

## NOMINATION GUIDELINES FOR MEDAL FOR OUTSTANDING FIRST NATIONS RESEARCHER

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### Purpose

These guidelines specify the processes and key dates for nominating a candidate for the Medal for Outstanding First Nations Researcher, an honorific award of the of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS), supported by Bellberry.

### Criteria

**The AAHMS Medal for Outstanding First Nations Researcher is awarded annually to an outstanding mid-career researcher of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, who is an emerging research leader working and making an impactful contribution in the health and medical sciences in Australia.**

The Medal recognises outstanding researchers and provides them with assistance to expand their research networks and to participate in international knowledge exchange by supporting travel nationally or internationally to visit relevant research centres.

Nominations are welcome from all fields associated with furthering biomedical and health research, whether clinical, public health, basic biomedical or social sciences research, and relevant areas of the humanities, such as bioethics. Candidates do not necessarily need to be working on research that has a First Nations focus.

The recipient will be a postdoctoral researcher within 12 years of achieving their PhD (or equivalent first research higher degree), inclusive, at the time of nomination. Consideration will be given to individuals whose career has been interrupted, delayed or otherwise constrained through reasons including, but not limited to illness, child bearing, child caring or other caring responsibilities. Other disruptions resulting from professional development or training, such as clinical load, would not be considered under this definition. We recognise that where individuals are working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, there is a time commitment involved in building and maintaining those relationships, accountabilities and other protocols that may be necessary. This may affect an individual's research outputs, and candidates should note where this is the case to ensure that it can be considered by the selection committee as an important consideration.

The recipient **must** be a resident of Australia at the time of nomination and the majority of their research **must** have been initiated or led from Australia (i.e. more than 50%).

The Medal will receive:

- **The AAHMS Medal for Outstanding First Nations Researcher**, which will be awarded at the Academy's annual meeting each October.
- Financial support for their travel costs to enable them to attend at the annual meeting to receive the award.
- A travel grant of \$10,000, which might be used to fund, for instance, conference registration fees; travel, accommodation and subsistence; and other related costs (further detail below).

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### Provisions

#### 1. Nomination for the Medal for Outstanding First Nations Researcher

##### 1.1. Entitlement to nominate

Fellows and non-Fellows may make a nomination, but individuals cannot self-nominate.

The nomination can be endorsed by any number of supporters. Support is provided by way of signatures attached to the nominator support letter.

##### 1.2. Eligibility for nomination

###### Citizenship/residency

Eligibility is restricted to Australian citizens or permanent residents who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (see below), who are undertaking outstanding health and medical sciences from work primarily in Australia (i.e. at least 50%). Medal recipients will be making or anticipated to make a significant impact in their field of health and medical research, at the time of the nomination, and will be, in the opinion of the nominator, emerging research leaders in their field. Candidates must be residing in Australia at the time of nomination.

###### Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Descent

Applicants are asked to provide a letter from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community or Organisation where they identify and are accepted. This may come from one of (although is not limited to) the following:

- Land Council
- Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) or Native Title Group
- Natural Resources Management Board (NRM Board)
- Traditional Owner group
- Elders group

###### Experience/Career Stage

The Award is open to persons within 12 years of completing their PhD (or equivalent first research higher degree, e.g. PhD/DPhil, DPsych, DSc, MD; candidates with alternative qualifications should contact the Secretariat for advice). The date of PhD is determined as the date of the letter advising the thesis was passed.

###### Career Disruption

The Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences is committed to ensuring all eligible researchers can be considered for this award and will assess qualifying career disruptions alongside their opportunity to demonstrate scientific and research excellence.

A career disruption involves a prolonged interruption to a candidate's capacity to conduct full time equivalent (FTE) research since completing their PhD due to, but not limited to: illness, child bearing, child caring or other caring responsibilities (a disruption should be 90 days or longer, and may include long-term partial return to work formally agreed with the employer). Other

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disruptions resulting from professional development or training, such as clinical load, would not be considered under this definition.

Candidates will be considered 'relative to opportunity', taking into account any career disruptions, to assess their associated productivity commensurate with the opportunities available. Nominators should specify in the relevant section of the nomination form the nature of any such disruptions.

Exemption periods that can be requested include up to two years FTE for a dependent child, up to a maximum of four years (FTE) for two or more dependent children. An additional 6 months (pro rata) can be applied per eligible career disruption to take into account the time it takes to return to FTE after a period of extended leave.

Career disruption periods will be taken into account for all nominees, including for those who would otherwise be beyond the eligibility requirements relating to the completion of their PhD (or equivalent).

## Referees

For shortlisted candidates invited to submit a full nomination. **Three** referee reports are required for each candidate. The nominator is responsible for providing the three required referee reports at the time of nomination, at least **one** of which should be from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleague. Referee reports from international Indigenous colleagues may also be submitted. All three reports must be received by the nomination deadline.

Referees should address the criteria for the award and comment the candidate's achievements against these criteria. They should justify why and how the candidate is an outstanding researcher (in a relevant field) and emerging research leader, and how they have contributed to meritorious research in a field relevant to health and medical science.

## 1.3. Nomination Procedure

- The first step in nominations is submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI). Nominators are to email the Secretariat ([awards@aaahms.org](mailto:awards@aaahms.org)) with the name of the intended candidate, their current email address, position and institution – for instructions on how to complete the EOI.
- Nominators will be asked to initially provide a completed EOI form, a candidate CV and evidence of the candidate's eligibility as an individual of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. The EOI form will ask the nominator to outline the candidate's qualifications, career disruptions (if applicable) and a description of why the candidate is considered a suitable nominee for this award, including their career track record and key achievements. A Candidate Consent & Certification Form will also be required.
- The selection committee will review the candidate EOIs and identify up to five candidates who will be invited to submit a full nomination.
- Nominators of shortlisted candidates will receive an invitation to complete the full Nomination Form. The full nomination will supplement the EOI and will include further information on the candidate's track record, their top 10 publications, and a lay description of their research. The nomination should also include and a description of the candidate's plans for using the travel grant (although this will not form part of the selection process).
- Nominators should submit all documentation via the Academy's nomination platform, Award Force, by the advertised deadline(s).
- The nominator is responsible for confirming the candidate's eligibility and consent to nomination, and for securing the referee reports.
- The nominator shall be the primary contact regarding all aspects of the nomination.
- Nominees will remain eligible for one selection round. The Selection Committee, at its discretion, may decide to extend the eligibility of up to two especially competitive candidates for one year, in exceptional circumstances.

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Approved by  
Document  
Owner

Executive  
Secretariat

Original Issue: 08/09/2023  
Version: 1.1

Approval Date 17 July 2024  
Review Date 17 July 2026

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## 1.4. Selection Procedure

- Recipient(s) will be selected by the AAHMS Medal for Outstanding First Nations Researcher Selection Committee, for endorsement by Council, based assessment of all candidates against the criteria.
- Only nominees for whom the Academy has received a complete EOI, and subsequent complete Nomination Form (outlined in the checklists below), will be considered by the Committee at each stage.
- The Committee will make a recommendation regarding a Medal recipient each year and may, at its discretion, carry over up to two unsuccessful nominations for twelve months, in exceptional circumstances.
- The Committee's decision is final – appeals can be made only on the basis of process error and should be directed to the Academy's President in the first instance.
- A copy of the Committee's Terms of Reference is available from the AAHMS secretariat.

## 1.5. Award

- Recipients will receive a Medal and a travel grant of \$10,000, which can be used to pay for the direct costs of travel, such as conference registration fees, flights and ground transport, accommodation and subsistence. Funding cannot be used to cover salaries, lab-related costs such as bench fees, insurance or visa costs. Nominators/applicants should contact the AAHMS secretariat should they have any questions about eligible expenses ([awards@aaahms.org](mailto:awards@aaahms.org)).
- Recipients may use the travel grant for any trip between two weeks and three months in duration that is relevant to their research. They may, if budget allows, use the grant to fund multiple trips (in which case, the total duration of all trips should add up to two weeks and three months in duration).
- Recipients will be asked to submit a brief final report on completion of their travel, which includes a summary of the travel undertaken and any outcomes (this will be requested two years after the award was made, if it has not already been submitted).
- Activities funded through the travel grant must have been undertaken within two years from the date on which the recipient receives the Medal (either in person or *in absentia*) – i.e. at the Academy's annual meeting. Recipients may apply for extensions or variations due to extenuating circumstances and should contact the AAHMS secretariat ([awards@aaahms.org](mailto:awards@aaahms.org)) as early as possible should such circumstances arise.
- Recipients will also be asked to make a presentation to the Bellberry community of staff and Human Research Ethics Committees members, following completion of the travel award on the activities supported by the grant, and the career impact arising (the costs of travel to provide the presentation will be separately provided by Bellberry).

***We are most grateful for the generous support of:***

- ***The Gandevia Foundation, for their donation to enable the establishment of this Award.***
- ***Bellberry Ltd for providing the travel grant component of the Award.***

## 2. Checklist for a completed nomination

### Expression of interest phase

- **Express of Interest Form**, including:
  - **Personal details** of the Candidate
  - **Eligibility of the candidate** as an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, currently residing in Australia, and the date of PhD acceptance is within the 12-year time frame at the due date of nomination

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- **Contact details** of the candidate
- **Short citation** in non-technical terms illustrating the candidates research and its broader impact/implications
- **Description of career track record and key achievements**
  - **Career disruption**, if applicable
- **Support letter from the nominator stating why the candidate meets the criteria**, including a description of why the candidate is considered a suitable nominee for this award and signed by any number of supporting signatures\*
- **Candidate's Curriculum Vitae**
- A **Candidate Consent & Certification Form** signed by the candidate\* – *this may be submitted separately by the candidate*

## Full nomination phase

- **Summary and DOI details or copies** of the candidate's **ten (10) most significant publications / contributions**. Please ensure that candidates outline their roles/contribution to publications within large multi-author papers.
- **Full publications list**
- **Three referee reports**, at least one of which should be from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleague. Referee reports from international Indigenous colleagues may also be submitted.
- **Letter of support from the nominee's institution**, from an individual at the level of department/division/school head or similar, supporting the application.
- **Short description of intended use of travel grant**
- A **Nominator certification form** signed by the nominator\*
- **Nomination checklist**

\* *Electronic signatures and/or scanned documents are preferred*

## 3. Key Dates and review process

<b>EOIs open</b>	Mid-October
<b>Deadline for EOI submission</b>	1 March
<b>Selection committee meeting 1: review EOIs and shortlist</b>	By end March
<b>Nomination window for full nominations</b>	Late March/early April – late May
<b>Deadline for full nominations</b>	20 May
<b>Selection committee meeting 2: identify winner</b>	Mid-late June
<b>AAHMS Council meeting – endorse recipient</b>	Mid-July
<b>Awardee contacted</b>	Late July
<b>Medal awarded (and next round opens)</b>	October (at the AAHMS annual meeting)