



Statement from the CEOs of the ARC and NHMRC: Bolstering Australian research integrity

The Australian Research Council (ARC) and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) are committed to upholding the highest standards of conduct and integrity in the research we fund.

At a time of increasing public scrutiny, maintaining responsible and ethical research practices is more important than ever. While research in Australia is overwhelmingly conducted to the standards expected by the Australian community, there are always opportunities to strengthen the system that safeguards those standards.

The ARC and NHMRC are working with Universities Australia to understand how Australia's research integrity system is operating and where it can be further strengthened. By partnering with researchers and institutions across the country, we aim to enhance the quality, transparency and accountability of Australian research.

Building a stronger evidence base

A key gap in our national approach is the lack of consistent, sector-wide data on research integrity issues. A more complete national picture is essential to identifying trends, risks and areas for improvement.

We are currently collaborating with sector stakeholders to gather and analyse existing research integrity data. Using these insights, our goal is to establish an impartial, transparent and ongoing national approach to data collection—one that supports system-wide reform and helps ensure the research integrity framework remains fit for purpose.

Strengthening research integrity practices

Consultation across the research sector has already highlighted opportunities to strengthen Australia's research integrity framework and better meet the needs of a rapidly evolving research environment.

A key focus is building the capacity of institutions and researchers to conduct high-quality, responsible research. NHMRC's [Good Institutional Practice Guide \(2025\)](#) supports institutional leaders to foster open, honest, supportive and respectful research cultures that underpin excellent research.

The ARC and NHMRC are also working closely with institutions to ensure that funding agreement requirements and responsibilities under the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) (the Code) are clearly understood and fully embedded in institutional policies and practices.



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As part of this effort, we will explore how to best support institutions in effectively managing complaints about potential breaches of the Code, including reviewing existing guidance and identifying mechanisms to access reputable independent expertise when needed.

Complementing this work, the ARC, NHMRC and Universities Australia have co-convened the *Partnering for Research Integrity Reform* Working Group. This group, comprised of representatives from Australia's universities, research institutions and peak bodies, is tasked with defining the scale and nature of current issues in the research integrity system, and developing structural and policy solutions for sector or government consideration.

Australian discoveries, Australian excellence

The ARC and NHMRC remain inspired by the significant contribution Australian research makes to our wellbeing, knowledge and economy.

The actions outlined above will help us and the sector identify and act on the key areas where improvement is needed. Through this process, we aim to equip researchers and institutions with the information, tools and support they need to be leaders in responsible research practice.

These initiatives represent the next step in our shared commitment to fostering ethical, excellent and impactful research in Australia. We look forward to working with researchers, institutions and the public as we continue this important work.

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