Guidelines and Conditions for Applicants

1. Introduction

The Clinician Research Fellowship program is an initiative of the Department of Health in conjunction with the Raine Medical Research Foundation.

The program is designed to encourage clinicians employed by WA Health to become more involved in health and medical research while continuing some clinical duties. The research must be undertaken in WA and be of direct relevance to WA Health.

Clinicians with minimal or no paid research time, are encouraged to apply.

The Nursing and Midwifery Office, Department of Health has contributed additional funds towards Fellowships for nurses and midwives.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of these Fellowships, the following definitions apply:

(a) “Clinical duties” are activities directly related to individual patient care, as distinguished from administrative, research or academic activities.

(b) “Clinicians” are health professionals involved in clinical duties including, but not limited to, physicians, radiologists, pathologists, psychologists, physiotherapists, exercise physiologists, radiation therapists, nurses and midwives.

(c) “Early-career researcher” is a clinician who has up to three years’ research experience (full time or equivalent, taking into account part time and/or career interruptions).

(d) “FTE” refers to the Full Time Equivalent of a position, for example 0.6 FTE refers to 60% of a full time position.

(e) “Mid-career researcher” is a clinician who has between three and eight years’ research experience (full time or equivalent, taking into account part time and/or career interruptions).
(f) “Raine Research Committee” refers to Raine Medical Research Foundation Research Committee members and may include specialist representatives co-opted in consultation with the Department of Health.

(g) “WA Health” refers to all WA public sector health agencies that are under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Health, Government of Western Australia.

3. **Purpose**

The purpose of the Fellowships is to:

(a) encourage clinicians employed by WA Health who are early- to mid-career researchers to further develop their research activity; and

(b) facilitate high quality research that will ultimately provide better healthcare outcomes.

4. **Eligibility**

Applicants shall:

(a) be Australian citizens or show evidence of permanent residency status; and shall be resident in Western Australia for the duration of the Fellowship;

(b) not have more than eight years' research experience (full time or equivalent, taking into account part time and/or career interruptions);

(c) not currently, or during the period of the Fellowship, be in receipt of more than 0.3 FTE paid research/academic time;

(d) currently, and during the period of the Fellowship, be employed by WA Health as a clinician at not less than 0.3 FTE;

(e) be able to be released from their post for the period of the Fellowship, with the post adequately back-filled (if applicable);

(f) appoint a research mentor, who will generally be a senior/established researcher, who stringently reviews the proposal providing expert advice on the design and statistical analysis as well as providing guidance and ongoing support during the term of the Fellowship, where the applicant is considered an early-career researcher; and

(g) be a Chief Investigator on the research project.

5. **Funding Allocation**

1. The Fellowships are offered subject to the availability of funds or to exceptional circumstances affecting the flow of funds to the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation.

2. Fellowship funding shall provide salary support for research duties up to a maximum of 0.5 FTE.
3. During the Fellowship period, clinical duties within WA Health must be retained at a minimum of 0.3 FTE.

4. Within the constraints of points 2 and 3 above, the applicant may undertake the Fellowship research duties:

   (a) in lieu of existing WA Health clinical duties; or

   (b) in addition to existing WA Health clinical duties, but not where the Fellowship would be replacing a research or academic role.

5. The value of each Fellowship, up to $150,000 per annum, shall be determined principally by the remuneration costs of the applicant’s WA Health clinician role, and shall be awarded for up to 3 years’ duration, depending on satisfactory research progress.

6. Subject to the discretion of the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation, funding may include a contribution towards research costs, up to a maximum of $10,000.

7. Additional research project costs, not included in the Fellowship award, will need to be obtained by the applicant.

8. The FTE and Fellowship duration offered to each successful applicant shall be subject to the number of Fellowships offered and total funding available.

9. The Business Manager shall ensure that salary and allowance costs, including scheduled or anticipated variations over the period of the Fellowship are accurate, as requests for additional funding will not be approved.

10. Requests for travel funds shall not normally be approved.

11. The Fellowship shall be taken up within one year of award. Any variation to this condition would require approval based on exceptional circumstances.

6. Applicant Selection

1. The applicant selection process shall be administered by the Raine Medical Research Foundation.

2. Each application will be assessed, based on:

   (a) the quality of the proposed research project*;

   (b) the proposed role and contribution of the applicant to the research project activities and outcomes**; and

   (c) the track record of the applicant relative to their research experience.

* Applicants should ensure that project data can be confidently interpreted; outcome measures are valid for the purpose and are quantifiable; and the study design and analysis are matched to the form of the data.

** The applicant must demonstrate that they are making a significant contribution to the research project at a leadership level.
3. In awarding the Fellowships, the Raine Research Committee will also take into account:

(a) the significance of the research project and relevance to WA Health;

(b) the likelihood that the proposed study may be successfully translated into improved patient outcomes through innovation or change to existing guidelines or health policies and/or represent world-leading health and medical research;

(c) the relevance of the host research environment and its capacity to foster, strengthen and advance the research of the applicant, where applicable; and

(d) paid research/academic time already available to the applicant.

4. The system of evaluation involves a four-stage process:

(a) Preliminary screening by the Raine Research Committee which may include co-opted specialist representatives.

At the completion of the preliminary screening stage, applicants will be informed as to whether their application has, or has not, been short-listed for external assessment.

(b) External assessment of short-listed applications by independent researchers. (Local assessors are not used unless deemed necessary.)

Applicants are asked to inform the Raine Administrative Office by email (Lyn.Ellis@uwa.edu.au) the name of any assessor(s) who they prefer were not used to review their application and any special requirements or provisions in relation to intellectual property or confidential material contained in the application.

Assessors are given assurances that Assessment Reports are afforded a high level of confidentiality. They are further informed that the evaluation process does not include applicant interviews, however, written reports are released anonymously to the applicant and copies are also provided, anonymously, to the Raine Research Committee for the final selection process.

Where the research project has already been assessed and had funding approved, then external assessment will be at the discretion of the Raine Research Committee and the funding body’s assessment reports may be requested.

(c) Applicant response to Assessment Reports.

After Assessment Reports are distributed to the applicant, they are invited to submit a written response by email to the Raine Administrative Office in accordance with the instructions provided.

(d) Final selection by the Raine Research Committee.

The decision of the Raine Research Committee shall be final. Correspondence will not be entered into regarding the decision.
7. **Research Governance Requirements**

All relevant research governance approvals shall be obtained and provided to the Raine Administrative Office, before the commencement of the Fellowship and research project.

Governance approvals which may be required include:

(a) Ethics approval, from each relevant Ethics Committee (human and/or animal).

(b) Additional Ethics approval from:

   (i) Department of Health WA HREC (*Department of Health Data Collections and Data linkage*);
   (ii) Coroner Ethics Committee (WA) (*access to coronial material*);
   (iii) WA Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee.

(c) Other approvals from:

   (i) Data Custodians, other than (b)(i);
   (ii) Gene Technology Regulator;
   (iii) Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC);
   (iv) NHMRC Embryo Research Licensing Committee;
   (v) NHMRC Human Genetics Advisory Committee (HGAC);
   (vi) Radiation Safety Officer (Dosimetry Report);
   (vii) Radiological Council;
   (viii) Reproductive Technology Council;
   (ix) Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

(d) Institutional authorisation, from each relevant institution.

8. **Intellectual Property**

The ownership of Intellectual Property produced by employees of WA Health in the course of the Fellowships shall vest in the State of Western Australia, through the Department of Health. Intellectual Property that is produced in conjunction with a host research group or other agency shall be consistent with the Western Australian Government Intellectual Property Policy and Best Practice Guidelines (2003) or that policy’s successor.

9. **Management of Funding**

1. The Fellowship funding:

   (a) shall be administered by The University of Western Australia on behalf of the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation;

   (b) shall be forwarded by The University of Western Australia to WA Health institutions, as appropriate; and

   (c) shall be used in accordance with Clause 5 as approved by the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation.
2. Fellowship funding that is used for purposes other than that for which it was awarded, or is unspent at the conclusion of the Fellowship period, shall be recoverable by The University of Western Australia, and shall revert to the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation.

3. Equipment that is purchased with Fellowship funds shall remain the property of the host institution.

10. Reports

1. Within two months of the completion of each calendar year, the Fellow is required to provide the Raine Administrative Office an Annual Report on the progress of the work.

2. Within six months of completion of the project, the Fellow is required to provide the Raine Administrative Office with two copies of the Final Report relating to the project.

The Final Report shall address

(a) the objectives of the project;
(b) the extent to which the objectives were achieved;
(c) the research results and benefits (particularly health benefit outcomes);
(d) any difficulties encountered; and
(e) the titles of published scientific papers, with copies provided.

If the Final Report contains Confidential Information:

(a) the Fellow must stamp “Commercial-in-Confidence” on the cover of the report and mark as confidential the parts of the report which may be reasonably viewed as containing Confidential Information; and
(b) the Raine Research Committee may require the Fellow to produce an edition of the Final Report in a form suitable for general distribution.

3. The Fellow is also required to include with their Final Report an acquittal statement of the expenditure of funds, certified by the relevant finance officer of the WA Health administering institution.

11. Acknowledgment

Full acknowledgment of the Department of Health and the Raine Medical Research Foundation shall be made as opportunities arise (in publications, public discussion, and press statements, etc.), copies of which shall be submitted to the Raine Administrative Office.