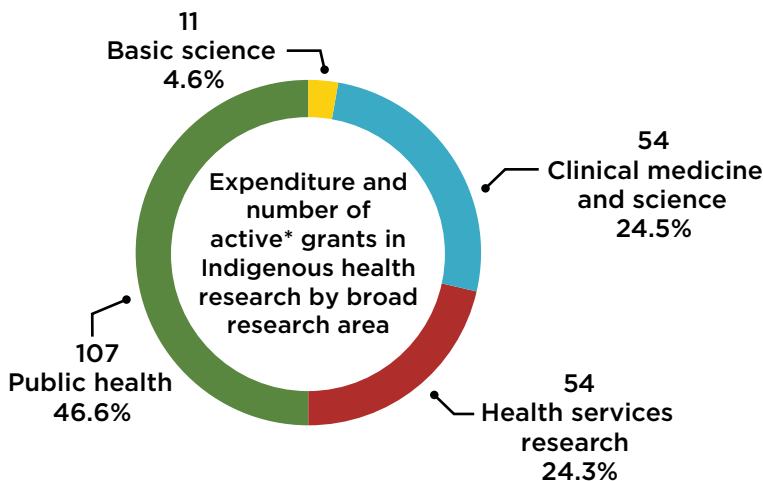


2023 NHMRC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Report Card of Achievements

This report card details 2023 achievements against the 2021-2024 Action Plan for *Road Map 3: A Strategic Framework for Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health through Research*. NHMRC continues to work with the Principal Committee Indigenous Caucus (PCIC) to progress all 18 actions in the Action Plan.

NHMRC is committed to spending 5% or more of the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical research.



PUBLIC HEALTH and **HEALTH SERVICES** were the **top fields of research** in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health receiving **\$31,858,284** in funding.



226

Active grants* in Indigenous health



\$68,980,572

Spent on Indigenous health research



8.1%

Of the MREA spent on Indigenous health

*All grants being paid in 2023

Strengthening Capacity

NHMRC is committed to building and strengthening capacity of Indigenous researchers. In 2023:



78

Active NHMRC grants* led by Indigenous researchers

*All grants being paid in 2023



192

Indigenous researchers on active grants funded by NHMRC*



2%

Of grants awarded in 2023 led by CIAs who identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent



Principal Committee Indigenous Caucus

PCIC is appointed on a triennial basis and works with NHMRC Council and CEO to provide advice on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research. Professor Yvonne Cadet-James is chair of PCIC and also a member of NHMRC Council for the 2021-2024 triennium.

National Consultation – Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria

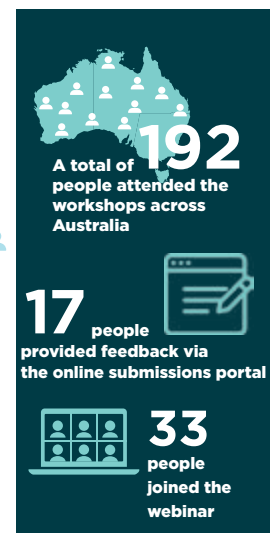
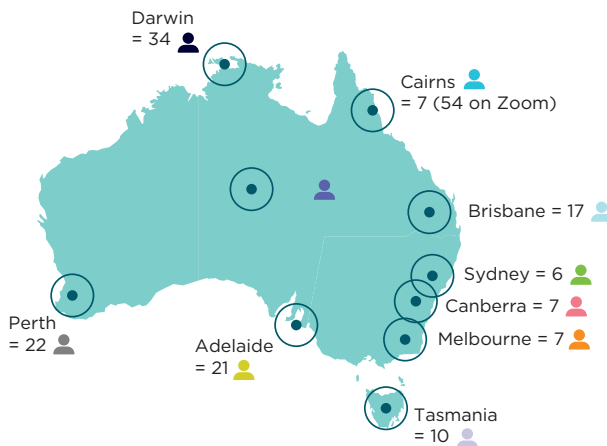
Our biggest activity for 2023 was the national consultation to review the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria (IREC). The IREC were designed to ensure that research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is of the highest scientific merit, likely to be beneficial and have impact and is acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

A report of the consultation can be found on the [NHMRC website](#).

The Office of the NHMRC are now working with the PCIC on an implementation plan.

Targeted Call for Research (TCR): Commercial determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

This TCR aims to encourage innovative, novel research in the emerging area of commercial determinants of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Applications closed in late 2023, with successful grant recipients to be announced in late 2024.



- ✓ Criteria are still relevant, but need to be refreshed with current terminology
- 👥 Time to raise expectations: e.g., community leadership/governance vs community engagement
- 🔗 Concepts that could be included: Indigenous knowledges, data sovereignty, translation, impact
- 📄 Accountability – did people do what they said in their application?
- 👉 The 20% threshold is confusing, and concern about potential to game it – but it's not clear what's better
- 👥 Resources to train and support IREC assessors and panel members
- ❓ Seeking greater consistency in how IREC report is applied in scoring
- 🗣️ A question for every funding application: how will this project benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health?

2022 NHMRC Sandra Eades Investigator Grant Award



Dr Graham Gee was the recipient of the 2022 NHMRC Sandra Eades Investigator Grant Award. A clinical psychologist, his research focuses on using Indigenous research methodologies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives to support healing and recovery needs of survivors and develop early intervention practices.

This annual NHMRC award is named to honour **Professor Sandra Eades AO FAHMS FASSA**, the first Indigenous medical practitioner to be awarded a Doctor of Philosophy. The award is given to the top-ranked Indigenous researcher grant recipient in the Emerging Leadership Category of Investigator Grants.

Our Collaborations in Health Research (OCHRe) Network

The collective vision of the NHMRC-funded First Nations Research Network, Our Collaborations in Health Research (OCHRe), is the establishment of a culturally secure and inclusive network of Indigenous researchers. OCHRe supports the interface of culture, science and health research that translates to improvements in the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples.

OCHRe activities in 2023 included the appointment of a National Manager and establishment of their governance structure. There are now over 250 members who are engaged through regular newsletters and webinars. An online workshop focussed on building the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers was delivered in November and included a presentation from NHMRC on 'How to write a good NHMRC grant.'

