

Clinician Research Fellowships 2026

Guidelines

Overview

The Clinician Research Fellowships (the Fellowships) program allows Metro North Health (Metro North) to attract and retain our brightest and most 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 to our patients 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 Fellowships (equivalent to 0.4 FTE clinical backfill for three years) to support clinician researchers to concurrently undertake clinical and research career pathways.

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 Strategy¹ outlines our approach to developing integrated research career pathways which will allow us to retain, train and attract a world class research active workforce. The Clinician Research Fellowships are offered to enable our brightest clinicians to develop a program of research aligned to the Metro North Research Strategy, which will concurrently advance their research and clinical practice careers.

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

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

- Support excellent basic and applied research by clinician researchers who are embedded within Metro North Health.
- Promote enhanced opportunities for diverse career pathways by attracting and retaining our most promising clinician researchers.
- Expand clinician-research capacity in a supportive and appropriately supervised, research-enabling environment.
- Enable capacity building and clinician-researcher mentoring, leadership and supervision capabilities.
- Support the career development of clinician researchers towards securing competitive research funding from national agencies and other funding sources.

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

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 0.2 FTE clinician duties, as per the definition above.
- - Have an award of a Research Higher Degree (RHD) date within 10 years of 1 July 2026; **or**
- Demonstrate a research track record equivalent to less than ten years post-RHD.
Consideration/adjustment will be given for relevant career disruption (e.g. pregnancy, major illness, carer responsibilities etc. according to NHMRC guidelines). Clinician Research Fellowships are not to be used as a PhD Scholarship.
- Nominate at least one appropriately qualified supervisor/mentor.
Include a signed letter of support from the mentor outlining a proposal for mentorship to support the Fellow to achieve their research career development plan. This should include activities to enhance research planning skills, navigating research pathways, grant writing, and funding applications during the Fellowship period.
- 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.
The research proposal should outline:
 - the research activities to be undertaken during the three-year Fellowship (linked to milestones and timelines)
 - an intention to consolidate leadership in research and translational impact (e.g. advancing knowledge, publications, informing evidence-based decision-making; supporting knowledge/research translation, research capacity building of junior researchers and supporting a research active culture).
 - a strategy to develop competitive Tier 1 research funding applications beyond the 3-year fellowship.
- - where an applicant is an existing Metro North employee:
include a signed letter of support from the relevant Head of Department with a commitment to support reduction of clinician duties by July 2026 (where required) and endorsement of the application.
- where the applicant is not currently a Metro North employee:
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.
- Have met research reporting requirements and demonstrated successful execution of any projects previously supported by Metro North Health grant funds.

Where an application does not meet all of the eligibility criteria outlined above, applications will be deemed ineligible and will not proceed to consideration 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.
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 incorporating the Terms and Conditions of award and must return a signed copy of the Acceptance of Offer.
- Fellows must take up the appointment in July 2026, 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. Continuation of Fellowship funding is contingent upon successful progress toward completion of these activities and annual submission of a Progress Report.

Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed by a Review Panel using the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Research program proposal - quality, feasibility, potential significance/impact	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%

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 Review Panel, up to eight applicants will be invited to interview at the Herston Campus.

- Invitations will be received by phone and email not less than one week prior to the scheduled interview.
- 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.
- Attendance is required in-person.
- Under extenuating circumstances, provisions for tele/videoconference may be made. Please note, this does not include work roster conflicts or inability to travel between Metro North campuses.
- Applicants that are existing Metro North employees are requested to invite their Head of Department, Clinical Supervisor or Executive delegate to attend.
- The Head of Department, Clinical 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.
- Successful 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.

How to Apply

Visit the Clinician Research Fellowship website: <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/research/grants/crf> and complete the online application form via the SmartyGrants platform.

Enquiries

All enquiries regarding the Clinician Research Fellowships should be directed to the Research Grants Officer at MetroNorthResearch-Grants@health.qld.gov.au or on (07) 3647 9635.

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.
- You are required to nominate at least one appropriately qualified Primary Supervisor/Mentor who will provide academic and/or clinical mentorship for the duration of the Fellowship. The Primary Supervisor/Mentor must outline their role and contribution to the Fellowship, provide a resumé, a signed letter of support and sign the certification page. The letter of support should outline how they intend to support your development as a clinician researcher, and your program of research.
- You may nominate a second appropriately qualified supervisor/mentor (recommended) who will also provide academic and/or clinical mentorship for the duration of the Fellowship. The Secondary Supervisor/Mentor must outline their role and contribution to the Fellowship, provide a resumé, and sign the certification page.
- 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.
- An Executive Director is required to certify the application. In most instances, this will be the Executive Director of your primary facility, e.g. ED RBWH, ED Redcliffe Hospital etc. If you are unsure of who needs to sign this section and require further guidance, please contact the Research Grants Officer (contact details above).
- You may upload an alternative letter of support. This may be from within Metro North Health 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.

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/Mentor	Refers to an individual nominated to supervise the Fellow whilst undertaking their clinician researcher duties. The supervisor/mentor must be appropriately qualified, with professional (clinical) and/or academic supervisory experience.
Research Higher Degree (RHD)	A postgraduate research higher degree 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).