

Clinician Research Fellowships 2024

Guidelines

The Clinician Research Fellowships (the Fellowships) program allows Metro North Health (Metro North) to attract and retain our brightest and promising clinicians and support their continuing professional development to create a strong foundation of evidence-based health care through research. Clinician researchers are well placed to identify issues and research opportunities of great relevance and need to our patients and their health care delivery and facilitate high quality research that will ultimately provide better healthcare outcomes for patients and the community.





The Fellowships aim to provide health professionals with the opportunity to pursue research without having to fully relinquish their clinical career in favour of a full-time research fellowship. The Metro North Office of Research will award up to 5 Early or Mid-Career Fellowships (equivalent to 0.4 FTE clinical backfill for three years) annually to support clinician researchers to concurrently undertake clinical and research career pathways.

Background

Metro North is investing in our current workforce to develop their capabilities to progress, learn, discover, teach, and translate new findings by embedding common components of successful international training and career pathway models for clinician researchers. As a health service, we must provide opportunities for clinicians to develop and consolidate their research skills at any stage in their career. This requires collaboration across the health and academic sector to strive for consistency and equity of opportunity for our clinician researchers.

Under the Metro North Research Strategy¹, we will look to work with the professional disciplines, facilities and directorates, Queensland Health, our academic partners, Foundations and professional colleges/training organisations to create an integrated research career support pathway that covers the pre-RHD, PhD, emerging, early and mid-career research stages, recognising the valuable contribution of research to our health service.

One of the ways in which Metro North Health will achieve this is by pioneering the Queensland Training for Research Active Clinicians (QTRAC) pathway.

PROFESSIONAL STREAM	CAREER STAGE					
	NOVICE	RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREE	EMERGING	EARLY CAREER	MID CAREER	ESTABLISHED
 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researchers						
 Allied Health	Pre-RHD Scholarships	RHD Scholarships	Emerging Researcher Fellowships Up to 2 years post-RHD*	Early Career Fellowships Up to 5 years post-RHD*	Clinician Researcher Fellowships Up to 10 years post-RHD*	Conjoint Researcher Appointments Greater than 10 years post-RHD*
 Medical						
 Nursing and Midwifery						
SUPPORTING BODIES QUEENSLAND HEALTH PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS ACADEMIC PARTNERS PROFESSIONAL BODIES						

*or equivalent track record

This will open up and maintain a diversity of career pathways traversing university and health settings and increase the strategic engagement and alignment between universities and Metro North.

¹ [Metro North Health Research Strategy 2023-2027](#)

Program Objectives

Metro North Health is committed to setting a forward-looking research agenda which embraces novel approaches to diagnostics and therapeutics, and systematically evaluates our clinical practice and the implementation of new knowledge to deliver world class health care. The Metro North Research Strategy outlines our approach to lead excellence in patient centred research and engage our people with a research-active culture to develop, attract and retain high calibre research expertise. The Metro North Office of Research provide the *Clinician Research Fellowships* to enable our brightest clinicians to develop a program of research aligned to the Metro North Research Strategy, designed to concurrently advance their research and clinical practice careers.

The key objectives of the Clinician Research Fellowships program are to:

- support excellent basic and applied research by promising early career clinician researchers who are embedded within the Hospital and Health Service; and
- promote enhanced opportunities for diverse career pathways by attracting and retaining our brightest and promising clinician researchers; and
- expand clinician-research capacity in a supportive and appropriately supervised research enabling hospital and health service environment; and
- enable capacity building and clinician-researcher mentoring, leadership and supervision capabilities.

Applications are invited from clinicians across all healthcare disciplines, including allied health services, health sciences, dental, medical, and nursing and midwifery health care professionals.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant	Refers to the individual who is submitting the application.
Clinician	A health professional with a recognised tertiary degree, with eligibility for full registration with either the Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA), or membership or registration with a relevant professional body. This includes medical practitioners, nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives, allied health professionals, and clinical scientists. Refer to Metro North Nursing & Midwifery, Medical Services, or Allied Health for full details of all eligible professions.
Clinician duties	Refers to those duties undertaken by the applicant in the course of their employment as a clinician. These duties may be directly related to patient care or may include non-clinical duties such as administrative or management specialisation, as distinguished from research or academic activities.
Clinician Researcher	A clinician with a research higher degree (RHD) OR who has a demonstrated research track record.
Fellow	For the purposes of this document, Fellow will refer to a successful Fellowship applicant.
Supervisor	Refers to an individual nominated to supervise the Fellow whilst undertaking their clinician researcher duties. The supervisor must be appropriately qualified, with professional (clinical) and/or academic supervisory experience. Up to two supervisors may be nominated on the application.
Research Higher Degree (RHD)	A postgraduate research higher degree (RHD) completed at a University or recognised training institution. For the purposes of the Fellowships program, the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) is used, and will include: Level 10 – Doctoral Degree (PhD); Level 10 – Doctoral Degree (MD); Level 9 – Masters Degree (Research).

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible for a Clinician Research Fellowship, applicants must:

- for the duration of the Fellowship be employed with Metro North, appointed to a minimum of 0.2FTE *clinician* duties, as per the definition above;
- - have an award of a Research Higher Degree date within 10 years of 1 July 2024; **or**
- where an applicant does not hold a Research Higher Degree, they must have a research track record equivalent to less than ten years post-Research Higher Degree;

Note: consideration/ adjustment will be given for relevant career disruption due to pregnancy, major illness or carer responsibilities (according to NHMRC guidelines)

- nominate at least one appropriately qualified supervisor;
- provide a proposal to develop and undertake a body of research aligned with the Metro North Research Strategy 2023-2027 to be undertaken at, or significantly associated with, Metro North Health facilities and/or directly involve Metro North Health patients and community;
- where an applicant is an existing Metro North employee, the applicant must include a signed Letter of Support from the relevant Head of Department with a commitment to support reduction of clinician duties by July 2024 (where required) and endorsement of the application;
- where the applicant is not currently a Metro North employee, the applicant will be required to demonstrate appropriate considerations for a future appointment as a *clinician* with Metro North Health;
- submit the application using the requisite online application form by the advertised closing date;
- upload all requisite documents according to content and formatting requirements;
- ensure that all requisite signatures are obtained.

Where an application does not meet **ALL** of the eligibility criteria outlined above, applications will be deemed ineligible and will NOT be considered by the Review Panel.

Terms of Funding

- Up to five part-time (0.4 FTE) 3-year Clinician Research Fellowship grants will be awarded.
- Fellows will be concurrently appointed to a temporary part-time position at the level of their substantive clinician appointment with the Metro North Office of Research.
- Fellows must be employed with Metro North Health and undertaking clinician duties (minimum 0.2 FTE) for the duration of the Fellowship. The total Metro North appointment may not exceed 1.0 FTE.

Note: the total concurrent employment arrangement with Metro North Health does not have to equate to 1.0 FTE.

- Fellows will receive a Letter of Offer and must return a signed copy of the Acceptance of Offer, outlining the Terms and Conditions of award, including compliance with all relevant policies, procedures, legislation and regulatory frameworks relating to the conduct and management of research.
- Fellows must take up the appointment in July 2024, except where the Metro North Office of Research has granted special permission to do otherwise.
- It is the Fellow's responsibility to ensure full ethical approval (HREC approval) and site authorisation (SSA approval) is received for all research undertaken during the Fellowship.

- The Fellow will be responsible for demonstrating adherence to the research strategy and plan outlined in the approved application, and continuation of Fellowship funding is contingent upon successful progress toward completion of these activities and submission of an Annual Progress Report.
- Where the application includes a proposed collaboration with an Academic partner, the applicant must also demonstrate agreement from the Academic partner to meet the minimum expectations in Fellowship support, including in-kind provision of FTE and infrastructure support.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed by a Clinician Research Fellowships Panel (the Panel) using the below criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Research program proposal - quality, feasibility, potential significance/impact and patient-centred research	25%
Research capacity building, synergy with health service duties, appropriate consumer engagement	25%
Research environment - including health service and academic supervision/mentorship	20%
Track record (relative to opportunity) in research and clinician duties	30%

Significant emphasis shall be placed on the applicant's track record and associated productivity relative to their stage of career.

Metro North Research is committed to creating pathways for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to develop their research skills and capacity. Weighted consideration will be given to applicants that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Metro North Health recognises the diversity of the communities that they serve. The Panel will include this consideration when ranking applications.

Interviews

Following assessment by the Panel, up to eight applicants will be invited to interview.

DATE 22 April 2024

DURATION: 30 minutes (must arrive 15 minutes prior to prepare)

LOCATION: Metro North, Block 7, Herston Campus

Invitation

- Invitations will be received by phone and email not less than one week prior to the scheduled interview.
- Applicants that are existing Metro North employees are requested to invite their Head of Department, Clinical Supervisor or Executive delegate to attend.

Acceptance

- Timeslots will be allocated and applicants are expected to be available at the requested time.
- Acceptance must be confirmed by return email. A request for a change in time only may be made. Requests are not guaranteed and will only be made subject to panel availability.
- Should an applicant decline or be unavailable to interview, they will not be eligible for the current round and the next-highest ranked applicant may be invited to interview.

The Interview

- Attendance is required in-person. Under exceptional and extenuating circumstances only, provisions for tele/videoconference may be made. Please note, this does not include work roster conflicts or inability to travel between Metro North campuses. It is the applicants' responsibility to arrange and successfully trial tele/videoconference arrangements prior to the interview, or else the interview will not proceed.

Assessment

- Applicants will be asked questions relevant to their application, selected by the Panel.
- The Head of Department, Supervisor or Executive delegate attending the interview will be asked to speak to the level of potential impact, project feasibility and support of the applicant.

Outcomes & Award

- The Panel will determine a recommendation of up to five (5) applicants following the interview.
- Once the recommendations have been endorsed by the Executive Director Research, the candidates will receive a tentative offer and will be requested to undertake formal negotiations with their proposed academic partner and confirm arrangements with their Head of Department and Facility Executive.

Online Application Form

It is essential that ALL applicants read the [Metro North Research Grants Policy](#) prior to applying.

How to Apply

Visit the Metro North Clinician Research Fellowship website <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research/grants/crf>

SmartyGrants Help Guides

Help Guide for Applicants: <http://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

Applicant FAQ's: <http://applicanthehelp.smartygrants.com.au/applicant-faq%27s/>

Notes on application form

- The research plan must clearly outline the research activities you propose to undertake during the three-year Fellowship and should be clearly linked to the milestones and timelines in the following section.
- You are required to nominate at least one appropriately qualified primary supervisor who will provide academic and/or clinical mentorship for the duration of the Fellowship. The Primary Supervisor is to outline their role and contribution to the Fellowship, provide a Resume/CV, and will certify and sign a copy of the application.
- You may nominate a second appropriately qualified supervisor who will provide academic and/or clinical mentorship for the duration of the Fellowship. The Secondary Supervisor is to outline their role and contribution to the Fellowship, provide a Resume/CV, and will certify and sign a copy of the application.
- You are required to provide a signed letter of support from your relevant Head of Department. The letter of support must, at a minimum, outline the commitment to support your reduction in clinician duties, and how you will be supported to maintain at least the minimum (0.2 FTE) clinician duties and integrate your research with clinical care. It must outline what supports will be available to you and provide an indication of the department and facility level support for this Fellowship application.
- You may upload an alternative letter of support. This may be from within Metro North or it may be from an academic or industry partner. In all cases it must be pertinent and relevant to your Fellowship application.

It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure enough time is allowed for obtaining signatures taking into consideration public holidays and planned leave for delegates (i.e. allow enough time for the delegate to receive, review, sign and return the application to you using their usual administrative methods).

Late applications will not be accepted, including those awaiting certification/signatures.