

## FHRI Fund Communique #10

### 13 August 2024 Meeting

It was a pleasure to chair my second Advisory Council (Council) meeting where we welcomed newest member Dr Marcus Tan to the Council. Dr Tan's wealth of innovation experience further diversifies the skills and expertise of the Council standing us in good stead to advance an exciting agenda for health and medical research and innovation in Western Australia (WA).

#### FHRI Fund strategic activities

I am pleased to announce that Scyne Advisory has been engaged to undertake the third-year evaluation of the FHRI Fund Scheme. The evaluation will assess progress towards meeting the objectives of the FHRI Fund legislation, ensuring that the FHRI Fund continues to deliver a secure source of funding for research and innovation activities that enhance WA's health system, promote health and wellbeing, drive economic prosperity and position our state as a national or international leader in health and medical research and innovation. As part of this evaluation, Scyne Advisory is developing a stakeholder consultation plan to engage representatives of the health and medical research and innovation sector over coming months.

The Council also agreed on an approach for shaping the future of the FHRI Fund's priorities through the development of a new strategic plan. The plan will articulate a clear vision for achieving the Objects of the FHRI Fund Act, achieved through a measured approach to research and innovation funding in WA. This work will be led by the Council over the remainder of 2024-25, drawing on insights from the ongoing evaluation and continued sector-wide engagement. The plan will enable improved communication about upcoming programs and initiatives, providing the sector with more time to plan and prepare for funding programs and initiatives.

#### Expert committees

As part of our ongoing commitment to sector engagement, the Council is progressing the establishment of a Research Expert Committee and an Innovation Expert Committee. The inaugural Research Expert Committee members have been agreed and will be notified in coming days. The selected members offer expertise and experience spanning a range of fields, institutions and career stages. Following announcement by the Minister for Medical Research, the new members will be published on the FHRI Fund website. The Council also endorsed the terms of reference for the Innovation Expert Committee and a call for expressions of interest will be released in coming weeks.

## Sector abstracts

In late 2023, the sector was invited to submit abstracts highlighting a challenge or opportunity of significance to the FHRI Fund for Council consideration. The response was impressive with over 60 abstracts submitted across a range of themes. Six abstracts were selected for presentations to the Council at the August meeting, addressing the themes of commercialisation, climate change, health equity and precision health. These presentations provided valuable insights into key issues and opportunities for the FHRI Fund. The Council remains committed to hearing from a diverse range of stakeholders and a schedule for abstract presentations has been confirmed for the next two Council meetings. Abstract authors will be contacted to present by the Office of Medical Research and Innovation (OMRI). Thank you to everyone who submitted an abstract through this process.

## October 2024 Open Day

I am excited to announce that the next Open Day for 2024 will be held in Albany on 25 October, co-hosted by the OMRI, the University of Western Australia (Albany campus), and the WA Country Health Service. The theme is '*partnerships for regional health and wellbeing*' and attendees will hear from exciting speakers working in health and medical research and innovation across the state. The event promises to highlight exciting developments and projects in the health and medical research and innovation space, with a special focus on collaborations between metropolitan and regional areas. The day will showcase FHRI Fund programs opening for applications and announce recent FHRI Fund grant recipients. Registrations will open shortly.

Thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to continued collaboration across the sector to advance health and medical research and innovation in Western Australia.

Kind regards,



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