

Position Description

Research Governance Officer

Group	Research Delivery
Team	Research Delivery
Reports to	Chief Strategy and Performance Officer
Direct Reports	1
Work Location	HMRI Building, 1 Kookaburra Dr, New Lambton Heights

Position summary

The Research Governance Officer is the central institutional authority for research governance across all research activity conducted under HMRI's auspices. The role is responsible for providing institute-wide leadership in the design, implementation and oversight of HMRI's research governance frameworks relating to internal grants, philanthropic funding, strategic investments, facility usage and government research funding.

The role is the institutional owner of research governance systems and assurance, including compliance with NHMRC Administering Institute obligations, the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and relevant national frameworks.

The role ensures HMRI maintains robust, transparent and compliant processes across the full funding lifecycle — from grant round design and award through to reporting, contract management and acquittal in line with HMRI Strategy, donor obligations, regulatory requirements and sector best practice.

The Research Governance Officer provides strategic oversight and assurance of the Grants Compliance Officer function, supports the Funding and Analysis Lead, and partners closely with Research Programs, Clinical Trials, Fundraising, Finance and Executive leaders to manage institutional risk and improve funding governance maturity.

Key responsibilities

Institutional Research Governance & Assurance

- Maintain institutional compliance with NHMRC Administering Institute requirements.
- Ensure compliance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
- Maintain a consolidated institutional Research Governance Framework integrating funding governance, research integrity, ethics interface, and regulatory compliance.
- Coordinate responses to research governance audits and external reviews.
- Produce periodic research governance assurance reports to Executive and Board Committees.
- Lead investigations or preliminary reviews of funding-related compliance issues where required.
- Contribute to investigations of research integrity compliance issues where required.
- Periodically review governance frameworks, policies, and procedures

Research Governance Leadership

- Lead the development, maintenance and implementation of HMRI's research funding governance frameworks, policies and procedures.
- Ensure compliance with contractual, donor, regulatory and ethical obligations relating to research funding and philanthropic gifts.
- Provide authoritative interpretation of research funding, compliance and governance obligations and make binding operational determinations within approved frameworks.
- Act as escalation point for complex funding issues, disputes or non-compliance events.
- Hold delegated authority for:
 - Operational funding governance decisions within approved policy frameworks.
 - Research integrity investigations, within approved frameworks
 - Clinical Trials Facility decisions, within approved frameworks
- Prepare governance briefings and reports for Executive, Committees and the Institute Director.

Oversight of Grants Compliance Operations

- Provide line or functional management and professional oversight to the Grants Compliance Officer.
- Ensure the effective delivery of HMRI's research grants administration processes.
- Monitor performance, risk indicators and compliance metrics across HMRI-funded programs.
- Review and assure grant lifecycle management practices and reporting quality.
- Support workforce capability development in research governance functions.

Grant Programs and Funding Rounds

- Provide governance oversight of HMRI and externally administered grant rounds.
- Approve frameworks, eligibility criteria, assessment processes and probity arrangements.
- Ensure conflicts of interest, panel governance and decision documentation meet best-practice standards.
- Partner with the Funding and Analysis Lead to continuously improve grant round efficiency and integrity.

Philanthropic and Strategic Funding Governance

- Oversee governance arrangements for major philanthropic gifts and strategic research investments.
- Ensure budgets, reporting schedules, milestone tracking and contract obligations are established and monitored.
- Work with Finance, Legal and Fundraising teams on contract execution and acquittal processes.
- Maintain institutional registers for major funding agreements and donor risk.

Systems, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

- Lead development of governance reporting dashboards, compliance frameworks and assurance processes.
- Provide quarterly research governance assurance reporting to Executive, including compliance metrics, risk indicators, and emerging governance issues.
- Sponsor improvements to grants management platforms, workflows and data integrity.
- Commission or conduct internal audits and reviews of funding governance processes.
- Embed continuous improvement and sector benchmarking.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Build trusted relationships with researchers, Research Program Directors, funders and donors.
- Partner with Fundraising, Finance, Legal and Executive teams to deliver integrated governance solutions.
- Represent HMRI in sector forums relating to research funding governance.

Affiliate Agreements & Research Program Governance

- Develop, implement, and maintain standardised frameworks for affiliate agreements, collaborative research partnerships, and program-based funding arrangements.
- Ensure affiliate and partner arrangements are supported by appropriate governance structures, including clearly defined roles, responsibilities, reporting requirements, delegations, and financial accountability mechanisms.
- Provide governance oversight and monitoring across the lifecycle of research programs delivered in partnership with external organisations, including establishment of governance arrangements, compliance monitoring, reporting oversight, variation governance, and closure processes.
- Support the implementation and ongoing administration of HMRI's research governance framework, ensuring affiliate and program arrangements align with institutional policies, funding obligations, compliance requirements, and organisational risk appetite.
- Develop and maintain consistent governance and reporting frameworks to support effective institutional oversight of research programs and affiliated activities.
- Partner with Legal, Finance, Fundraising, and Research Program leadership to ensure agreements and governance arrangements are appropriately developed, reviewed, approved, executed, and monitored.
- Maintain institutional registers relating to affiliate agreements, research program governance frameworks, compliance obligations, and renewal schedules.

Work Health and Safety (WHS)

The employee must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others. The employee must comply with all applicable work health and safety legislation, codes of practice, organisational policies and procedures, and any reasonable direction relating to health and safety.

- Participate in required WHS inductions, training and consultation activities.
- Follow safe work procedures, use equipment correctly, and use/wear provided personal protective equipment (PPE) as required.
- Report hazards, incidents, injuries and near-misses promptly, and cooperate with investigations and corrective actions.
- Do not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety.
- Maintain a safe and tidy work area, including safe manual handling practices and appropriate ergonomics.
- If supervising others (including students, volunteers or contractors), ensure WHS requirements are communicated and followed, and escalate WHS issues to the relevant manager promptly.

Key Selection Criteria

- Postgraduate qualifications in research management, public policy, finance, law or governance, or equivalent.
- Experience working with philanthropic donors and government research funders.
- Familiarity with online grants management platforms.
- Demonstrated senior experience in research governance, grants management, compliance or funding administration within a research institute, university, health service or philanthropic environment.
- Proven ability to design and implement governance frameworks, policies and operational controls.
- Experience supervising or leading professional staff.
- Excellent interpersonal skills including negotiation, influence and stakeholder management.
- Highly developed judgement and decision-making capability.
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills.
- Experience preparing papers for Boards and governance committees.
- Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage complex priorities in a deadline-driven environment.
- Demonstrated risk management capability.

I confirm that I have read and understood this Position Description and agree to work in accordance with the requirements of the position. I understand that this document is intended to provide an outline of the key responsibilities of the role and that aspects of the Position Description may change over time. I also acknowledge that additional tasks and responsibilities may be assigned, as reasonably required by the organisation or my manager.

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date