



**NITRO-Oceania**

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**Seminar**  
**Monday, August 23, 2021**  
**12-1PM AEDT**  
**Online – All welcome!**

**Universities' Commitment to Interdisciplinary Research: Some Causes and Consequences**

**Professor Erin Leahey**

Science policy experts promote interdisciplinary research to foster innovation and address grand scientific challenges. In collaborative research supported by the National Science Foundation, my team and I collected vast amounts of data on 158 universities in the United States to:

1. develop a measure of university commitment to interdisciplinary research, which relies on the organizational structuring of research activity into research centers and departments.
2. examine the factors that influence such commitment, including top-down administrative support for, and bottom-up faculty engagement with, interdisciplinary research.
3. examine the effects of such commitment. We found that it spurs interdisciplinary research and NIH (National Institutes of Health) grant activity in particular.

These results suggest that when commitments to interdisciplinary research are made tangible - through research centers and interdisciplinary departments - they can have their intended effect.



Erin Leahey is Professor and Director of the School of Sociology at the University of Arizona, Tucson, USA.

She is an elected member of the Sociological Research Association and is known largely for her work on science, scientific careers, and inequality therein.

Recently she has focused on studying the costs, benefits, and precursors of interdisciplinary research at both the individual and organization levels.

Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/universities-commitment-to-interdisciplinary-research-by-erin-leahey-tickets-163817072273>

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