Social and Economic Research
Schedule 2.2

The Parties agree that the issues are:

- There are a number of significant knowledge gaps that exist, both locally and nationally, in respect of the social and economic issues relevant to effective policy development, policy decision making and service-program delivery.

- Both the University and the NT Government undertake research for their own purposes. Prior and existing collaborations in social and economic research have occurred largely on an ad hoc basis between officers. There are strategic advantages to working together, and university based research practice and management can accommodate the ‘defined purpose’ nature of Government research (ie contract based research).

- There is a dearth of skilled professionals, locally and nationally, trained in the critical analysis and review of social and economic data, and the application of these analyses for policy development, decision making and service delivery purposes.

- There is a regional need for socially robust knowledge and capability in systems / applied / experimental economics, social science, demography and statistics. Opportunities exist for partnering between the NT Government and the University, assisted by philanthropic funding to build enabling competence in these areas.

- The University has a role in meeting Government’s needs for problem analysis and policy advice in key areas relevant to operations in, and services to, sustainable development of rural and remote communities in the desert and wet/dry tropics.

- Occasions may arise where policy and service delivery decisions must be made in the absence of an appropriate depth of underpinning knowledge, data evidence-based analyses. An adaptive management approach enables decision making in such situations by linking monitoring and evaluation into the research and decision making cycles.

- Improved policy and more effective service delivery are achievable where underpinning research is participatory; that is: project participation is integrated to policy and service delivery through research and evaluation outcomes.

The Parties agree that the objective of this schedule is:
To generate the knowledge and capability required to assist effective and culturally appropriate policy development and service delivery in Government.

The Parties agree that the strategies to be employed in achieving this objective are:

- Identify and prioritise key areas of policy development and service delivery that warrant social and/or economic research and explore opportunities for University involvement in the conduct of the necessary research.
- Identify key groups of Government social and economic researchers, and develop collaborative mechanisms to co-locate, second, or in other ways link these researchers with the University.
- Identify individuals or groups of University staff with knowledge, experience or skill relevant to Government research needs and facilitate and nurture their involvement in Government research activities and projects.
- Establish an appropriate capability in the Institute of Advanced Studies.
- Explore other strategies to collaboratively build capability in education resource and health economics.
- Establish graduate research traineeships, including the development of professional higher degrees (available to NTTPS employees through part time enrolment linked to workplace based projects) in key areas of social and economic research.
- Develop protocols for participatory research that enables the aspirations, perspectives and knowledges of Indigenous people to be documented and used for purposes of policy development and/or service delivery.

The Parties agree that the Performance Indicators for 2004/2005 are:

- A report that documents the social and economic research gaps and opportunities in the NT by January 2005.
- A report that documents possible groups of social and economic Government researchers with potential to benefit from links with the University (Jan 2005).
- A report that documents possible University staff and groups of staff with potential to contribute value to Government research projects and activities (Jan 2005).
- Creation, or enhancement, of at least two new substantial research linkages between Government and the University, identified through the above reports, and which provide for mutual benefit to Government and the University.
- Successful creation and establishment of research grant to support the appropriate capability at CDU by January 2005.