



Flinders  
University

FHMRI

# Research Strategy

## 2024–2029



# Acknowledgment *of Country*

Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which its campuses are located, there are the Traditional Lands of Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the Southeast, First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people. We honour their Elders and Custodians past, present and emerging.

Flinders University uses the term 'Indigenous' when referring to the programs and strategies and 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander' when referring to peoples.



## **ADELAIDE**

Bedford Park  
Tonsley  
Festival Plaza

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Barossa  
Berri  
Mount Gambier  
Murray Bridge  
Renmark  
Victor Harbor

## **NORTHERN TERRITORY**

Alice Springs  
Darwin  
Katherine  
Nhulunbuy  
Tennant Creek





# Strategy *on a page*

## *Vision*

Healthy, Thriving Communities

---

## *Aspiration*

Worldclass Health & Medical Research Institute

---

## *Priorities*

### **Excellence**

Foster scientific excellence and impact in areas of strength

### **Supportive Environments**

Create systems and culture promoting excellence, diversity and inclusion

### **Collaboration**

Strengthen and expand collaborations and partnerships

### **Equity**

Advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing

### **Impact**

Actively facilitate translation of research into health and social policy, practice and outcomes

# Vision

We will lead ground-breaking health and medical research that improves health outcomes, promotes health equity and pushes the boundaries of discovery worldwide.



# Aspiration

In the next five years, FHMRI will be recognised as a world class health and medical research institute providing the answers to the health challenges of our times. We will be ranked in the top 10 university-based health and medical research institutes in the country.

We will be the employer of choice for the world's brightest and best health and medical researchers, known for our dynamic culture of excellence, diversity and inclusion.



We will be Australia's leader in rural and remote and Indigenous health research, working with communities to tackle health disparities and contributing to closing the gap. Our partnerships with industry and government will transform clinical practices, health services and health outcomes for our local and global communities.

# The Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute

A part of Flinders University, the Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute (FHMRI) is a broad, multi-disciplinary, highly dynamic and skilled community of researchers spread across a footprint spanning the central corridor of Australia.

Established in 2019, FHMRI has rapidly gained a reputation for its world leading health and medical research. Its research impact extends across scientific breakthroughs, innovation in clinical practice, policy and practice reform, and transformation of population health and equity outcomes.

This is an exciting time for FHMRI. In 2024, with a new leadership group, the Institute structure was reshaped to clearly define our strengths, and the Health and Medical Research Building (HMRB) will springboard the Institute into an era of accelerated collaboration, discovery and impact. Our 2024–2029 Research Strategy sets out a plan for thriving in this new era.



**Professor Billie Bonevski**  
Dean Research, FHMRI Director  
College of Medicine and Public Health





## Glossary

FHMRI	Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute
HMRB	Health and Medical Research Building
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
CRE	Centre of Research Excellence
MRFF	Medical Research Future Fund
RART	Rapid Applied Research Translation initiative
ARC	Australian Research Council
CoE	Centre of Excellence
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FHMRI-RED	FHMRI Researcher Education and Development
SA	South Australia
NT	Northern Territory
SARDI	South Australian Research and Development Institute
NCRIS	National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy
SALHN	Southern Adelaide Local Health Network
LHN	Local Health Network
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
SAHMRI	South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute
HDR	Higher Degree by Research

# Strategic Priority 1



## *Excellence*

### Foster scientific excellence and impact in areas of strength

Excellence is at the core of all our activities. We will continue to build on and evolve FHMRI's strengths and capabilities in improving health and wellbeing, both within Australia and overseas, and in the context of national and global strategies. Innovation, discovery, translation and impact are all driven by our obligation to deliver research of the highest standard to our communities.

#### **Key Strategies:**

- Identify current areas of research strength and excellence through the establishment and resourcing of Flagship and Impact Programs
- Evolve our organisational and governance structure to best catalyse and integrate a diverse core of activities
- Grow our funding and income base across all categories, with an increased emphasis on large capacity building grants (e.g., NHMRC CRE, Synergy, MRFF RART, ARC CoE, DFAT and other government bids) to promote the sustainable delivery of research excellence
- Develop strategies and resources to accelerate the attraction of externally funded research fellowships
- Accelerate an upward trajectory of key research outputs (Scimago Top 10% journal publications and Field Weighted Citation Index) to reflect excellence
- Continue to emphasise innovation as a foundation of discovery and translational science
- Pioneer innovation and the application of emerging technologies, platforms, and novel methodologies
- Encourage curiosity-led, consumer and community-led and values-led research
- Promote and reward exemplary performance through setting of agreed targets, reviewing of outcomes and expectations of continuous improvement
- Proactively support the development of new areas of research strength.



# Strategic Priority 2



## *Supportive Environments*

### Create systems and culture promoting excellence, diversity and inclusion

Building, sustaining and nurturing a community of the world's best researchers, we will attract and retain leading researchers and higher degree by research (HDR) students, assisting them to achieve their full potential. Providing infrastructure, technology, facilities and processes to enable researchers to achieve their best and create impactful research. We recognise that providing advanced and sophisticated bioplatfroms enables discoveries. We aim to reinforce a clear internal identity and culture that is aspirational, supportive and empowering for the delivery of our vision.

#### **Key Strategies:**

- Deliver on the activation of the HMRB, providing state-of-the-art research facilities
- Enhance FHMRI visibility and reputation in order to attract students, researchers, partners, and funding, through media and communications opportunities
- Facilitate a culture of shared success by celebrating achievements across University, College, and FHMRI communication channels.
- Ensure gender equity and a focus on priority populations is part of the Flagship and Impact Programs Initiative
- Promote the participation of women researchers in the Franklin Women organisation.
- Provide funding support to facilitate collaboration across our Rural and Remote and Adelaide campuses
- Strengthen supportive systems and processes to build a vibrant research culture by:
  - » Resourcing FHMRI Researcher Education and Development (FHMRI-RED) to deliver initiatives across the career lifespan from students through to senior leaders
  - » Leading FHMRI HDR student events and support
  - » Nominating our researchers into Flinders University Researcher Professional Development opportunities
  - » Supporting consumer and community involvement in research and training for consumers and researchers
- Develop a FHMRI-RED program of activities that encourages the next generation of scientists with an emphasis on Indigenous and Rural and Remote researchers, clinician researchers and winning fellowships
- Explore with the Dean Education opportunities for embedding research into education to create a pathway for undergraduate students into health and medical research careers
- Take a leading role in the implementation of the Flinders Clinician Investigator Fellowships program as a pathway for clinician researcher career development
- Maintain and upgrade bioplatfroms to ensure sustainability
- Support recruitment processes which are values-led and inclusive of diversity
- Create an environment and culture which encourages, enables and rewards leadership at all levels.



# Strategic Priority 3



## *Collaboration*

### Strengthen and expand collaborations and partnerships

As an Institute of Flinders University, we will continue to explore mechanisms and opportunities to build even stronger relationships with strategically aligned partners. This includes governments, researchers, health practitioners, industry, community organisations and NGOs, nationally and globally. We are uniquely positioned across the SA and NT central corridor, creating opportunities for community in-reach and partnerships.

#### **Key Strategies:**

- Working with the FHMRI Consumer Advisory Board to ensure consumers and community as active contributors and partners in research
- Establish a FHMRI Scientific Advisory Board, with an independent Chair, which will be externally focused. It will advise FHMRI management on major strategic matters, facilitate engagement with influential stakeholders and partners and assist with fundraising.
- Continue to strengthen partnership initiatives between SALHN and FHMRI, build new opportunities with other South Australian LHNs, and grow partnerships with NT Health
- Create a Head of Strategic Partnerships role within FHMRI Management Group to accelerate partnerships with local, national and international industry groups
- Promote the newly established Flagship and Impact Programs to position FHMRI as a global and national leader in those fields
- Strengthen cross-college, cross-institute, multidisciplinary collaborations within Flinders
- Leverage Flinders networks and community relationships across the rural and remote health campus footprint to build research partnerships across SA and NT
- Leverage the new HMRB to renew and continue to develop strategic partnerships incorporating funding arrangements with the Australian Government's Department of Health, SA Health, South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)
- Encourage participation of researchers in panels and committees of important national HMR bodies, including ARC, NHMRC and MRFF
- Facilitate improved engagement with the Flinders Foundation and the Flinders University Alumni and Advancement team to align philanthropic opportunities with FHMRI strengths
- Establish new communication initiatives and enhanced technologies to support enhanced external communications.

# Strategic Priority 4



## Equity

### Advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing

FHMRI recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been conducting research for over 60,000 years.. FHMRI is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to build on this legacy and to achieving optimal health and wellbeing through research. FHMRI research will meet the identified needs and priorities of partner Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We will support culturally responsive research and safe environments that nurture the work and careers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers.

#### Key Strategies:

- Ensure researchers working in Indigenous health adhere to:
  - » Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research principles and guides, such as those described by the NHMRC, Lowitja Institute, AIATSIS, and SAHMRI
  - » Indigenous Data Sovereignty principles, including processes that foster Indigenous research leadership and governance and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determine the management of their research data
  - » Indigenous research priorities that are identified and driven by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations, and stakeholders
  - » The principle of reciprocity in all Indigenous research
  - » Flinders University Indigenous Workforce Strategy and Reconciliation Action Plan
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher involvement in research leadership through the College Research Committee with representation from SA and NT
- Deliver the FHMRI/College components of the Flinders University Indigenous Research Strategy
- Work closely with Poche SA+NT to ensure community-led research and research dissemination and translation back to community
- Recognise the research excellence and strengths gained in applying Indigenous Knowledges and Methodologies
- Create opportunities for recruitment and career support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers at all career levels
- Work with the Office of Graduate Research to develop support resources to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HDR students
- Strengthen research partnerships with the Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and peak bodies, particularly across SA and NT
- Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers to participate in the Flinders University First Nations Research Collective.



# Strategic Priority 5



## *Impact*

### Actively facilitate translation of research into health and social policy, practice and outcomes

FHMRI will continue to place great emphasis on ensuring our research findings generate new knowledge and are translated into evidence-based treatments, clinical guidelines and effective prevention strategy frameworks and public health policies that improve the lives of people in our local and global communities. Consumer and community involvement in our research is key. Our focus on equity and priority populations is core to our research principles and will continue to be a key objective of FHMRI's research impact.

#### **Key Strategies:**

- Continue to support government and community decision makers in the development and implementation of effective, efficient and sustainable public health, social and clinical policy
- Participate in government submissions and ministerial roundtables to influence government actions
- Encourage our researchers to contribute to prominent, influential external health-related committees and boards that will facilitate translation
- Achieve consumer and community involvement in research from the start to the end of the research process
- Encourage cross-disciplinary research, bridging laboratory science with clinical trials, clinical research with implementation science, and public health and population health approaches
- Champion research that promotes health and social equity and increases access to health care
- Harness our global alumni networks in research to accelerate international research impact
- Host community and consumer forums to encourage health-based debate and advocacy and identify needs-based research priorities
- Continue to work with Health Translation SA to cultivate translational partnerships, participate in translation activities and events, and showcase our research
- Explore opportunities to partner with the Central Australia Academic Health Science Network
- Facilitate industry, government and non-government co-located and/or co-funded opportunities such as PhD scholarships, internships, and joint appointments.



Flinders  
University

FHMRI



FHMRI acknowledges people with lived and living experience of health challenges and ill-health; and the experience of those who are carers, families or supporters. We welcome and celebrate the contribution that these people bring to health and medical research.

Contact us:  
[FHMRI@flinders.edu.au](mailto:FHMRI@flinders.edu.au)

[Flinders.edu.au/FHMRI](https://flinders.edu.au/FHMRI)