



AMRRIC Research Policy



1. PREFACE:

AMRRIC recognises that ethical, culturally sensitive research can result in significant and tangible benefits for both Indigenous communities¹ and their companion animals. Additionally, AMRRIC recognises the benefits of the involvement of Indigenous people as full partners in research projects. Such collaboration builds capacity both within communities and of Indigenous researchers, institutions and organisations, and is a model that AMRRIC strongly supports.

In its work, AMRRIC seeks to base its policies and strategies on factual information and ethical research findings. AMRRIC is therefore interested in engaging with Indigenous communities and researchers to assist in the development and implementation of projects that align with AMRRIC's strategy and objectives. As Australia's only independent organisation focusing on all areas of companion animal management in rural and remote Indigenous communities, AMRRIC is in a unique position to facilitate effective and appropriate research collaborations.

2. AIMS OF THIS POLICY

1. To ensure that research that AMRRIC is involved in or supports: builds capacity; complies with national guidelines; is of the highest ethical standards; is both culturally sensitive and humane; is developed and implemented in collaboration with local communities; and that the results of such research will be made available to and have considerable benefit to Indigenous communities and their companion animals.
2. To outline AMRRIC's expectations and role in regards to AMRRIC's involvement in, or support of research projects involving Indigenous communities.
3. To outline AMRRIC's research priorities.

¹ Whilst Indigenous is the term used in reference to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, AMRRIC appreciate and acknowledge the immense diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.



3. AMRRIC'S PRINCIPLES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

1. Any research project in which AMRRIC is involved or supporting, must abide by the principles articulated in the following guidelines:
 - a. *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*²;
 - b. *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies*³;
 - c. *Values and Ethics - Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research*.
2. Research projects involving animals must comply with the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*⁴ and aspire to the highest possible welfare standards.
3. The collection, use and storage of data relating to research projects must comply with the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Data Principles*⁵.
4. AMRRIC prioritises support to those research projects where the locus of control rests with the Indigenous community involved.
 - a. i.e. Where a community determines what questions they want answered and are linked with professional researchers who help them develop research designs, and train them to carry out the research themselves.
5. As far as possible, Indigenous academics, research students, institutions and organisations should be full partners in research projects so as to enable them to build capability, contacts and expertise.
6. In its support or involvement, AMRRIC prioritises research projects that are of national significance and produce outcomes that can be applied in more than one jurisdiction or community.
7. AMRRIC endorses and commits to the 'no research without service' approach to field based research, ensuring that research findings translate to tangible outcomes for Indigenous communities and their companion animals.
8. Research projects should produce benefits for all participants.
9. Research projects must not compromise or endanger the legitimate cultural rights, values and expectations of Indigenous participants and/or communities.
10. Consultation, negotiation and free, prior and informed consent are the essential foundations of any research projects that involve Indigenous peoples.
11. Research project design and execution must be culturally respectful and engage communities and community leaders in ongoing consultation – including providing culturally relevant feedback on research outcomes.
12. Research projects should include in their design and execution, effective strategies for the transfer of knowledge and information related to the research, to Indigenous communities,

² http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/r39.pdf

³ http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/_files/research/GERAIS.pdf

⁴ <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ea28>

⁵ http://aihw.gov.au/committees/nagatsihid/nagatsihid_data_principles.doc





relevant local health and other service providers, as well as AMRRIC, governments and other stakeholders.

13. In all interactions with Indigenous peoples, researchers must provide a culturally safe environment that is spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically safe for people and their animals.
14. Research copyright should be established with stakeholders (the community/people where and upon whom the research is being conducted, and the researchers/universities) prior to commencement of the research.
15. Researchers must respect the intellectual property rights of Indigenous peoples, ensuring that culturally-restricted or culturally-sensitive information is protected from inappropriate use or publication.
16. Relevant Ethics Committee/s approval is required for all projects, including “field trials”.
17. AMRRIC is to be represented on the research governance/oversight mechanisms for the research projects it engages in.

4. AMRRIC'S ROLE IN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

1. AMRRIC may be involved with research projects, or support research projects.
 - a. AMRRIC defines ‘involvement with research projects’ as assisting, in a limited capacity, in the development of research projects within Indigenous communities.
 - i. An example of AMRRIC’s involvement with research projects is providing researchers with introductions to appropriate Indigenous communities.
 - b. AMRRIC defines ‘support of research projects’ as providing advice, in-kind and other forms of support to a research project. AMRRIC Board approval is essential for all research projects that AMRRIC supports.
 - i. Examples of AMRRIC’s support of research projects include:
 - working with communities to identify research priority areas, and subsequently linking communities with professional researchers;
 - advising researchers on research design appropriate to the context;
 - collecting samples on behalf of researchers;
 - providing researchers access to AMRRIC’s program data;
 - advising researchers on how to effectively translate research results into tangible benefits for Indigenous communities.
 - c. In general, AMRRIC does not see itself as a major financial contributor to research but may provide in-kind and other forms of support.
2. AMRRIC actively seeks to develop research collaborations with all relevant national and international organisations and individuals and avoids exclusive agreements with any one party.





3. Priority will be given to research projects that align with AMRRIC's strategy and objectives.

5. AMRRIC'S RESEARCH PRIORITIES

1. Links between animal, human and environmental health, including best-practice management of interdependent animal and human health and welfare issues promoting trans-disciplinary approaches.
2. Animal health and welfare education priorities
3. Animal behaviour and community safety
4. Capacity building in regards to One Health knowledge
5. Links between animal abuse and human abuse
6. Program evaluation and policy development and analysis





GUIDELINES AND FURTHER READING

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research – NHMRC, ARC and UA (2007)

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/r39.pdf

Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies – AIATSIS (2012):

<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/files/research/GERAIS.pdf>

Values and Ethics – Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research – NHMRC (2003 NB Under review at time of this document's publication)

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/e52>

Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes – NHMRC (2013)

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/ea28>

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Data Principles – AHMRC (2006)

http://aihw.gov.au/committees/nagatsihid/nagatsihid_data_principles.doc

National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research – NHMRC (2007, updated 2014)

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/e72>

Keeping Research on Track – A Guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about health research ethics – NHMRC (2006 NB Under review at time of this document's publication):

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/e65>