

Position Description	
POSITION TITLE	Research Assistant
REPORTING RELATIONSHIP	Program Lead, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program and Head of Advocacy and Policy Impact, Food Policy
PROGRAM	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program Food Policy
EMPLOYMENT DURATION	1 year
TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT	Full time Fixed Term, 1 FTE
DATE	April 2021

The George Institute for Global Health

The George Institute ('TGI') employs 700+ people, focused on improving the health of millions of people worldwide. As a medical research institute affiliated with leading universities and with projects in approximately 50 countries, we are challenging the status quo in healthcare to find the best ways to prevent and treat chronic disease and injury, and to influence policy and practice worldwide. Our innovative commercial enterprises help maximise our impact.

Here is a sample of the things we are doing to achieve our goal of having the greatest possible impact on global health:

- We are identifying better and safer treatments for our biggest killers like stroke, heart disease and high blood pressure
- In many countries, our award winning FoodSwitch smartphone app is helping people make healthy food choices when shopping
- In China, we ran a successful education and awareness program to reduce the amount of salt eaten by people by 25% each day
- In rural India, we have shown that mobile technology can help diagnose mental health, as well as help treat cardiovascular disease, and we're looking at similar approaches to treating chronic diseases in Indonesia and China
- Together with Aboriginal communities in NSW, Australia, we have developed an innovative community led program to assist young Aboriginal drivers attain their license, now implemented in a dozen of locations
- We are developing an affordable dialysis machine, with potential to save millions of lives each year and transform the way kidney disease is treated globally
- And much more...

Context of the Role

The George Institute's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program cuts across content areas and is conducted within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing, with a focus on social determinants of health, health systems and healthcare delivery. We maintain an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paradigm of health and healing (physical, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual) and a commitment to making impact through translation that influences policy.

Underlying principles of our Program are:

- Strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and a commitment to using strengths-based approaches



- Capacity building for the next generation of researchers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and for non-Indigenous researchers to enable collaborative approaches to conducting high quality, ethically sound research in partnership with First Nations organisations, communities and individuals
- Genuine engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, other First Nations peoples and communities with research determined by community priorities

The Project

This project is about improving food and water security in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Building on the Yuwaya Ngarra-li (YN) partnership between the Dharriwaa Elders Group in Walgett and the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, the project aims to use innovative community-led processes and frameworks, encompassing Indigenous rights and knowledges, to strengthen, implement and evaluate community solutions and build resilience to mitigate future risks to food and water security.

The project is funded through a prestigious National Health and Medical Research Council IDEAS grant and supported by a multi-disciplinary team including health, social science, food policy, engineering, and health care workers. Following a series of threats to food and water security in Walgett, the Aboriginal community has prioritised the need to establish resilient food and water systems to ensure a sustainable, secure local supply of affordable, nutritious food and safe drinking water. In 2019, the YN partnership launched the Walgett Food and Water for Life Project, with a view to pioneering innovative solutions to food and water security.

The other project the candidate will assist with is the Join Us Research Register, development of a national disease agnostic research register. 'Join Us' is working with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program team to ensure that the ongoing development of the research register is culturally safe and appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The successful candidate will assist with the coordination of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory group and broader community engagement.

The Role

The Research Assistant will work closely with the Food and Water for Life Project team to support the project management and provide research support to the project (3 days). The Research Assistant will also provide support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and coordination of aspects of the Join Us Research Register. The Research Assistant will work closely with and be supported by the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program Team at TGI to support existing and new programs relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health with a focus on food and nutrition. There is potential for someone with the right interests and drive to progress to achieve their further education goals, potentially leading to a Masters degree or PhD.

Reporting Relationships

The Research Assistant will report into the Program Lead for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program and work closely with the Chief Investigator for the Food and Water for Life Project and other project team members including the Yuwaya Ngarra-li team at UNSW. The Research



Assistant will be situated within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program at TGI and be supported by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

Duties and Key Responsibilities

- Providing project management and administrative support to the Food and Water for Life Project
- Organising agendas and papers for meetings and documenting outcomes and actions
- Liaising between members of the project team (TGI, Yuwaya Ngarra-li staff at UNSW, Dharriwaa Elders Group, Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services and others) to help co-ordinate actions
- Lead communications between partner institutions and ensure regular updates to project team
- Assist in report writing and ensuring final reports are submitted within the required deadlines
- Provide ongoing support to Food and Water for Life team in program delivery
- Provide feedback to the Research Advisory Group and Food and Water for Life working party involved in the project on project progress and results
- Monitor program delivery and ensure ongoing quality of program
- Provide executive support for the Aboriginal Advisory group for Join Us Register
- Liaison with AH&MRC and potential “partner” organisations
- Assist in planning & implementing consultation processes in relation to Join Us Register

General roles and responsibilities

- Support other relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs as required
- Ensure that any research component is being conducted in line with NHMRC ethical guidelines for the conduct of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, NSW AH&MRC and Yuwaya Ngarra-li research protocols
- Observe financial and administrative guidelines of the George Institute

As a team member

- Participate in special projects to improve processes, tools, systems and organisation
- Take responsibility for personal learning and development and for setting achievable and meaningful work objectives and managing personal targets, meeting obligations of The Institute’s Performance Management and Development Policy
- Demonstrate commitment to The Institute’s organisational values, including performing to an exceptionally high ethical standard and focus on integrity, collaboration and teamwork in all efforts

Work, Health and Safety

- Comply with Work Health and Safety legislation and operate in accordance with established Occupational Health and Safety practice and procedures at the Institute
- Promote and contribute to a safe, secure environment for staff and visitors

Skills, Knowledge and Experience

- Experience within public health, Aboriginal health research or medical research, or in health care environments
- Interest in and capacity to establish expertise in food and water security, nutrition and public health
- Experience within Aboriginal health care and/or Aboriginal community liaison experience with an understanding of the issues affecting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- Ability to effectively communicate and work with Aboriginal community organisations and staff



- Excellent planning and organisational skills, including the ability to manage a range of tasks with conflicting priorities and to meet deadlines whilst maintaining accuracy
- Strong project management skills particularly in a research, coordination and development environment
- Demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality and comply with privacy requirements
- Proven ability to work as a member of a team as well as completing tasks without supervision
- Full NSW driver license and willingness to travel

General

- Proactive approach to work
- Proficient in the use of the Microsoft Office suite of products, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and the Internet
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work well and flexibly ie autonomously, in small teams and with a wide range of varying stakeholders
- Ability to be flexible and adaptable in the face of changing organisational priorities and ambiguous environments.
- Strong focus on quality of work

This is an Identified Position

In this position, the incumbent's race is a genuine occupational qualification and authorised by Section 14(d) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.

The George Institute will accept proof of Aboriginality confirming the incumbent:

- Is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- Identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and
- Is accepted by the Aboriginal community in which they live.