



Australian Academy  
of Health and  
Medical Sciences

2014 – 2020: Celebrating the formative years  
of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices stand and on which we hold our meetings and events across the country.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples were the nation's first scientists, and they remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land.

We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

**The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences is the impartial, authoritative, cross-sector voice of health and medical science in Australia. We are an independent, interdisciplinary body of Fellows – elected by their peers for their outstanding achievements and exceptional contributions to health and medical science in Australia. Collectively, they are a representative and independent voice, through which we engage with the community, industry and governments.**

**The Academy is uniquely positioned to convene cross-sector stakeholders from across Australia to address the most pressing health challenges facing society. We focus on developing future generations of health and medical researchers, on providing independent expert advice to government and other stakeholders, and on providing a forum for discussing progress in health and medical research with an emphasis on translating research into practice.**

The Academy is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient.

We are most grateful to all the organisations and individuals who have supported our work through grants, donations and sponsorships during the past five years, and to our Fellows who generously give their time to support our work.

## Our Purpose

To advance health and medical research in Australia and its translation into benefits for all, by fostering leadership within our sector, providing expert advice to decision makers, and engaging patients and the public.



Professor Ingrid Scheffer  
AO FRS FAA PresAHMS  
President, 2019-2022



Professor Ian Frazer  
AC FRS FAA FTSE FAHMS  
Inaugural President, 2014-2019

## The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences is Australia's newest learned Academy.

The Academy was established in 2014 and admitted its first full intake of Fellows in 2015, and in this short period has established itself as a valuable national resource – an independent, interdisciplinary, authoritative source of advice and leadership.

Our Fellows are elected competitively by their peers for their exceptional achievements and contributions to health and medical science in Australia. Drawn from universities, medical research institutes, health services, industry, charities and the public service, AAHMS will have 426 Fellows as of October 2020, located in all of Australia's eight states and territories, and internationally.

The diversity of talent and expertise among these Fellows generates a representative and authoritative voice that spans the breadth of translational biomedical and clinical research in Australia. This collective expertise is unique to the Academy and provides a strong platform through which we engage with the community, industry and governments.

This document celebrates our formative years. It is worth noting that for much of this time, the Academy has been working with only two or three staff members.

We are very proud of what we have achieved so far and look forward not only to the next five years, but the next 50 – and beyond.

## Our Vision

A future in which health and medical science, with the Academy as its champion, drives sustained improvement in the health of the Australian and global community.

## Our Objective

To provide independent and research-based expert advice on challenges and opportunities in health, enabling decisions informed by the best available evidence.



## Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

As Australia and the world have faced the extraordinary challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been working with our Fellows and Associate Members to monitor and respond to the outbreak.

We have liaised with government, the Chief Medical Officer, Chief Scientist, and others as they work to manage the pandemic effectively. We have also worked in partnership with key stakeholders across Australia's research and innovation landscape to provide expert advice and analysis.

## Rapid Research Information Forum

The Rapid Research Information Forum (RRIF) is an expert forum chaired by Australia's Chief Scientist.

It provides a mechanism through which the Government receives scientific input and analysis of the latest evidence on pressing questions on the COVID-19 pandemic, as they emerge.

As a learned Academy, AAHMS is a core member of this group. Our Fellows act as lead and contributing authors of RRIF briefings, alongside Fellows of other Academies and additional experts.

RRIF has produced briefings on topics including the most promising vaccines and therapeutics, the potential for reinfection with SARS-CoV-2 and the possibility of there being a seasonal aspect to the pandemic.



## Webinars

Our webinars have proved an effective means through which we have informed the health and research communities.

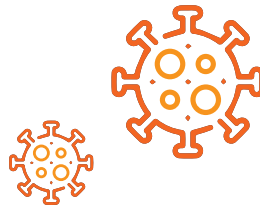




## COVID-19 Expert Committee

Our COVID-19 Expert Committee brings together interdisciplinary expertise from the Academy's Fellowship to ensure we provide an independent and authoritative voice as the pandemic progresses in Australia, and as we consider future preparedness.

Chaired by Professor Tania Sorrell AM FAHMS, the committee coordinates much of our work on COVID-19.



## Publications, Outputs and Events

The Academy published an early statement in March 2020, on the initial Australian response to the pandemic. We welcomed the effective use of science advice in the Australian response and highlighted the ongoing need for evidence-based, transparent decision-making.

A later statement in May 2020 reflected on the ongoing situation, supporting the effective use of public health measures and the value of exploring innovative solutions such as the COVIDSafe app in Australia's continuing efforts to manage the pandemic.

The Learned Academies COVID-19 Expert Database was also created to provide a mechanism for governments, the business sector, research sector, and other decision-makers to easily access the expertise they need to inform their decision making. It serves as a hub for interdisciplinary expertise on COVID-19 and its widespread impacts on Australia and the world.



## Providing Expert Advice

The Academy provides an impartial and authoritative voice for healthcare and is active in influencing policy.

Through the expertise of our Fellows and by convening leaders and stakeholders, we evaluate evidence to produce high quality advice to Government and other stakeholders.



### 22 Submissions & Statements

Since 2015, we have made 22 submissions and statements. Topics have included:

- The value of data for health research
- Women in STEM
- Emerging technologies
- The health impacts of bushfires
- Investment in research and innovation
- Research integrity & responsible conduct
- Research training and workforce.



### 5 National Priorities

Set out for Government in 2019:

- Invest in health and medical sciences
- Foster a vibrant research environment
- Embed research in the health system
- Harness research outcomes to improve health
- Cultivate a skilled, diverse and mobile workforce.

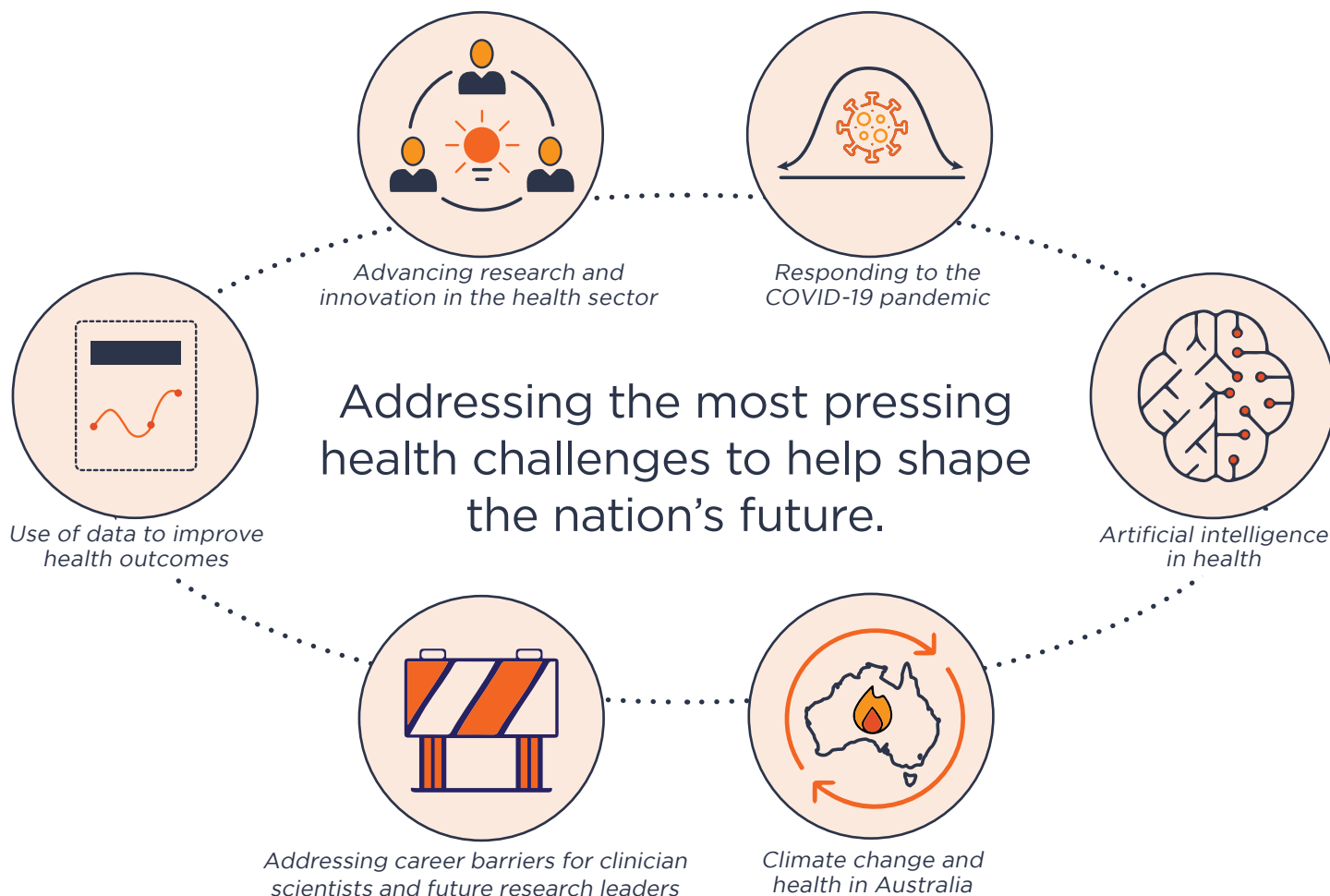
## Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)

The MRFF is a valuable new source of funding for health and medical research and the Academy has actively supported its development and implementation.

**2016** Advice to the Department of Health based on extensive consultation with the Fellowship and key external stakeholders to inform MRFF priority setting 2016-2018.

**2018-2019** Advice on methodologies for setting priorities, providing suitable models including implementation, review and evaluation.





## Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA)

ACOLA's horizon scanning projects are an important source of advice in tackling pressing national challenges that increasingly require solutions drawn from across Australia's research base.

As an Associate Member of ACOLA, we contribute to these projects – further strengthening this invaluable national resource with our health perspective and thereby diversifying the expertise incorporated into

expert groups on topics including:

- The Future of Precision Medicine in Australia
- Synthetic Biology in Australia: An outlook to 2030
- The effective and ethical development of Artificial Intelligence
- The Internet of Things
- The Future of Agricultural Technologies.

## Our Objective

Cultivate an environment in Australia in which future health and medical science leaders can thrive – where they can represent the community in which we work.

## Life as a Clinician Scientist

Life as a Clinician Scientist events are held across Australia and see Academy Fellows and other experts share insights from their own careers with students, doctors, health professionals and early career researchers.

This program is unique in Australia – inspiring, encouraging and supporting individuals across the country to pursue research careers in the health and medical sciences.

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13 Events held across  
4 States and Online  
More than 2,600 registered attendees

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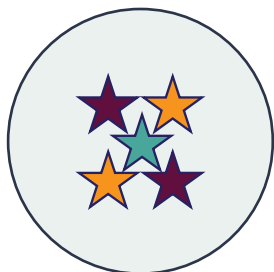
*“EVERY session was compelling, detailed and interesting”*



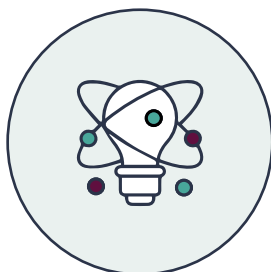
*“A wonderfully informative and inspiring event”*



## What Do Our Attendees Think?<sup>1</sup>



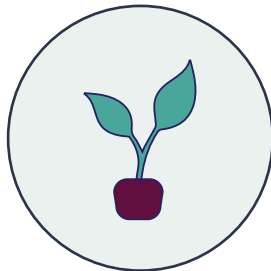
**99% rate**  
our events above  
average or excellent



**98% agreed**  
knowledge learned at  
the event is applicable



**99% agreed**  
knowledgeable speakers  
and quality discussions



**81% likely/very likely**  
to pursue a clinician  
scientist career after  
attending



*"Speakers provided  
me with great insights  
into the pathways into  
clinical research"*



<sup>1</sup> Based on evaluation from our 2019 events.

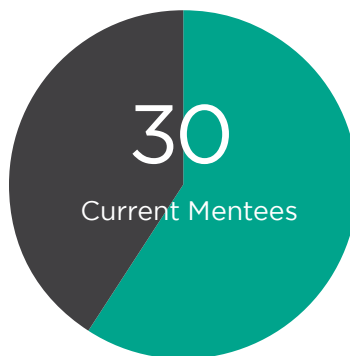
## Mentorship

A distinctive program in Australia, in which emerging health and medical research leaders are mentored by Academy Fellows.

The mentee receives individualised support, tailored to their career needs and delivered by the country's most eminent researchers.

The mentees become Associate Members of the Academy while in the three-year program.

Our program targets a critical career point, where individuals are growing their independent research careers and looking towards leadership positions – even the most talented researchers can be lost from the system at this point.



Current Mentees



Accepted onto  
the program  
to date

Men Women

“

*Our mentees are simply  
astounding and highlight the  
enormous potential and promise  
of emerging leaders in health  
and medical sciences in Australia.*

Professor Ingrid Scheffer





“

*It has truly been life-changing and if I think back to where I was three years ago and where I am today, it is a period of enormous personal and professional growth, which I attribute in large part to this program.*

Mentee alumnus

## What Do our Mentees Think?<sup>2</sup>

100%

of those

completing the program  
would recommend it

100%

of those

completing the program  
felt their mentor was a  
good match

100%

believe

the mentorship came  
at the right time in  
their career

96%

say

their mentor has the right  
skills to mentor them



<sup>2</sup> Data from voluntary responses to our annual survey of mentees and of mentees when they complete the program.

## Our Objective

Promote excellence in all we do, underpinned by an active Fellowship of Australia's best and brightest researchers, which reflects the full diversity of health and medical sciences.



## Our Fellows

We elect the best and brightest as Fellows – recognising their outstanding achievements and exceptional contributions to health and medical science in Australia. They are a representative and independent voice, through which we engage with the community, industry and governments.

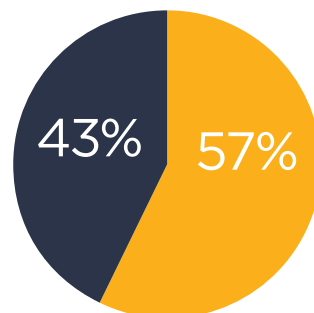
We have implemented a number of measures to drive up diversity and inclusion within the Fellowship, especially the election of women - 48% of the Ordinary Fellows elected in 2019 were women and 46% in 2020.

30

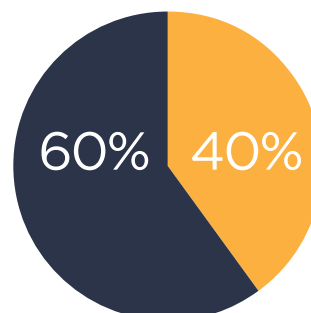
Associate Members

426

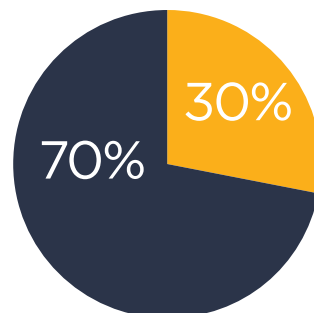
Fellows



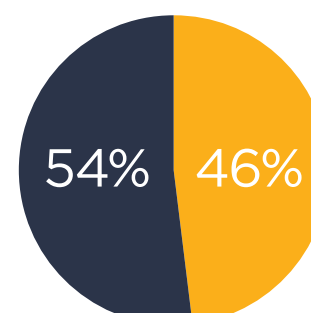
Executive



Council



Ordinary Fellows

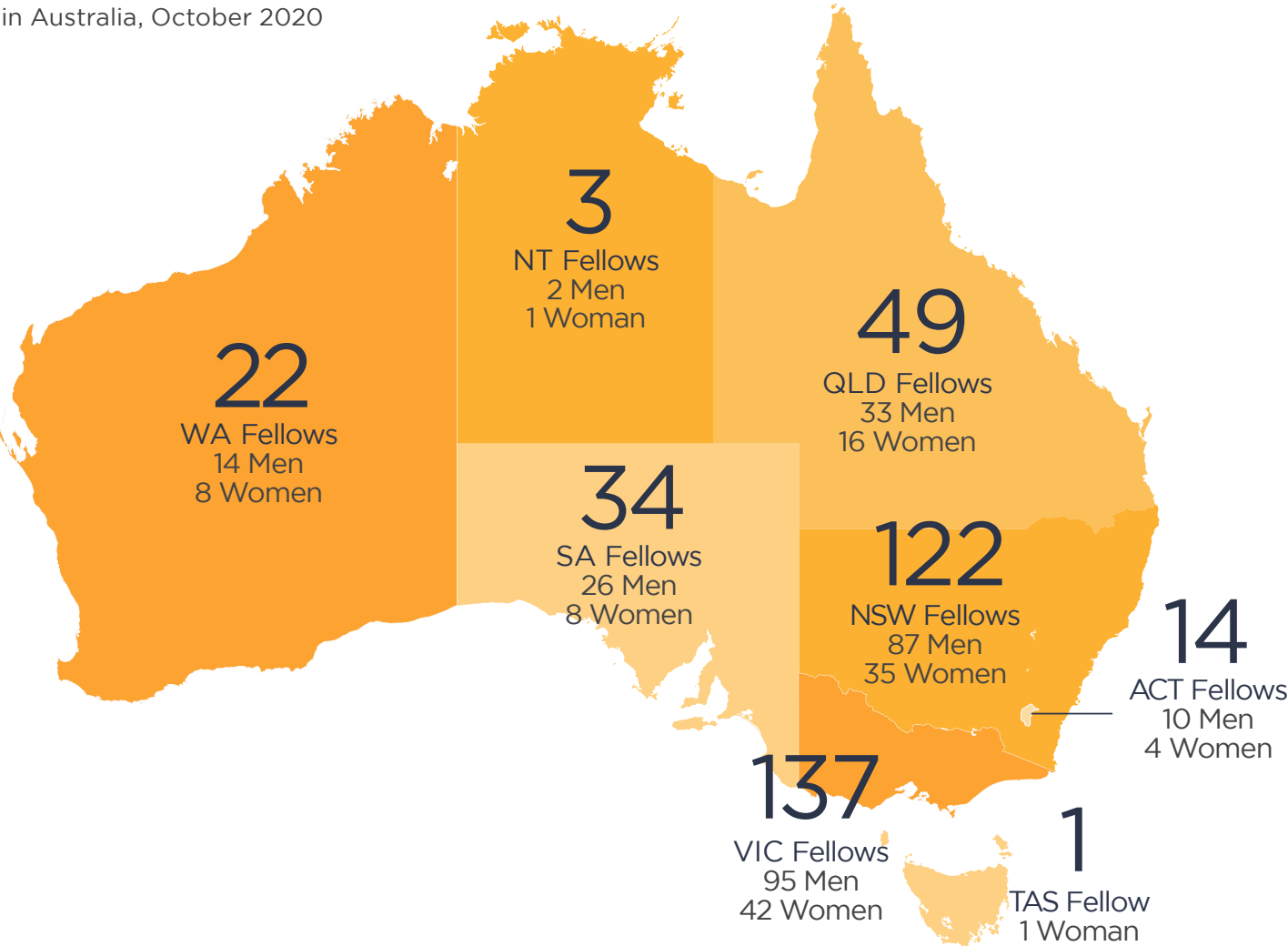


New Fellows 2020

Women  
Men

Data as of October 2020.

AAHMS Ordinary Fellows based  
in Australia, October 2020



Average Age





### Did you Know?

- The Academy's Fellows and Associate Members bring together expertise from more than 15 medical specialties, nursing, and allied health professions including psychology, physiotherapy, speech pathology and dietetics
- We can draw on the knowledge of research leaders from more than 50 universities and medical research institutes across all eight states and territories of Australia
- Executives and Deans of Medicine from all Group of Eight universities are represented among the Fellowship
- Eleven Academy Fellows have been elected to the Royal Society, including our President, Professor Ingrid Scheffer AO FRS FAA PresAHMS
- Two Academy Fellows are Nobel Laureates.

### Honorific Awards

#### Jian Zhou Medal

The Academy launched its first honorific award in 2019 – the Jian Zhou Medal recognises rising stars of Australian health and medical sciences.

It is awarded annually to individuals within 15 years of achieving their PhD (or equivalent) who are making a significant impact in translational medical science, primarily working in Australia.



#### Medal for Outstanding Female Researcher

Launched in October 2020 and awarded annually, this new Medal will recognise a researcher who identifies as female, who has made one or more exceptional discoveries in Australian health and medical sciences.



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ABN: 55 167 124 067

## Our Objective

Strengthen our contribution to improving Indigenous health and wellbeing and the representation of researchers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.

We are working to increase the representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers within the Fellowship and among our Associate Members.

Our goal with this strategic objective is to embed Indigenous perspectives and contributions across all our activities.

For instance:

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers have shared their career journeys and stories at our Life as a Clinician Scientist events, which has been hugely valued by our attendees.
- Indigenous perspectives have been an important part of our annual meetings. Our 2018 annual meeting on big data featured a session on the 'Effective use of data for Indigenous health'.
- Indigenous health and wellbeing, and views from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers, are also crucial perspectives for our policy projects. Our 2019 Federal election statement called for ambitious goals for supporting and increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers. It also drew attention to the concerning rise in health inequalities in Australia, noting that these are especially pronounced in Indigenous communities.



The Academy is funded through multiple sources, an important principle that helps maintain our independence.

Our primary source of funding in our formative years has been our Fellows and Associate Members' subscription fees.

We have also received funds through donations, government grants, and sponsorships and ticket sales for our events.

We work hard to ensure that all our activities have maximum impact with their target audiences.

More than **\$225,000** raised through sponsorship to date.

More than **\$240,000** raised in donations to date.

More than  
**42,000**  
people reached through our Life as a Clinician Scientist pages in 2019.

### Facebook Reach



### Top Tweet



**21,000** impressions.

**1,250** engagements when we announced our new 2019 Fellows.

Over **200,000** twitter impressions during 2019.

# Supporters 2014-2020

The Academy is most grateful to all the organisations and individuals who have supported our work during our formative years. We would not be able to deliver our programs and initiatives without their generous support, which comes in many forms, including donations, grants, event sponsorships and in kind contributions.

They are listed alphabetically as follows:

ANZAC Research Institute  
Australian Regenerative Medicine Institute  
Bellberry Ltd  
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre  
Bupa Health Foundation  
Mrs Veronika Butta  
Centre for Eye Research Australia  
Professor John Chalmers AC  
Club Melbourne  
Commonwealth Department of Health  
Cook Medical  
CSL Ltd  
Deakin University  
Doherty Institute  
Griffith University School of Medicine  
Findex  
Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health  
Professor Ian Frazer AC and the Frazer Family Foundation  
Gandevia Foundation  
George Institute for Global Health  
Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research  
Hudson Institute of Medical Research  
Kolling Institute  
Lions Eye Institute

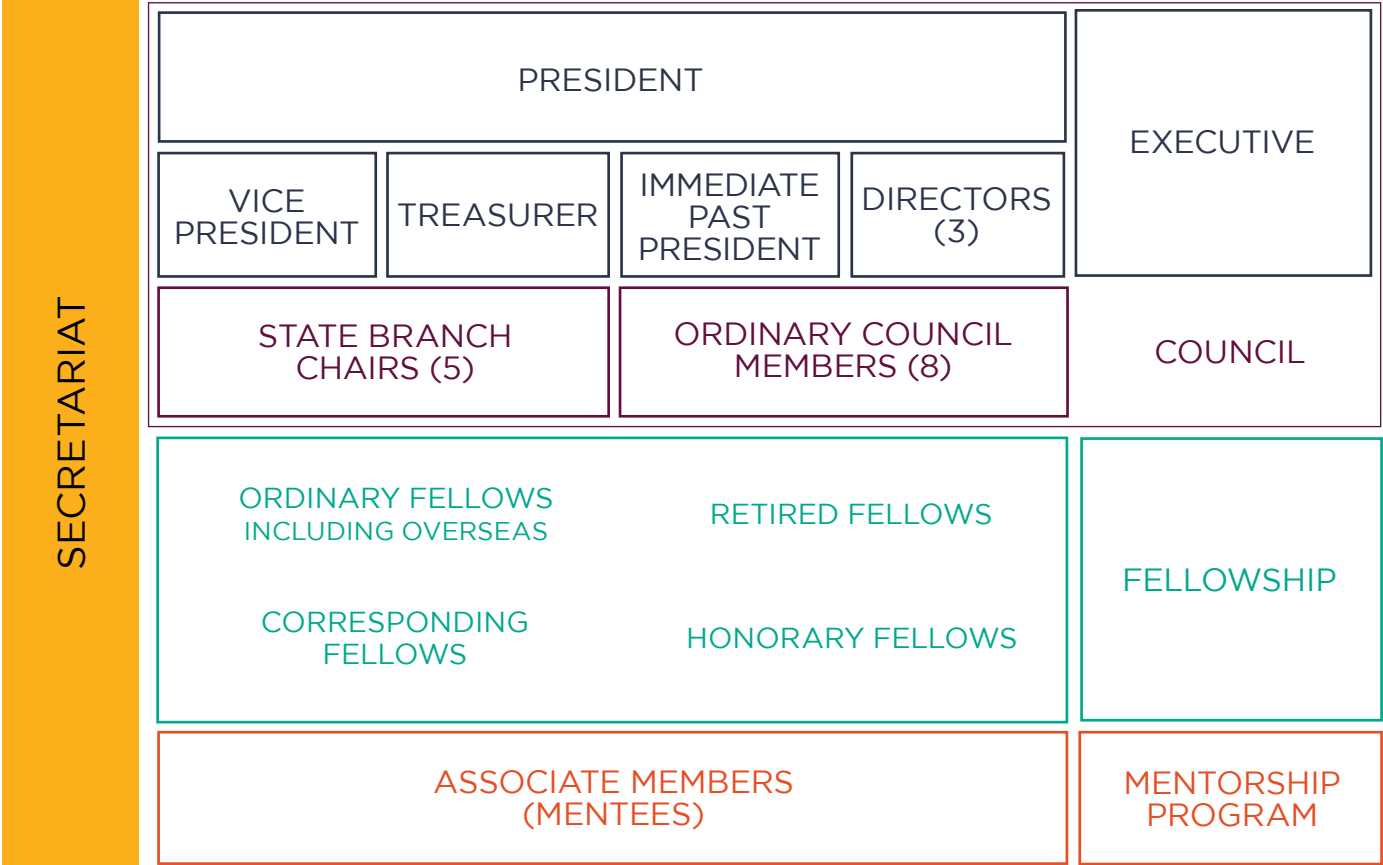
Menzies Health Institute Queensland  
Merchant Charitable Foundation  
Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute  
Monash University  
Murdoch Children's Research Institute  
QIMR Berghofer  
Queensland Brain Institute  
South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute  
Dr Xiao Yi Sun  
Telethon Kids Institute  
Translational Research Institute  
University of Adelaide  
University of Melbourne  
University of Notre Dame Australia  
University of Queensland Faculty of Medicine  
University of Queensland Medical Society  
University of Sydney Faculty of Medicine and Health  
University of Western Australia  
UNSW Sydney  
Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute  
Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research  
Western Australia Health Technology Network  
Westmead Institute for Medical Research

Alongside the important contributions made by our Fellows through their Fellowship subscription fees and the generosity of the many volunteers who have helped deliver our events.



# How is the Academy Governed?

The Academy is governed by elected representatives who form an advisory Council and an Executive (Board of Directors). This includes elected Chairs in each of our five state branches: New South Wales & the Australian Capital Territory; Queensland; South Australia & the Northern Territory; Victoria & Tasmania; Western Australia.



The Academy also has the following Standing Committees: Finance, Audit and Risk Committee; Reports Committee; Mentorship Committee; and Selection Committees for the Fellowship election and for our honorific awards. We are most grateful to all those Fellows and Associate Members who generously serve on our committees, all of which is undertaken voluntarily.

Photo credits throughout,  
listed alphabetically:

David Broadway

Paul Burston/University of Melbourne

Stewart Donn

Milly Huang

Peter Kelly

Justine Walpole

Walter and Eliza Hall Institute