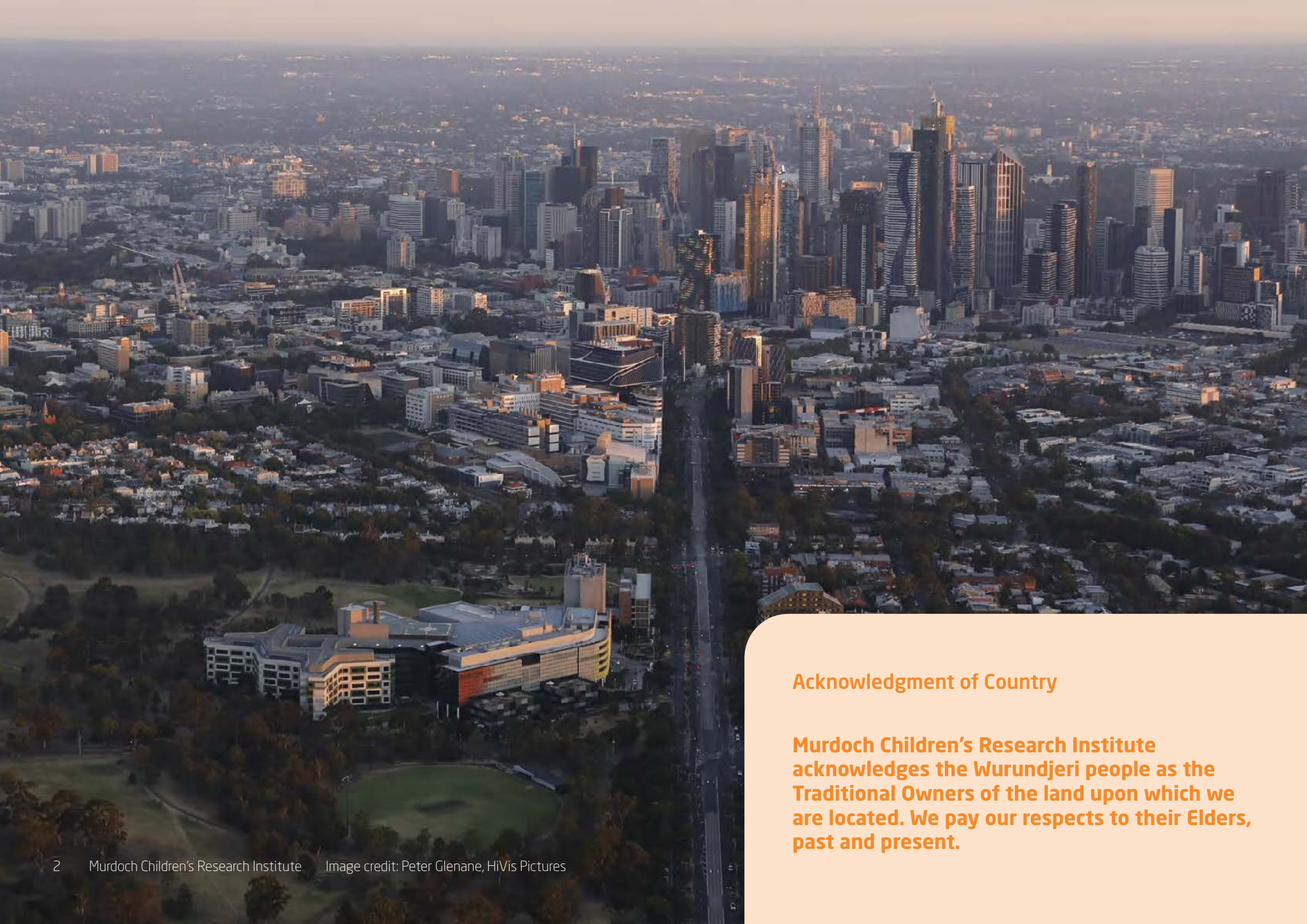


MCRI Code of Conduct





Acknowledgment of Country

Murdoch Children's Research Institute acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are located. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

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Advice and Support

Please contact the People & Culture team for further advice or support: peopleandculture@mcri.edu.au



Code of Conduct:

Quick Reference Guide

Applies to Everyone

Employees | Executives | Board Members | Contractors | Volunteers | Students

Your 6 Core Responsibilities

1. **Read and understand** this code and your obligations
2. **Act ethically** by upholding integrity, honesty, fairness and respect
3. **Comply** with all laws, policies and mandatory training
4. **Promote a positive workplace** by demonstrating our values
5. **Protect** people, assets, information and intellectual property
6. **Speak up** by reporting breaches and unsafe practices

Live Our Values

COURAGE | **INTEGRITY** | **CURIOSITY**

Zero Tolerance

- Discrimination, racism, bullying, harassment
- Sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment
- Child harm or abuse
- Fraud, corruption, bribery or theft
- Drugs or alcohol misuse at work

Key Standards

- Follow NHMRC Research Code
- Comply with Child Safe Standards and report concerns immediately
- Use resources responsibly
- Get approval before public statements or using MCRI branding
- Maintain professional social media presence



Need Help or Have a Concern to Report?

Speak to:

People Leader | Senior Leader | People and Culture

Or use the Whistleblower Service (confidential):

1300 687 927 | mcricri@whistleblowingservice.com.au

The Code is mandatory. It applies every day to every one of us.

A Message from Our Director

Dear Colleagues,

At Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), our purpose is clear: **to give all children the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilled life.** This purpose, inspired by our founder Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE and the visionary community that established MCRI, continues to guide everything we do as one of the world's top child health research institutes.

Achieving this purpose requires more than research excellence – it requires a foundation of trust, integrity and ethical behaviour in every aspect of our work. Our Code of Conduct is here to help us navigate this responsibility. It provides practical guidance on how to uphold our values of courage, curiosity and integrity, and sets clear expectations for how we work with each other, our partners and the families and communities we serve.

Our people are the heart of our success. Whether you're conducting groundbreaking research, supporting critical operations, or contributing to our collaborative culture, you play a vital role in making MCRI an inspiring place to work. The Code empowers each of us to make decisions with confidence, knowing that we are acting in the best interests of children and families.

Please take the time to read and understand the Code and discuss it with your colleagues. If you have questions or concerns about a decision or behavior (whether your own or that of a colleague), I encourage you to speak up. Creating an inclusive, safe and equitable environment requires effort from everyone, and your voice matters.

Thank you for your dedication to our purpose and for maintaining the highest standards in everything we do. Together, we will continue to transform children's health and make a lasting difference.

With gratitude,

Kathryn North

Director, Murdoch Children's Research Institute





Introduction

Purpose

This document sets out the Code of Conduct of Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI), referred to as the Institute.

Victorian Clinical Genetics Services (VCGS) staff should refer to the VCGS Code of Conduct.

Our Code of Conduct:

- sets out the standards of behaviour we expect from everyone who works or studies with us;
- helps us act ethically, respectfully, and responsibly; and
- ensures all people behave in a way that promotes public confidence and trust in the Institute.

Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- all Institute employees; and
- all volunteers, students, honorary and affiliate appointments.

Core Principles and Responsibilities

Following the Code of Conduct is mandatory. It applies every day and to every one of us, including Board Members, Executives, Employees and Contractors.

All people at the Institute are expected to:

- **Read the Code of Conduct.** Understand your obligations and understand how the Code impacts you, your role and the way you behave and represent the Institute.
- **Act ethically and responsibly.** Uphold integrity, honesty, fairness, and respect in all interactions.
- **Comply with all laws and policies.** Follow legislation, awards, enterprise agreements, and all internal policies and procedures, including mandatory training.
- **Promote a positive workplace.** Demonstrate our values and foster trust, inclusion, and psychological safety.
- **Protect people and assets.** Safeguard the safety, health, intellectual property, and information of the Institute.
- **Speak up.** Report concerns about breaches of the Code, unethical conduct, or unsafe practices.

It is important that you take personal responsibility for the following Code of Conduct and question something that doesn't feel right or doesn't align to our values.



Our Purpose

**To give all children
the opportunity to
live a healthy and
fulfilled life**

Purpose and Strategy

Our purpose is to give all children the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilled life. It's the reason we exist and guides the way we work and change the face of child health.

To help meet our long-term goals, we have four strategic goals. These ensure we have the right focus and investment on key priorities across the Institute to deliver on our purpose.

The Code of Conduct links our purpose, strategy, values and behaviours and sets out our expectations for how we act, solve problems and make decisions. **Everything we do should be guided by a commitment to advancing our strategic priorities and enabling ground-breaking research.** This is how we turn our purpose into real impact.



People

An inclusive, safe and equitable environment that enables and develops brilliant minds.



Research Excellence

Global leadership that transforms child health and wellbeing.



Sustainability

A secure future that facilitates breakthroughs and builds enduring trust.



Impact

Partnerships that accelerate translation, commercialisation and implementation, at scale.

Values and Behaviours

Our three values are intrinsic to our purpose and the success of our strategy, and they come to life through the actions we take, how we behave, and the decisions we make. Living these values everyday will help build an inclusive and safe culture.

Underpinning each value is a set of behaviours which guide the way we work together. **MCRI team members must demonstrate MCRI's values and behaviours of courage, integrity and curiosity at all times.**

COURAGE

Leading with bold action, authenticity and purpose.

- We have brave conversations.
- We explore and discover.
- We learn from setbacks.
- We step beyond the familiar.
- We value authenticity and action.

INTEGRITY

Building trust through rigour, responsibility and transparency

- We uphold scientific rigour.
- We make ethical choices.
- We take ownership.
- We are transparent.
- We build trusting partnerships.

CURIOSITY

Driving discovery, creativity and collaboration.

- We inquire with intention.
- We spark innovation.
- We seek solutions.
- We collaborate, share and grow.
- We listen and connect.

The behaviours aligned to each value can be found in the Code on page 12.

Our Code of Conduct

Following the Code of Conduct is mandatory. It applies every day and to every one of us, including Board Members, Executives, Employees and Contractors. The following Code outlines the expectations of employment at MCRI. We all share a responsibility to act in accordance with our Code and make ethical decisions.

In addition to outlining our key principles, our Code includes a column with relevant policies and guidelines to help you answer any questions and know how and when to act or speak up.

Research Integrity

Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [MCRI Authorship Guide](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)
- [Framework for Handling and Resolving Breaches of the NHMRC Code and Scientific Misconduct at RCH and MCRI](#)

Principle	Requirement
The Institute conducts research responsibly, ethically and with integrity. All our people must adhere to the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the Code) and related guides.	
Honesty in the development, undertaking and reporting of research	• Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
Rigour in the development, undertaking and reporting of research	• Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
Transparency in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings	• Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately. • Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.
Respect for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment	• Treat human participants and communities that are affected by the research with care and respect, giving appropriate consideration to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people. • Ensure that respect underpins all decisions and actions related to the care and use of animals in research. • Minimise adverse effects of the research on the environment.
Recognition of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them	• Recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. • Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement. • Report to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of research in which they have engaged.
Accountability for the development, undertaking and reporting of research	• Comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines. • Ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research. • Consider the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.
Promotion of responsible research practices	• Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

Safety and Equity

Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Sexual Harassment, Sex-Based Harassment and Sex Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#)
- [Gender Equity and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Disability Equity Policy](#)
- [Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment Policy](#)

Principle	Requirement
The Institute is committed to creating an inclusive, safe and equitable environment for everyone. All our people must uphold the below principles and guidelines to deliver on our People Goal.	
Zero Tolerance for inappropriate behaviour	• Do not discriminate against anyone based on race, religion, gender, nationality, age, disability, sexual orientation or other attributes. • Do not engage in or tolerate racism, discrimination or bias of any kind. • Do not bully, intimidate, or behave unreasonably towards others. • Do not harass or make offensive or humiliating remarks to anyone. • Do not engage in sexual harassment or any behaviour based on sex or gender discrimination. • Do not ignore or condone behaviours that undermine a safe, inclusive and respectful environment.
Prevention of inappropriate behaviour	• Speak up and stand against inappropriate behaviour or discrimination whenever it occurs. • Actively challenge and respond to incidents of racism or discrimination, demonstrating a commitment to a welcoming and inclusive environment. • Support colleagues and children who may be affected by harmful behaviour. • Report incidents of inappropriate behaviour promptly.
Prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment	• Do not engage in or tolerate sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment in any form. • Report all concerns or incidents immediately. • Maintain confidentiality and respect the rights and wishes of victim/survivors. • Identify and challenge power imbalances and abuse of authority. • Engage in and support ongoing training and awareness on PSEAH standards.
Inclusion of all our people	• Model respectful, inclusive and positive behaviour in all interactions to set a strong example. • Promote awareness and understanding around diversity, respect, inclusion and anti-racism. • Treat everyone with respect and fairness regardless of gender or background. • Follow established policies and procedures when addressing concerns or resolving issues, ensuring fairness for all involved.

Professional Behaviour

The Institute promotes a professional environment based on our values. Our values shape how we behave, treat other people and make decisions with clarity. All our people must demonstrate MCRI's values and behaviours at all times.

Act with **Courage**

- **Have brave conversations.** Create a safe and inclusive environment where all voices are heard, fostering open and honest communication, even when difficult.
- **Explore and discover.** Seek out novel research questions and push the boundaries of knowledge by embracing challenges and pushing ourselves past limitations.
- **Learn from setbacks.** View setbacks as valuable learning opportunities, openly discussing challenges and sharing lessons learned to foster collective growth and resilience.
- **Step beyond the familiar.** Seek out new experiences and skills, embrace experiences that stretch your capabilities and broaden your perspective.
- **Value authenticity and action.** Have the courage to be the authentic version of yourself and actively advocate for support, fairness, equity and wellbeing.

Act with **Integrity**

- **Uphold scientific rigour.** Maintain the highest standards of accuracy and transparency in the design, conduct and analysis of research, ensuring the reproducibility and validity of our research.
- **Make ethical choices.** Balance personal goals with responsible, honest and fair behaviour that respects others' rights and promotes the wellbeing of our Institute.
- **Take ownership.** Accept responsibility for actions and outcomes, learning from mistakes with humility and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Be transparent.** Share the 'why' behind decisions, inviting open dialogue, and fostering a culture of understanding and trust.
- **Build trusting partnerships.** Approach teamwork with a generosity of spirit and respect, building strong, collaborative partnerships that empower every member to contribute their best.

Exercise **Curiosity**

- **Inquire with intention.** Ask thoughtful questions with a genuine desire to understand, creating a culture where curiosity is valued and every perspective is heard.
- **Spark innovation:** Embrace a mindset of exploration, venture beyond conventional thinking, and seek out new ideas, technologies and approaches to spark innovation and advance discovery.
- **Seek solutions:** Question existing norms with a positive and solution-oriented mindset, striving to make our Institute better each day.
- **Collaborate, share and grow.** Connect with colleagues to exchange ideas, continuously learn from one another and ignite creativity.
- **Listen and connect.** Seek inspiration and knowledge from our community and actively listen to diverse voices to ensure our work addresses real-world needs.

Child Safety

Our purpose is to give all children the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilled life, this involves actively keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect. All our people must prioritise child safety and abide by our zero-tolerance policy.

Uphold Child Safe Standards

- Abide by the Child Safety Policy and Procedure.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including labour laws.
- Identify and reduce risks to children.
- Immediately report child harm or abuse according to Australian legislation and Institute policies.

Seek to Do No Harm

- Prioritise the best interests of children and young people.
- Do not exploit or harm children or engage in any form of prohibited sexual conduct.
- Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries.

Respect for children and their families

- Create a welcoming environment where children and families feel safe and can participate.
- Communicate with children using accessible, child friendly language.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children.



Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [Child Safety Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Procedure](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005](#)
- [Crimes Act 1914](#)
- [Criminal Code Act 1995](#)
- [DFAT Child Protection Policy](#)
- [ACFID Code of Conduct](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Health and Wellbeing

The Institute is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of everyone. It is expected that all people prioritise health and wellbeing to create a safe workplace.

Act Responsibly with alcohol and drugs

- Do not use intoxicating, addictive or illegal drugs while working in or visiting the Institute.
- Use alcohol and substances responsibly outside of work so they don't harm your health or affect your ability to do your job.
- Do not endanger the health and safety of others with alcohol or drugs.

Take Care for your health and safety at work

- Take care for your own health and safety.
- Consider the health and safety of others.
- Follow the Institute's safety and security directives.
- Do not intentionally or recklessly interfere with health, safety or welfare initiatives.



Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [Alcohol and Drugs Policy](#)
- [Environmental Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)

Institute Resources and Property

Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [Financial Management Framework](#)
- [Fraud, Corruption and other Losses Prevention Policy & Framework](#)
- [Procurement Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

The Institute manages its resources and property carefully to support our goals. All our people must prioritise responsible use and safeguarding of these assets.

Responsible Management of Institute resources

- Use the Institute's resources wisely and responsibly.
- Avoid waste or unnecessary spending.
- Do not commit or support any form of fraud or dishonesty.
- Do not engage in or support any form of corruption, including bribery, or misuse your position for personal gain.
- Do not steal or take anything that does not belong to you.
- Follow procedures for using equipment, supplies, and other resources properly.
- Report any suspicions of fraud or misuse of resources immediately.

Protect our Institute and intellectual property

- Use Institute information and resources only for work-related purpose.
- Do not share or give access to our information systems or data to anyone who is not authorised.
- Keep passwords secure and change them regularly to prevent unauthorised access.
- Do not access or use information that you are not authorised to see or use.
- Be careful to protect any valuable ideas, inventions or information created during work.
- Follow the Institute's policies on intellectual property and seek approval from the Director of Innovation if unsure about rights or ownership.
- Do not take improper advantage of official information gained in the course of employment.

Positive Public Image

The Institute strives to main a strong, positive reputation. All our people must prioritise representing the Institute with honesty and professionalism to uphold public trust.

Practice Responsible Communication

- Do not speak publicly about issues that affect the Institute unless approved by the Director and Chief Operating Officer
- Always provide accurate and consistent information when talking to the public.
- Do not use MCRI's name, logos, branding or trademarks without approval.

Maintain a Professional Reputation

- Be careful about how you show your connection to MCRI on social media or public profiles.
- Do not share confidential information about MCRI on social media.
- Do not post information, comments or materials that has the potential to damage your reputation in such a way that continuing your association with MCRI would bring us into disrepute.
- Do not post mean, disrespectful or unfair comments about employees, contractors or volunteers at the Institute.

If faced with a **difficult situation**, ask yourself:

- Are my actions consistent with the law, the Institute's Code of Conduct and policies?
- What would my advice to a friend or other colleague be?
- What might other people think of my actions?
- How might it look on the front page of the newspaper?

If you are uncomfortable with any of these answers, you should seek advice before acting.

Relevant Policies and Guidelines

- [Media Policy](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)



Roles and Responsibilities

The Code of Conduct is mandatory for all employees, representatives and contractors. However, there are some additional responsibilities and requirements for People Leaders and relevant teams.

ALL EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES & CONTRACTORS	PEOPLE LEADERS	PEOPLE & CULTURE TEAM	EXECUTIVE & BOARD
• Always follow our Code of Conduct. • Do not engage in unlawful conduct. • Report any breaches of the Code. • Acknowledge this Policy and complete all related training.	• Lead by example and inspire behaviour aligned to our Code. • Keep an open door to your team to answer any questions or concerns about the Code or any other process, procedure or policy. • Foster a culture of trust and transparency by making it clear that people can come to you for guidance, support or to make a report. • Monitor the workplace for safety and respect. • Provide a safe and positive workplace and make sure people are not exposed to health and safety risks. • Take all reports seriously and respond quickly. • Contact the People and Culture Team to report unlawful conduct.	• Investigate reports fairly and privately. • Help People Leaders to handle reports. • Help People Leaders report critical incidents confidentially to the Board and/or external funding bodies as required.	• Lead by example and inspire behaviour aligned to our Code. • Provide a safe and positive workplace and make sure people are not exposed to health and safety risks. • Work to eliminate unlawful and inappropriate behaviour.

Final Note

It is up to every one of us to make sure we adhere to the Code of Conduct and other Institute policies and comply with all applicable laws.

If you are in a situation and are not sure what to do, or if you see something that might break the law or breach the Code or any of our other policies, you should speak to your People Leader, a more senior leader, or anyone from the People and Culture team.

Our [Whistleblower Policy](#) enables and encourages people to raise concerns about any wrongdoing involving the Institute without fear of reprisal. You can access the whistleblower service anonymously through any of the methods below. You can be assured that any reports will be treated confidentially and taken seriously.

- **By Phone:** 1300 687 927
- **Online:** www.whistleblowingservice.com.au/mcri/

Reference Number: 2022mcri

Company Name: MCRI

Unique Key: MCRI

