

# Research letters of support

## PURPOSE

This work instruction describes the process and actions required by Metro South Health (MSH) to provide a letter of support which is required in the preparation of some external research grant applications.

## OUTCOME

The intended outcome of this work instruction is to:

- Outline the process Chief Investigator/Principal Investigators/Coordinating Principal Investigators (CI/PI/CPI) need to follow to request that MSH provide a letter of support.
- Ensure the MSH restricted signing delegation, as determined by the Metro South Financial Delegation Schedule and Framework, is adhered to for the execution and signing of all research applications and contracts by ensuring the letter of support is signed by an authorised delegate.
- Facilitate a more detailed review of the application, aimed at improving the quality of the application if sufficient notice is provided by the researcher to Metro South Research (see Appendix 1).

This work instruction outlines processes described in MSH procedure PR2023-412 Research support and management and upholds principles outlined within the Research Support and Management Handbook.

## SCOPE

This work instruction applies to:

- All MSH employees and collaborators who conduct human research within or in association with MSH, or through access to MSH participants, health records or data.
- Persons involved in the preparation of external research grant applications within or in association with MSH facilities/services, or through access to MSH participants and/or clinical data.
- All employees involved in the governance or financial management of research grants.

## WORK INSTRUCTION

### 1. STEP 1: IDENTIFY REQUIREMENTS

#### 1.1 External grant requirements

- Some external research grant funding guidelines require a letter of support from the applicant and/or partner organisations as part of the grant application.
- The funding guidelines will also state who in the applicant/partner organisation is an appropriate signatory for the letter.
- In MSH research applications and contracts have restricted signing delegation. The authorised signatory will be determined by Metro South Research.

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## 1.2 MSH requirements

- Where a letter of support from MSH is required, the following items must be provided to Metro South Research at least 14 days prior to the grant closing date:
  1. A draft of the letter of support addressing all of the items required in the letter of support as stated in the relevant funding guidelines.
  2. An executive summary of the grant application (no more than two (2) pages) which includes:
    - project overview (clear and concise);
    - how MSH facilities/services are involved;
    - what MSH's contribution is (i.e., recruitment site, provision of data);
    - where the grant budget proposes an allocation to MSH to facilitate recruitment for example) this information should be included; and
    - the name and role in relation to the project of each MSH CI/PI/CPI.
  3. A supporting email from the relevant Head of Department/s (HoD) stating they:
    - have had the opportunity to be briefed about the proposed project;
    - have considered implications for service delivery;
    - approve any commitments stated in the proposal whether it be in-kind full time equivalent (FTE), cash, other resources or arrangements.
      - Note: If the HoD is named in the application the supporting email should be escalated to their line manager.
  4. An email from the relevant business manager and/or cost centre manager/s:
    - stating they have been consulted regarding costings for any resources stated in the proposal whether it be in-kind FTE, cash, or other resources or arrangements; and
    - explaining the source of any cash contribution.
- A letter of support cannot be processed until all of the above-mentioned requirements are met.

## 2. STEP 2: IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

### 2.1 MSH Budget Template

- Instead of direct monetary transactions, MSH may aid the research project by providing an 'in-kind' contribution of, resources, services or expertise.
  - For example: MSH may provide access to specialised equipment, software licences, computers, or space for a research study, or a MSH clinician may offer their time and expertise to contribute to the project or a MSH Clinical Trial Assistant may provide project administrative support as part of their role.
- In-kind support can also encompass donations of materials, such as research materials, data sets, or even office supplies. Proper documentation and communication of in-kind support are crucial to ensure transparency and acknowledge the contributions of all involved parties.

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- In order to accurately capture in-kind contributions, use the MSH Budget template attached to MSH work instruction WI2023-293 Research funding, budgets, and infrastructure support, and include separate lines for
  - Type of contribution (i.e., labour or non-labour – equipment, materials, data).
    - For example: Labour 0.1 FTE AO6 - 6 months
  - Value (confirm with business manager and/or cost centre manager).
  - Source (i.e., Departmental operational funding).
  - Purpose (i.e., how the in-kind contribution directly supports the research project).

## **2.2 Less than \$10,000 in-kind contributions**

- The relevant business manager and/or cost centre manager must review all research project budgets for under \$10,000 in-kind contributions.
  - Note: The Health Service Chief Executive (HSCE) has delegated the approval of research budgets up to \$10,000 either in-kind or funded to the Manager, Research Integrity and Compliance, Metro South Research.
- For project budgets over \$10,000 (as delegated by the HSCE) the site Finance Manager must review and endorse.

## **3. STEP 3: SUMBIT REQUEST**

### **3.1 Timeframe**

- Metro South Research requires at least 14 business days (once all above-mentioned requirements have been submitted) to process a letter of support.
- When submitting all documents to MSH-RSS@health.qld.gov.au please include the grant submission date.
- Any requests submitted within the 14 business day timeframe may not be processed in time which may cause the researcher to miss the grant submission deadline.

### **3.2 Additional information**

- Metro South Research may request additional information if all required documentation is not provided with the initial submission.
- Requests for additional information may impact upon the processing time of the letter of support.

## **4. STEP 4: GENERATE LETTER**

### **4.1 Submit letter**

- Metro South Research will copy the applicant's draft letter of support on to a MSH letterhead.
- Metro South Research will submit the letter and supporting documents to the relevant delegate for signature:

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- Chief, People, Engagement and Research Officer has delegated authority >\$500,000
- Executive Director, Metro South Research <\$500,000
- The grant due date will be noted in the request.

#### 4.2 Signed letter

- Once the delegate has signed the letter it will be returned to Metro South Research who will forward to the CI/PI/CPI for uploading with the relevant grant application.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility	Audit criteria
MSH delegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the draft letter of support and sign (if appropriate) on behalf of MSH.</li> </ul>	N/A
Metro South Research – Metro South Research Support Coordinator (MSRSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the MSH letter of support process and ensure compliance with rules and related processes.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate advice to CI/PI/CPIs, to enable all required documents to be submitted.</li> </ul>	N/A
Head of Department/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the requirements of the research project and ensure their department is able to commit to the project.</li> </ul>	N/A
Business managers/financial officers and/or cost centre managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure MSH research budgets are developed with appropriate rigour and for providing costs associated with the identified research resources.</li> </ul>	N/A
Principal Investigators/ Coordinating Principal Investigators (PI/CPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring appropriate development and review of letter of support submission requirements.</li> <li>• Reading eligibility rules and guidelines and ensuring that research grants are submitted in accordance with the sponsoring/funding entity/organisation's requirements.</li> <li>• Consulting with the relevant business manager and/or cost centre manager to develop research grant application budgets.</li> </ul>	N/A

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with relevant department heads and other stakeholders to establish the acceptability and feasibility of the proposal before submitting a grant application.</li> <li>• Be aware of and comply with this work instruction when requesting a letter of support from MSH.</li> </ul>	
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## DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
In-kind	In-kind financial support refers to providing goods, services, or resources directly instead of giving money. This could include things like donating goods, offering services, or providing materials to assist a research project. It's a way of contributing without using traditional monetary transactions.
Sponsor	An individual, organisation or group taking on responsibility for securing the arrangements to initiate, manage and finance a study.

## RELATED AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

<b>Legislation and other Authority</b>	<p><b>Legislation (as updated and replaced from time to time)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Financial Accountability Act 2009</i> (Qld)</li> <li>• <i>Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011</i> (Qld)</li> <li>• <i>Hospitals Foundations Act 1982</i> (Qld)</li> <li>• <i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> (Qld)</li> <li>• <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i> (Qld)</li> <li>• <i>Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982</i> (Qld)</li> </ul> <p><b>Regulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Accountability Regulation 2019 (Qld)</li> <li>• Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 (Qld)</li> <li>• Hospital and Health Boards Regulation 2012 (Qld)</li> <li>• Hospitals Foundation Regulation 2015 (Qld)</li> <li>• Information Privacy Regulation 2009 (Qld)</li> <li>• Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Regulation 2019 (Qld)</li> </ul> <p><b>Metro South Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro South Health Research Strategy</li> <li>• Metro South Financial Delegation Schedule and Framework</li> </ul>
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<b>Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Clinical Trials Governance Framework</li> <li>• National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Standard 1 – Clinical Governance</li> <li>○ Standard 2 – Partnering with Consumers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Supporting documents</b>	<p><b>Procedures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PR2023-411 Research excellence</li> <li>• PR2023-412 Research support and management</li> <li>• PR2023-413 Research administration and compliance</li> </ul> <p><b>Work instructions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WI2023-293 Research funding, budgets, and infrastructure support</li> <li>• WI2022-226 Open access journal publications in research</li> <li>• WI2023-294 Research grants administration</li> <li>• WI2023-296 Metro South Health Research Support Scheme (MSHRSS)</li> <li>• WI2023-297 Gift cards (for use as research incentives)</li> <li>• WI2023-298 Scientists in the Clinic (MSH/TRI)</li> </ul>

## HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 2019

Metro South Hospital and Health Service is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. Under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, Metro South Health has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights. When making a decision about research letters of support, decision-makers must comply with that obligation. Further information about the *Human Rights Act 2019* is available at:

<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/humanrights>.

## WORK INSTRUCTION DETAILS

<b>Work Instruction Name</b>	Research letters of support
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## REVIEW HISTORY

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Version	Approval date	Effective from	Authority	Comment
1.0	7/12/2023	12/12/2023	Executive Director, Metro South Research	New work instruction

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# APPENDICES

## 1. APPENDIX 1: METRO SOUTH HEALTH LETTER OF SUPPORT PROCESS

Metro South Health letter of support process

