



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

Melbourne Academic Centre for Health  
Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

### Research Assistant in Evaluating Consumer Engagement and Participation in Research

POSITION NO	0050433
CLASSIFICATION	Research Assistant, Level B
WORK FOCUS CATEGORY	Academic Specialist
SALARY	\$105,232- \$124,958 (pro rata)
SUPERANNUATION	Employer contribution of 9.5%
WORKING HOURS	Part-time (0.6 FTE)
BASIS OF EMPLOYMENT	Fixed-term position for 12 months. Fixed term contract type: Externally funded.
OTHER BENEFITS	<a href="http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/working/benefits">http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers/working/benefits</a>
HOW TO APPLY	Online applications are preferred. Go to <a href="http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers">http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers</a> , under 'Job Search and Job Alerts', select the relevant option ('Current Staff' or 'Prospective Staff'), then find the position by title or number.
CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES ONLY	Ms Nuzha Wazeer Tel +61 3 9035 8436 Email: <a href="mailto:wazeerf@unimelb.edu.au">wazeerf@unimelb.edu.au</a>  <i>Please do not send your application to this contact</i>

For information about working for the University of Melbourne, visit our websites:  
[about.unimelb.edu.au/careers](http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers)

## ***Position Summary***

The MACH is an NHMRC-accredited joint venture between Victoria's top healthcare providers, medical research institutes and the University of Melbourne.

At the MACH, our responsibility is to facilitate collaboration between academia and healthcare to accelerate the translation of innovative research into clinical care and better patient outcomes. The MACH focuses on integrating medical research with systems and infrastructure to improve the understanding of patient needs and the quality of care provided to those patients. We do that by convening theme-driven committees made up of leading experts from across the MACH network, among other activities. Improving consumer and community involvement in health and medical research is an important part of our mandate as well as our partners', which include the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI), a leading biomedical research organisation with a special interest in current major health challenges such as cancer, immune health, infection, development and ageing. Research at the Institute ranges across basic, translational and clinical research.

WEHI's Consumer Buddy Program pairs consumers (in this context, individuals affected by the 'disease' being studied) with medical researchers to focus efforts and provide personal insights. Consumers in the program contribute their life experience to researchers, assist researchers with communicating in plain language, provide insight into how research can affect the community, and become an active part of the WEHI community by attending events and seminars. Findings from the Buddy Program are communicated to the Consumer Advisory Panel, which advises the Clinical Translation department on involving consumers in research.

The MACH has recently received funding through the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) in order to carry out an evaluation project on the Consumer Buddy Program and is already liaising with WEHI to begin this evaluation. This will fulfil the MRFF funding stipulation that the project should identify "innovative approaches for community and patient involvement in setting research priorities and facilitate system-wide learning and collaboration".

This project will be comprised of a mixed-methods analysis including the following activities:

1. Participant (researcher and consumer) interviews, building upon and updating previous interviews conducted.
2. Surveys across stakeholders (researchers, consumer buddies, external consumers).
3. Qualitative data from thematic analysis by focus group, including within and between consumer categories (e.g. novice, experienced, patients/carers).
4. Synthesizing qualitative data for key recommendations.
5. Coordinating input from and feeding back to the MACH's national research translation partners.

The output of this project will be a report outlining what success looks like, the challenges faced, guidelines for use among MACH partners and potential integration as a model for use across Australia.

A dedicated Research Assistant is vital for the success of this project. Under the supervision of the MACH (academic and administrative) and WEHI (Consumer Buddy Program coordinators and Consumer Advisory Panel), the RA will coordinate all research activities and will require a high level of independence.

The University of Melbourne acts as the administrative and infrastructural support for the MACH and thus you will be a University of Melbourne employee. University employees working for MACH are required at all times to continue to adhere to University policies, procedures, regulations and statutes, as well as to MACH policies and procedures, but the University's policies and procedures shall prevail in the event of any inconsistency. For the period of participating in activities at MACH, you will be subject to the reasonable control and direction of MACH and its project leaders. You consent to the University disclosing to MACH your personal employment information solely for the purposes of facilitating your secondment to MACH, and that such disclosure will not be a breach of any of your privacy rights.

This position reports to Dr Lorraine O'Reilly (WEHI and University of Melbourne). Project updates will be given to the project steering committee, consisting of WEHI and University of Melbourne representatives, on a 3 monthly basis.

## ***Key Responsibilities***

### **1.1 RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING**

- ▶ Work with steering committee members to develop a project plan.
- ▶ Lead in the preparation of documents required for ethics and governance submission.
- ▶ Design and conduct surveys with multiple stakeholders.
- ▶ Manage and analyse qualitative data.
- ▶ Prepare a report outlining findings and recommendations.
- ▶ Contribute to publications arising from this research.
- ▶ Active participation in the communication and dissemination of research where appropriate.

### **1.2 LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE**

- ▶ Actively participate at project team and/or division meetings and with guidance, lead the project through all phases of the research cycle.
- ▶ Participate in community and professional activities related to the relevant disciplinary area.
- ▶ Effective demonstration and promotion of MACH and University values including diversity and inclusion and high standards of ethics and integrity.

### **1.3 OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- ▶ Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) responsibilities as outlined in section 4.
- ▶ Any other duties as reasonably requested, consistent with the classification of this position.

## ***2. Selection Criteria***

### **2.1 ESSENTIAL**

- ▶ A postgraduate degree in evaluation studies, health sciences or a related discipline.
- ▶ A strong interest in research evaluation.
- ▶ Experience in qualitative survey design.
- ▶ Demonstrated understanding of the conduct of research including the collection, collation, management and analysis of qualitative research data.
- ▶ Strong ability and desire to build an academic or research career trajectory.
- ▶ Excellent verbal and written communication skills for effective research collaboration and engagement.
- ▶ Excellent organisation and time management skills.

- ▶ Flexible and responsive to changing priorities.

## 2.2 DESIRABLE

- ▶ Demonstrated understanding of principles guiding consumer and community involvement in health and medical research.
- ▶ Experience of working in health and medical research evaluation.

## 2.3 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ Unrestricted right to work in Australia.
- ▶ Some out of hours work may be required.
- ▶ This position is based in Parkville. Travel to other sites may be required.
- ▶ All workplaces and the surrounding site are non-smoking environments.

## 3. *Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion*

The University is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a workplace free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. The University makes decisions on employment, promotion and reward on the basis of merit.

The University is committed to all aspects of equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and to providing all staff, students, contractors, honorary appointees, volunteers and visitors with a safe, respectful and rewarding environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and victimisation. This commitment is set out in the University's People Strategy 2015-2020 and policies that address diversity and inclusion, equal employment opportunity, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and appropriate workplace behaviour. All staff are required to comply with all University policies.

The University values diversity because we recognise that the differences in our people's age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, physical ability and background bring richness to our work environment. Consequently, the People Strategy sets out the strategic aim to drive diversity and inclusion across the University to create an environment where the compounding benefits of a diverse workforce are recognised as vital in our continuous desire to strive for excellence and reach the targets of Growing Esteem.

## 4. *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)*

All staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other personnel who may be affected by their conduct.

OHS responsibilities applicable to positions are published at:

<http://safety.unimelb.edu.au/topics/responsibilities/>

These include general staff responsibilities and those additional responsibilities that apply for Managers and Supervisors and other Personnel.

## **5. Other Information**

### **5.1 MELBOURNE ACADEMIC CENTRE FOR HEALTH**

[www.machaustralia.org](http://www.machaustralia.org)

The Melbourne Academic Centre for Health (MACH) is a joint venture between Victoria's top healthcare providers, medical research institutes and the University of Melbourne.

Established in 2014, MACH has established an integrated program of discovery, innovation and clinical implementation, with a focus on improving patient outcomes.

The objectives of the MACH are to:

- i) Facilitate collaboration between the partners to conduct research and trial initiatives that will lead to better health outcomes and patient experiences;
- ii) Promote best practice in healthcare and community and public health;
- iii) Promote and build the research capacity of our Partners;
- iv) Provide policy advice to governments, and;
- v) Work cooperatively with governments and other organisations to improve health outcomes and patient experiences.

### **5.2 FACULTY OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

[www.mdhs.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.mdhs.unimelb.edu.au)

The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences has an enviable research record and is the University of Melbourne's largest faculty in terms of management of financial resources, employment of academic and professional staff, teaching of undergraduate and postgraduate (including research higher degree) students and the conduct of basic and applied research. The Faculty's annual revenue is \$628m with approximately 55% of this income related to research activities.

The Faculty has a student teaching load in excess of 8,500 equivalent full-time students including more than 1,300 research higher degree students. The Faculty has approximately 2,195 staff comprising 642 professional staff and 1,553 research and teaching staff.

The Faculty has appointed Australia's first Associate Dean (Indigenous Development) to lead the development and implementation of the Faculty's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will be aligned with the broader University – wide plan. To enable the Faculty to improve its Indigenous expertise knowledge base, the Faculty's RAP will address Indigenous employment, Indigenous student recruitment and retention, Indigenous cultural recognition and building partnerships with the Indigenous community as key areas of development.

### **5.3 THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**

Established in 1853, the University of Melbourne is a leading international university with a tradition of excellence in teaching and research. The main campus in Parkville is recognised as the hub of Australia's premier knowledge precinct comprising eight hospitals, many leading research institutes and a wide-range of knowledge-based industries. With outstanding performance in international rankings, the University is at the forefront of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

The University employs people of outstanding calibre and offers a unique environment where staff are valued and rewarded.

Further information about working at The University of Melbourne is available at <http://about.unimelb.edu.au/careers>.

#### 5.4 THE WALTER AND ELIZA HALL INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute is one of Australia's leading biomedical research organisations, with a national and international reputation for performing highly influential basic and translational research.

WEHI are addressing some of the major health challenges of our time, with a focus on:

- **Cancer** – understanding the basic processes that are disrupted to generate cancer cells, and how these can be targeted to treat disease
- **Immune health and infection** – discovering how the body fights infection, and how errors in the immune system lead to disease
- **Development and ageing** – studying how the biological foundations laid down during gestation and childhood affect development, and how our longer life expectancy presents new challenges for our ageing population

They are at the forefront of research innovation, with a strong commitment to excellence and investment in research computing, advanced technologies and developing new medicines and diagnostics.

The Institute is organised around five research themes:

- Infection, Inflammation and Immunity
- Cancer Research and Treatments
- Health Development and Ageing
- New Medicines and Advanced Technologies
- Computational Biology

#### Walter and Eliza Hall Consumer Buddy Program

The Institute's Consumer Buddy Program was piloted in May of 2013 and was formally launched in 2014 to provide researchers at the Institute as a way of being able to connect with the general community and gain insights from people who have been either patients or carers. Consumers are an integral part of Institute's research where they provide inspiration and support to Researchers and their teams, help set research direction and bring a link with community into the Institute. Our Consumers are important champions of the Institute and are a powerful voice within the community about scientific issues.

The Consumer Buddy Program is led by the WEHI Consumer Advisory Panel Co-ordinator., under the direction of the Consumer Advisory Panel. The coordinators role is to 'match' a trained Consumer with a Researcher in order to facilitate better research outcomes. A successful 'match' by the Co-ordinator enables two-way discussions between Researchers and Consumers.. From an initial number of 9 Consumers in 2014 it has grown to 65 Consumers in 2020, with a clear mandate for future growth to meet Researchers needs.

#### 5.5 ADVANCING MELBOURNE

The University's strategic direction is grounded in its purpose. While its expression may change, our purpose is enduring: to benefit society through the transformative impact of

education and research. Together, the vision and purpose inform the focus and scale of our aspirations for the coming decade.

Advancing Melbourne reflects the University's commitment to its people, its place, and its partners. Our aspiration for 2030 is to be known as a world-leading and globally connected Australian university, with our students at the heart of everything we do.

We will offer students a distinctive and outstanding education and experience, preparing them for success as leaders, change agents and global citizens.

We will be recognised locally and globally for our leadership on matters of national and global importance, through outstanding research and scholarship and a commitment to collaboration.

We will be empowered by our sense of place and connections with communities. We will take opportunities to advance both the University and the City of Melbourne in close collaboration and synergy.

We will deliver this through building a brilliant, diverse and vibrant University community, with strong connections to those we serve.

The means for achieving these goals include the development of the University of Melbourne's academic and professional staff and the capabilities needed to support a modern, world-class university. Those means require a commitment to ongoing financial sustainability and an ambitious infrastructure program which will reshape the campus and our contribution to the communities we engage with. This strategy, and the priorities proposed, is centred around five intersecting themes; place, community, education, discovery and global.

## 5.6 GOVERNANCE

The Vice Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and responsible to Council for the good management of the University.

Comprehensive information about the University of Melbourne and its governance structure is available at <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/governance>