



# Consultation: Good Institutional Practice Guide

## Overview

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The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is pleased to release the draft *Good Institutional Practice Guide* (the Guide) for consultation.

The draft Guide seeks to provide guidance to NHMRC-funded institutions and NHMRC-funded researchers about good institutional practice to promote open, honest, supportive and respectful institutional cultures conducive to the conduct of high-quality research. Its development has been overseen by NHMRC's [Research Quality Steering Committee](#).

NHMRC is keen to ensure that the research community has the best opportunity to participate in developing guidance about good institutional practice to support high-quality research. Please bring this consultation to the attention of colleagues who may be interested in providing comment.

A copy of the draft Guide is available from [NHMRC's consultation hub](#).

## Why your views matter

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Your feedback will assist NHMRC to develop practical guidance for anyone involved with the conduct of research to implement positive cultural changes that support the conduct of high-quality research.

The closing date for this consultation is **Wednesday, 10 July 2024 at 5.00pm (AEST)**. If you need assistance with completion of the survey, please email us at: [quality@nhmrc.gov.au](mailto:quality@nhmrc.gov.au).

We look forward to receiving your comments.

## Share your views

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The Online Survey for submission of your feedback can be accessed at [NHMRC's consultation hub](#).

This document can be used if you would like to prepare your responses offline, or collate information from multiple areas within your institution, ahead of lodging your submission via NHMRC's consultation hub.

**Submissions will only be accepted via NHMRC's consultation hub.**

## Online survey questions

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### 1. Privacy Collection Notice

The content of your submission will be used by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHRMC) for the purpose of review of the draft *Good Institutional Practice Guide*. The personal information that you include in your

submission is being collected so that NHMRC may communicate with you about your submission, if appropriate, and for reporting purposes. If you do not provide this information, we may not be able to contact you or include your de-identified personal information in our analysis of respondents.

Any personal information collected via this website will be stored and used in accordance with NHMRC's obligations under the Privacy Act 1988, and in accordance with the [NHMRC Privacy Policy](#). NHMRC will not disclose your information to any third party without your consent. Further information can be found in the [NHMRC Privacy Policy](#).

There are security risks associated with transmission of information via the internet. The NHMRC has taken reasonable steps to safeguard against unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure of personal information we hold electronically. Before deciding whether to use this facility you should make your own assessment of the potential risks to the security of your information. By clicking on the disclaimer tick box below, you acknowledge and agree that the Commonwealth of Australia will not be liable for any unauthorised access or for any loss or damage which you may incur as a result of any unauthorised access to this site or to the information transmitted by you or any other person .

I have read the security warning/disclaimer in the Privacy Collection Notice and accept the risks and conditions outlined. *(Required)*

2. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an institution?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- As an individual (go to question 3)
- On behalf of an institution (skip to question 10)

## About you (individual)

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3. What is your name?

Note: This question is optional. You can provide a submission anonymously.

4. What is your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- [I/They] use a different term
- Prefer not to answer

5. Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander
- Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- No

- Prefer not to answer

6. What type of institution are you associated with?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Educational institution (other than university)
- Government department or agency – Commonwealth
- Government department or agency – state or territory
- Healthcare institution (other than hospital)
- Hospital / health service
- Professional peak body (e.g. Academies, Royal Colleges, societies)
- Research institution – commercial
- Research institution – non-commercial
- University
- Other

If 'Other', please specify below.

7. What is the name of your institution?

8. What best describes your role/area within your institution? (Select all that apply)

*(Required)*

- Senior administrator/Institutional leader
- Research leader
- Researcher
- Research student
- Research administrator (ethics)
- Research administrator (governance)
- Research support (e.g. statistician, librarian, information technology professional, data steward, core facility staff)
- Human Resources staff
- Ethics committee chair/member (Human Research Ethics Committee or Animal Ethics Committee)
- Other

If other, please specify below.

9. Please give further details of your position/employment level at your institution

For example, Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Laboratory Head; Mid-Career researcher; PhD student; research ethics officer; research administration officer; Director of Human Resources; member of a Human Research Ethics Committee, etc.

*(Required)*

**Please proceed to Question 13.**

## About your institution

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10. What is the name of your institution?

*(Required)*

Australian Library and Information Association, Health Libraries Australia Sector Committee

11. Please provide an email contact in case NHMRC needs to clarify any part of the submission?

*(Required)*

[Michele.gaca@alia.org.au](mailto:Michele.gaca@alia.org.au); [gemma.siemensma@gh.org.au](mailto:gemma.siemensma@gh.org.au); [Cheryl.Hamill@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Cheryl.Hamill@health.wa.gov.au); [Glynis.Jones@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Glynis.Jones@health.wa.gov.au)

12. What type of institution are you lodging a submission on behalf of?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Educational institution (other than university)
- Government department or agency – Commonwealth
- Government department or agency – state or territory
- Healthcare institution (other than hospital)
- Hospital / health service
- Professional peak body (e.g. Academies, Royal Colleges, societies)
- Research institution – commercial
- Research institution – non-commercial
- University

- Other

If other, please specify below.

Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Health Libraries Australia (HLA)

## Feedback on sections of the draft Guide

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13. How well does the 'Snapshot' section summarise the contents of the draft Guide?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Very well
- Somewhat well
- Neutral
- Somewhat poorly
- Very poorly

If you would like to provide feedback on the 'Snapshot' section, please provide details below.

We're pleased to see articulation of the values that are core to quality research. These align well with our profession's Code of Ethics which is currently being updated.

The snapshot section is a simple but comprehensive list of headlines for all the factors discussed through the rest of the document.

14. How helpful are the 'Definitions'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on the 'Definitions', please provide details below.

Query the definition of 'Institution'.

Is this a draft Good Institutional Practice Guide broadly or only in the context of NHMRC research? If the guide is meant to apply broadly in other contexts, the definition of 'institution' as one 'that administers NHMRC funds' seems too narrow. Perhaps it should say 'administers NHMRC or other health research funds'. It is of course an NHMRC document but would also be very valuable to other health research funders.

15. How helpful is the information in the 'Introduction'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on the 'Introduction', please provide details below.

|   |
|---|
| <p>We agree that research culture does underpin research success through to translation. Especially at the clinical coal face in hospitals and health services. Health Libraries Australia members provide core supports to NHMRC and Australian grant bodies.</p> <p>The NHMRC strategy for health and medical research is underpinned by services and resources provided by health science librarians; our focus is on quality evidence-based practice.</p> |
|---|

16. How helpful is the information in Section 1 'Values'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 1 'Values', please provide details below.

|                  |
|------------------|
| <br><br><br><br> |
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17. How helpful is the information in Section 2 'Approaches: implementing change to improve institutional research culture'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 2 'Approaches: implementing change to improve institutional research culture', please provide details below.

We support a safe working environment especially for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers. We actively advocate and promote the need for author status for our Indigenous research communities.

Recently we have advocated for the US National Library of Medicine (NLM) to improve their indexing thesaurus MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) to create a culturally appropriate indexing term of 'Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' to replace former indexing terms of 'Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander' and 'Oceanic Ancestry Group'.

This will enhance the findability of published research on our Indigenous populations.

Another group of health libraries is working on creating a validated search filter to find literature on Aboriginal and Torres Strait populations (to update one that is now outdated but still in use).

<https://www.lowitja.org.au/tools/lit-search/>

18. How helpful is the information in Section 3.1 'Modelling and leadership'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.1 'Modelling and leadership', please provide details below.

As information professionals, librarians play a pivotal role in the research process. We are often the first point of call for a clinical researcher and contribute to the modelling of best practice and play a leadership role by mentoring researchers through the various implementation phases as required.

#### SCENARIOS

Australian Health Science Libraries contribute significantly to education and training of new graduates and early career clinical researchers (in all craft groups - doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and many other allied health professionals).

We acquire, develop and maintain scholarly information resources in all formats to meet research, learning and teaching needs. We contribute to the skills development of research students/researchers through information literacy and training programs.

Often (as the NHMRC survey supports) resourcing to guide clinician researchers in the early stages by senior grant recipients are limited. A SENARIO demonstrating our contribution would be supportive of our often-hidden contribution, and actively demonstrate our role.

19. How helpful is the information in Section 3.2 'Institutional resources to support the conduct of high-quality research'?

(Required)

Please select only one item.

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.2 'Institutional resources to support the conduct of high-quality research', please provide details below.

The Consultation Draft 2024 document lacks an acknowledgement of the role health libraries and health librarians play in the research cycle.

Health librarians are an essential institutional research resource and assist in many ways:

- advise on research methodologies and risk of bias
- provide expert literature searches for grant applications, parliamentary inquiries, scoping of research topics, systematic and other reviews
- advise on publication options – suitable titles, publishing and reporting standards, any open access options available from Library subscriptions (APCs)
- advise on scientific writing including citation formatting
- advise on curating researcher profiles (use of ORCID and other identifiers)
- curate, manage and subscribe to numerous research tools and literature
- acquire and deploy tools such as LibKey which links researchers to articles but also makes the retraction status of articles clear (ensuring validity and currency)
- provide easy access to published content
- research and report on staff publications and other research impact measures
- host research repositories to ensure compliance with NHMRC's Open Access policies
- supply staff publications data to annual surveys from the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) on Hospital Teaching, Training and Research Activities (HTTRA).

We note for example that the need to appoint qualified statisticians is a suggested activity on page 25. We suggest some such wording on the need for clinical research organisations in particular to provide library and librarian support.

Make it possible:

- **Provide** a comprehensive library service including a curated collection of information resources and a suite of services to provide access to reputable evidence-based information collections
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Make it easy:

- **Appoint** qualified librarians to advise and support researchers across range of topics including the scholarly information lifecycle, research metrics, and data management.

20. How helpful is the information in Section 3.3 'Education and training about good research practices'?

(Required)

Please select only one item.

- Considerably helpful

- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.3 'Education and training about good research practices', please provide details below.

As mentioned, librarians contribute significantly to the Clinical Education space with regards to education and training around good research practices

21. How helpful is the information in Section 3.4 'Rewards and recognition'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.4 'Rewards and recognition', please provide details below.

SAMPLE SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS are useful. However, we feel they could be strengthened by including the below.

- How do institutional leaders encourage the use of infrastructure for supporting good research practices? (e.g. Library)
- How does the institution support, manage and store research data and output such as research publications? (e.g. institutional research repository)

22. How helpful is the information in Section 3.5 'Reporting and addressing research quality issues'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.5 'Reporting and addressing research quality issues', please provide details below.

Health librarians actively support the integrity of the research process and do witness, support and provide leadership in ensuring researchers focus on valid research questions based on gaps in the current evidence.

23. How helpful is the information in Section 3.6 'Communication'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.6 'Communication', please provide details below.

Health libraries play a role in the institutions knowledge dissemination and management and can easily act as conduits for communication and cross fertilisation of ideas given our engagement across research projects

24. How helpful is the information in Section 3.7 'Monitoring, evaluation and reporting'?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Considerably helpful
- Moderately helpful
- Neither helpful nor unhelpful
- Slightly helpful
- Not at all helpful

If you would like to provide feedback on Section 3.7 'Monitoring, evaluation and reporting', please provide details below.

## General feedback

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25. How would you rate the content of the draft Guide overall?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Fair

Poor

If you would like to provide any general comments on the draft Guide as a whole, please provide details below.

We believe the Good Institutional Practice Guide would be enhanced by the inclusion of our craft groups contribution to the research process.

26. If you would like to submit a brief synopsis (in no more than 200 words) describing an occasion when members of your institution confronted an issue involving poor research culture and what they did to remedy the situation, please provide details below.

27. If your synopsis appears useful for inclusion in the Guide, NHMRC may contact you for further information. Please provide your name and email address below.

## Permission to Publish

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Note: Submissions made to the NHMRC are subject to the requirements of the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act 1982. NHMRC retains the right to determine which submissions it will publish.

28. In the event that NHMRC does decide to publish submissions, do you give NHMRC permission?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item.*

- Yes, NHMRC may publish my submission.
- No, I do not consent to my submission being published.
- My submission contains some information that I do not want published. I have clearly marked the information that I would like redacted before NHMRC may publish my submission.