



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**



Western Australian
Future Health Research
& Innovation Fund

Implementation Science Fellowships 2021

Guidelines and Conditions

Closing Date: 1.00pm, Tuesday 31 August 2021

fhrifund.health.wa.gov.au

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1. Introduction

The Implementation Science Fellowships program is funded through the [Future Health Research and Innovation \(FHRI\) Fund](#), which aims to improve, through research and innovation, the health and prosperity of Western Australians, the sustainability of the health system and to advance the State's standing as a leader in research and innovation.

This program is aligned with the 2020/21 FHRI Fund Research Priority to: Support research translation to foster a vibrant research translation culture in the public health system, facilitate quantifiable buy-in from health system leadership and improve patient care and outcomes.

Administration of this program is provided by the Research and Innovation Office (RIO), WA Department of Health (Department of Health). Queries regarding this program may be directed to RIO.DOH@health.wa.gov.au.

2. Program Description

Implementation science is “the scientific study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice, and hence improve the quality and effectiveness of health services and care”¹.

Implementation science seeks to understand the system-level facilitators and barriers to implementing evidence into practice and identify evidence-based approaches to promote translation.

The aim of the Implementation Science Fellowships program is to identify strategies for the successful implementation of research findings into policy and practice in the WA public health system, in the following two streams:

- Aboriginal health issues
- Country and regional WA health issues.

Applications can be made by eligible WA administering institutions (administering institution), in partnership with at least one WA Health Service Provider (HSP).

Fellows will contribute to the development of a broad Research Program that:

- a. Addresses a contemporary challenge or need faced by the WA public health system in the areas of Aboriginal or country/regional WA health.
- b. Includes one or more proposed implementation science research projects that will be completed within the term of the Fellowship.
- c. Demonstrates the potential pathway(s) for implementation of research findings into improved policy and/or practice in the WA public health system.

The Fellows will also contribute to reporting on critical implementation science enablers and barriers for consideration across the WA public health system, promote implementation science knowledge and develop implementation pathways.

One Fellowship will be available for each stream, each to the value of \$200,000 per annum for three years, which may be used for salary and research costs.

¹ <https://wiki.jbi.global/display/JHEI/The+emerging+field+of+implementation+science>

The Fellowship funding must be matched by the administering institution with a 'support package' to at least the same value.

Recruitment of the Fellow will be undertaken by the administering institution with active involvement of RIO.

3. Eligibility

- a. Applications can be made by a WA administering institution that is a WA university or WA research institution with an ABN.
- b. Applications must describe a recruitment strategy, support package and career development plan for the Fellow.
- c. The support package for the Fellow must be at least equal to the value of the Fellowship grant and include at least one linked PhD scholarship and a cash contribution.
- d. Applications must include a proposal for a Research Program relevant to Aboriginal or country/regional WA health issues.
- e. To ensure relevance to the WA public health system, a HSP must be involved in the application, contribute to the preparation and scope of work for the Research Program and commit to working with the Fellow in facilitating the objectives of the Research Program. The Country and Regional WA Implementation Science Fellow must form at least one partnership with WACHS.

4. Conditions of Fellowship

- a. The Fellow must be employed by the administering institution and undertake the Fellowship at 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) for the duration of the Fellowship.
- b. The Country and Regional WA Implementation Science Fellow is expected to be based at a country or regional location for at least part of the Fellowship term, with the duration and location to be negotiated with the relevant HSP.
- c. RIO shall be notified immediately if there are changes that affect Fellowship eligibility, Fellowship administration or Fellowship research activity. This includes changes to the Fellowship recipient FTE, the recipient leaving the administering institution or inability to undertake the described research activities.

5. Role and Contribution of the Fellow and Supporting Team

Applications must address the role and contribution of the Fellow with regards to the proposed Research Program and in supporting implementation science across the WA public health system.

Applications should also address the capacity and suitability of the supporting team in supporting Fellows in meeting the Fellowship deliverables.

Deliverables of the Fellowship include:

- a. Design and undertake one or more implementation science research projects based on the higher-level Research Program proposed by the administering institution in the application.

- b. Identify and produce a report on the barriers and enablers of implementation in the Research Program area and more broadly in the HSP partner's business.
- c. Develop and test practical solutions to the identified implementation barriers in the context of Aboriginal health or country/regional health environment.
- d. Determine the best way of introducing these practical solutions into the WA public health system and contribute to their implementation, evaluation and modification as required.
- e. Work with the other Implementation Science Fellow and Translation Fellows (appointed through a parallel FHRI Fund funding program) to inform system-wide opportunities to enhance research translation and implementation. This work will be captured in a report to the FHRI Fund Advisory Council, co-authored by FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellows and Translation Fellows.
- f. Deliver presentations and support training of others regarding implementation science.
- g. Promote implementation of existing evidence by working with researchers who have previously demonstrated beneficial and translatable findings but who were unable to achieve significant implementation.
- h. Establish protocols or processes for decision making related to implementation and support work to inform the embedding of an implementation science approach as a core part of the WA public health system's problem-solving processes.

6. Consumer Involvement

In line with the NHMRC's definition, consumers are people who have lived experience of a health issue. They include patients, their friends, families, carers and members of the general public. Consumers can also be people who represent the views and interests of a consumer organisation, a community or a wider constituency.

There is increasing recognition of the benefits of involving consumers in the research process. Effective consumer involvement can ensure research is relevant to the WA community and improves the uptake of findings.

Applicants should engage with health consumers during both the development of the Research Program proposal and for the ongoing project(s) by including them in the research team where appropriate and providing a detailed description of their role and contribution.

Consumer involvement should incorporate:

- Clearly defined relationships with health consumers or community groups who have 'lived experience' of the research project issue being investigated.
- Demonstrated understanding of the benefits derived from involving people with a lived experience in research.
- Inclusion of consumers in the research team where appropriate.
- Plans to involve consumers in the project throughout the research timeline.
- Budget strategy with funds allocated to support, implement and acknowledge consumer involvement (e.g. stakeholder training opportunities, honoraria and payments, additional time to support involvement activities, administration support and consultations and events associated with involvement activities).

Guidance on consumer involvement can be found at the [Consumer and Community Involvement Program](#) website and the [NHMRC's Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research 2016](#).

7. Health Service Provider Partnerships

Effective implementation science involves collaborative research and, therefore, the skills needed to build and maintain policy and practice partnerships are a critical consideration.

For the purposes of the Fellowship, a HSP partner must be involved in the application and commit to working with the Fellow in supporting the implementation science research in the proposed Research Program area and more broadly in the HSP partner's business.

HSP partners include the Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS), East Metropolitan Health Service (EMHS), North Metropolitan Health Service (NMHS), South Metropolitan Health Service (SMHS), WA Country Health Service (WACHS) and PathWest. Health entities which are contracted to provide health services to the State are also eligible, for example, Joondalup Health Campus and St John of God Midland Public Hospital.

There is no limit on the number of HSP partnerships that can be involved in supporting the Fellowship.

8. Support Package for the Fellow

Applications must describe a suitable support package for the Fellow, which must be at least equal to the value of the FHRI Fund's contribution and will include at least one linked PhD scholarship and a cash contribution. The support package may include:

- Additional cash contribution (mandatory)
- In-kind support
- Linked PhD scholarships (at least one mandatory)
- Supporting team
- Other enabling resources.

This information should form part of the Budget (Section 11) of the Application Form.

Funding received through other FHRI Fund and the Department of Health funding programs cannot be included as a cash contribution in the support package.

9. Recruitment Strategy for the Fellow

Recruitment of a suitable Fellow must be completed within three months of award. Any variation to this condition would require approval based on exceptional circumstances.

Applications must include a recruitment strategy for the Fellow, which demonstrates a clear plan that explains the role of the Fellow being recruited, who will conduct the recruitment process and how the Fellow will be selected.

Elements of the recruitment strategy that should be described include, but are not exclusive to, the following:

- Timeline of the recruitment stages
- Sourcing and attracting the ideal candidate
- Selecting and screening candidates
- In the event the successful candidate will relocate to WA from interstate or overseas, the plans and processes to be used to ensure this can occur within current and potential future COVID-19-related restrictions.

10. Research Career Development Plan for the Fellow

Applications must describe the strategy to develop the Fellow's research career.

This may include role modelling, career path guidance, training, policy/practice placements, and planning to achieve desirable career milestones and sustained grant income.

Applications should address how the Fellow will achieve an independent and self-sustaining career once the funding support ceases.

11. Funding

This Fellowship program is funded by the [Future Health Research and Innovation \(FHRI\) Fund](#).

Fellowship funding to the value of \$200,000 per annum for three years will be made available to the successful administering institution, which may be used for Fellowship salary and research project costs.

Fellowship salary will be paid to the Fellow by the administering institution in accordance with their employment conditions. Salary funding can be used for annual leave and long service leave entitlements that accrue during the Fellowship term. However, severance and termination payments and extended leave payments (leave entitlements accrued in non-Fellowship roles) are not supported and must not be paid for with Fellowship funding.

Research project costs may include funding for additional personnel working on the research project, minor equipment, consumables, and other expenses directly related to the research project. The support package described in the application must be sufficient to support additional research project costs, not included in the Fellowship award.

Relevant external funding information should be included in the Budget (Section 11) of the Application Form.

Funding is offered subject to budget availability, which could be varied in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Budget Information

Applicants should calculate budgets accurately, as requests for additional funding will not be considered. Budget requests should be adequately described and justified.

The budget information should include an outline of the support package for the Fellow, which must be at least equal to the value of the FHRI Fund's contribution.

It is intended that funds will be spent in WA only. An exception to this may be considered in the case where specific expertise or equipment is required and is not available in WA. When this situation occurs, adequate justification must be provided.

Funding is only made available for the scope of work described in the application (or with any modifications requested by RIO). The Department of Health is not obliged to underwrite any recurrent or capital costs beyond the funding awarded through this program.

Payment Schedule

Grants will be released in three instalments:

- The first instalment will be subject to full execution of a Grant Funding Agreement between the administering institution and the Department of Health.
- The second and third (final) instalments will be paid annually, subject to satisfactory progress being achieved against research project milestones, demonstrated in progress reports.

Partial Payment or Suspension of Funds

RIO reserves the right to:

- pay instalments in parts based on milestone achievement to date and risk assessment of future milestones
- suspend payment of instalments or part-instalments where project feasibility has become uncertain.

Termination of Funds

Funds shall revert to, or be recoverable by, the Department of Health in instances where:

- the project is terminated by RIO as a result of insufficient progress being made at the time of the annual progress report or any interim progress report
- funds are not fully spent at the conclusion of the Fellowship, unless an extension has been agreed to by RIO
- funds are used for purposes other than those for which they were awarded
- the Fellow is successful in obtaining funding for the project or their salary from another source
- the Fellow leaves the administering institution and RIO determines that it is not feasible for the objectives of the grant to be fulfilled, including recruiting a replacement Fellow and completion of the Fellowship activities, within the remaining term of the grant.

12. Selection Process

Funding will be awarded on merit, based on a process of assessment and selection. The assessment process shall be conducted by an independent Review Panel comprising of experienced researchers, experts and consumer representatives.

Conflicts of interest that may arise will be treated in accordance with the WA Health [Managing Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines](#).

RIO reserves the right to:

- request further information from applicants in the event that the reviewers assess an application to be of particular benefit to the WA community but require further clarification before a final decision is made
- request modifications to Research Program proposals.

Applications must meet defined eligibility requirements and will be assessed based on the criteria and weightings set out in the table below:

Assessment Criteria	%
Research Program Proposal Significance of the Research Program proposal to the WA public health system in the areas of Aboriginal or country/regional WA health, and the Program's feasibility and potential for translation.	25
Role and contribution of the Fellow and Supporting Team Relevance and significance of the role and contribution of the Fellow and other investigators to the Research Program and supporting implementation science across the WA public health system.	20
Consumer Involvement Evidence of the involvement of a consumer/s in the development of the Research Program proposal and the plan for ongoing involvement during the project(s).	10
Health Service Provider Partnership/s Evidence of the Health Service Provider partner's plan and commitment to integrating the work and outputs of the Fellow into practice.	10
Support Package for the Fellow Feasibility and attractiveness of the support package for the Fellow.	25
Recruitment Strategy for the Fellow Appropriate recruitment strategy to select a suitable Fellow.	10

13. Approvals and Agreements

Research Governance

It is the responsibility of the administering institution to obtain all relevant research governance approvals prior to commencement of the associated research project(s).

Research Governance approvals can include:

- a. Ethics approvals, from relevant Ethics Committees (human and/or animal).
- b. Research governance authorisation (also known as site specific authorisation) from each relevant institution/site conducting the project or providing access to data, participants or tissue samples.

For information on ethics and governance submission requirements please refer to the following websites:

- <https://rgs.health.wa.gov.au/Pages/Research-Ethics.aspx>.
- <https://rgs.health.wa.gov.au/Pages/Research-Governance.aspx>.
- <https://rgs.health.wa.gov.au/Pages/Multi-centre-Research.aspx>.

Data Linkage

A Research Program proposal that includes a request for linked data from the [Department of Health](#) requires the team to demonstrate feasibility to obtain, and adequate expertise to analyse, the requested data.

Where linked data are required, the [Research Data Services \(RDS\) Team](#) should be contacted for assistance with the Application for Data process. The RDS Team should provide both i) a cost estimate; and ii) an estimate of time required to obtain the data. All requests should state that the data request is associated with the *FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellowships 2021* program, which requires the research to be completed within a specific period.

The preliminary cost estimate should be included in the proposed Budget (Section 11) and the time-estimate built into the Research Program proposal (Section 4) in the Application Form.

Following confirmation of funding support, the application for data process as outlined on the [Data Linkage WA](#) website should be followed.

Intellectual Property

The ownership of Intellectual Property (IP) produced by the Fellow in the course of the Fellowship shall vest with the administering institution, with an appropriate IP access agreement for other team members' organisations.

It is the administering institution's responsibility to ensure that appropriate agreements are in place with any partner organisations.

When a research team involves more than one institution and includes a member from the WA public health system, then the IP agreement must be authorised by the relevant WA public health system entity and the administering institution.

14. Reporting

The administering institution will be responsible for coordinating the Fellowship activities and meeting reporting requirements over the duration of the Fellowship and at its conclusion.

Research projects must be concluded within the allocated period which includes obtaining ethics and governance approvals, employment of research staff, data collection and analysis and submission of reports.

A member of RIO will be assigned to each Fellowship (RIO liaison officer) and will liaise with the relevant delegate of the administering institution to assist with grant payments, reporting and other operational issues as they arise. RIO liaison officers will provide the relevant reporting templates as required.

Fellowship Deliverables Plan

Within six weeks of appointment, the Fellow will submit to RIO a Fellowship Deliverables Plan, addressing the deliverables described in Section 5 of these Guidelines and Conditions. Detailed research project plans will be included in the Fellowship Deliverables Plan. All co-investigators and HSP partners on the application must endorse the Fellowship Deliverables Plan. RIO reserves the right to require the Fellowship Deliverables Plan to be revised and resubmitted. Failure to provide a Fellowship Deliverables Plan to the satisfaction of RIO may result in suspension or withdrawal of funding for a Fellowship.

Progress Reports

An annual Progress Report outlining the progress against the milestones listed in the Research Program proposal is required at the 12- and 24-month points of the grant. Interim progress reports may be requested at any point throughout the Fellowship period.

Final Report and Community Stakeholder Brief

A final report detailing the Fellowship and project outcomes, including a report on the barriers and enablers of implementation in the Research Program area and more broadly in the HSP partner's business, is to be submitted to RIO at the end of the Fellowship term.

Failure to submit the final report at this time may render the Fellow ineligible for further funding from the FHRI Fund and RIO until the report is received.

In addition, in order to provide feedback to stakeholders, a one-page *Community Stakeholder Brief* which includes an outline of the research project(s), outcomes, and next steps is to be provided to all participating consumer groups (including Aboriginal communities) and a copy submitted to RIO.

FHRI Fund Advisory Council Report

The Fellow will work with the other FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellow and Research Translation Fellows to inform system-wide opportunities to enhance research translation and implementation. This work will be captured in a report to the FHRI Fund Advisory Council, co-authored by FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellows and Translation Fellows.

Financial Acquittal Statement

An acquittal statement outlining the expenditure of funds must be submitted to RIO at the conclusion of the Fellowship. Acquittal statements must be certified by an authorised finance officer at the administering institution.

15. Acknowledgements

The Minister for Health and/or Department of Health will publicly announce the recipients of the *FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellowships 2021*. As such, all other parties must withhold announcement/media coverage promoting their association with the selected projects until after RIO advises that the announcement of recipients has occurred.

Full acknowledgement of FHRI Fund support must be made as opportunities arise in publications, conference presentations, public discussion, press statements etc.

Suggested citation: “*this project was/is co-funded by the Future Health Research and Innovation Fund through the Implementation Science Fellowships 2021 program.*”

16. Complaints

Applicants who feel that their interests have been adversely affected by a decision made by the Review Panel and/or RIO may lodge a complaint. Complaints can only be considered when they refer to the administrative process and not to the actual outcome of a particular decision. Complaints must be submitted in writing to:

Executive Director, Clinical Leadership and Reform
Clinical Excellence Division, Department of Health
PO Box 8172
Perth Business Centre WA 6849

17. Confidentiality

Plain language summaries and researcher statements provided on applications or reports may be used for publicity purposes as stated on the relevant templates.

All other information provided in applications and reports will be maintained confidentially by RIO and the Review Panel. If requests are received by RIO to make public any aspect of the Fellowships, the authorisation of the administering institution will be sought.

Applicants are advised that the Department of Health is subject to the *Western Australian Freedom of Information Act 1992*. This provides a general right of access to records held by State Government agencies. In addition, information pertaining to the receipt of State Government financial assistance is tabled in the Parliament of Western Australia.

18. Publications

Researchers are requested to forward copies of publications resulting from the Fellowship to RIO. In order to maximise knowledge exchange, researchers are asked to comply with the NHMRC’s ‘Publication and dissemination of research: a guide supporting the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research’, which can be downloaded from the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research page](#).

19. Evaluation

RIO will undertake an evaluation of the *FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellowships 2021* program and Fellows, co-investigators, consumers, administering institutions and HSPs will need to participate in this.

The evaluation will focus on matters such as the extent of implementation of the research findings into practice and health policy, product development, commercialisation, contribution to capacity building, knowledge transfer, publications and further research funding/grants received as a result of activity funded by the *FHRI Fund Implementation Science Fellowships 2021* program.



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