



Western Australian  
Future Health Research  
& Innovation Fund

## FHRI Fund Communique #8

### 7 February 2024 meeting

It was my pleasure to welcome Advisory Council (Council) members to the first meeting of 2024. Many exciting opportunities lie ahead, including the launch of new programs and initiatives and the development of a fresh strategy and priorities for the Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund.

Looking forward, it is important that the FHRI Fund is guided by evidence-based evaluation and sustained engagement with the health and medical research and innovation sector (the sector).

#### Evaluation and performance review

I am pleased to announce that in 2024, an independent evaluation of the FHRI Fund and its activities will be conducted, assessing performance of the Fund over its first three years. This evaluation will measure progress against objectives of the FHRI Fund legislation, ensuring that it continues to deliver a secure source of funding for research and innovation activities that contribute to the improvement of Western Australia's (WA's) health system, the health and wellbeing of its citizens, economic prosperity, and advancing our State as a national or international leader in health and medical research and innovation.

A performance review of the Council, the Secretariat, and the Expert Committees is also scheduled for 2024 to ensure that activities bring the highest value and benefit to the Western Australian community.

#### Research Expert Committee

In recognition of the research experience and expertise across the sector, the Council is establishing a standing Research Expert Committee (Committee). The Committee will serve as an invaluable source of advice and guidance, offering insights on research priorities, program design, and implementation. An Expression of Interest for Committee membership will be released soon.

#### Advisory Council call for abstracts

The Council call for abstracts has been extended. If you made a submission and did not receive an acknowledgement, please re-submit your abstract [here](#). Submissions will be considered, and selected stakeholders will be invited to present to the Council at dedicated sessions throughout 2024.

In addition to the regular Council meeting in May, we will hold our annual strategy session as well as the first scheduled session for selected stakeholders to present on topics of interest and significance to the Council.

## March 2024 Open Day

The 8 March Open Day will be hosted by the Office of Medical Research and Innovation in collaboration with the WA Centre for Rural Health and the Pilbara Aboriginal Health Alliance. The event will showcase exciting WA health and medical research and innovation projects, provide information about FHRI Fund programs open for applications, and highlight recently awarded FHRI Fund grant recipients.

For those attending in person, an event highlight will be interactive demonstrations by finalists of [The Challenge](#) who are competing for a prize of \$5 million for the winning solution to health service delivery challenges in the Pilbara.

On International Women's Day (8 March), the Open Day will have a theme of 'Women's and children's health' with an emphasis on research and innovation in partnership with Aboriginal communities in the Pilbara.

[Registrations](#) are now open and you can join online or in-person at the Red Earth Arts Precinct in Karratha. We hope to see you there.

## Chair update

It is with mixed emotions that I announce my decision to step down from the role of Chair of the Council.

Chairing the Council has been a rewarding experience, and I am proud of the progress we have made, including injecting funding into the sector to the value of around \$109 million to date and in addition to this, approval of new programs to the value of approximately \$70 million to be launched at the Open Day in March.

Establishing robust governance arrangements and fostering strong relationships across the sector have been key priorities, and I am confident that the foundation we have laid will continue to support the Council's work in the future.

I would like to thank the sector for its support and dedication throughout my tenure as Chair. It has been a privilege to serve our community in this capacity, and I look forward to witnessing the continued growth and success of the FHRI Fund and its initiatives into the future.

The Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC has announced Ms Rebecca Tomkinson as the incoming Chair. Please see the Minister's [statement](#) for further information on the new appointment.

Kind regards



Mr John Van Der Wielen

**FHRI Fund Advisory Council Chair**

**Future Health Research and Innovation Fund**

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