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Performance measurement of Australian geoscientific minerals researchers in the changing funding regimes

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Smith, Kerry (2003) *Performance measurement of Australian geoscientific minerals researchers in the changing funding regimes*. PhD thesis, Murdoch University.



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Abstract

The thesis examines the performance of geoscience minerals researchers from three Australian geoscientific research centres. The study explores whether the changing funding regimes for geoscientific research in Australia have impacted on the research performance of these geoscientists, measured through analysis of activity and output. The context of the study is the literature outlining the settings for the general culture of geoscientific research and the Australian scientific policy and research environment, in particular, including an evaluation of bibliometric methods.

The case study of three geoscience minerals research centres and their researchers finds that journal and book publishing is only one component of the researchers' performance and that conferences, technical reports as well as teaching have an important place in the dissemination of research results. The study also finds that the use of the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) indices not only influences the policy directions for scientific and geoscientific research funding in Australia, but also directs the ways in which the geoscientists publish. It also tends to restrict publishing output: the tail wags the dog.

The study recommends: that the various ways through which research outcomes are disseminated, as well as other components of the research continuum including the processes of education and professional activity, receive wider acceptance and recognition in Australian government policy; that the Australian geoscientific community re-assess its educational and research directions through a considered auditing and strategic planning process; and that a more comprehensive approach to the dissemination of geoscientific research outcomes into the public domain be enacted.

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