

MENZIES SCHOOL OF HEALTH RESEARCH and CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY

NORTHERN AUSTRALIA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Driving the North Australia Agenda: Engagement with Asia and Developing Indigenous Leadership

Why Menzies School of Health Research at Charles Darwin University?

- Menzies was established in 1985, employs over 260 staff and has an annual turnover of \$40 million.
- Menzies works in 24 countries across Asia and with over 60 Indigenous communities across Australia.
- Menzies undertakes the highest quality health research. Of *all* universities and medical research institutes in Australia, we have the highest success rate in competitive National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funding.
- In 2013, 38% of our NHMRC grant applications were successful — double the Australian average.
- Menzies has a strong track record in capacity building, mentoring, training, employment and community development.
- Every \$1 invested in research at Menzies returns more than \$3 in economic and health benefits. (Deloitte Access Economics 2012)
- Menzies is internationally recognized for its global health research, with sustained collaborations with leading universities and research institutes in the US, Europe and across Asia.
- Menzies has Gates Foundation funding to lead the Asia-Pacific Malaria Elimination Network to grow research capacity in countries across our region, to conduct targeted research and to translate findings to prevent malaria, a disease which threatens one-third of the world's population.
- Menzies has strengths across *all* key health areas contributing to the gap in life expectancy for Indigenous Australians.
- Menzies is ideally situated and ready to drive the Commonwealth Government's Northern Australia tropical health and medical research agenda.

The Vision for the Northern Australia Centre for Research Excellence:

To make a measurable impact to improve the life expectancy of Indigenous Australians;

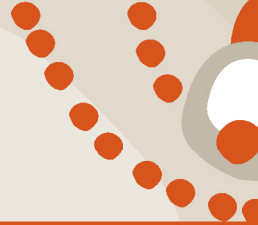
To grow a robust and sustainable cohort of Indigenous health researchers directing, leading and guiding research in Indigenous health;

To expand engagement with Asia in health and medical research through research training, exchange, capacity building and partnership; and

To generate high-quality evidence to address priority health issues of Northern Australia and the region.

In particular, through establishment of the Northern Australia Centre, we will:

1. **Establish pathways for Indigenous high school students into the health sector** as Top End Science Pathways Scholars and through Gap Year placements;
2. **Develop Indigenous researchers as international leaders** across the priority areas of chronic disease, cancer, nutrition, child health and infectious diseases;
3. **Develop community research hubs** in community and health service sites across Northern Australia;
4. **Consolidate and extend research partnerships in Asia** through strengthening of research hubs in Indonesia, Malaysia and other countries and mutual exchange of early- and mid-career researchers; and
5. **Establish a vibrant program of International Northern Australia Centre Fellows** bringing internationally-recognized experts to the Top End to participate in research, training and education.



Specific Goals are to develop and implement:

1. Pathways for Indigenous high school students into the health sector in Northern Australia

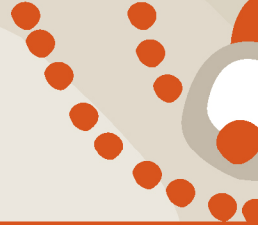
Indicative School Programs	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gap year programs delivering training and employment for 12 months after completion of year 12. 	Provision of 5 gap year programs to Indigenous students over 5 years	\$ 35,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Science Pathways Programs at Menzies. 	Target of 40 students over 5 years (8 students per year)	\$ 15,000 per year

2. Training and career development for Indigenous tertiary students in Northern Australia

Indicative Programs	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Indigenous Cadetship Support placements, which link students with employers who provide paid work in between semesters, through the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations – e.g. for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the Flinders Medical School and other suitable students at CDU. 	Engagement of up to two cadets annually (target of 8 cadets over 5 years). Each cadet will have one placement each year over their tertiary course.	\$ 60,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of placements for CDU's Professional Practice in Applied Science program (Bachelor of Applied Science). 	Provision of 8 professional placements with appropriate supervision and training over 5 years (up to 2 professional placements per year).	\$ 15,000 per year

3. Mechanisms to attract, retain and develop Indigenous research leaders across priority areas

Indicative Programs for researchers and others already in the health sector	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Northern Australia Centre PhD Scholarships to attract early career researchers to Menzies. 	Target to recruit up to 2 PhD students annually (5 PhD scholars over 5 years).	\$ 80,000 p.a. (\$40K / year for up to 2 yrs then independent PhD funding).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer of Northern Australia Centre Fellowships to attract and develop Indigenous researchers to become international leaders in research. 	Provision of funding support for up to 3 Fellows per year (Target of 5 Fellows supported and trained over 5 years).	\$ 240,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of tailored mentoring and support, individual Learning and Development Programs and formal peer support for Indigenous researchers at Menzies. 	Northern Australia Centre Project Officer	\$ 100,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Leadership Development and support for Northern Australia Fellows to establish a national and international profile. 	Northern Australia Centre Project Officer	



4. Strengthen partnerships with communities and health services through capacity building and establishment of research hubs

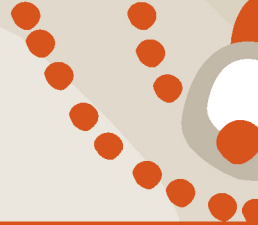
Indicative Programs	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored investment in and mentoring of key community people identified by Menzies through its projects in remote communities. 	Train and mentor 30 community-based researchers to complete a Certificate II in Health Research. (The Menzies Cert II, established in 2005, has been completed by 40 community-based researchers. It is a VET sector accredited course and an appropriate entry point for community based researcher training. More than 50% of graduates continue to work in health or health research.)	\$80,000 per year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing research hubs, designed to facilitate communities and health services taking charge of their own health research priorities. 	Establishment of 3 community hubs with Community/health service-based Research Fellows over 5 years	\$ 240,000 per year

5. Consolidate and extend research hubs in Asia

Indicative Programs	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of existing research hubs in Malaysia and Indonesia through ongoing employment, training and capacity building of local research collaborators. Selection of an additional site in which to build more permanent research infrastructure. 6 to 12 month exchange of early- and mid-career researchers on established research programs 	<p>Develop and sustain three research hubs across Asia</p> <p>Offer up to 2 Research Exchange Fellowships annually (Target 6 Exchanges over 5 years)</p>	\$ 400,000 per year

6. Establish Northern Australia International Research Fellowships

Indicative Programs	Key Outcomes	Average Annual Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of International Northern Australia Centre Fellowships, inviting global experts in chronic disease, tropical health, nutrition, maternal and child health, Indigenous community health and other key areas to conduct research, teach and enable the cross-fertilisation of ideas with Menzies researchers. 	Attract International Northern Australia Centre Fellows for periods of 1 – 3 months (Target: 8 Fellows over 5 years)	\$ 60,000 per year



Funding Required

\$30 million capital investment with funding for the Northern Australia Centre from interest earnings based on a 5% guaranteed rate of return.

Menzies and CDU will guarantee an annual return of 5% on the capital investment for the Northern Australia Centre. We will fund the Centre activities using these investment earnings, without drawing down on the original capital investment. Any earnings above 5% per annum will be reinvested to fund the activities of the Centre. Such surpluses will be used first to offset operational expenses incurred during years in which a 5% return could not be achieved; and second to increase the Centre's core investment.

Annual Budget

Program Area	Annual Cost
Provision of gap year program placements	\$ 35,000
Provision of placements for high school students on the Science Pathways Program	\$ 15,000
Provision of Indigenous Cadetship Support placements	\$ 60,000
Provision of placements for CDU's Professional Practice in Applied Science Program	\$ 15,000
Provision of funding support for Northern Australia Centre Fellows	\$240,000
Provision of Northern Australia Centre PhD Scholarships	\$80,000
Train and mentor community-based researchers to complete Cert II	\$80,000
Establishment of community hubs with Fellows	\$240,000
Consolidate and extend research hubs in Asia	\$400,000
Establishment of International Northern Australia Centre Fellowships	\$ 60,000
Northern Australia Centre Project Officer	\$100,000
Travel, accommodation, training and support working with communities	\$ 75,000
TOTAL ANNUAL COST:	\$1,400,000

Leadership and Governance

Menzies, with its 28-year experience in financial management and administration, will be responsible for the funds. An Advisory Board, including Menzies and CDU representatives and seeking to engage expertise from government, business and finance sectors, will be established to support the Centre.

It is proposed that Professor Alan Cass be appointed as the Inaugural Director of the Centre with the aim to attract, retain and develop an Indigenous leader of the Centre within the first five years of operation. The current Head of Menzies' Education and Capacity Building Division, Heather D'Antoine, will serve as Associate Director of the Centre. The cost of both positions will be covered by Menzies. A Project Officer position will be essential to manage, oversee and report on progress towards achieving the outlined targets.

For more information contact:

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Director Menzies School of Health Research**