificial intelligence are especially important within this framework because they operate across all three levels. They reshape governance, public authority, and political communication. They alter organizations, markets, work, innovation, entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurial practice. They influence decision-making, identity formation, social interaction, and the production of knowledge itself. They also generate substantial economic costs and potential benefits, from investment requirements, labour-market disruption, regulatory burdens, and organizational adjustment costs to productivity gains, new business models, improved coordination, and expanded analytical capacity. Their significance lies in the reorganization of relations among individuals, institutions, markets, and systems.

The framework gives WVPU a shared intellectual orientation while preserving disciplinary diversity, methodological pluralism, and academic freedom. It allows research on global orders, organizations, markets, identities, behaviour, communication, digital systems, legal-institutional questions, and socio-economic practices to contribute to a common profile without being forced into artificial uniformity.

The result is an intellectual profile defined by a common question: how does change unfold across the interconnected levels of contemporary life, and what does it mean for individuals, organizations, societies, and global orders?

3. Why Change?

WVPU uses the term **change** deliberately.

Change is analytically open because it allows scholars to examine movement, continuity, adaptation, disruption, resistance, acceleration, delay, and unintended consequence without assuming in advance what a process means or where it must lead. It keeps inquiry close to evidence and leaves room for theoretical disagreement.

Economic and socio-political life rarely moves in a single direction. Institutions may adapt while trust declines. Technologies may expand capacity while increasing dependency. Markets may create opportunities while redistributing risk. Organizations may innovate while reproducing old hierarchies. Individuals may gain new forms of agency while facing new forms of uncertainty. Change therefore requires explanation, not assumption.

The distinction between change and transformation matters. Transformation names a stronger claim: a deeper alteration in form, structure, relation, or meaning. It is appropriate where evidence shows that an underlying order has been qualitatively reconfigured. Researchers may therefore study digital transformation, organizational transformation, political transformation, or social transformation where the evidence warrants that stronger analytical claim.

Yet not every change is transformative. Changes vary in depth, scope, duration, and consequence. Some are incremental. Some are symbolic. Some are temporary. Some are absorbed by existing institutions. Some alter practices without changing underlying structures. Some appear far-reaching at first but later become routinized, reversed, or contained. Beginning with change allows researchers to ask whether transformation has occurred, where it has occurred, for whom it has occurred, and by what criteria it can be identified.

For WVPU, this distinction is central. Economic, political, technological, organizational, and individual developments must be examined through evidence rather than assumption. It asks whether a process changes behaviour, institutions, power relations, markets, identities, meanings, practices, or systems, and whether those changes amount to transformation in a stronger analytical sense. The term also fits WVPU's multi-level research profile because change can be examined within, and traced across, macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis, where its most important effects often appear.

WVPU's use of change also preserves methodological pluralism. Some forms of change are measurable through data, indicators, models, experiments, surveys, and comparative analysis. Others require interpretation of meaning, discourse, identity, institutional practice, historical context, or lived experience. A serious research environment accommodates both. The study of change therefore invites quantitative, qualitative, computational, theoretical, experimental, and interpretive approaches, each judged by its appropriateness to the question.

The term is also preferable because it avoids premature closure. Words such as transformation, transition, disruption, crisis, innovation, or progress may be useful when they describe specific empirical processes. Yet each carries assumptions that may fit some cases and distort others. Change

is broader and more disciplined. It allows researchers to ask whether a development is gradual or sudden, superficial or deep, reversible or durable, beneficial or harmful, intended or unintended.

For WVPU, change is a research problem: something to be explained, measured where possible, interpreted where necessary, and assessed in terms of its causes, mechanisms, meanings, and consequences.

Change therefore stands at the centre of WVPU's research identity. It provides coherence without reducing complexity and preserves the openness that serious scholarship requires.

4. Science, Not Advocacy

WVPU's research identity rests on the disciplined practices of science: conceptual clarity, methodological rigour, evidence, interpretation, transparency, peer review, and openness to correction.

Research may begin from concern for the world. Scholars may care deeply about safer societies, better institutions, more responsible governance, human dignity, public health, equality before the law, environmental sustainability, or the conditions for peaceful and meaningful lives. Such concerns often shape the questions researchers ask. The scholarly task, however, remains inquiry.

At WVPU, research proceeds through evidence, method, interpretation, and critique. It distinguishes analysis from advocacy and explanation from preference. It treats claims as propositions to be examined, tested, interpreted, challenged, and refined. It values public relevance because careful research can clarify problems, improve debate, support evidence-based decision-making, and deepen understanding.

This distinction makes research useful to society. Public debate, policy advice, organizational learning, professional practice, and democratic decision-making require scholarship that is independent enough to question assumptions, careful enough to assess evidence, and honest enough to revise conclusions.

Therefore, WVPU understands public relevance as an extension of scholarly responsibility. Research may inform public debate, contribute to policy discussions, support institutional learning, and engage with business, government, civil society, and cultural communities. In each case, its contribution depends on the integrity of its methods and the independence of its analysis.

Science here means disciplined inquiry: answerable questions, careful claims, explicit limits, and openness to correction. This commitment is the basis of research quality, public credibility, and academic freedom.

5. WVPU's Institutional Position

WVPU's research identity is shaped by a specific institutional position: it is a private, non-profit, research-led university in Vienna, accredited within the Austrian higher education system, internationally oriented in faculty and student body, and embedded in Webster University's global academic network while developing its own European research profile.

This position gives WVPU both international reach and institutional responsibility. The university must build a research environment appropriate to its size and defined by its location, legal status, faculty capacity, research profile, and academic objectives. WVPU's model is one of concentrated research capacity rather than comprehensive scale. Its research development depends on disciplined

concentration, methodological pluralism, international connection, and scholarship whose significance can reach well beyond the size of the institution itself.

Vienna provides a particularly important setting for this research profile. As a city of international organizations, diplomacy, European institutions, public agencies, cultural exchange, entrepreneurial activity, and business networks, it offers a natural environment for research on economic and socio-political change. Questions of governance, identity, markets, institutions, communication, technology, public decision-making, entrepreneurship, and individual agency are present in the city's political, economic, cultural, and intellectual life. Vienna's vibrant artistic and cultural scenes also provide important spaces in which social meanings are produced, contested, and publicly examined, often through forms of critique that illuminate how individuals and communities experience broader processes of change.

The university's Constitution explicitly describes WVPU as a research-led institution, and its mission includes the generation of knowledge, globally oriented education, small classes, and mentorship.ⁱ Its guiding principles include freedom of science and teaching, the generation and dissemination of research that strengthens understanding of economic, social, political, and individual processes, and the advancement of knowledge-based decision-making.

Research-led teaching follows from this institutional position. Students encounter knowledge through questions, concepts, methods, evidence, argument, and critique. They learn how claims are evaluated, how uncertainty is handled, and how responsible judgement develops. In this sense, research contributes to the formation of graduates who can think clearly, act responsibly, and participate meaningfully in institutional, civic, and public life.

WVPU's research development therefore rests on a clear intellectual profile, serious academic standards, internationally connected research, and a public contribution grounded in evidence, explanation, and academic integrity.

Part II: Research Clusters as Communities of Inquiry

6. From Research Profile to Research Communities

WVPU's research profile gives the university a shared intellectual orientation. The research clusters give that orientation an academic form.

The clusters translate WVPU's shared research orientation into communities of inquiry. They connect individual faculty research to a broader institutional profile while preserving disciplinary depth, methodological pluralism, and academic freedom. Their purpose is to make research at WVPU more communicable, collaborative, and institutionally legible.

The clusters address one of WVPU's central structural challenges: how to build coherence without narrowing intellectual freedom. WVPU's size calls for focus to create energy rather than rigidity. The cluster model allows research at WVPU to develop through concentration, connection, and visibility while preserving the freedom of scholars to pursue questions that emerge from their disciplines, methods, and intellectual commitments.

Each cluster brings scholars together around shared questions. Those questions may concern global orders, organizations, markets, identities, technological systems, public decision-making, or the lived experience of change. They may be addressed through different methods and disciplines, but they contribute to a common institutional profile when they clarify how change unfolds, how it is interpreted, and what consequences it produces.

The clusters are best understood as dynamic research communities. They reflect the current state of WVPU's research activity, collaborations, and strategic priorities, while remaining open to future development. New clusters may emerge as faculty expertise develops, external conditions change, new projects take shape, or new colleagues join the university. Existing clusters may evolve, merge, narrow, expand, or fade as research activity changes over time. This flexibility is essential to an intellectually honest research environment.

The clusters also create points of connection: collaborators, seminars, grant applications, student research, visiting scholars, public communication, and external partnerships. They give Research Services, academic units, the Chief Academic Officer, and the public research platform a clearer structure through which to support and communicate research. In this sense, the clusters give individual scholarship an institutional form while preserving the openness that serious scholarship requires.

7. How WVPU's Research Clusters Work

WVPU's current research clusters are aligned with the university's multi-level research profile. Some are primarily macro-level in orientation, others focus more strongly on meso-level or micro-level processes, and all operate across levels to some degree. This overlap is intentional. Questions of change often become most productive where levels intersect.

The clusters serve six main functions.

First, they provide **thematic coherence**. They allow WVPU to describe its research activity in a form broader than individual publications or faculty biographies and more precise than a general institutional statement.

Second, they create **intellectual community**. Clusters provide a framework for seminars, reading groups, workshops, visiting scholar events, faculty presentations, student research activities, and informal exchange.

Third, they support **research development**. Clusters can help identify promising research questions, improve grant applications, build project teams, connect faculty across academic units, and locate external partners, co-authors, and institutions whose expertise complements WVPU's own. They provide a natural structure for moving from individual research interests to collaborative research activity, including joint publications, externally funded projects, visiting scholar exchanges, conference panels, and institutional cooperation.

Fourth, they support **research-led teaching and student inquiry**. Clusters can help students understand how faculty research connects to larger questions. They may also serve as entry points for thesis topics, research assistantships, student presentations, methods training, and participation in public research events.

Fifth, they strengthen **visibility**. Clusters make WVPU's research easier to communicate internally, on research.webster.ac.at, through WVPU Research Talks, and to prospective faculty, partners, reviewers, funders, and public audiences. A cluster gives research a public language without flattening the complexity of individual scholarship.

Sixth, they support **strategic development**. Clusters help WVPU identify existing scholarly strengths, future investment needs, and areas where research support, public communication, recruitment, visiting scholars, and grant development can be aligned.

The cluster model has value only when it remains intellectually active. A cluster hosts conversations, generates questions, supports projects, invites external voices, and makes research visible. Its measure is the scholarly work it enables.

For this reason, WVPU reviews its clusters periodically. Their names, scope, activities, and membership must reflect the development of research itself. Their measure is intellectual usefulness: whether they help WVPU ask better questions, support stronger research, build meaningful collaboration, and communicate its work more clearly.

8. The Five Research Clusters

WVPU's current research environment is organized through five multidisciplinary research clusters. Each cluster gives academic and public form to the university's broader research profile and its multi-level logic.

Each cluster is presented under its official institutional title, followed by a short acronym in parentheses for ease of reference and described through profile, representative research questions, illustrative faculty and topic fit, methods and evidence, and public and institutional relevance. Faculty references are illustrative rather than exhaustive; they show how existing research activity fits the cluster logic while leaving room for new projects, colleagues, and directions.

Because the clusters bring together different disciplines and levels of analysis, their topic areas call for different forms of evidence, methods, and analytical techniques. Macroeconomic and financial questions may require econometric modelling, time-series analysis, comparative indicators, and policy evaluation. Questions of identity, meaning, or belonging may require interviews, ethnography,

discourse analysis, biometric data, or interpretive methods. Research on AI and digitalization may require computational modelling, machine learning, digital trace data, experimental designs, or socio-technical analysis. The clusters therefore identify what WVPU studies and how its questions can be investigated with scholarly rigour.

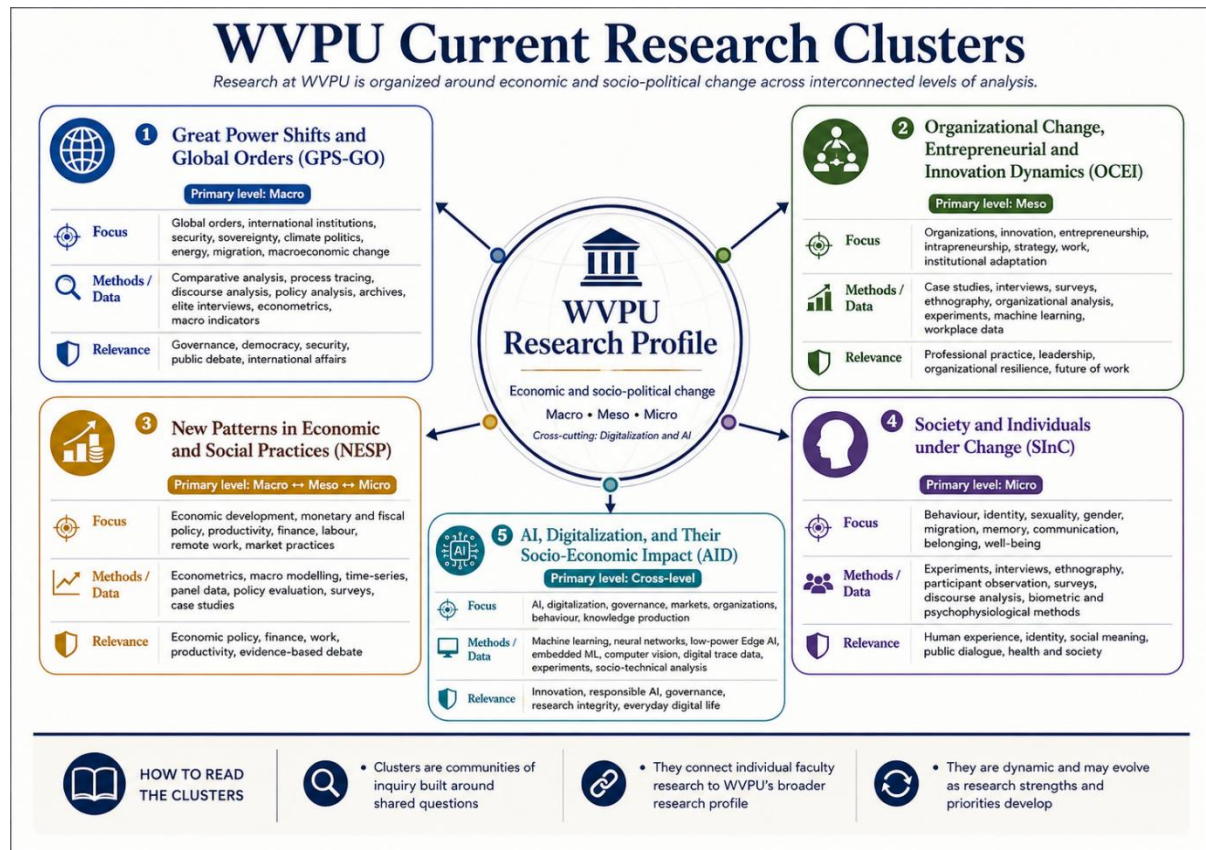


Figure 1. WVPU's Current Research Clustersⁱⁱ

The figure presents WVPU's current research clusters as communities of inquiry organized around the university's multi-level research profile.

8.1 Great Power Shifts and Global Orders (GPS-GO)

Profile

This cluster examines the reconfiguration of global orders, international institutions, geopolitical relations, political economy, security, sovereignty, borders, climate politics, energy systems, democratic resilience, and macroeconomic change. It is primarily macro-level in orientation, although many of its questions extend toward markets, organizations, identities, public narratives, and individual security.

The cluster asks how large political and economic systems are organized, how they become contested, and how institutions respond when established orders shift. It is concerned with the conditions under which global and regional orders remain stable, lose legitimacy, adapt to new pressures, or become reconfigured through conflict, cooperation, policy change, economic disruption, technological development, and changing public meanings.

This cluster is especially important for WVPU because it connects the university's research profile to some of the most visible questions of contemporary public life: the changing distribution of power, the future of democratic governance, the role of international institutions, the relationship between markets and political authority, the politics of energy and climate, and the consequences of conflict, migration, and institutional uncertainty.

Representative Research Questions

- What conditions enable or constrain the European Union's development of a coherent China strategy amid great-power rivalry, transatlantic recalibration, and the erosion of liberal global governance?
- How does the global expansion of private military and security companies transform war as an institution of international order?
- How do geopolitical crises and shifting patterns of energy dependence reshape Europe's climate and energy transition, and what implications does this have for global governance and the emerging international order?
- How does the concept of "greatness" operate as a central narrative pattern structuring Russia's political decisions and foreign policy actions across different historical epochs?
- How do spatial inequalities in resource endowments and control over extraction, processing, and end use shape change and stability in systemic power balances?
- How do changing patterns of trade, foreign direct investment, financial flows, productivity, and demographic pressure reshape economic development and power hierarchies in a changing global order?

Illustrative Faculty and Topic Fit

Illustrative faculty work in this cluster includes research on international institutions and global re-ordering (Bátora), the privatization of warfare (Bátora), the evolution of EU security and defence policy (Bátora, Algieri), EU-China relations (Algieri), discourses and narratives in the formation of great power identities (Reshetnikov), media governance, freedom of expression, communication ethics, international communication regulation, and the role of international and non-governmental organizations in norm formation (Löwstedt), climate politics and the global implications of climate change (Brutschin), energy geopolitics and resource competition (Schubert), border regimes and sovereignty (Oslan), aging populations and the Kuznets curve (Workie), measuring multinational production through foreign direct investment statistics (Wacker), and transnational migration, gendered power, and state-society relations across changing political orders.

Together, these research areas show how the cluster connects political order, economic structure, institutional change, public meaning, and individual consequences. They also show why the study of global orders cannot be separated from questions of markets, identity, security, legitimacy, and policy capacity.

Methods, Data, and Analytical Approaches

Research in this cluster may draw on qualitative, quantitative, historical, and interpretive approaches. Methods include comparative case analysis, process tracing, institutional analysis, policy analysis, conceptual and normative analysis, discourse and narrative analysis, archival research, elite interviews, content analysis, and the analysis of legal, policy, diplomatic, and institutional documents.

Where macroeconomic or political-economic questions are involved, research may use quantitative approaches such as econometric modelling, time-series analysis, panel-data analysis, comparative indicators, macroeconomic indicators, foreign direct investment statistics, trade and investment data, demographic data, and policy evaluation methods.

The cluster's theoretical resources include international relations theory, political economy, constructivist approaches to identity and meaning, institutionalism, security studies, European studies, governance research, macroeconomics, and theories of global order and systemic change.

Public and Institutional Relevance

This cluster draws particular advantage from WVPU's location in Vienna, where international organizations, diplomatic networks, European institutions, policy communities, and public agencies form part of the wider intellectual environment. Questions of governance, security, democracy, migration, energy, climate, institutional authority, and global political order are not remote topics in this setting. They are part of the city's public, diplomatic, and policy landscape.

The cluster gives WVPU a platform for research-led teaching, public lectures, WVPU Research Talks, policy-facing events, and external cooperation in areas such as international affairs, European governance, security, climate politics, migration, and economic policy. Its public relevance lies in clarifying how global and regional orders change, how institutions respond to uncertainty, and how political narratives shape authority, legitimacy, and public decision-making.

8.2 Organizational Change, Entrepreneurial and Innovation Dynamics (OCEI)

Profile

This cluster examines how organizations, markets, innovation systems, professional environments, and institutional practices respond to changing economic, technological, and social conditions. It is primarily meso-level in orientation, although many of its questions connect directly to macro-level pressures and micro-level behaviour.

Organizations rarely respond to change in purely mechanical ways. They interpret uncertainty, adapt routines, revise strategies, absorb or resist new technologies, and create new practices through the actions of individuals and groups. Entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship are therefore central to this cluster. They show how ideas, practices, and processes can move from individuals or small teams into organizations, markets, technological use, and, at times, wider economic and political life.

The cluster studies innovation, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, strategy, leadership, work, organizational identity, institutional adaptation, organizational fields, and new forms of coordination. It asks how organizations make decisions when markets, technologies, and expectations change at once, and how they respond when inherited assumptions no longer explain new realities.

Representative Research Questions

- How do institutional structures, personnel configurations, and external security pressures empower or constrain the European Union's use of contractors in security and defence?
- How can complex organizational data be analysed to identify patterns, relationships, and decision-relevant information that are not visible through conventional interpretation alone?
- How can organizations distinguish decision-relevant information from redundancy in large and complex datasets, and how does this affect strategic decision-making under uncertainty?

- How do configurations of entrepreneurship-support activities shape venture success across technological, social, and sustainability-oriented ventures, and under what conditions do data-driven measurement and crowd-based participatory formats reconfigure entrepreneurship support as an organizational field?
- Under what configurations of entrepreneurial ecosystems and support arrangements do transformational ventures and intrapreneurial initiatives in incumbent firms co-evolve, and how do hybrid organizational forms such as Living Labs reshape coordination among new ventures, established organizations, and public actors in sustainability-oriented fields?
- How can organizations prevent, detect, and respond to distinct forms of organizational misconduct, including workplace bullying, financial statement fraud, and other failures of responsibility?
- How do attributional biases, including victim-blaming, emerge in organizational contexts, and how can organizational procedures reduce their influence on judgement, responsibility, and response?

Illustrative Faculty and Topic Fit

Illustrative faculty work in this cluster includes research on the influence of capital on transnational migrant entrepreneurship (Reuther), organizational field formation in EU defence (Bátora), the evolution of new organizational forms in the context of modern wars (Bátora), workplace attribution dynamics and behavioural perceptions (Zedlacher), AI-driven innovation in organizational contexts (Roth), and clustering and machine learning for data-driven analysis and decision support (Beer).

This cluster also includes collaborative work with institutions such as TU Vienna, WU Vienna, and other partners, including organization studies and management conference contributions, joint funding applications, and empirical studies on changing work-time arrangements. These activities connect organizational theory, technological change, behavioural analysis, applied research, and organizational partners.

Methods, Data, and Analytical Approaches

Research in this cluster may use qualitative, quantitative, computational, mixed-method, and applied organizational research designs. Methods include case studies, interviews, surveys, organizational ethnography, field research, comparative organizational analysis, process studies, social network analysis, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, and the analysis of organizational documents, strategy materials, workplace data, project-level evidence, and institutional records.

For research on innovation, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, and decision support, the cluster may also draw on quantitative modelling, machine learning, clustering techniques, classification methods, decision analytics, and computational approaches to organizational and market data.

Analytically, the cluster may engage organizational theory, institutional theory, entrepreneurship studies, innovation studies, strategy, leadership research, behavioural science, management theory, socio-technical approaches, and theories of technological and organizational change.

Public and Institutional Relevance

This cluster connects WVPU's research profile to the environments in which many students, alumni, and partners work, namely organizations, firms, public institutions, NGOs, start-ups, and professional

networks. It addresses questions of leadership, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, innovation, organizational resilience, technological adoption, and the future of work.

The cluster connects scholarly analysis with professional practice. Research in this cluster can inform how organizations understand uncertainty, adapt strategies, manage change, develop new practices, and create conditions for responsible innovation. It also offers natural opportunities for external cooperation, applied research, executive and professional engagement, and student involvement in organization-facing research.

8.3 New Patterns in Economic and Social Practices (NESP)

Profile

This cluster examines the practices, institutions, and indicators that structure markets, work, finance, productivity, consumption, and economic development. It connects macroeconomic analysis with the study of social and economic practices, asking how economic life is measured, organized, experienced, and governed.

The cluster addresses questions of monetary and fiscal policy, productivity, demographic change, foreign direct investment, financial flows, labour flexibility, remote work, stakeholder engagement, consumer behaviour, and the changing relationship between economic systems and social expectations. It is especially concerned with how economic change becomes visible through data, institutions, policy instruments, workplace practices, and everyday forms of participation in markets.

This cluster operates across levels of analysis. At the macro level, it examines economic development, monetary and fiscal policy, productivity, demographic change, foreign direct investment, exchange-rate dynamics, and financial systems. At the meso level, it studies markets, organizations, stakeholder relations, infrastructure projects, and work arrangements. At the micro level, it considers how individuals work, consume, communicate, interpret economic change, and participate in social and economic practices.

Representative Research Questions

- How do citizens in European Union member states think about the EU, and what implications do different thinking styles have for preferences concerning EU policies, politics, and polity formation?
- How is the agency of professional translators and interpreters perceived by the actors involved in international politics, diplomacy, and governance, and how does positional interlinguality help us rethink agency in international relations?
- Which historical processes, political institutions, and professional norms have contributed to the displacement of interpreters and translators from the visible sphere of political decision-making, even though their work remains central to international politics, diplomacy, and governance?
- When is technological change labour-replacing, and when does it support labour, and how uniform are these patterns across countries?
- How do foreign direct investment patterns and cross-border financial flows shape macroeconomic stability, productivity, and development outcomes in increasingly interconnected economies?

- How does the implementation of non-standard working arrangements, including four-day work weeks and remote work, affect employee reciprocity and gender equality over time?

Illustrative Faculty and Topic Fit

Illustrative faculty work in this cluster includes research on stakeholder engagement in infrastructure projects (Eslerod), remote work and gendered labour patterns (Zedlacher), macroeconomic dynamics including productivity, aging populations, and foreign direct investment (Workie, Wacker), citizens' thought communities concerning European integration and the privatization of security and defence services (Bátora), and the role of translators as intercultural interpreters in diplomatic negotiations (Reshetnikov).

The cluster also includes research collaborations on monetary transmission and exchange-rate dynamics, shadow banking, illicit financial flows, and other questions concerning economic measurement, financial systems, and institutional trust. These areas demonstrate how WVPU research connects economic indicators, policy instruments, financial structures, market practices, and social interpretation.

Methods, Data, and Analytical Approaches

Research in this cluster may use quantitative, qualitative, mixed-method, and applied economic research designs. Methods include econometric modelling, econometric analysis, time-series analysis, panel-data analysis, cross-country comparative analysis, causal inference, policy evaluation, productivity measurement, demographic modelling, financial analysis, input-output analysis, and statistical analysis of monetary, fiscal, labour-market, trade, productivity, demographic, investment, and financial-flow data.

For research on work, consumption, stakeholder engagement, communication, and socio-economic practices, the cluster may also use surveys, interviews, focus groups, organizational case studies, consumer research methods, discourse analysis, comparative institutional analysis, and mixed-method designs.

The analytical vocabulary includes macroeconomics, monetary economics, fiscal policy analysis, development economics, international economics, finance, labour studies, political economy, consumer behaviour, communication studies, stakeholder theory, and socio-economic practice theory.

Public and Institutional Relevance

This cluster gives clearer analytical definition to the economic dimension of WVPU's research profile. It contributes to evidence-based debate on economic development, monetary and fiscal policy, productivity, finance, labour markets, demographic change, foreign direct investment, and the measurement of economic change.

Its public relevance comes from linking technical economic analysis to social and institutional consequences. Inflation, productivity, financial flows, work arrangements, demographic shifts, and market practices shape household security, organizational decision-making, institutional trust, and public capacity. The cluster therefore connects economic analysis, financial systems, market practices, communication, and institutional interpretation in ways directly relevant for policy, organizational decision-making, and public understanding.

8.4 Society and Individuals under Change (SInC)

Profile

This cluster examines how individuals, groups, communities, and relationships are shaped by uncertainty, identity formation, social meaning, communication, and lived experience. It asks how people understand themselves and others under conditions of uncertainty, how meanings and values are produced and contested, and how broader social, political, economic, technological, and cultural changes become part of individual and collective life.

The cluster includes research on behaviour, decision-making, emotion, identity, sexuality, gender, migration, memory, communication, belonging, social relations, trauma, health, and social meaning. It is primarily micro-level in orientation, although many of its questions connect directly to macro-level processes such as migration, political identity, nationalism, conflict, cultural change, social norms, institutional authority, and public meaning.

This cluster is essential to WVPU's research profile because change becomes meaningful through human experience. Institutions, markets, technologies, and political systems shape individual lives, but individuals and communities also interpret, resist, reproduce, and change those systems through action, communication, identity formation, and social practice.

Representative Research Questions

- How do democratic institutions operationalise equality in ways that simultaneously produce protection and harm, and what does this reveal about the limits of democracy as a protective political order?
- How do differences in air, atmosphere, and the body across neighbourhoods, regions, nation-states, and the planet co-constitute breathing inequalities and respiratory conditions of possibility in suffocating times?
- How do young people negotiate gender identity under conditions of political, social, and institutional instability, and what implications does this have for recognition, belonging, embodiment, and mental health?
- How do renewed conservative gender norms, including nostalgic ideals of masculinity, femininity, family, and domesticity, emerge among younger generations, and how do such counter-movements affect longer histories of emancipation?
- How do nationalist narratives shape identity politics, and how are such narratives reproduced through language, symbols, memory, and political storytelling?
- How do migration, memory, gender, and transnational belonging shape identity formation under conditions of social and political change?
- How do embodied, vocal, behavioural, and physiological markers shape social recognition, sexual identity, interpersonal judgement, and the interpretation of difference?
- How does entrepreneurial motivation affect business model design?

Illustrative Faculty and Topic Fit

Illustrative faculty work in this cluster includes research on gender nonconformity (Rieger), vocal characteristics and sexual orientation (Rieger), psychological and sociocultural dynamics related to sexuality and identity (Rieger), Russian identity in international affairs (Reshetnikov), gender, migration, memory, and transnational identity under conditions of social change (Albrecht),

communication ethics, intercultural and transnational communication values, dignity, norms, and the relationship between communication, identity, and social meaning (Löwstedt), and entrepreneurial motivation and the impact of motivation types on venture development and performance measures (Reuther).

This cluster also includes externally funded research on biometric and psychological dimensions of sexual orientation, as well as collaborations with medical, psychological, cultural, and social science research partners. These areas demonstrate how WVPU research connects individual experience, identity formation, social meaning, and broader processes of change.

Methods, Data, and Analytical Approaches

Research in this cluster may use experimental, qualitative, interpretive, ethnographic, biometric, psychophysiological, survey-based, and mixed-method designs. Methods include psychological experiments, surveys, structured and semi-structured interviews, focus groups, ethnography, participant observation, conceptual analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, content analysis, cross-cultural comparison, biometric measurement, psychophysiological measurement, behavioural observation, and analysis of communication, media, cultural, historical, and archival materials.

For research on identity, meaning, memory, migration, gender, sexuality, trauma, belonging, and social relations, ethnographic and interpretive methods are particularly important. They allow researchers to examine how people attach meaning to experience, how identities are formed and contested, how values are internalized or resisted, and how broader social and political changes are experienced at the individual and community level.

The cluster's theoretical resources include approaches to identity, sexuality, migration, memory, social interaction, behavioural evidence, cultural meaning, and lived experience, including constructivist approaches to meaning and identity.

Public and Institutional Relevance

This cluster gives WVPU's research profile its most direct connection to lived experience. It examines how people interpret change, form identities, build relationships, experience uncertainty, and attach meaning to social, political, cultural, and institutional conditions.

Its relevance extends to education, health, civil society, cultural institutions, communication, public dialogue, and social policy. Research in this cluster can clarify how identity, belonging, sexuality, gender, migration, memory, trauma, and health are shaped by broader processes of change. It also creates significant opportunities for student research because many students encounter social and political change first through questions of identity, communication, belonging, and personal experience.

8.5 AI, Digitalization, and Their Socio-Economic Impact (AID)

Profile

This cluster examines digitalization and artificial intelligence as cross-cutting forces that reshape governance, organizations, markets, work, communication, decision-making, behaviour, identity formation, and the production of knowledge itself. At the macro level, AI and digitalization affect governance, regulation, political communication, institutional authority, public administration, security, and the conditions under which knowledge circulates in society. At the meso level, they

reshape organizations, markets, innovation, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, work processes, coordination, and decision support. At the micro level, they influence perception, behaviour, judgement, social interaction, identity, emotion, trust, and everyday forms of digital participation.

The cluster is especially important because AI and digitalization are both objects of research and tools used in research. They create new research questions, new forms of data, new analytical possibilities, and new responsibilities concerning authorship, transparency, privacy, accountability, and scientific integrity.

Representative Research Questions

- How can we detect patterns automatically in data that are too complex to be analysed directly by human observers?
- How can we evaluate the quality of new AI methods in ways that are meaningful, expressive, reproducible, and appropriate to the problem being studied?
- How can highly specific research problems be formalised mathematically so that AI-supported analysis remains reliable, transparent, and reproducible?
- How do data analytics, artificial intelligence, and blockchain transform business processes, customer interactions, and supply-chain coordination across digital markets?
- How does computer-mediated interaction shape the emotional impact of discrimination, and what role do nonverbal and affective cues play in digital social environments?
- How can the analysis of facial expressivity and nonverbal behaviour support the early detection of Parkinson's disease while improving understanding of socio-emotional communication in health contexts?
- How can AI-based virtual managers improve organizational processes, decision-making, and whistleblowing effectiveness?
- How can digital and AI-supported entrepreneurship ecosystems enable climate adaptation as organizational and societal transformation?
- How can AI-enabled entrepreneurship support systems help break path dependencies and drive organizational and societal change?
- How does the explicit presence of AI in venture-development impact adaptive resilience in entrepreneurial development?

Illustrative Faculty and Topic Fit

Illustrative faculty work in this cluster includes neural network applications (Roth), automated behavioural analysis (Méhu), gender attribution biases in digital contexts (Zedlacher), best practices for digital entrepreneurship (Reuther), how configurations of artificial intelligence in venture development processes and venture products/services shape venture performance (Reuther), digital user engagement mechanisms (Madlberger), information and communication technology development, knowledge production and reproduction, coding, programming, and the cultural and anthropological contexts of digital systems (Löwstedt), neural network applications in socio-economic systems (Roth), and clustering and unsupervised machine learning for pattern discovery in complex high-dimensional data (Beer).

The cluster also includes externally funded interdisciplinary work connecting computational modelling, biosemiotics, behavioural science, automated facial-expression analysis, and health-related diagnostics. This includes work on automated facial-expression-based diagnostics for early-stage

Parkinson's disease, where computational approaches intersect with behavioural science, affective analysis, and applied health-related research.

Methods, Data, and Analytical Approaches

Research in this cluster may use computational, experimental, behavioural, organizational, and socio-technical research designs. Technical methods include machine learning, neural networks, unsupervised learning, clustering, classification, computational modelling, natural language processing, computer vision, affective computing, automated behavioural analysis, digital trace analysis, algorithmic auditing, model evaluation, and data-driven decision support.

Where relevant, the cluster includes low-power Edge AI, embedded machine learning, sensor-based systems, on-device inference, energy-efficient AI architectures, privacy-preserving computation, and real-time computational methods. These approaches are especially important where AI applications operate outside centralized computing environments or where cost, latency, privacy, energy consumption, and deployment constraints shape technological use.

For socio-technical questions, research may also use interviews, surveys, experiments, case studies, media anthropology, human-computer interaction methods, organizational analysis, ethics assessment, governance analysis, and studies of AI adoption in institutions, markets, research, and public life.

Analytically, approaches draw on theories and methods from computer science, data science, behavioural science, AI ethics, digital governance, organizational theory, innovation studies, socio-technical systems research, human-computer interaction, research integrity frameworks, and theories of technological change.

Public and Institutional Relevance

This cluster addresses one of the most consequential areas of contemporary economic and socio-political change. AI and digitalization affect governance, organizations, markets, research, teaching, communication, everyday life, and the production of knowledge itself. They also generate substantial costs and potential benefits, including investment requirements, labour-market disruption, regulatory burdens, organizational adjustment costs, productivity gains, new business models, improved coordination, and expanded analytical capacity.

The cluster is institutionally important because AI is both an object of research and a tool used in research. It therefore connects computational inquiry with questions of authorship, transparency, data protection, scientific integrity, responsible use, and academic judgement. Together, these elements form a socio-technical research agenda linking computational methods, behavioural evidence, organizational practice, governance questions, and research integrity.

8.6 Clusters as a Current Research Map

Together, WVPU's five current research clusters provide a research map for the university. They identify areas of concentrated intellectual engagement, support collaboration, and give internal and external audiences a clearer account of WVPU's research activity. They connect the university's research profile to practical development by identifying concentrated expertise, overlapping questions, potential partners, and areas from which future projects, publications, grants, and public research formats can emerge.

As a research map, the cluster structure helps prospective faculty, students, Research Services, academic units, and the CAO understand WVPU's profile with greater precision. The clusters reflect WVPU's research activity as it currently stands. They are designed to evolve. As faculty expertise develops, new colleagues join WVPU, external partnerships grow, and research priorities shift, the cluster structure may change. New clusters may emerge. Existing clusters may develop in new directions, merge with related areas, or become less central as research activity changes over time.

This flexibility is essential. A research-led university must recognize its current areas of research activity while remaining responsive to new questions, methods, projects, and intellectual opportunities.

Part III: Research Culture and Public Communication

9. Research Culture at WVPU

WVPU's research culture is built around a simple but demanding premise: serious research requires intellectual freedom, methodological discipline, institutional support, and sustained exchange among scholars.

WVPU's research profile gives this culture a shared intellectual language. It allows researchers working with different questions, evidence, methods, and theoretical traditions to recognize points of connection without requiring uniformity of discipline, method, or object of study. Research on global orders, economic systems, organizations, markets, identity, behaviour, communication, technology, and lived experience contributes to a common institutional profile when it helps explain how change unfolds, how it is interpreted, and what consequences it produces.

This shared profile requires methodological pluralism. Different questions call for different forms of evidence and different techniques of analysis. Some questions require econometric modelling, statistical analysis, experiments, surveys, or computational methods. Others require interviews, ethnography, archival work, discourse analysis, interpretation, case analysis, or historical reconstruction. Methodological pluralism is therefore not a loose tolerance of all approaches. It is the disciplined use of the method that fits the question, the evidence, and the claim being made.

Pluralism has value only when joined to rigour. Different methods produce different kinds of evidence, and each must be judged by its appropriateness to the research question, the quality of its execution, the transparency of its reasoning, and the clarity of its contribution. WVPU's research culture therefore values work that is theoretically informed, empirically grounded, methodologically appropriate, and open to revision.

This culture depends on the quality of questions asked and the seriousness with which they are pursued. Research develops through sustained work, critical exchange, and the gradual refinement of ideas. Scholars identify mechanisms, assess evidence, interpret meaning, test claims, confront uncertainty, and communicate findings with clarity.

WVPU's scale gives this culture a particular form. Faculty can know one another's work, students can encounter researchers directly, and interdisciplinary exchange can take place through proximity rather than bureaucracy. Seminars, workshops, reading groups, visiting scholar events, project meetings, public conversations, and cluster-based exchange make that proximity productive.

The research clusters are central to this culture because they give intellectual circulation an institutional form. They create spaces in which ideas can be presented, questioned, tested, and developed. They also connect individual scholarship with grant development, external partnerships, student research, and public communication.

Mentorship is another defining feature. Research culture is transmitted through supervision, collaboration, feedback, and academic example. Senior scholars contribute through publications, grants, and external networks, but also by helping junior scholars, students, and colleagues develop stronger questions, better methods, clearer arguments, and more ambitious research trajectories.

Public relevance follows from this foundation. Research at WVPU can enter public debate, inform professional practice, contribute to policy discussions, and support knowledge-based decision-making

because it rests on scholarly independence, careful method, and the distinction between analysis and advocacy. Public contribution is strongest when research remains disciplined in its claims and transparent about its evidence.

WVPU's research culture depends on the interaction between intellectual commitment and institutional design: time, infrastructure, research services, data and literature access, ethical review, administrative support, public communication, and a performance framework that recognizes meaningful scholarly contribution.

The result is a research culture that is focused, serious, internationally connected, and publicly engaged, one in which faculty, students, visiting scholars, collaborators, and research support staff contribute to WVPU's shared research orientation and intellectual life.

10. Research Communication, Seminars, and Public Exchange

At WVPU, ideas circulate through public research conversations, departmental seminar series, methods-oriented formats, visiting scholar lectures, project-based workshops, and cluster-based exchanges. These formats expose research to critique, connect faculty and students with external scholars, and give the university's intellectual life a recurring public form.

Research communication is part of the research culture itself. Publications, grants, and funded projects remain central to scholarly work, but research also develops through presentation, discussion, disagreement, refinement, and public explanation. Seminars, talks, lectures, and research conversations create the spaces in which scholars test ideas, expose work to critique, identify collaborators, and translate specialized research into forms that can be understood by students, colleagues, partners, and wider audiences. WVPU's public research platform provides the external point of visibility for this activity, connecting internal research culture with audiences beyond the institution.

10.1 WVPU Research Talks

WVPU Research Talks are the university's flagship public-facing research conversation format. They consist of quarterly video and podcast conversations with WVPU researchers, visiting scholars, collaborators, and selected research partners. The Chief Academic Officer leads this series designed for public dissemination.

WVPU Research Talks preserve depth by allowing researchers to present the question, method, evidence, findings, limits, and significance of their work in a format that remains accessible to students, prospective colleagues, external partners, alumni, and public audiences.

The talks connect individual research to WVPU's broader profile. A conversation on geopolitical order, monetary policy, organizational change, entrepreneurship, identity formation, AI, digitalization, or public communication can show how a specific project enters the university's multi-level research profile.

Over time, WVPU Research Talks become part of the university's research memory: documenting faculty research, introducing new colleagues, highlighting funded projects, presenting visiting scholars, supporting recruitment, and opening the intellectual life of the university beyond internal academic circles.

10.2 IR Research Seminars

The **IR Research Seminars** are organized by the International Relations Department and Dr. Jozef Batora and take place two to four times per semester. They are usually public, frequently include guests from other universities, and are focused on International Relations.

The IR Research Seminars provide disciplinary depth. They offer a regular forum in which research on international relations, global order, security, diplomacy, political economy, international institutions, and related areas can be presented, discussed, and refined. They also provide an important disciplinary anchor for WVPU's macro-level research profile.

The seminar format supports research at a stage earlier than publication. It allows scholars to present developing arguments, test interpretations, clarify concepts, receive critique, and identify points of connection with colleagues and students. When external scholars participate, the format also extends and deepens WVPU's research networks and international visibility.

Although the IR Research Seminars are disciplinary in focus, their relevance may extend beyond International Relations. Questions of security, energy, migration, sovereignty, identity, institutional authority, and public narratives often connect macro-level order with markets, organizations, communication, legal-institutional structures, and individual or collective meaning. The seminar series therefore contributes both to disciplinary research culture and to WVPU's broader inquiry into the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of change.

10.3 The Empirical Edge

The Empirical Edge is a methods- and evidence-oriented research seminar series led by WVPU macro-economist Dr. Menbere Workie. It focuses on empirical research in economics, including both microeconomic and macroeconomic work. It takes place two to four times per semester and is usually public, while also providing a relevant format for advanced students and doctoral researchers where applicable.

The series strengthens WVPU's empirical research culture by focusing on evidence, data, research design, measurement, interpretation, and methodological choice. It showcases interdisciplinary data-driven research and fosters global scholarly exchange.

The series is primarily speaker-led, with workshop elements where appropriate. It foregrounds empirical reasoning: how questions are operationalized, how data are selected, how models are built, how results are interpreted, and how limitations are handled.

The Empirical Edge is especially important for the economic dimension of WVPU's research profile. It can support work on productivity, monetary and fiscal policy, financial systems, economic development, demographic change, labour markets, market behaviour, foreign direct investment, and the measurement of economic change. It also has broader institutional value because empirical research across disciplines requires explicit attention to evidence, method, and inference.

10.4 Public Lectures and Visiting Scholars

Public lectures and visiting scholar events connect WVPU's research environment to wider academic, policy, professional, cultural, and civic debates. They bring external voices into the university and give faculty and students access to perspectives beyond the institution.

A particularly important format is the **Dr. Elizabeth Chopin Endowed Visiting Professorship**, which supports visiting scholars through tailored guest lectures, mini-seminars, in-house lectures, and public lectures, usually over a period of three days to one week. The format is designed to bring senior researchers to WVPU and to connect them with students, faculty, alumni, and wider Webster stakeholders.

WVPU's visiting scholar and public lecture activity has included internationally recognized scholars whose work speaks to WVPU's research clusters and public intellectual profile. Examples include Henrik Olsson, Research Group Co-Leader at the Complexity Science Hub and External Faculty at the Santa Fe Institute; Dennis Jancsary, Chair in Organization Studies at the University of Liverpool Management School; Semir Zeki, Professor of Neuroesthetics at University College London; Robin Mansell, Professor Emerita of New Media and the Internet at the London School of Economics and Political Science; Sean McFate, Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council and Professor of Strategy, National Defense University College of International Security Affairs; David Shambaugh, Gaston Sigur Professor of Asian Studies, Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University; Marwan M. Kraidy of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania; Iver B. Neumann, Director, The Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Philip G. Zimbardo of Stanford University; and Joel M. Stern of the University of Chicago.

These events bring high-level intellectual exchange into WVPU's everyday research culture. They can connect with research clusters, generate future collaborations, support student engagement, lead to WVPU Research Talks, deepen public outreach, and demonstrate the university's capacity to host serious scholarly debate through selectivity and serious intellectual networks.

10.5 From Events to Research Culture

Research communication formats are part of WVPU's intellectual infrastructure. They support the circulation of ideas, the formation of collaborations, the public presentation of faculty work, and the development of student research.

These formats are planned and documented as part of the university's scholarly life. Public-facing events, talks, lectures, and recorded conversations become visible through WVPU's public research platform where appropriate. NAPOLM remains focused on ongoing research activity by employed faculty rather than serving as a general event archive.

Published WVPU Research Talks and public lectures count as public outreach. Third mission activity requires sustained external engagement, cooperation, or knowledge transfer with policy, industry, civil society, professional practice, cultural institutions, or community partners. This distinction allows WVPU to recognize public communication without confusing it with sustained third mission activity.

Together, these formats show research as it is practiced: through questions, evidence, method, interpretation, disagreement, refinement, and contribution. They sustain research culture through recurring scholarly exchange rather than occasional events alone.

11. The Public Research Platform

WVPU's public research platform, **research.webster.ac.at**, serves as the external point of visibility for the university's research activity. It presents faculty research, funded projects, research networks, public events, scholarly outputs, and project-based digital resources in a form accessible to academic, institutional, and public audiences.

The platform is the public counterpart to this guide. It shows WVPU's research environment in motion through projects, publications, grants, collaborations, seminars, interviews, visiting scholars, public lectures, and evidence of scholarly and public impact.

Its central function is visibility grounded in substance. Research communication at WVPU makes the university's intellectual profile legible while preserving the seriousness of scholarly work. A public-facing article on entrepreneurship research, an interview with a faculty member, a report on a funded AI project, or a feature on an international collaboration helps external audiences understand the scholarly question, the evidence or method involved, and the contribution of the work.

The platform also supports recruitment and partnership development. Prospective faculty encounter the research questions, clusters, projects, methods, and intellectual conversations into which they may enter. Prospective students encounter a university whose faculty bring active research, international networks, and current scholarly debates into the academic environment. External partners can identify areas of expertise, possible collaborators, and formats through which cooperation may develop.

Recurring research formats belong to this public architecture. Individual events, talks, seminars, funded projects, and research news appear as connected expressions of the same institutional research profile.

The platform also serves as a gateway to WVPU's wider digital research resources. This includes dedicated research institutes, project platforms, and digital environments developed for funded scientific projects. Such spaces allow faculty and project teams to present project-specific outputs, communicate with scholarly and public audiences, and, where appropriate, publish research resources such as novel datasets, documentation, tools, or other materials generated through scientific work.

Editorially, **research.webster.ac.at** follows the same principles as this guide: careful use of the language of change, connection between individual research and the larger profile, distinction between research and advocacy, attention to evidence and method, and clarity about scholarly contribution and public relevance. Its credibility rests on visible activity, accuracy, and regular renewal.

The platform also functions as institutional memory. Over time, it will document the development of WVPU's research identity through clusters, colleagues, outputs, funded projects, visiting scholars, research networks, and emerging directions.

The public platform, **research.webster.ac.at**, turns internal research culture into a public record of faculty research, funded projects, research networks, public events, datasets, and project platforms.

Part IV: Research-Led Teaching, Mentorship, and Student Inquiry

12. Research-Led Teaching and Academic Formation

Research-led teaching at WVPU is academic formation through inquiry. Students encounter knowledge as something produced, tested, interpreted, contested, and revised. They learn to pose better questions, test claims, distinguish evidence from assertion, causal from correlational relationships, and argument from opinion.

This understanding follows from WVPU's institutional position: small classes, close academic guidance, international orientation, and an active research profile. Its teaching environment is shaped by

research-active faculty whose work engages current scholarly debates, emerging methods, public questions, and the changing conditions of civic, institutional, and social life. It is also enriched by adjunct faculty whose experience brings practical knowledge of how institutions, organizations, markets, policy environments, and cultural fields function beyond the university.

Research joins teaching through the intellectual habits that courses cultivate. Courses introduce students to the practices through which fields define problems, formulate claims, use concepts, select methods, assess evidence, and handle uncertainty, including the distinction between causal and correlational claims, testable and non-testable hypotheses, evidence and assertion, and valid and invalid inference.

At the undergraduate level, research-led teaching often appears through foundational knowledge, disciplinary concepts, methods, and standards of argument. At more advanced levels, students engage more directly with research design, literature, data, interpretation, and original inquiry. Across these levels, the common expectation remains the same: students learn to examine complexity through concepts, evidence, method, and argument.

WVPU's research profile gives this academic formation a recognizable orientation. The study of change enters teaching through global orders, markets, organizations, technology, identity, communication, behaviour, policy, and public life. Faculty research augments and enriches this environment when courses draw on current publications, funded projects, methodological expertise, external networks, or research clusters.

Research-led teaching also supports ethical reasoning, civic responsibility, and informed leadership by training students to evaluate evidence, identify causal claims, test assumptions, and communicate arguments clearly. It connects faculty scholarship, practical expertise, student formation, and larger research questions and contributes to graduates ability to think clearly, reason carefully, act responsibly, and engage seriously with the institutional, civic, and social worlds in which they act.

13. Student Research, Theses, and Supervision

Student research at WVPU develops progressively across levels of study. It begins in coursework, becomes more independent through advanced assignments and theses, and reaches its most developed form in doctoral research. Across these levels, the aim is consistent: students learn to pose questions, identify evidence, select methods, reason carefully, and build arguments that can withstand critical examination.

Research is embedded in WVPU courses according to level, field, and subject matter. In some courses, this may involve archival work, textual analysis, case building, coding, surveys, interviews, laboratory work, data interpretation, or formal modelling. In others, it may involve the careful reconstruction of arguments, the comparison of theoretical approaches, the interpretation of historical or institutional evidence, or the evaluation of causal claims. The form varies by discipline and level; the underlying expectation remains intellectual discipline.

At the undergraduate level, student research focuses on the foundations of inquiry. Students learn how to formulate researchable questions, work with scholarly literature, distinguish description from analysis, evaluate sources, identify evidence, and understand the logic of method. Undergraduate thesis work gives this process a formal structure: students identify a supervisor, develop a research

question and basic research design, prepare a proposal, write under supervision, receive feedback, and produce a substantial piece of academic work.

At the graduate level, research becomes more independent and methodologically developed. Students are expected to engage more deeply with literature, theory, research design, data, analysis, and interpretation. Graduate thesis work includes supervision, proposal development, a reader, assessment, and a formal defense. This structure requires students to explain and defend the logic of their research: the question asked, the method chosen, the evidence used, the analysis conducted, and the limits of the conclusions reached.

Doctoral research represents a further step in independence, originality, and scholarly integration. In European research-career terminology, doctoral candidates correspond most closely to the R1 First Stage Researcher profile: researchers who carry out research under supervision, develop methodological and disciplinary competence, produce data under supervision, and learn to communicate the value of their research to scholarly peers. Doctoral candidates at WVPU are embedded in the research environment through clusters, seminars, supervision structures, and participation in ongoing scholarly activities. Their work is expected to engage current theoretical and methodological debates, contribute to knowledge, and develop within a framework of research integrity, international visibility, and structured academic supervision.

Supervision is central at every level because it is the academic relationship through which students refine questions, clarify concepts, improve design, confront limitations, handle evidence, and sharpen argument. It builds independent research capacity by moving students from receiving knowledge to producing and evaluating it.

The methods students use depend on the questions they ask. Across WVPU's fields, this may involve archival work, interviews, case building, qualitative coding, workplace evidence, indicators, models, quantitative data, surveys, experiments, laboratory methods, biometric data, computational methods, machine learning, digital traces, or model evaluation.

WVPU's research profile is methodologically pluralistic. Students encounter research as a set of disciplined choices: what question can be asked, what evidence can answer it, what method fits the evidence, what claims can be supported, and what remains uncertain.

Student research also connects teaching to WVPU's clusters. Depending on topic and level, a thesis or advanced research project may enter questions of global order, organizational change, markets, identity, lived experience, AI, or digitalization, allowing students to understand their work as part of a broader research profile rather than as an isolated academic exercise.

Student research and supervision are essential to academic formation. They develop independent research skills in ways appropriate to each level of study and field of inquiry, while connecting students, faculty, methods, evidence, and questions within a shared intellectual environment.

14. Mentorship and Academic Development

Mentorship at WVPU is an academic practice through which students, doctoral candidates where applicable, early-career scholars, junior faculty, and research-active colleagues develop stronger questions, methods, arguments, and scholarly judgement.

Mentorship turns individual expertise into shared academic capacity. Senior scholars contribute through publications, funded projects, external networks, and public visibility, and also through the less visible work of reading drafts, discussing research design, advising on publication strategy, supporting conference participation, connecting colleagues with collaborators, and helping emerging scholars develop coherent research trajectories.

Research clusters give this work an institutional setting. They allow junior and senior colleagues to encounter one another's work, identify shared questions, and develop projects across fields through seminars, workshops, grant discussions, public lectures, research talks, and collaborative writing.

For students, mentorship begins in coursework and develops through research assignments, thesis supervision, and participation in research-related events. For doctoral candidates, where applicable, it becomes more structured and research-intensive, involving sustained supervision, methodological development, publication planning, integration into research communities, and international scholarly exchange.

For faculty, mentorship supports academic development across career stages. Early-career scholars require guidance on research focus, publication strategy, funding opportunities, ethics, conference participation, and scholarly networks. Established scholars contribute by leading research groups, developing funded projects, hosting visiting scholars, creating public research formats, and supporting institutional research priorities. In this sense, individuals strengthen the institution, and the institution creates conditions in which individuals can develop.

Effective mentorship requires seriousness, clarity, and respect for academic independence. It cultivates judgement, responsibility, methodological care, and independent scholarly capacity. It connects teaching, supervision, faculty development, public communication, and institutional responsibility; and it transmits research through habits of inquiry, standards of evidence, intellectual generosity, and the disciplined formation of independent scholars.

Part V: Research Practice, Outputs, and Expectations

WVPU's research identity becomes institutionally meaningful through the work of its faculty. Publications, funded projects, conference presentations, peer review, public outreach, third mission activity, and research reporting are the practices through which scholarly activity becomes visible, evaluable, and connected to the university's broader institutional research profile.

For WVPU's professors, research is both an intellectual vocation and an institutional responsibility. Faculty are expected to contribute to recognized scholarly debates, participate in international research communities, pursue external funding where appropriate, communicate research publicly, and document their work through transparent reporting and evaluation systems.

This part sets out the core expectations and support structures for faculty research. It addresses scholarly outputs, external funding, international visibility, public engagement, research services, infrastructure, integrity, governance, and reporting. The aim is to make clear how individual research activity contributes to WVPU's research profile, its current clusters, and its development as a quality-assured institutional research profile.

15. Publications, Scholarly Outputs, and Research Contribution

WVPU's framework for faculty evaluation requires research-active faculty to produce scholarly publications at an internationally recognizable standard. The framework establishes minimum expectations for publication output, performance agreements, annual review, quality assurance, and institutional accreditation. These expectations define a floor. They do not define research excellence. Strong faculty profiles are expected to exceed the minimum where rank, career stage, research trajectory, external funding, disciplinary practice, and institutional responsibility make this appropriate.

The relevant Senate-approved document is **WVPU evaluation of research publications**, approved by the University Senate on **28 March 2025**.ⁱⁱⁱ It establishes the publication point system used to evaluate scholarly outputs and provides the baseline publication requirement for full-time faculty. The policy rests on three principles: trust in serious faculty research, open and predictable criteria, and a systematic framework for evaluating research outputs.

The publication framework is based primarily on the **Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers**. WVPU uses the Norwegian Register as an open-access analytical support tool to identify recognized scholarly publication channels and to distinguish between standard-quality and high-quality outlets. The Register differentiates between **Level 1** and **Level 2** channels, with Level 2 indicating publication channels of higher standing within their fields. The Register is available at: <https://kanalregister.hkdir.no/en>.

WVPU also recognizes that publication cultures differ by discipline. Journal articles, monographs, chapters in edited volumes, peer-reviewed conference papers, proceedings, datasets, software, and other scholarly outputs carry different significance across fields. The Senate-approved point system therefore provides the core university framework, while performance agreements allow expectations to be specified according to field, rank, career stage, author contribution, current projects, and disciplinary publication practice.

This is especially important in Computer Science and related fields, where significant research often appears first, and sometimes most importantly, through peer-reviewed conference papers and proceedings. WVPU therefore recognizes the relevance of the **International CORE Conference Rankings** for conference papers in Computer Science, alongside journal- and publisher-based evaluation. The CORE portal is available at: <https://portal.core.edu.au/>.¹

Eligible publication outputs under the Senate-approved WVPU framework include peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly monographs, and chapters in edited volumes that are published or accepted for publication. Outputs in the Norwegian Register are counted according to the point table below. Outputs not listed in the Norwegian Register but indexed in **Web of Science** or **Scopus** also count, but receive lower point values.

Table 1. Senate publication point system based on the Norwegian Register, WOS, and Scopus.

Publication type	Publishing outlet level	Journal article	Chapter in edited volume / encyclopaedia	Book / monograph
Level 2	Norwegian Register Level 2	3	2	7.5
Level 1	Norwegian Register Level 1	2	1.5	5
WoS / Scopus but not NR	Indexed in Web of Science or Scopus, not listed in NR	1.5	1	3
A*	CORE [‡] Exceptional (Flagship conferences)	3	n/a	n/a
A	CORE [‡] Excellent	2	n/a	n/a
B	CORE [‡] Good to Very Good	1.5	n/a	n/a

[‡] Points allocated to CORE are under Senate consideration and are not confirmed as final (15.05.2026).

Full-time faculty members are expected to achieve **no less than nine total publication points over any three-year evaluation period**, equivalent to an average of three publication points per year. The three-year period recognizes that publication trajectories differ across disciplines, projects, methods, and outlets. Any combination of eligible publication outputs may count toward the overall score, provided the outputs meet the criteria established in the Senate-approved framework.

This requirement is a minimum institutional baseline. It provides transparency, comparability, and predictability, but it must not be confused with the full measure of scholarly contribution. A serious research profile is assessed through the quality, originality, external recognition, and intellectual significance of the work, as well as through its contribution to scholarly debate, funded research, public communication, and WVPU's research clusters.

The Framework for Performance Evaluation confirms that publication standards operate within the broader multi-year performance agreement system.^{iv} It makes clear that expectations vary by specialization, rank, career stage, ongoing activities, and projects, and that WVPU may require more from individual faculty members based on rank, role, and research responsibilities.

¹ See https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DQixeK53tlq_jh6lsplHroiwu1pmM6-y/edit (accessed 12.05.2026) for the most recent Computer Science Conference Rankings Descriptions.

Author contribution also matters, and the performance framework notes that significant intellectual contribution, reflected for example in single, first, last, or corresponding authorship where relevant, may be considered in individual performance agreements. This allows publication output to be evaluated with attention to disciplinary authorship practices, collaborative research, and the actual scholarly role of the faculty member.

Publication output is connected to broader scholarly activity. Faculty are expected to present at least one full research contribution annually at an international scientific conference, engage in peer-review activity for an NR-listed journal, and participate in international scientific cooperation in ways appropriate to their field and career stage. These activities place faculty research within external scholarly communities and support WVPU's international visibility.

The evaluation of scholarly outputs gives faculty clear minimum expectations, supports fair Performance Agreements, and provides evidence of research activity and quality assurance. The point system establishes the floor. The substantive expectation remains higher: faculty research must contribute to recognized scholarly debates, demonstrate intellectual consequence, advance WVPU's research profile, and support the university's development as a serious research-led institution.

16. External Funding and Research Competitiveness

Competitive third-party funding is the most important form of external research recognition at WVPU. Publications place ideas, evidence, and arguments into scholarly debate. Externally acquired research funding demonstrates that peers, public bodies, foundations, industry partners, or other external institutions are prepared to entrust resources to a researcher, a project team, and the university because they judge the proposed work to be credible, significant, and worth supporting.

The acquisition of third-party funding is therefore a major institutional priority. It demonstrates research potential, scholarly competence, methodological capacity, project leadership, and scientific or societal relevance. It also marks the point at which research moves from output to outcome: a proposal demonstrates effort, planning, and research ambition; a successful grant secures resources, enables research activity, raises the public profile, supports career development, and expands institutional capacity.

External funding creates research capacity. It supports empirical work, fieldwork, laboratories, surveys, datasets, software, research assistance, mobility, workshops, visiting scholars, dissemination, and external cooperation. It also allows faculty to build research teams, involve younger researchers, and create project environments in which mentorship, training, publication, data generation, and future funding can develop. In this way, external funding generates outputs such as datasets, project platforms, public events, technical tools, research networks, and long-term institutional partnerships.

The acquisition of funding also carries intellectual meaning. A successful proposal requires a research question that matters, a method that fits, a team that can deliver, a budget that is credible, and a contribution that external evaluators recognize. Funding is therefore a test of scholarly seriousness in a different register. It asks whether a research idea can be formulated as a project, whether the researcher can persuade others of its value, whether the work can be organized responsibly, and whether entrusted resources can be used with academic, financial, and ethical integrity.

Researchers at WVPU are expected to pursue and successfully acquire third-party funding to advance their research objectives and the interests of the university. Grant applications are a necessary part of this process, but the institutional expectation extends to the acquisition of external resources. Every faculty member is expected, within the duration of the multi-year Performance Agreement, to develop and submit funding applications in an amount and at a level appropriate to career stage, academic status, discipline, research profile, and individual track record, and to build a funding trajectory that leads to successful awards over time. Depending on status and subject matter, faculty may contribute as Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, Work Package Leader, consortium partner, project collaborator, or fellowship applicant. Relevant funding may include peer-reviewed scientific grants, corporate or contracted third-party funds, acquired fellowships, scholarships, and project-based external support.

Expectations increase with seniority, experience, and research profile. More advanced researchers are expected to acquire funding preferably from highly reputable scientific funding bodies such as the ERC, FWF, WWTF, EU, FFG, or comparable institutions. Early-career faculty are expected to build toward this level through smaller grants, mobility funding, seed funding, collaborative proposals, conference funding, pilot projects, fellowships, or participation in larger projects led by more established researchers. This progression is consistent with European research-career expectations: established and leading researchers are expected to conduct independent research, lead collaborative projects, form consortia, secure resources, and create research environments in which others can develop.

A mature funding strategy is often incremental. Highly competitive grant schemes attract excellent proposals that may remain unfunded because many other proposals are also excellent. An excellent project can fail in such competitions for reasons of fit, timing, budget, panel composition, strategic priority, or competition density. Faculty therefore develop funding profiles deliberately: beginning with attainable opportunities, building evidence of delivery, developing partnerships, developing preliminary data or conceptual foundations, and moving progressively toward larger and more competitive schemes. This is the disciplined path through which sustainable research capacity is built.

Funding instruments differ in purpose. Individual and joint research grants strengthen the scholarly profile of a researcher or research team. Network and cooperation projects strengthen institutional connection, mobility, doctoral training, and long-term collaboration. Both matter, but they build different forms of research capacity.

This distinction is particularly important for European funding. COST Actions, for example, are interdisciplinary research networks; COST specifies that the funding covers networking activities rather than research itself.^v Erasmus+ supports mobility and cross-border cooperation between higher education institutions, including cooperation partnerships and mobility consortia.^{vi} Such projects can be administratively demanding and often involve many institutions, coordinated work packages, mobility arrangements, reporting obligations, and complex partnership structures. They may require substantial involvement by Research Services, academic unit heads, and university management. They create networks, platforms, institutional capacity, and future research opportunities.

WVPU therefore distinguishes several forms of funded activity. These include individual research projects, joint projects between two or more investigators, multi-institutional co-PI projects, consortium projects, work-package-based participation, doctoral school or training network involvement, networking actions, mobility and development projects, single commissioned studies, contracted research, and externally funded fellowships. A serious funding culture values this range

while preserving clarity about purpose: some instruments build research directly; others build the conditions through which future research becomes possible.

For reporting and evaluation purposes, the following funding categories are used:

Table 2. Third party funding categories

Grant type	Description and examples
IPF	International public research funding agency, for example ERC or EU programmes
NPF	National public research funding agency, for example FWF or FFG
PPF	Major private and philanthropic funding agency, for example Rockefeller, Ford, or Spencer
SNPF	Subnational and municipal research funding agency, for example City of Vienna or State of Styria
INR	International non-research grant agency, for example COST or Erasmus+
MDF	Military and defence research funding, for example NATO resilience-related grants
MPPF	Minor private and philanthropic funding agency, generally below € 100,000
NGO	Non-governmental organization funding, for example Greenpeace or comparable organizations
Contracted Studies	Contracted research or studies, regardless of whether the source is corporate, public, or institutional

This variety matters because funding development requires fit among the research question, career stage, and institutional objective. A small municipal grant may allow a faculty member to collect pilot data. A foundation grant may support fieldwork, archival work, or applied research. A COST or Erasmus+ activity may build networks that later support larger applications. Contracted studies may connect faculty expertise to public or organizational needs. National and international peer-reviewed scientific grants provide particularly strong external validation because they place faculty research in competitive evaluation systems.

Research Services supports this process through call identification, proposal planning, budget preparation, submission coordination, post-award administration, and documentation. Its role is especially important in network, consortium, Erasmus+, COST, and contracted projects, where coordination, reporting, partner communication, budgeting, and compliance can determine success as much as the scholarly idea itself. Faculty ownership remains essential: the strongest proposals arise when scholarly vision, methodological clarity, strategic fit, and institutional support work together.

Mentorship and academic leadership are central to funding development. Senior researchers, department heads, Research Services, and the Chief Academic Officer help faculty identify appropriate targets, sequence applications realistically, build consortia, refine project ideas, and connect individual funding strategies to WVPU's research profile. Funding acquisition is both an individual responsibility and a collective academic practice.

Externally funded projects strengthen WVPU's public and international reach. They connect the university with research consortia, partner institutions, public agencies, professional communities, industry, civil society, and wider scholarly networks. They can generate visiting scholar activity,

workshops, conferences, public lectures, WVPU Research Talks, project platforms, datasets, and project-specific dissemination through **research.webster.ac.at**.

Successful external funding gives momentum to the faculty member's research trajectory. Depending on the nature of the award and the relevant university policies, it can support career progression, research time, teaching adjustments, research assistance, team-building, and broader institutional recognition. It allows faculty to mentor younger researchers, develop a more visible research profile, and contribute to WVPU's reputation as a research institution through work that is externally validated, properly resourced, and publicly accountable.

Third-party funding is a measure of recognition, a means of research development, and a core responsibility of research-active faculty. It validates the capacity of faculty to formulate significant questions, persuade external evaluators, manage entrusted resources, and produce work of scholarly and public value. The university therefore treats the pursuit and successful acquisition of external funding as one of the highest priorities of its research environment.

17. International Visibility, Cooperation, and Research Networks

International visibility is a condition of serious research at WVPU. Faculty research must circulate beyond the institution, enter recognized scholarly communities, and be exposed to external critique. WVPU builds visibility through the quality, consistency, and reach of faculty work, through participation in international academic networks, and through cooperation with scholars and institutions in Austria, Europe, and beyond. These expectations align with the European research-career framework,^{vii} in which independence, collaboration, communication, international reputation, participation in scholarly governance, and the creation of research networks become increasingly important as researchers move from recognised to established and leading profiles.

International visibility includes regular presentation of papers and research activities at international scientific conferences, congresses, workshops, and seminars. Presentations must conform to the practices of the respective discipline. In some fields, this may mean presentation of peer-reviewed papers at major disciplinary conferences. In others, it may include invited lectures, research workshops, congress panels, methodological seminars, or field-specific forms of scholarly exchange.

Visibility also extends beyond conference participation. Membership in editorial boards, participation in programme committees, service on PhD defence committees at external or international institutions, membership in scientific review boards, peer-review activity, and reviewer roles for journals, publishers, conferences, or funding bodies all demonstrate that a faculty member's expertise is recognized by scholarly communities outside WVPU. Scientific prizes and awards provide further evidence of external recognition.

Cooperation is understood as active collaboration or co-organization with scholars at external institutions. It may include jointly organized conferences, workshops, seminars, edited volumes, special issues, research networks, consortia, doctoral schools, collaborative publications, joint grant applications, or project-based cooperation. Such activity matters because it moves research beyond individual output and into shared scholarly structures.

Performance Agreements translate international visibility into concrete expectations. They identify relevant conferences, congresses, workshops, seminars, or equivalent scientific events, define the expected number of scientific presentations, and establish the target annual average for the

qualification or evaluation period. This allows expectations to be aligned with discipline, career stage, research profile, and strategic development.

The minimum annual expectations for all faculty are:

Area	Minimum expectation
International presentation	At least one presentation of a full contribution at an international conference or equivalent scientific event
Peer review	At least one peer-review activity for a Norwegian Register-listed journal
Austrian cooperation	At least one cooperative undertaking with at least one colleague from an Austrian public university

In addition, **over the relevant performance period**, faculty are expected to demonstrate at least one further form of international or external scholarly recognition. This may include:

- successful establishment of new international academic collaborations;
- membership in programme committees or editorial boards;
- participation in PhD defence committees;
- service on scientific review boards;
- scientific prizes or awards;
- reviewer or review activities for journals, conferences, publishers, academic associations, or funding bodies.

These expectations keep faculty research connected to external scholarly standards and to networks that can lead to publications, grants, visiting appointments, doctoral cooperation, and research consortia. They also demonstrate that WVPU faculty participate actively in international academic life.

Austrian cooperation has particular importance. WVPU maintains and develops meaningful connections with Austrian public universities, research institutes, public agencies, cultural institutions, and professional communities. Cooperation with Austrian public universities also deepens WVPU's integration into the national research environment while supporting broader international positioning. Research clusters support this work by helping faculty identify conferences, collaborators, co-authors, visiting scholars, editorial opportunities, project partners, and funding consortia. They help move individual contacts toward more durable research relationships.

International visibility requires documentation. Faculty record conference presentations, invited talks, peer-review activities, editorial work, external committee service, PhD defence participation, co-authored publications, research networks, and international collaborations through the university's reporting systems. Significant collaborations, visiting scholars, public events, and major outputs appear on **research.webster.ac.at** where appropriate.

International visibility is the external life of research. It demonstrates that faculty scholarship circulates, that research questions matter beyond the institution, and that the university contributes to recognized scholarly, professional, and public conversations. It is through such visibility that WVPU builds authority, attracts partners, forms consortia, and extends the reach of its research.

18. Public Outreach, Third Mission, and Societal Engagement

Public outreach and third mission activity are part of WVPU's research environment because research gains public value when it informs debate, institutional practice, policy, cultural life, and knowledge-based decision-making. This engagement must remain grounded in scholarly integrity: evidence, method, interpretation, and the distinction between analysis and advocacy.

WVPU distinguishes public outreach from third mission activity. Public outreach communicates research beyond specialized academic audiences through public lectures, media contributions, interviews, podcasts, videos, public-facing essays, research features, WVPU Research Talks, and related formats. Third mission activity involves sustained knowledge exchange with external actors, including public institutions, policy actors, companies, NGOs, cultural institutions, schools, civil society organizations, international organizations, or community partners.

The distinction is institutional rather than rhetorical: a WVPU Research Talk, public lecture, or media interview normally belongs to public outreach. A multi-stage cooperation with a ministry, municipality, company, NGO, cultural institution, international organization, or civil society partner may constitute third mission activity when it involves continuing engagement, identifiable knowledge transfer, and documented outputs or outcomes.

Faculty are expected to engage in public outreach and third mission activity in ways appropriate to discipline, career stage, research profile, and opportunity. Such engagement derives its value from serious research, not from visibility for its own sake. Across WVPU's clusters, this engagement takes different forms. Work on global orders may inform debates on security, democracy, migration, energy, and institutions. Work on markets and economic development may clarify productivity, inflation, finance, labour, and public policy. Work on organizations may contribute to discussions of innovation, entrepreneurship, work, and strategic adaptation. Work on society, identity, and lived experience may clarify questions of behaviour, memory, sexuality, health, public meaning, and belonging. Work on AI and digitalization may contribute to public understanding of automation, data, low-power Edge AI, responsible technological use, and knowledge production.

Public engagement also enriches research. It can reveal new questions, create access to field sites, support data collection, generate partnerships, strengthen grant applications, and connect faculty with communities, institutions, and organizations that encounter the practical consequences of economic and socio-political change. It can also help students see how research informs public life without reducing scholarship to advocacy.

The public research platform, research.webster.ac.at, gives this work an institutional form by presenting public lectures, WVPU Research Talks, funded projects, project platforms, datasets, research news, faculty interviews, and selected public-facing outputs as part of research practice rather than as a separate communication exercise.

Faculty document public outreach and third mission activity in the relevant reporting systems. Public-facing research communication, public lectures, WVPU Research Talks, media contributions, and other outreach activities are made visible through the public research platform where appropriate. Sustained third mission activity is documented with attention to partners, purpose, duration, outputs, outcomes, and connection to the faculty member's research profile.

Public outreach and third mission activity show research in contact with the world: informing debate, supporting institutional learning, contributing to policy and practice, and engaging the cultural, civic, economic, and technological questions through which change becomes visible.

19. Research Services, Infrastructure, and Project Support

Research support at WVPU is organized around coordination, planning, and the sustained development of faculty research agendas. Its purpose is to help faculty move from research idea to fundable project, from project to output, and from output to visible scholarly and institutional contribution.

The **Research Services Officer** plays a central supporting role in this environment. The position serves as a liaison among faculty, academic units, and the Chief Academic Officer in the planning of performance agreements and the ongoing monitoring of research agendas. This role is especially important because research development at WVPU is understood over a multi-year framework. Publications, funding applications, project milestones, collaborations, outputs, and public communication require sequencing, follow-up, and coordination across academic and administrative units.

The Research Services Officer supports faculty by helping identify funding opportunities, monitoring deadlines, interpreting procedural requirements, assisting with proposal timelines, and coordinating the planning and implementation phases of funded projects. In proposal development, the RSO supports budget planning, clarifies funder requirements, assists with administrative preparation, and helps ensure that submissions are complete, timely, and institutionally viable.

Faculty authorship and intellectual ownership remain essential. A strong research proposal must come from the scholar or project team: the question, conceptual contribution, method, literature, work plan, and scholarly logic belong to the faculty member. Research Services supports this work by helping align scholarly ambition with funder expectations, procedural requirements, budgetary logic, institutional capacity, and implementation conditions.

The RSO also supports coordination across the project cycle. Infrastructure needs, budgetary implications, staffing requirements, timelines, and reporting obligations must be understood early. Where infrastructure investment is required, planning takes place in coordination with the Director of Finance, with the RSO helping ensure that relevant stakeholders remain informed, aligned, and on time. This is especially important for consortium projects, network grants, contracted studies, externally funded laboratories, digital research platforms, and projects with complex deliverables.

WVPU also provides a dedicated internal research recording and reporting tool known as NAPOLM. Faculty use NAPOLM to keep research records current as publications, proposals, projects, outputs, and outcomes develop. Used consistently, it gives faculty, academic units, the CAO, Research Services, and the university a reliable institutional record of research activity.

Research infrastructure at WVPU includes both digital and physical resources. The university hosts R and SQL servers, among other digital resources, to support quantitative, computational, and data-driven research. It also supports biometric and physiological research through laboratories situated across campus. These resources support quantitative, computational, behavioural, biometric, psychophysiological, statistical, and data-driven research.

Research infrastructure also includes communication capacity. For purposes of public outreach, research communication, recruitment, and public presentation of scholarly work, WVPU maintains facilities for professional video and audio production. These facilities support formats such as WVPU Research Talks, research interviews, public lectures, project presentations, and digital research communication. Where appropriate, the university also works through external partnerships for media and documentary production.

Digital research visibility is supported through **research.webster.ac.at**, which serves as a gateway to faculty research, funded projects, dedicated research platforms, project-specific outputs, datasets, tools, documentation, and public-facing research communication. This connection between research infrastructure and public communication is important: funded projects increasingly require dissemination, digital presence, data management, and demonstrable public or scholarly reach.

Research support at WVPU operates across performance planning, proposal development, project administration, budget coordination, infrastructure planning, documentation, digital visibility, and public communication. Its effectiveness depends on close cooperation among faculty, department heads, the Research Services Officer, the Director of Finance, IT, communications, laboratories, and the Chief Academic Officer.

Research support is a condition of scholarly seriousness. It allows faculty to plan over time, pursue funding with discipline, manage entrusted resources responsibly, document outputs accurately, and communicate research to scholarly and public audiences. It also reflects a central principle: faculty research begins with individual scholarly responsibility, but its development, support, and consequences are institutional.

20. Research Integrity, Ethics Review, and Good Scientific Practice

Research integrity at WVPU is grounded in national and European standards of good scientific practice. As a full member of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity, ÖAWI,^{viii} WVPU aligns its research integrity framework with the **ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, 2023**,^{ix} the **ÖAWI Best Practice Guide for Research Integrity and Ethics**,^x and the **ÖAWI Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice**.^{xi} These standards provide the reference framework for responsible research conduct, institutional oversight, ethical review, data handling, authorship, publication practice, and the investigation of possible misconduct. WVPU's own research-environment materials identify ÖAWI membership and adherence to ALLEA and ÖAWI standards as the basis of its institutional framework for research integrity. The ALLEA 2023 Code is recognized by the European Commission as the primary standard for research integrity in EU-funded research; ÖAWI provides guidelines, training, and independent procedures related to good scientific practice and alleged research misconduct.

WVPU's integrity framework operates at three levels: normative standards, institutional procedures, and project-specific ethical review. At the normative level, the university's Code of Conduct establishes expectations concerning academic honesty, responsible research practice, respectful conduct, and the disclosure of conflicts of interest.^{xii} At the procedural level, WVPU's Conduct and Grievance Procedures define the process for addressing suspected academic misconduct involving students and faculty.^{xiii} In cases involving faculty research integrity, a **Faculty Integrity Board** reviews allegations and determines whether a formal investigation is warranted. Where appropriate, cases may be referred to ÖAWI for independent investigation, thereby aligning institutional procedures with Austrian standards of research integrity.

Research involving human participants is reviewed through Webster University's centralized global operating Institutional Review Board, which is responsible for human-subjects research across the university's international locations.^{xiv} This is WVPU's current ethical review pathway for human-subjects research. The IRB evaluates research proposals according to risk, voluntary participation, informed consent, proportionality, and compliance with applicable legal and ethical standards. Projects must receive approval before data collection begins. Depending on the nature and risk level of the research, review may be expedited for minimal-risk projects or conducted through full committee review for sensitive populations or higher-risk research.

For faculty, students, and doctoral candidates where applicable, IRB preparation is part of research design. Applications normally require a research protocol, informed consent materials, and relevant information on data protection, risk, confidentiality, and participant rights. Research involving personal data must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation^{xv} and relevant Austrian data protection requirements;^{xvi} where appropriate, a data protection impact assessment may be required. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that student and doctoral research involving human participants satisfies the relevant ethical and legal requirements before research activity begins.

Good scientific practice applies across the entire research cycle: question formulation, literature use, research design, ethics review, data collection, analysis, interpretation, publication, dissemination, archiving, and reporting. Researchers are expected to represent evidence accurately, cite sources properly, distinguish their own contribution from the work of others, respect authorship norms, disclose conflicts of interest, protect confidential information, and draw conclusions proportionate to the evidence. These obligations apply to publications, grant proposals, theses, datasets, software, conference papers, public lectures, commissioned studies, media contributions, and public-facing research communication.

WVPU's research profile makes these standards practical. Research on behaviour, sexuality, identity, migration, memory, organizations, work, AI, digitalization, public communication, or economic policy may involve sensitive data, vulnerable participants, interviews, surveys, experiments, biometric or physiological measurement, digital traces, institutional documents, or commercially confidential information. The ethical requirements of a project must therefore be identified early, before data are collected, shared, processed, analysed, or made publicly visible.

The university's research infrastructure creates both opportunity and responsibility. The Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience and Behaviour Laboratory, CanBeLab, supports research involving EEG systems, biometric recording devices, and analytical software. The Human Sexuality Lab, HuSeX Lab, supports empirical research on human sexuality and identity through biometric and physiological measurement. WVPU also provides computer laboratories, audio-visual production facilities, digital tools, licensed software, access to scientific databases, and secure IT and data-management systems. WVPU maintains secure digital infrastructure compliant with GDPR requirements and uses data-management systems to support research documentation and compliance.

These infrastructures require disciplined research governance. Projects using laboratories, biometric or physiological data, interviews, surveys, digital data, AI-supported analysis, or project-specific datasets must address consent, risk, storage, access, anonymization or pseudonymization, data minimization, retention, and the legitimate purpose of data use. Where research outputs include datasets, documentation, tools, or digital project platforms, researchers must ensure that public

dissemination is compatible with ethical approval, data protection, authorship, contractual obligations, and the rights of participants and partners.

Training and monitoring form part of WVPU's integrity environment. The university actively promotes research integrity training through ÖAWI workshops and internal seminars on research transparency, reproducibility, responsible data management, and the ethical use of artificial intelligence tools. Written submissions and doctoral theses may be screened with plagiarism-detection software, and adherence to research integrity standards forms part of supervision and progress review where doctoral research is involved.

Artificial intelligence requires particular care and is treated in detail in the following section. Its use must preserve authorship, originality, transparency, data protection, confidentiality, and scientific accountability. Researchers remain responsible for the accuracy of claims, the integrity of evidence, the validity of interpretation, and the disclosure of AI use where required by institutional policy, funders, publishers, or the norms of the relevant field.

Public research communication is also governed by good scientific practice. WVPU Research Talks, public lectures, project websites, datasets, reports, media contributions, and public-facing articles must communicate research clearly while preserving appropriate caution. Public relevance can deepen the impact of research when findings are presented accurately, methods are explained responsibly, and uncertainty is neither concealed nor exaggerated.

Research integrity is a condition of academic freedom and public credibility. A research-led university earns trust through the quality of its questions, the discipline of its methods, the reliability of its evidence, the protection of participants, the responsible use of data and infrastructure, and the integrity with which research is conducted, reviewed, communicated, and preserved.

21. Responsible AI in Research

Artificial intelligence is both a research object and a research instrument at WVPU. It is studied as part of WVPU's research profile, and it is also used in literature work, coding, modelling, data analysis, translation, visualization, writing support, project management, and public communication. This double role requires clear academic judgement; scholarly responsibility remains human, institutional, and non-transferable.

WVPU's approach to AI follows the principles that govern research integrity more broadly: authorship, transparency, evidence, method, data protection, reproducibility where possible, and responsibility for the final scholarly claim. AI tools may support research. They do not transfer responsibility away from the researcher. Faculty, students, doctoral candidates where applicable, and project teams remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, interpretation, and ethical standing of the work they submit, publish, present, or communicate.

Responsible AI use begins with the research question. Researchers are obligated to distinguish between AI as a **topic of inquiry**, AI as a **method of analysis**, and AI as a **support tool**. A project studying AI governance, algorithmic bias, low-power Edge AI, digital entrepreneurship, affective computing, or automated behavioural analysis treats AI as an object of research. A project using machine learning, neural networks, computer vision, digital trace analysis, natural language processing, clustering, or model evaluation uses AI or computational methods as part of the research design. A researcher using AI to assist with translation, coding support, summarization, editing, or

project administration uses AI as a support tool. Each use carries different requirements for disclosure, validation, data protection, and methodological explanation.

Where AI is part of the method, the same standards apply as in any other methodological choice. Researchers must be able to explain why the tool was used, what data were used, how the model or system was applied, what limitations exist, and how the results were validated. Claims based on AI-assisted analysis require particular care because model outputs may reflect bias, error, incompleteness, opacity, or instability. A method that cannot be explained sufficiently for scholarly evaluation cannot carry more argumentative weight than its transparency and validation allow.

Where AI is used as a support tool, AI-generated text, code, summaries, classifications, translations, images, or analyses must be checked, corrected, and integrated through the researcher's own judgement. AI use must not obscure sources, invent evidence, weaken citation practice, compromise confidentiality, or create uncertainty about authorship.

Data protection is central. AI tools must be used with particular caution when research involves personal data, sensitive data, confidential institutional information, commercially sensitive materials, biometric or physiological data, interview transcripts, student work, unpublished manuscripts, grant proposals, or partner information. Such materials may be placed into external AI systems only where ethical approval, data protection requirements, contractual obligations, funder conditions, and university policy permit their use. Projects involving AI-supported analysis of human participants, digital traces, biometric data, or behavioural data require early attention to consent, risk, storage, access, anonymization or pseudonymization, and the legitimate purpose of processing.

WVPU's research infrastructure makes these questions concrete. Computational work using R and SQL servers, machine learning, low-power Edge AI, embedded systems, digital trace data, biometric or psychophysiological measurement, laboratory data, or project-specific datasets must be governed through sound data-management practice. Where funded projects generate models, code, datasets, documentation, or digital tools, project teams must plan how these outputs will be stored, described, protected, shared, or published. When such resources are made public through project platforms or **research.webster.ac.at**, dissemination must remain consistent with ethical approval, data protection, authorship, funder obligations, and the rights of participants and partners.

Responsible AI also matters in teaching and supervision. Students may use AI tools in ways permitted by course rules and university policy, but they must understand that AI use does not replace learning, source work, method, reasoning, or authorship. In thesis work and doctoral research, supervisors are expected to address AI use explicitly where relevant: what may be used, what must be disclosed, what data may be processed, and how the student will demonstrate independent intellectual contribution.

AI use in grant writing and project development also requires care. Tools may support language refinement, literature mapping, administrative drafting, coding, or planning. A successful proposal depends on the researcher's question, contribution, method, team, budget, and capacity to deliver. AI may assist the process, but it must not supply the scholarly substance.

Responsible AI is part of research quality. It may extend analytical capacity, but it cannot replace scholarly judgement, methodological accountability, or institutional responsibility.

22. Research Governance, Quality Assurance, and Academic Leadership

Research governance at WVPU is rooted in its Constitution, which defines the respective roles of the Chief Academic Officer, the University Senate, and the Executive Board. It is the working system through which academic freedom, rigorous academic standards, faculty development, and institutional accountability are held together. Its central logic is clear: research is considered at entry, reviewed during advancement, connected to teaching qualifications, supported through planning and infrastructure, monitored through multi-year performance agreements, reviewed annually in performance discussions, and made visible through reporting and public communication. Annual performance discussions allow performance agreements to be assessed and revised in light of progress, emerging plans, changing opportunities, and university priorities, ensuring that researchers remain on track toward their multi-year goals and fully aware of the institution's highest research-development priorities.

This system is rooted in European best practice. The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area^{xvii} provide the common framework for internal and external quality assurance across the EHEA, while the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, 2023, provides a central European reference point for research integrity, research culture, data management, open science, research assessment, and emerging research practices. WVPU translates these broader reference points into institutional procedures for appointments, promotions, performance agreements, research planning, research integrity, ethics review, reporting, and public communication.

The quality-control system begins before appointment. All search committees for full-time status-track faculty must consider a candidate's past, present, and prospective research with no less weight than teaching and service.^{xviii} Candidates are required to present a detailed **multi-year research plan**, aligned with the length of the initial appointment and ordinarily corresponding to the five-year appointment period. The plan sets out proposed projects, expected outcomes, publication targets, funding potential, and opportunities for internal and international collaboration. Shortlisted candidates must also present their past, current, and prospective research to the university community.

The search process itself provides procedural quality control. The University Senate establishes search committees for status-track faculty and is required to nominate a committee composition that includes permanent full professors, a faculty member from another university, and a student representative. Human Resources and academic leadership are also included, and conflict-of-interest recusal is built into the procedure. This means that research quality enters the process through the candidate's own research record and plan, through peer review by internal and external academics, through community presentation, and through a Senate-linked appointment structure.

This is the first point at which WVPU's research profile becomes operational. The university appoints scholars whose research plans, publication trajectories, funding potential, international cooperation, and capacity for internal collaboration are examined before entry into the research environment. Research quality is therefore built into recruitment, rather than assessed only after appointment.

Promotion provides a second and deeper level of assessment. Promotion involves an extensive multi-level process in which the candidate's research is examined internally and externally and then considered in relation to WVPU's overall research profile.^{xix} The process includes assessment of

research performance and prospects, external scholarly review, Senate participation, and final institutional judgement. The Senate nominates possible external reviewers, the academic leadership selects the required reviewers from that pool in the current governance language of the university, and the Senate must issue an endorsement before the promotion can be formalized.

This process evaluates more than accumulated outputs. It examines publication quality, intellectual contribution, funding activity, international visibility, mentorship, academic leadership, future trajectory, and the candidate's contribution to strengthening WVPU's research environment. External review anchors the process in disciplinary standards beyond the university. Senate endorsement anchors it in academic self-governance. CAO leadership anchors it in institutional research planning, quality assurance, and the university's developing research profile.

WVPU's quality architecture also extends to lecturers, senior lecturers, visiting professors, adjunct faculty, and teaching assignments. Visiting professors are defined as scholars engaged in research activities relevant to and in cooperation with the university's permanent faculty or programs, and their appointment requires Senate approval. Lecturers and senior lecturers also require Senate approval.^{xx} Adjunct faculty are selected and evaluated annually by academic unit heads, with qualifications reported to Human Resources and annual reports distributed to the Senate and Executive Board for review. Teaching qualifications are governed by a separate policy^{xxi} requiring appropriate academic credentials, tested experience where applicable, review of teaching performance, and assignment according to expertise; seminars, colloquia, and theses are restricted to permanent faculty, visiting professors, or adjuncts who are employed at least half-time at another accredited university.

These rules create a continuous quality chain. Research is considered at entry, assessed during advancement, reflected in teaching qualifications, and visible in the appointment of scholars who contribute to the university's academic life. This is one of the central and strongest features of WVPU's research quality-control environment: research quality is embedded in the composition of the faculty, the assignment of teaching, the supervision of students, the appointment of visiting scholars, and the advancement of academic careers.

The **heads of academic units** provide the departmental layer of research governance. They support the development of faculty research within departments, connect individual research trajectories with unit-level priorities, contribute to search and appointment processes, make teaching assignments according to expertise, participate in strategic planning, and help ensure that performance expectations are realistic, demanding, and aligned with the university's research profile.

The **Research Services Officer** provides the operational support through which research governance becomes a working process. The RSO connects faculty, academic unit heads, the CAO, finance, IT, communications, and other administrative units in the planning and monitoring of performance agreements, funding applications, project milestones, infrastructure needs, reporting obligations, and public communication. This role gives continuity to the system: ideas become plans; plans become proposals; proposals become projects; projects become outputs, outcomes, and documented institutional contribution.

Quality assurance is operationalized through multi-year Performance Agreements. Because serious research requires time, these agreements provide the framework through which publication pipelines, grant proposals, collaborations, third mission activity, and public research visibility are planned, reviewed, and recalibrated through annual performance discussions.

This is where guidance, support, and accountability meet. Faculty retain intellectual ownership of their research agendas, while the university provides expectations, support, review, and institutional direction. Annual performance discussions keep research trajectories aligned with the multi-year plan and with WVPU's highest research priorities, especially publication quality, successful third-party funding acquisition, international visibility, cooperation, research integrity, and public communication.

Research quality at WVPU is therefore governed through an interlocking system. Faculty retain intellectual ownership of their research agendas. Academic unit heads support and monitor research development within their units. Research Services supports planning, funding support, documentation, and project administration. The CAO provides academic leadership, quality oversight, and institutional research planning in line with WVPU's constitution and research profile. The Senate secures academic self-governance, policy legitimacy, search committee participation, promotion oversight, and external-review mechanisms. The Executive Board ensures that resources, infrastructure, staffing, and institutional strategy are aligned with research development.

The system is evidence-based. Publication policies, funding expectations, international visibility requirements, ethics and integrity procedures, promotion and appointment rules, NAPOLM reporting, and public communication through research.webster.ac.at provide the evidence through which research quality is reviewed, supported, documented, and made visible.

Academic integrity completes the quality-control environment. WVPU's Degree Revocation Policy establishes procedures for cases in which a degree was obtained through serious academic misconduct or fraud, including plagiarism or research misconduct while enrolled in a degree program.^{xxii} The University Senate is responsible for handling and deciding academic-misconduct-related degree revocation cases, with investigation, hearing, and decision procedures defined in policy. This reinforces the principle that academic standards apply across the full academic cycle: admission, study, supervision, assessment, graduation, and post-award integrity.

This governance model protects academic freedom by giving it procedural form. Faculty are free to pursue serious scholarly questions according to disciplinary standards, methodological appropriateness, and intellectual contribution. The university does not prescribe conclusions. It requires that research be planned seriously, conducted responsibly, assessed transparently, supported institutionally, and documented accurately. **Academic freedom is therefore strengthened by rigorous procedures because those procedures protect quality, fairness, accountability, and trust.**

Research governance at WVPU is a coordinated quality-control environment. It works through the harmony of academic leadership, Senate participation, external review, departmental responsibility, Research Services coordination, multi-year performance planning, annual review, integrity procedures, and public accountability. This is the institutional machinery through which WVPU preserves intellectual freedom, guides faculty development, supports research capacity, and demonstrates research quality with clarity and confidence.

23. Performance Agreements, NAPOLM, and Research Reporting

Multi-year Performance Agreements translate WVPU's research expectations into an individual plan that can be supported, reviewed, and revised over time. They define goals in terms of outputs and outcomes, specify responsibilities, and connect individual research activity to the university's research-development priorities.

The Performance Agreement distinguishes outputs from outcomes. Outputs are tangible products of academic activity, including publications, conference presentations, datasets, software, patents, funding proposals, public outreach, and documented collaborations. Outcomes are the benefits those outputs create: successful funding, external recognition, enhanced public profile, improved research capacity, career progression, research teams, or institutional development.

The Performance Agreement is built around the categories defined in the **WVPU Framework for Performance Evaluation**.^{xxiii} These include publications, third-party funding, international visibility and cooperation, professional development, third mission and public outreach, research-relevant teaching, and mentorship and leadership. The framework identifies minimum standards for all faculty, while individual agreements vary according to field, rank, career stage, specialization, ongoing projects, and institutional role. Minimum standards are therefore a floor. They provide transparency and comparability, while the individual agreement defines the level of expectation appropriate to the faculty member's research profile.

The process begins with a multi-year research plan. The faculty member prepares the plan in the university's prescribed format, setting out objectives, expected outputs, intended outcomes, timelines, and support needs. The plan is discussed with university leadership and the supervising department head, revised where necessary, and confirmed as the basis for the Performance Agreement. The agreement is therefore a cooperative instrument: it supports individual scholarly development while giving the university a reliable framework for research planning, quality assurance, and strategic oversight.

Annual performance discussions provide the mechanism through which the multi-year plan remains active. Toward the end of each academic year, progress is reviewed against the objectives of the Performance Agreement, and the plan for the following year is prepared accordingly. These discussions allow research targets to be recalibrated, obstacles to be identified, deadlines to be adjusted, support needs to be clarified, and new opportunities to be incorporated. They also ensure that faculty remain aligned with WVPU's highest research-development priorities: publication quality, successful third-party funding acquisition, international visibility, cooperation, research integrity, public outreach, and meaningful institutional contribution.

NAPOLM is the documentation instrument through which this process becomes evidence based. Faculty are required to document their research activities in NAPOLM in real time, and the system serves as the basis for evaluation. It records research activity as it develops, rather than only after completion. Publications are updated as they move from idea to draft, submission, revision, acceptance, and publication. Funding activities are updated as they move from idea to call identification, proposal development, submission, award, rejection, implementation, reporting, and completion.

NAPOLM also supports documentation of conferences, peer review, editorial roles, cooperation, outreach, third mission activity, professional development, supervision, research talks, funded projects, datasets, and public research communication.

Quality assurance requires evidence of the full research pipeline: ideas under development, grant targets, submitted proposals, revised manuscripts, accepted publications, collaborations, public engagement, project milestones, and emerging outcomes. NAPOLM gives WVPU the institutional

memory needed to support faculty, identify risks, plan resources, prepare accreditation evidence, and communicate research activity accurately.

Research reporting distributes responsibility and makes support possible. Faculty retain intellectual ownership of their research agendas and are responsible for keeping records current. Department heads use the information to support and monitor research development within academic units. Research Services uses it to coordinate funding support, deadlines, project planning, and documentation. The CAO uses it to guide performance discussions, evaluate progress, identify support needs, and align individual research trajectories with the university's research profile. In this sense, reporting supports the faculty member, the department, Research Services, academic leadership, accreditation, and the university's public account of research quality.

Performance Agreements and NAPOLM form the practical core of research quality assurance. The Performance Agreement defines the multi-year trajectory. Annual performance discussions keep that trajectory active. NAPOLM records the evidence. Together, they connect faculty research to measurable outputs, meaningful outcomes, institutional support, and the wider scholarly community.

24. Research Careers and the European Research-Career Framework

WVPU uses the European research-career framework, disseminated through EURAXESS, as a reference language for faculty development, doctoral supervision where applicable, performance planning, recruitment, promotion, and research leadership. It allows the university to describe how researchers develop from supervised research activity toward independence, collaboration, international visibility, resource acquisition, and responsibility for building research environments for others.

The European framework defines four broad researcher profiles: **R1 First Stage Researcher**, **R2 Recognised Researcher**, **R3 Established Researcher**, and **R4 Leading Researcher**.^{xxiv} R1 refers to researchers up to the point of the PhD; R2 to PhD holders or equivalent researchers who are not yet fully independent; R3 to researchers who have developed independence; and R4 to researchers leading their research area or field. It supports comparability across countries, institutions, and employment sectors without reducing research careers to job titles.

WVPU treats this framework as a reference point rather than a mechanical classification system. The profiles do not correspond automatically to job title, seniority, rank, contract category, or a fixed linear career path. High-quality research remains the central criterion. This distinction matters because academic rank, employment category, discipline, publication culture, funding record, international visibility, and institutional role may differ across individual faculty trajectories.

The R1 to R4 profiles do not replace WVPU's academic ranks of **Assistant Professor**, **Associate Professor**, and **Full Professor**. They are not appointment categories, promotion steps, or salary grades. They describe levels of research independence, responsibility, visibility, and leadership that may inform performance planning and evaluation without determining rank mechanically.^{xxv}

The framework becomes useful only when it clarifies differentiated responsibility. R1 researchers require supervision and methodological formation. R2 researchers build independence. R3 researchers consolidate independent agendas, collaboration, funding, and supervision. R4 researchers carry responsibility for research leadership, major funding acquisition, consortia, mentorship, and institutional research development.

Table 3. EURAXESS Researcher career stages and indicative relevance for WVPU research development

European profile	General meaning	Indicative relevance for WVPU research development
R1 First Stage Researcher	Researcher working under supervision, normally up to completion of the PhD	Doctoral candidates where applicable; supervised research formation, methodological development, research integrity, and first integration into scholarly communities
R2 Recognised Researcher	PhD holder or equivalent researcher who has begun to develop a research profile but is not yet fully independent	Researchers building publication records, methods, conference presence, peer-review experience, external networks, and initial funding activity
R3 Established Researcher	Independent researcher with a developed agenda and recognized scholarly contribution	Researchers with independent trajectories, publication quality, external visibility, supervision capacity, collaboration, and successful funding activity
R4 Leading Researcher	Researcher leading a field, area, agenda, network, or major research environment	Researchers who shape agendas, secure significant funding, build consortia, mentor others, support institutional research priorities, and advance WVPU's external recognition

Doctoral candidates, where applicable, correspond most closely to the R1 profile because they conduct research under supervision while developing methodological competence, disciplinary knowledge, research integrity, and the ability to communicate the value of their work to scholarly peers. Undergraduate and graduate students conduct research through coursework, thesis work, laboratory activity, archival work, surveys, case building, coding, modelling, or other forms of academic inquiry, but they are not normally classified as researchers in the European research-career sense. Their work belongs to academic formation; doctoral research begins the formal research-career trajectory.

Within WVPU, the framework supports differentiated expectations across career stages. It makes explicit why publication targets, funding expectations, cooperation, outreach, supervision, mentorship, and leadership responsibilities vary by rank, discipline, track record, methodological profile, current projects, and future trajectory. The purpose is not uniformity, but fair differentiation within a coherent institutional framework.

The value of this alignment lies in discipline rather than classification. It allows WVPU to distinguish career stage from academic rank, expectation from entitlement, and research potential from demonstrated research responsibility. Used in this way, the framework supports fair differentiation while keeping the central criterion clear: serious researchers are expected to develop independence, secure external recognition, assume responsibility for resources and networks, and contribute visibly to the university's research profile.

25. Researcher Development, Mobility, and Scholarly Capacity

WVPU invests in scholarly capacity because serious research requires more than individual effort. It requires time, method, mobility, networks, guidance, and opportunities to test ideas beyond the

institution. Researcher development is not a generic personnel activity. It is part of the university's research quality system.

Scholarly capacity is planned through multi-year Performance Agreements, annual performance discussions, Research Services support, departmental mentoring, research-specific training, mobility, and structured periods of concentrated research where appropriate. These instruments connect support to a faculty member's research agenda, track record, methodological profile, and future trajectory.

Research-specific training improves the quality and competitiveness of scholarly work. It includes grant writing, publication strategy, advanced methods, data management, research ethics and integrity, responsible AI use, project management, supervision, open science, academic leadership, public research communication, and field-specific technical or methodological specialization. WVPU's research framework identifies structured training in grant writing, academic publishing, research ethics, Erasmus+ staff mobility, and ÖAWI-related research integrity as part of the university's research support environment.

Mobility is one of the most powerful instruments of scholarly capacity-building. Research stays, visiting appointments, laboratory visits, archival periods, staff exchanges, conference residencies, and funded mobility periods expand access to sources, techniques, co-authors, laboratories, research groups, doctoral networks, and future consortia.

The most valuable mobility is often tied to external funding and structured research cooperation. Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, Erasmus+ staff mobility, nationally funded international mobility programmes, foundation schemes, doctoral networks, and comparable instruments can support research stays, staff exchange, institutional collaboration, publication development, and durable research partnerships. Such mobility develops the individual researcher while expanding WVPU's international research networks.

Mobility is planned with a clear scholarly purpose: publication, grant development, data collection, fieldwork, archival work, laboratory access, methods acquisition, consortium formation, project preparation, doctoral cooperation, or sustained collaboration with an external institution. Its value is measured by what follows: stronger outputs, better proposals, wider networks, shared projects, visiting scholars, public events, and long-term institutional cooperation.

Structured periods of concentrated research, including sabbaticals where applicable under university policy, form one part of this wider framework.^{xxvi} Sabbatical arrangements are regulated opportunities for concentrated research activity free from regular teaching and administrative duties, with access governed by transparent procedures that protect equity and institutional continuity. Such periods require defined research objectives, departmental feasibility, expected outputs, and alignment with the university's capacity.

Concentrated scholarly time gains institutional value when it advances a major publication, grant proposal, empirical project, fieldwork, archival inquiry, laboratory-based study, methodological specialization, international collaboration, or outputs arising from externally funded research. The point is not absence from the university. The point is the disciplined development of research capacity.

Scholarly capacity also depends on guidance. Department heads, senior scholars, Research Services, and the Chief Academic Officer help faculty identify training, mobility instruments, funding targets,

host institutions, collaborators, and project milestones. Research Services supports call identification, proposal timelines, budget logic, mobility-related funding opportunities, and institutional coordination. Academic leadership keeps scholarly progression connected to Performance Agreements, research priorities, and the university's broader research profile.

Such investment enables faculty to produce stronger scholarly work, acquire external funding, build international networks, supervise more effectively, lead projects, and contribute to research quality through disciplined growth rather than isolated achievement.

26. Building the Next Stage of WVPU's Research Environment

WVPU is moving from an established base of individual scholarly activity toward a more coordinated and externally recognized institutional research profile. The next stage requires discipline: clearer priorities, more consistent and consequential publication trajectories, sustained third-party funding acquisition, better documentation, sharper public communication, and deeper integration of faculty research into WVPU's clusters, networks, and support structures.

The next stage depends on focus. WVPU cannot build research depth through breadth alone. It must direct effort toward areas where faculty capacity, institutional identity, external opportunity, and public relevance reinforce one another. The current clusters provide the framework for this focus by making visible where research activity has already taken shape, where collaboration can grow, where funding strategies can be developed, and where new colleagues, visiting scholars, doctoral activity, and public engagement can be meaningfully connected.

The most important priority is the successful acquisition of external research funding. Publications remain essential, but funded research creates capacity: teams, data, platforms, collaborators, mobility, infrastructure, and external trust. **WVPU's next stage therefore depends on faculty who build funding trajectories deliberately, move from attainable opportunities toward more competitive schemes, and convert successful grants into outputs, outcomes, public recognition, and institutional development.**

Multi-year planning, annual performance discussions, Research Services support, and NAPOLM reporting provide the structure through which this development is maintained. Their purpose is scholarly momentum: clearer pipelines, earlier identification of obstacles, stronger sequencing of publications and proposals, and closer alignment between individual research agendas and the university's highest research priorities.

Research networks, infrastructure, and public communication give this next stage its institutional form. Co-authorships, grant consortia, visiting appointments, doctoral cooperation, research platforms, laboratories, R and SQL servers, biometric and physiological research capacity, media production, and research.webster.ac.at matter because they help faculty produce better work, build durable partnerships, and make WVPU's research profile legible beyond the institution.

Public visibility must be grounded in substance. WVPU Research Talks, IR Research Seminars, The Empirical Edge, public lectures, visiting scholar events, funded project platforms, and public research communication show research as it is practiced: through questions, evidence, method, interpretation, collaboration, and contribution. Public communication gives scholarship a wider audience while preserving the seriousness of evidence, method, and argument.

The next stage also requires a culture of responsibility. Faculty retain intellectual ownership of their research, but their research has institutional consequences. It affects accreditation, reputation, recruitment, partnerships, student formation, external funding, public trust, and the credibility of WVPU's research profile and institutional capacity. **The university supports research and expects research-active faculty to contribute visibly, regularly, and successfully to that development.**

WVPU's research identity will be sustained by the interaction of intellectual focus and institutional discipline. Its scale calls for concentration. Its location calls for international engagement. Its research profile calls for methodological pluralism. Its quality framework calls for evidence, integrity, and accountability. Its faculty are the decisive element: the scholars who ask the questions, acquire the funding, publish the work, build the networks, supervise the students, communicate the findings, and give the university's research identity its substance.

The next stage of WVPU's research environment is the disciplined continuation of what has been built: a focused, research-led university in Vienna, organized around economic and socio-political change, committed to scientific integrity, supported by clear governance, and made visible through scholarship that earns external recognition.

End Notes

ⁱ See Webster Vienna private university Constitution, revised December 15, 2025 and Approved by join decision of the General Assembly and the University Council March 26, 2026.

https://atlas.webster.ac.at/internals1/primary_docs/WVPU_Constitution_GA_Approved_March_26_2026.pdf

ⁱⁱ Source: Author's own elaboration based on WVPU institutional documents.

ⁱⁱⁱ See WVPU evaluation of research publications, Approved by the University Senate on March 28, 2025.

^{iv} See WVPU Framework for Performance Evaluation (2025).

^v See <https://www.cost.eu/>

^{vi} See <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>

^{vii} See

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf

^{viii} See <https://oeawi.at/en/members/>

^{ix} See <https://allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/European-Code-of-Conduct-Revised-Edition-2023.pdf>

^x See https://oeawi.at/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-10-20_Praxisleitfaden-fuer-Integritaet-und-Ethik-in-der-Wissenschaft_engl_.pdf

^{xi} See https://oeawi.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/OeAWI_Brosch%C3%BCre_Web_2019.pdf

^{xii} See <https://www.webster.ac.at/academics/academicpolicies.php#code-of-conduct>

^{xiii} See <https://www.webster.ac.at/campuslife/student-policies.php#grievance>

^{xiv} See <https://www.webster.edu/academic-affairs/institutional-review-board.php>

^{xv} See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>

^{xvi} See https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/ErV/ERV_1999_1_165/ERV_1999_1_165.html

^{xvii} See https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

^{xviii} See Policy on Senate's role in Search Committees, Policy on Senate's role in the appointment of adjunct faculty, lecturers, and visiting professors, Policy on Senate's role in the promotion of faculty, and Policy on Teaching Qualifications and Assignments.

^{xix} See Guidelines for Appointment, Extension and Promotion of Faculty (updated 2024).

^{xx} See Policy on Senate's role in the appointment of adjunct faculty.

^{xxi} See Policy on Teaching Qualifications and Assignments.

^{xxii} See Degree Revocation Policy.

^{xxiii} See WVPU Framework for Performance Evaluation

^{xxiv}

See

https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf

^{xxv} The European Commission offers a detailed set of research profile descriptors via its EURAXESS platform. See <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/career-development/researchers> for details.

^{xxvi} See WVPU Policy on Sabbaticals.

AI Use Statement

OpenAI ChatGPT, GPT-5.5 Thinking was used selectively during the final review of this guide for editorial consistency checks, minor language refinement, and visual-formatting assistance. The graphics were prepared as original institutional figures based on the author's specifications and institutional content, with limited AI-assisted formatting support in ChatGPT, and finalized under the author's responsibility. All intellectual framing, institutional interpretation, policy references, academic standards, substantive claims, and final wording remain the responsibility of the author and Webster Vienna Private University.