

**Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and the Digital Economy;
Medical Research; Volunteering;
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council**

Our ref: 62-33446

Mr John Van Der Wielen
Chairperson
Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Advisory Council

FHRI.Fund@health.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Van Der Wielen ^{John}

FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND RECOMMENDATION

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2023 in which you recommend two new Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund Programs, an updated existing FHRI Fund Program and a new FHRI Fund and Brightspark Foundation Co-funded Partnership program.

I note that your recommendation is in response to the direction I provided in a letter of 20 April 2022, pursuant to section 4D of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012* (the Act).

I hereby approve the FHRI Fund Advisory Council's recommendation, as set out in your letter mentioned above.

For your information, I will cause your recommendation to be laid before each House of Parliament, as provided in sections 4D(3)(b) and 10A(4)(a)(iv) respectively of the Act.

I thank the Advisory Council for its ongoing efforts to progress the FHRI Fund objectives for the benefit of the WA community.

Yours sincerely

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

BRIEFING NOTE

ISSUE

Approval of Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund Programs and Initiatives (P&Is) recommended to the Minister for Medical Research (the Minister) by the FHRI Fund Advisory Council (the Advisory Council).

KEY MESSAGES

- In a letter of 15 May 2023 (Attachment 1), the Advisory Council Chair presents to the Minister a recommendation by the Advisory Council regarding two new P&Is, an updated existing P&I, a new FHRI Fund and Brightspark Foundation Co-Funded Partnership program and a list of P&Is that have been approved previously for which expenditure of FHRI Account moneys is planned in 2023-24 (Attachment 1a).
- It is recommended that the Minister signs the attached letter to the Advisory Council Chair (Attachment 2), providing approval of the Advisory Council's recommended P&Is (Attachment 1a) and causes Attachments 1a, 2 and 3 (the Minister's direction to the Advisory Council to make recommendations regarding P&Is) to be tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

BACKGROUND

- In a letter of 20 April 2022 (Attachment 3), the Minister directed the Advisory Council, in accordance with section 4D of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012* (the Act), to make recommendations regarding how money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should be applied under section 4C.
- The Minister must consider the Advisory Council's recommendation before making or approving arrangements under section 4C(1) of the Act, or applying FHRI Account moneys under section 4C. P&Is are equivalent to the arrangements referred to in section 4D of the Act. The Act provides that the Minister's direction and the corresponding recommendation by the Advisory Council must be laid before each House of Parliament within 14 days of the Minister having received the recommendation (sections 4D(3)(a) and (b) respectively).
- In accordance with the FHRI Fund Governance Framework, P&Is must contribute to achieving one or more Priority Goal of the FHRI Fund.
- After Ministerial approval, Instruments of Delegation enable Department of Health (DoH) officers to implement and manage P&Is.
- The DoH Annual Report fulfills the statutory reporting requirements for the FHRI Fund. The FHRI Fund Annual Report is released after the DoH Annual Report, with significantly more detail than is possible in the DoH Annual Report.

CURRENT SITUATION

- At a meeting of 9 May 2023, the Advisory Council considered two updated versions of existing P&Is, two new proposed P&Is and a new FHRI Fund and Brightspark Foundation Co-Funded Partnership program for implementation in the next financial year (2023-24).
- The Advisory Council resolved to recommend to the Minister one updated version of an existing P&I, two new P&Is and a new FHRI Fund and Brightspark Foundation Co-Funded Partnership program (see Attachment 1a).

- It is recommended that the Minister approves the P&Is recommended by the Advisory Council. A letter to that effect is provided at Attachment 2 for the Minister's consideration and signature.
- Under the requirements of the Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012, the Minister is required to cause a copy of the Minister's direction to the Advisory Council to make the recommendation (Attachment 3) and a copy of the recommendation regarding P&Is subsequently received (Attachment 1a) to be tabled in each House of Parliament, within 14 days after having received the recommendation. While the Act does not require the Minister to table in Parliament his response to the Advisory Council's recommendation, it is advised that this be done for transparency purposes at the same time as tabling the Minister's direction and Advisory Council's recommendation.
- Attachment 1 provides context regarding the Advisory Council's recommendations and is for the Minister's information only, not for tabling in Parliament.
- A draft Communique for the Advisory Council's 9 May 2023 meeting has been prepared but cannot be released until the Minister has approved the P&Is recommended in the present briefing, and subsequently approved by the FHRI Fund Advisory Council Chair (provided as Attachment 4, for the Minister's information).
- The Advisory Council's Charter requires the Chair to lead an annual evaluation of the Advisory Council's performance to determine whether it is functioning effectively. Findings of this evaluation were presented to members on 8 May 2023 and to the Minister on 9 May 2023. The findings are summarised in Attachment 5.

RECOMMENDATION/ACTION

Minister to:

- Approve the P&Is recommended by the Advisory Council (Attachment 1a) by signing the letter to the Chair of the Advisory Council (Attachment 2).
- Cause the Minister's direction to the Advisory Council of 20 April 2022 (Attachment 3), Attachments 1a and 2 to be sent to the Clerk of the House within 14 days of having received the recommendation (Attachment 1a).
- Approve publishing of Attachment 4 and Attachment 5 on the FHRI Fund website.

FOR DECISION

Ref 4-202356

Prepared by: Sharyn Rodger
A/Manager, Strategic Research Initiatives
Office of Medical Research and Innovation

Date: 17 May 2023

Sign off: Rob Anderson
A/DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL

Sign off: Angela Kelly
A/DIRECTOR GENERAL

Angela Kelly
23/05/23

Approved



Not Approved

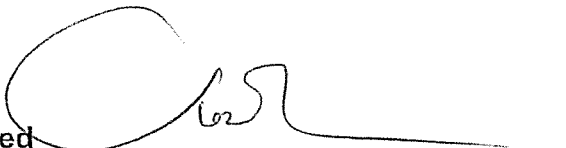


Noted



Comments:

Signed



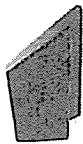
MINISTER FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

Date

31/5/23

Att.

1. Letter - Chair of Advisory Council regarding FHRI Fund Programs and Initiatives
- 1a. Recommended FHRI Fund Programs and Initiatives
2. Draft reply to Advisory Council Chair approving recommended Programs and Initiatives
3. Minister's direction to FHRI Fund Advisory Council
4. FHRI Fund Communique 5 – 9 May 2023
5. DOH FHRI AC Review Public Communique



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Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Medical Research
12th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Minister

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Thank you for your letter, dated 20 April 2022, directing the Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund Advisory Council to provide recommendations to you on how money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should be applied during current and future financial years.

As set out in the FHRI Fund Governance Framework, Programs and Initiatives provide the mechanism through which FHRI Account moneys are applied. The Advisory Council notes that in accordance with the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012* and the FHRI Fund Governance Framework, Priorities and Programs and Initiatives are subject to the Minister's approval.

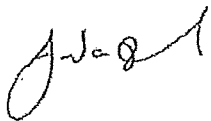
The Advisory Council met on 9 May 2023 and resolved to recommend two new FHRI Fund Programs, an updated existing FHRI Fund Program and a new *FHRI Fund & Brightspark Foundation Co-Funded Partnership Program* that have been developed by the Department of Health. Of these, synopses for the *Innovation Challenge – Sustainable Health Priorities* and the *WA Cohort Studies – Operational Infrastructure Support Program* have been updated to clarify features agreed on at the Advisory Council meeting.

The Advisory Council is satisfied that these Programs have been developed appropriately and align with FHRI Fund Priorities and the Strategy.

These new and updated Programs and Initiatives, and existing Programs and Initiatives with potential expenditure in 2023-24, are formally recommended in Attachment 1, for your approval.

Thank you for your support of the FHRI Fund and I look forward to receiving your decision regarding the Programs and Initiatives the Advisory Council has recommended.

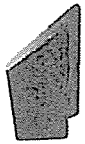
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Van Der Wielen', with a stylized, cursive script.

John Van Der Wielen
CHAIRPERSON
FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

15 May 2023

Att 1: FHRI Fund Recommended Programs and Initiatives



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ATTACHMENT 1

Dear Minister

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING APPLICATION OF FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACCOUNT MONEYS DURING (2023-24) AND FUTURE FINANCIAL YEARS

I, John Van Der Wielen, on behalf of the Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Advisory Council, of which I am the Chairperson, recommend that Future Health Research and Innovation Account moneys be applied to the Programs and Initiatives listed in this document in the (2023-24) and future financial years.

The following should be noted:

- The number of annual rounds has been indicated
- Expenditure associated with an annual round may extend over future financial years.

This recommendation is made in response to your direction, dated 20 April 2022, which is in accordance with section 4D of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012*.

Yours sincerely

John Van Der Wielen
CHAIRPERSON
FUTURE HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

15 May 2023

NEW and UPDATED 2023-24 Recommended Programs and Initiatives

Programs and Initiatives (description)	Priority Goal alignment	Annual rounds
<p>Co-Funding Partnerships Program (Co-FPP) – FHRI Fund & Brightspark Fellowship Program</p> <p><i>The Co-FPP provides a mechanism for organisations to form partnerships with the FHRI Fund to implement funding programs or initiatives that address shared goals.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed FHRI Fund & Brightspark co-funded fellowship program aims to retain and increase the number of PhD graduates in child health research in WA and build the capacity of WA child health researchers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish co-funding partnerships that will secure genuinely new non-government funding for research and innovation aligned with the Priorities for the FHRI Fund. Support the development of early-career researchers, helping them to achieve an independent and self-sustaining career. Target high-performing researchers in WA to maintain and/or advance the State's position as a leader in health and medical research. 	2023-24 2024-25 2025-26
<p>The Western Australian (WA) Cohort Studies: Research Project Support Program (WACS-RPSP)</p> <p><i>The purpose of the proposed WACS-RPSP is to leverage WA cohort studies to demonstrate their use and applicability and address unmet needs that complement the FHRI Fund Strategy and Focus Areas (i.e., Aboriginal health, rural and remote health; burden of diseases; living with COVID-19; long-COVID; and Mental Health).</i></p> <p><i>The WACS-RPSP will support high quality research projects utilising one of the three largest cohort studies in WA, that provide reliable evidence on the relation of important interventions, risk factors and other exposures to population health-related outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of early and mid-career researchers, helping them to achieve an independent and self-sustaining career. Enhance health and medical research literacy, skills, and experience of consumers so that they engage more in research. Enhance clinical trial capacity and expertise to improve the quality of clinical trials in WA and make the state more attractive to funders of clinical trials (grant funding and commercial sponsors). Target high-performing researchers in WA to maintain and/or advance the State's position as a leader in health and medical research. 	2023-24 2024-25 2025-26

Programs and Initiatives (description)	Priority Goal alignment	Annual rounds
<p>The current WA large cohort studies include the Busselton Health Study, ORIGINS Project, and Raine Study.</p> <p>The Western Australian (WA) Cohort Studies - Operational Infrastructure Support Program (WACS-OISP)</p> <p>The objective of the WACS-OISP is to provide a secure source of operational funding that is awarded based on demonstrable competitive excellence and use.</p> <p>Funding through the WACS-OISP will be used by eligible cohort studies to fund services and infrastructure that support activities which are not covered by research grants.</p> <p>For example, facilities, Information Technology (IT) services, core personnel salaries, infrastructure such as freezers, administrative services, sample storage and curation, and research management.</p> <p>Funding for future rounds of this program (2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27) will be subject to the outcome of an evaluation to determine if the WA Cohorts are fit for purpose and level of value they provide to the WA research sector, by a technical consultant external to WA and acceptable to the FHRJ Fund Advisory Council.</p> <p>*New rounds for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 will be subject to an evaluation of the value of the Cohort studies to the research sector and review of findings and endorsement by the FHRJ Fund Advisory Council members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of early and mid-career researchers, helping them to achieve an independent and self-sustaining career. Enhance health and medical research literacy, skills and experience of consumers so that they engage more in research. Enhance clinical trial capacity and expertise to improve the quality of clinical trials in WA and make the state more attractive to funders of clinical trials (grant funding and commercial sponsors). Target high-performing researchers in WA to maintain and/or advance the State's position as a leader in health and medical research. 	<p>2023-24</p> <p>2024-25*</p> <p>2025-26*</p> <p>2026-27*</p>

Programs and Initiatives (description)	Priority Goal alignment	Annual rounds
<p>Innovation Challenge Program – Sustainable Health Priorities</p> <p><i>The purpose of the proposed program is to fund innovative solutions that support the aims of the six focus areas of the Sustainable Health Review and two key areas within the SHR recommendations of genomics and mental health.</i></p> <p><i>The existing Innovation Challenge program model will be used to invite applications to address any one, or more of the eight priority areas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish innovation P&Is to support topical and/or early-stage ideas and enable opportunities for these innovators to secure follow-on funding from commercial/other funders. 	2023-24

Previously approved FHRI Fund programs and initiatives with potential expenditure in 2023-24

Programs and Initiatives
Clinician Research Fellowships
Clinician Researcher Training Program
Co-Funding Partnerships Program
Consumer and Community Involvement in Research Workforce Advancement
FHRI Focus Grants: COVID-19
FHRI Distinguished Fellows
FHRI Translation Fellows: Aboriginal health; Country and regional WA health; Mental health
Implementation Science Fellowships: Aboriginal health; and Country and regional WA health
Innovation Challenge – Mental Health
Innovation Fellowships
Innovation Seed Fund
Major Research Application Support Program
Research Translation Projects
WA Near-Miss Awards
Innovation Challenge 2023 - Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)
DISCOV3R Focus Grants
Capability Building Program - National Reconstruction Fund (Medical Manufacturing)
Grant Management System - implementation
State Health and Medical Research Strategy resources - implementation
Centre of Excellence – Aboriginal Health Research



Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and ICT; Medical Research; Volunteering;
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Our ref: 62-30443

Mr John Van Der Wielen
Chairperson
Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Advisory Council
C/- Research and Innovation Office
Department of Health
RIO.DOH@health.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Van Der Wielen *Jan*

I write to the Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund Advisory Council (Advisory Council) with regard to section 4D of the *Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Act 2012* (the Act), which states:

4D. Requirements to be met before FHRI Account applied

- (1) Before making or approving arrangements under section 4C(1) that will operate during a financial year, or applying during a financial year money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account under section 4C, the Minister for Health must —
 - (a) direct the advisory group to make a recommendation on how money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should be applied during the financial year under section 4C; and
 - (b) consider the advisory group's recommendation.
- (2) A direction under subsection (1)(a) may —
 - (a) include proposals for how money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account is to be applied during the financial year under section 4C; and
 - (b) require the advisory group's recommendation to state 1 of the following —
 - (i) that money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should be applied during the financial year in accordance with the proposals;
 - (ii) that money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should not be applied during the financial year in accordance with the proposals;
 - (iii) that money standing to the credit of the FHRI Account should be applied during the financial year in accordance with the proposals as the proposals are modified as specified in the recommendation.

Pursuant to section 4D(1) of the Act, I direct the Advisory Council to provide recommendations to me on how money standing to the credit of the Future Health Research and Innovation Account should be applied during current and future financial years.

Your recommendations will be provided to me when new or renewed Programs and/or Initiatives require my approval. This standing request may be retracted or amended and does not restrict the Minister for Medical Research's ability to request additional recommendations under 4D(1), which may include the conditions contemplated under 4D(2).

I look forward to receiving and considering the Advisory Council's recommendations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SD', with a large loop at the start and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

20 APR 2022



FHRI Fund Communique #5

9 May 2023 meeting

Welcome to the May 2023 Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund Communique. This month FHRI Fund Advisory Council (Advisory Council) events were held in parallel with the annual Science on the Swan (SoTS) Conference at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from 8-10 May 2023. It was a pleasure to welcome some of our Advisory Council members to Perth to attend these events in person.

Panel members enjoyed meeting with the Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Medical Research, attending an Advisory Council strategy session and meeting and participating on a SoTS Panel Session.

Performance review and strategy session

In February 2022, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) conducted a review of the Advisory Council. The Review outlined the performance and function of the Advisory Council and its members.

Review findings have been shared with the Advisory Council and recommendations for improvements will be incorporated into our planning over the next 12 months. The strategy session held on 7 May 2023 was informed by the review and members discussed and agreed on a number of strategic improvements.

It was agreed that in order to achieve the objects of the FHRI Fund Act, the Advisory Council should focus on building the health and medical research and innovation ecosystem and this requires improvements to the way WA researchers and innovators collaborate (local, national and international collaboration). The practical implications for future FHRI Fund programs and initiatives is a requirement that 50% of requested funding be spent in WA but flexibility in where the remaining 50% is spent (either locally, nationally or internationally), providing the benefits can be justified. Collaboration will be encouraged and monitored across all FHRI Fund programs and initiatives. Further information regarding the outcomes of the strategy session will soon be made publicly available.

Science on the Swan events

FHRI Fund recipient presentations

The Minister for Medical Research and Advisory Council members were treated to some of the exciting research and innovation activities supported by the FHRI Fund at SoTS. Sessions were delivered by FHRI Fund recipients, with podium appearances and lightning round poster presentations.

Partnering for success – panel session

Advisory Council members, Adjunct Professor Dale Fisher and Mr Kane Blackman joined me, together with Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Cathy Foley and distinguished Professor Lyn R. Griffiths, Queensland University of Technology on the Partnering for Success panel session on Monday 7 May.

The panel session, which included a Q and A session, was facilitated by Professor S.S. Vasan, WA Office of Medical Research and Innovation (OMRI) Director, with panel discussion on:

- national priorities for health and medical research and opportunities for WA in this space
- the role of the FHRI Fund, gender equity and consumer and community involvement in promoting and supporting successful partnerships.

Funding Cycle Open Day

The next FHRI Fund Open Day on 4 July 2023 will be co-hosted by WA Country Health Service (WACHS) at the Geraldton Universities Centre (GUC) in Geraldton from 10:30am – 2:00pm. The Minister for Medical Research, and other eminent presenters from the FHRI Fund Advisory Council, WACHS and the WA Centre for Rural Health will be presenting.

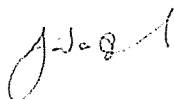
OMRI will also be presenting on the programs and initiatives launching in this cycle. Registration details will be announced soon and attendance options for the Open Day will be on-line or in-person at the GUC, Geraldton.

Key and new programs update

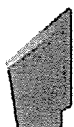
The Advisory Council met on 9 May 2023 and endorsed the following new and/or updated programs:

- WA Cohort Studies: Research Project Support Program (WACS-RPSP) – provides research grants for population health research projects that endorse a clear hypothesis, methodology, and scientific protocol, utilising an established WA cohort study.
- WA Cohort Studies: Operational Infrastructure Support Program – provides secure operational funding required for WA cohort studies to continue to contribute to the delivery of clinical outcomes, changes to health policy and translational health outcomes.
- Innovation Challenge: Sustainable Health Priorities – provides grants for innovative solutions aligning to the 6 priority areas of the Sustainable Health Review, as well as genomics and mental health.
- The FHRI Fund and Brightspark Foundation Co-Funded Partnership Program – provides fellowship funding for WA's best early career child health researchers.

Following approval by the Minister for Medical Research, full details, guidelines and conditions for all of these programs will be made available when they are launched on 4 July 2023 at the FHRI Fund Open Day in Geraldton.



John Van Der Wielen
FHRI Fund Advisory Council Chair
Future Health Research and Innovation Fund
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Western Australian
Future Health Research
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Review of the function and operation of the Advisory Council

As part of a commitment to continuous improvement and good governance, PwC was engaged to review the function and operation of the Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Advisory Council (AC).

Background and approach

In February 2023, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) was engaged to review the Future Health Research and Innovation Fund (FHRIFund) AC. The Review outlines the performance and function of the AC as a whole and the operation of each AC member.

To undertake the review PwC completed the following:

- Review of AC governance artefacts;
- Interview of each AC member, voting and non-voting; and
- Completion of a performance survey by each AC member on each voting AC member.

The findings of the review have been shared with the AC and recommendations for improvements will form part of planning over the next 12 months.

Review approach and key findings

Category	The role the Advisory Council	Expertise and diversity	Independence and ethics	Advisory Council operations
	The function and role of the AC and its members, including how it's understood by its members, government stakeholders, research and innovator stakeholders.	The expertise and diversity each AC member brings to the AC, expanding from specialised research, innovation and translation knowledge.	The management of independence by the AC and its members, including its ethical decision making capacity.	The operation of the AC by way of regular meetings, out-of-meeting communication and responsibility fulfillment.
Topics explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of government stakeholders understanding of the role and priorities of the AC • Review of researcher and innovator's understanding of the role and priorities of the AC • Review of interviewee's understanding of the role and priorities of the AC • Suggestions of ways to improve alignment of understanding of roles, priorities and expectations within the AC and with key stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of AC's structure appropriateness to fulfil its objectives • Review of AC member's effectiveness in sharing their expertise and diverse experiences towards the achievement of the AC's priorities • Suggestions of how skills experience mix, the AC as a whole could be improved • Suggestions of how the AC could better leverage the expertise and diversity of AC members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of AC members effectiveness in managing their actual and perceived conflicts of interest • Review the control environment and if it is fit for purpose to meet its responsibilities • Observations on the AC or AC members' behavior concerning ethical performance in the ethics and integrity frameworks? • Observations on weaknesses of the AC control environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the AC's alignment on key strategic priorities • Review how AC meetings are conducted and if they facilitate the achievement of its key roles and priorities • Review of AC member's ability to participate and contribute to their full potential under the current structure and operation of the AC • Review of the level and nature of discussion of strategic importance actively debated during AC meetings • Observations on how ways of working might evolve in the next 2 to 5 years
Key Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AC should continue to increase engagement opportunities with the research and innovation communities including a structured and forward looking program of events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations for participation as an AC member should be explicitly outlined and upheld. • Knowledge of Western Australian research and innovation ecosystem to be incorporated into the AC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AC is operating with robust ethics and integrity frameworks supported by a well functioning control environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After a period of establishment, AC focus should progressively become more strategic in nature including the formation of sub committees for specific topics.