

Research involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples

The RACGP is often approached by researchers seeking letters of support and/or to partner in research proposals for funding. The Research team, together with RACGP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, has developed the following criteria to apply to requests that include research which is about, or may affect, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RACGP is keen to support quality, ethical research that contributes to the scientific literature and translates into improved health outcomes, and to only support research that meets national standards for ethical and responsible conduct of research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This page outlines the criteria and requirements for submitting a request for a research partnership with the RACGP for research, which is about, or may affect, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Criteria for support

The following criteria will be applied in assessing whether the RACGP can provide a letter of support and/or partner in research proposals:

- The research proposal has received support from the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities participating in the research. Proof of this (for example, letter of support from communities) is provided. Ideally there will be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander leadership within the research team.
- The project must be subject to ethics review by a [human research ethics committee](#) with expertise in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander research.
- The project plan must explain how the research contributes to a community-identified need, has involved community input/consultation and will include ongoing involvement, including as researchers.
- The project plan must explain how it will build capacity of the community to do research in future and how it supports non-researcher community members to contribute (ie remuneration).
- The project plan must explain how the project will adhere to the principles of Indigenous data sovereignty and governance. This includes recognising the rights of Indigenous peoples to control the use of their data, and have access to the data for decision making and self-determination.
- It is our expectation that the research proposal will explain why they are requesting a letter of support from the RACGP. The RACGP does not support researchers to engage with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, it is our expectation is that this will have already occurred.

All human research must also comply with the:

[National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#)

[National Health and Medical Research Council \(NHMRC\) Values and Ethics – Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research](#)

NHMRC Guidelines under [section 95](#) and [section 95A](#) of the Privacy Act 1988

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007](#)

Further Reading

- [The AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#)
- [Guide to applying: the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council - Ethical guidelines for research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*](#)

- Indigenous Data sovereignty
 - <https://www.maiamnayriwingara.org/>
 - <https://www.lowitja.org.au/tools/indigenous-data-sovereignty-readiness-assessment-and-evaluation-toolkit/>
- Refer to state and territory resources relevant to your jurisdiction.

*Six principles in these guidelines, identified through a national consultation by the Lowitja Institute:

1. Spirit and integrity – a connection between the past, present and future, and the respectful and honourable behaviour that holds Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander values together.
2. Reciprocity – shared responsibilities and obligations to family and the land based on kinship networks, also includes sharing of benefits.
3. Respect – for each other's dignity and individual ways of living. This is the basis of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live.
4. Equality – recognising the equal value of all individuals. Fairness and justice, the right to be different.
5. Survival and protection – of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages and identity.
6. Responsibility – is the recognition of important responsibilities, which involve Country, kinship, caring for others and maintenance of cultural and spiritual awareness. The main responsibility is to do no harm to any person or any place.