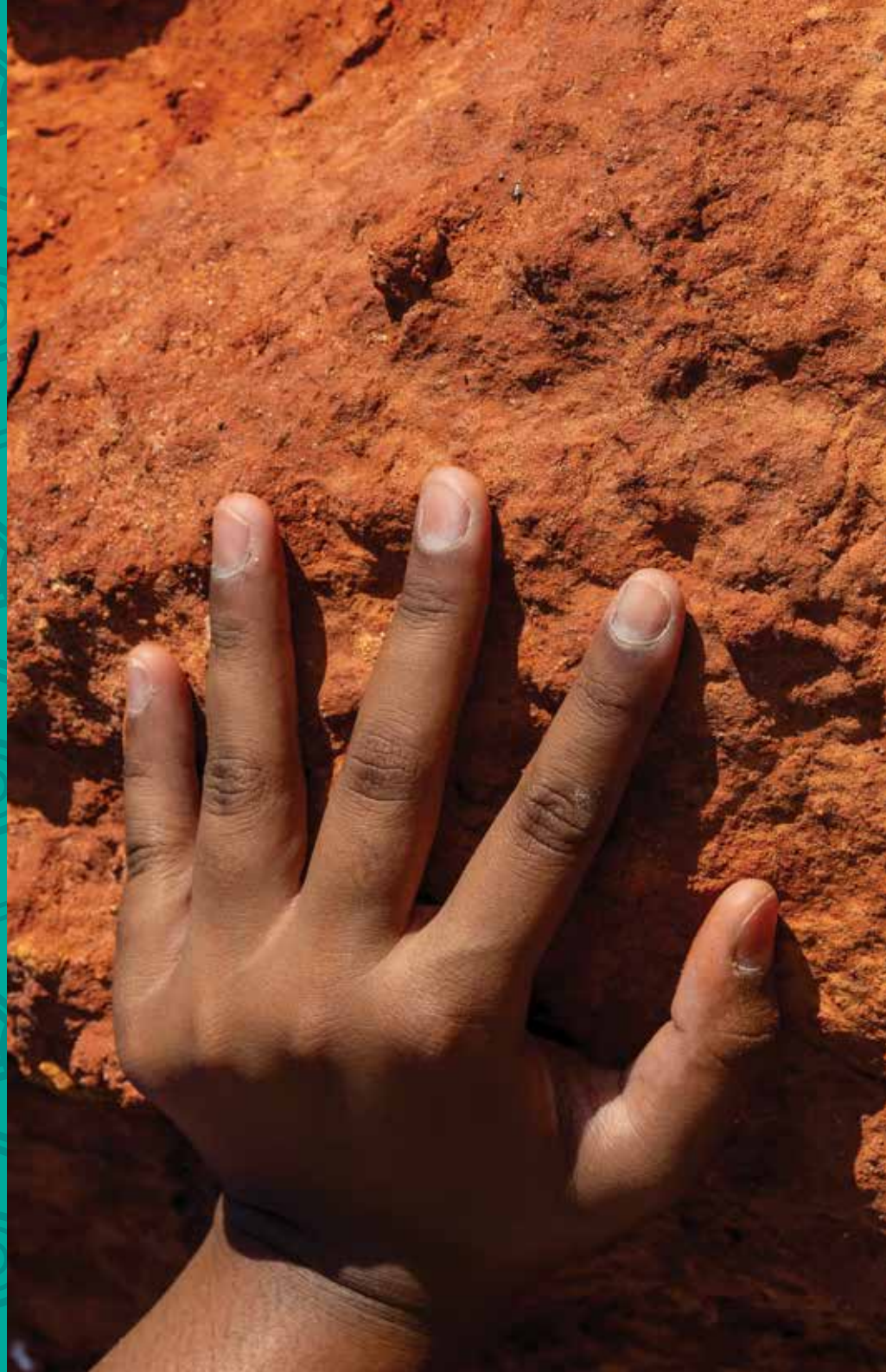





RESEARCH REIMAGINED

Strategic Plan | The Kids 2025 to 2035

We recognise First Nations people as the original scientists on this land and reaffirm our commitment to not ignore, nor accept, the continued disparity in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids compared with other Australian children.



A close-up photograph of two hands, likely belonging to a child, pressed against a wall of dry, cracked, reddish-brown earth. The hands are positioned in the lower half of the frame, with fingers spread. The background is a textured, uneven surface of the same earth, showing deep cracks and some lighter patches. The lighting is bright, casting soft shadows from the hands onto the wall.

The Kids Research Institute Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters of Australia.

We also acknowledge the Nyoongar Wadjuk, Yawuru, Kariyarra and Kurna Elders, their people and their land upon which the Institute's sites are located and seek their wisdom in our work to improve the health and development of all children.

COVER | Partnering with community: Dr Bernadette Ricciardo checks Lauren's skin as part of the dermatology clinics established in partnership with Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service and South West Aboriginal Medical Service on the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin project, co-designed and led by Aboriginal Elders and community members to describe skin health in urban-living Aboriginal kids.

OUR VISION

Happy healthy KIDS





OUR PURPOSE

**To find solutions to
improve the health and
happiness of children
and young people**

BEYOND DISCOVERY

Associate Professor Timo Lassmann has developed an innovative artificial intelligence algorithm that is helping crack the complex codes that underlie many childhood diseases, paving the way for personalised treatment and interventions that could change a child's life.





At The Kids, we do research differently.

We work hard to find solutions to important problems, but that's not enough.

Our job is not done until that solution is changing young lives.

And that's not something we can do alone.

Research Reimagined is our strategy for research to have a bigger impact on the health and happiness of kids over the next decade.

We work in an open and agile research environment, embracing our values of courage, collaboration, evidence and respect.

We co-design high quality science together with community, partners and other sectors, to make the science and solutions even better.

So our discoveries will help more kids, everywhere.

thekids.org.au



FOCUS AND IMPACT: Reimagining how we deliver research



Research Reimagined is our bold response to a research landscape that is in an unprecedented state of flux.

For decades, the cornerstone of research has been the individual scientist, driven by their curiosity and passion to ask specific questions, and seeking funding from highly competitive research grants. This system has served us well and supported many breakthroughs. But as funding has become tighter, and as health problems have become more complex, the limitations of this model have become clearer.

We think there is a better way.

We see a future that is built not around the next grant, but around the next major scientific advance that solves big problems for kids and families.

Our community and key stakeholders tell us they want research to have more impact, quicker, and they want to be active partners in that process.

To us, that's exciting.

Research Reimagined is a strategy that redefines the "who, what and how" of a research institute that is both agile and sustainable.

As an organisation, we will take responsibility for driving research outcomes to where they have impact.

As scientists, we commit to working to a shared Institute vision that puts the health of kids at the forefront of everything we do.

Our research model still supports and values the curiosity of scientists pursuing groundbreaking discoveries.

That establishes the pipeline for the breakthroughs of tomorrow. But these discoveries are best fostered within an environment that also identifies major challenges affecting kids and tackles them systematically and holistically, often starting with the endpoint in mind.

We recognise the fundamental value of contributors with non-traditional research backgrounds, from community, government, industry and service providers.

At its heart is a commitment to true partnership and collaboration. There will be times when we take on the responsibility to lead and times when the outcome is best served by walking alongside, or quietly facilitating the success of others.

Proudly founded in Western Australia, we are part of a national and global research community. We build partnerships as well as our physical and virtual footprint where it makes sense to deliver impact and better outcomes.

While our vision is for all kids, it is our duty to ensure that those who have the poorest outcomes receive proportionately more benefits from research. We aim to be the leading Indigenous child health research organisation in the world – not for our own benefit, but because we believe our partnerships with First Nations communities here provide pathways to improved outcomes for kids around the world.

Our focus will always be on delivering solutions that have impact, improving the lives of the kids of Australia, and globally. We hope you will join us in this great endeavour.



Prof Jonathan Carapetis AM
Executive Director

Our commitment to Aboriginal children and families: Mara West, Cheryl Bridge and Val Swift provide cultural guidance and advice to Institute staff, and support our Aboriginal staff through the Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy.



Equity

Kids everywhere have the right to grow up healthy and happy, but there are huge disparities in outcomes in Australia and around the world.

Children and young people are disproportionately affected by biological, social, economic and environmental factors.

Too often, their unique needs are not properly considered in developing policies, allocating resources, prioritising health issues, or even conducting research.

We will bring the voice of evidence and experience, working with communities and partners to influence and advocate for children and families, particularly those who miss out the most.

A focus on equity transcends borders.

Communities and cultures everywhere bring strengths and can learn and share with each other.

That is global health in its fullest form.



Generations of impact:
Raine Study 'kid' Ditzu Teng
with her son Jeremiah

Meela Goldsworthy and her family have been involved in the DiabHQ project, developing an innovative new platform that integrates a range of diabetes data so it can be used more effectively to accelerate research and translation, improve clinical care, and help patients and families with self-management.



OUR APPROACH

Research Reimagined refines our research environment to deliver more impactful research, faster.

It requires that we focus our research, enable clear pathways to impact, and thrive as an organisation of high performing, values-driven and engaged professionals in an environment that's well-governed and financially sustainable.

To achieve this we will build our Institute's future on three Strategic Pillars:





We will focus our research on solving a defined set of priority problems where we are uniquely placed to add value.

How will we do it?

Priority Setting:

- Work with community and partners in identifying priority areas where we can make a useful contribution, and accelerating effective implementation of research findings into action.
- Within our teams and themes, identify the research of greatest importance or potential to translate into improved health outcomes for kids, and concentrate our efforts and resources on this research.
- Collaborate to learn and grow our expertise and partnerships, reducing disparities in outcomes for First Nations children and families as an Institute-wide priority.

Implementing a Challenge Research Model

- Facilitate team science and collaboration among researchers and partners to create more integrated scientific capability, built around solving important problems. (See page 20)

Research Excellence

- We maintain high expectations and measure our performance in terms of quality, outcomes and impact.

Partnerships

- Build trusted partnerships with community, governments, industry and the health and research sectors, recognising their critical roles and the diverse needs and contexts of all partners.
- Empower communities and those with lived experience through consumer and community involvement and the implementation of our Standards for the Conduct of Aboriginal Health Research.



We will deliver tangible solutions with pathways to impact, and grow our research pipeline for tomorrow's breakthroughs.

How will we do it?

Impact Capability

- Build a centralised impact unit with specialist resources, accelerating outcomes of our work to make a difference for kids and the community.
- Identify clear goals and pathways to impact as essential elements of the Challenge model.

Commercialisation

- Foster an entrepreneurial culture with training in innovation and commercialisation.
- Provide specialised expertise and identify pathways to commercialisation as a vehicle for impact.

Scientific capabilities

- Empower our research in clinical settings from primary care to hospital, including expanding clinical trials and health services research.
- Expand investment in new technologies and capabilities, including omics, modelling and big data analytics.

Advocacy and Outreach

- Be an evidence partner to policy makers and service providers to improve decision making and outcomes.
- Be a trusted voice and advocate for evidence-based approaches to issues affecting the health and happiness of children and young people.



We will build security for our people and future through an empowered culture, effective governance, diversified funding and streamlined operations.

How will we do it?

Workplace Culture

- Engage and empower our workforce through a commitment to embedding “The Institute Way.”
- Attract, grow and retain top talent at all levels and increase employment and careers of people from under-represented communities across the workforce.

Financial foundation

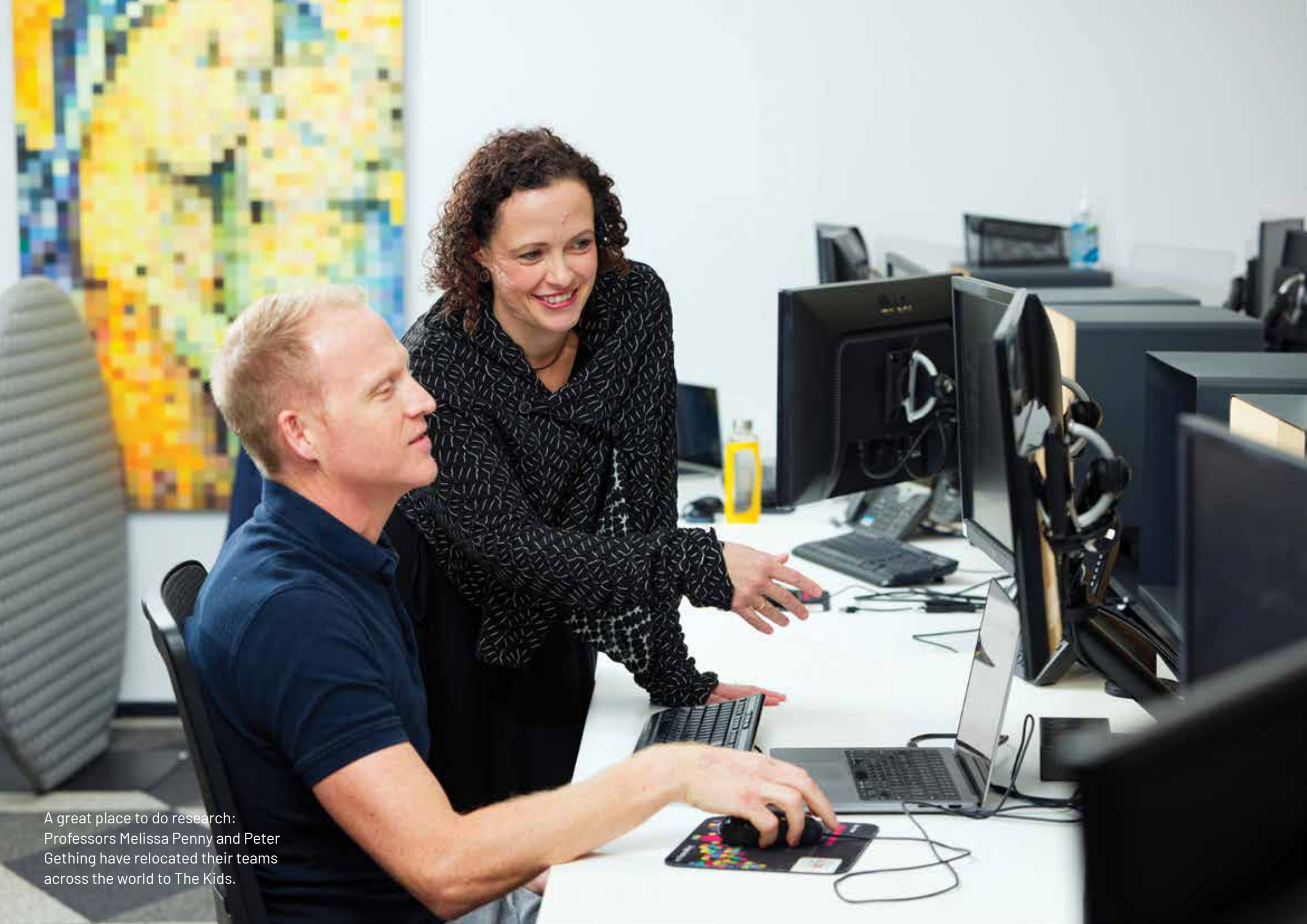
- Grow our financial reserves to generate ongoing income to support research operations and strategic priorities.
- Implement a funding model that covers the full costs of research.

Diversify Opportunities

- Grow Philanthropy and Social Investment, including among our supporter communities and other stakeholders.
- Expand our Business Development activities, identifying service, training and other offerings as vehicles for impact and potential expansion of our revenue base.
- Be a trusted adviser to government and industry through tenders, contract research and consultancy.

Optimised Central Support Services and Platforms

- Implement centralised, streamlined and efficient research operations, platforms and professional services to support our strategy, research model and impact.
- Grow our locations and reach aligned with research priorities and impact – physically, virtually and through partnerships.



A great place to do research:
Professors Melissa Penny and Peter
Gething have relocated their teams
across the world to The Kids.

OUR RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Research Reimagined requires a research environment that is both supportive and challenging and brings about the change that excites us all. That environment has two essential elements: our Research Themes, and a capacity to enable “Challenge-driven” research.



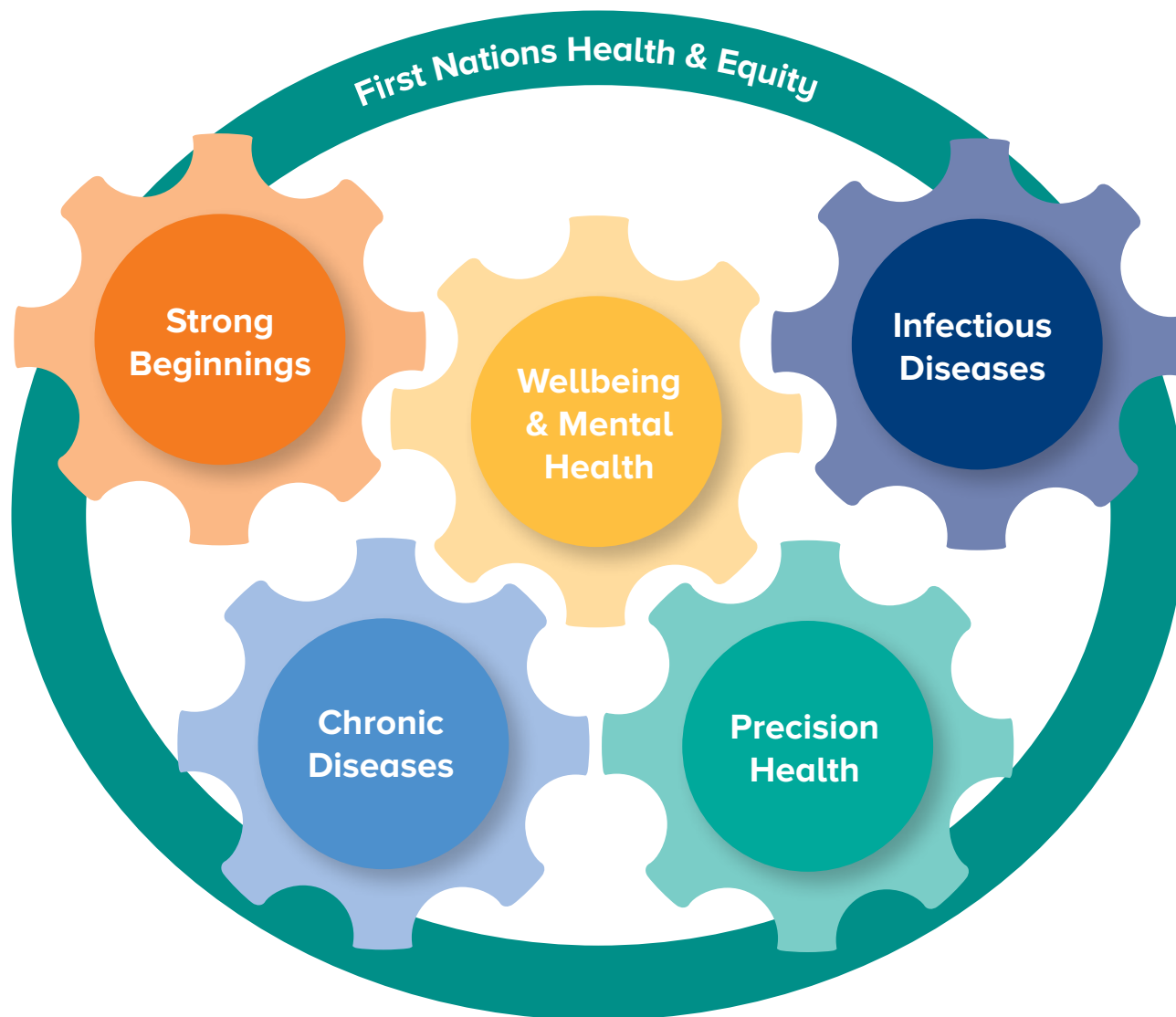
Research making a difference: Professor Jenny Downs and her team have been working with families of children with Rett syndrome, including Leana Eikelboom and her Mum Jane, to develop resources for families, schools and clinicians.



THEMES: A home for our research teams

Our Themes are the home for our research teams. They host defined programs of work where the Institute has clear strengths and capacity.

Our overarching commitment to First Nations Health and Equity surrounds all our work and features as a core consideration in each Theme.



In each Theme you will find:

- A clear strategy with defined outcomes, timelines, and funding plan
- An understanding of ongoing and emerging research
- An ability to stand up agile teams to undertake research across Themes, including Challenge-driven science
- A focus on culture, including a recruitment, career development and retention strategy
- Investigator led and curiosity driven science consistent with theme strategy

Each Theme will deliver:

- Clearly defined and measurable outcomes, with pathways to improvements in child health and wellbeing
- New methodologies and new discoveries
- Tangible impacts, including products to market and changes to policy and practice
- Leading scientists for today and tomorrow

CHALLENGES: Starting with the end in mind

Our Challenge Model is geared to deliver high impact outcomes by bringing together research teams with other partners to identify and tackle big problems faced by kids. Every researcher and team is supported to ensure that their science progresses to the next knowledge advance and, ideally, to a practical outcome.

Some challenges may be relatively small-scale and achievable in the short-term – with tangible outcomes enabled by existing research delivered sooner with focused attention. Some may arise from teams or Themes working together with partners to identify specific problems and to co-design plans to address them over the medium-term.

But our Challenges don't stop there – our Grand Challenges are ambitious and without limits. They will be Whole-of-Institute programs of work, carefully planned with communities and partners, identifying large-scale complex problems that may have long-term time frames. Partnerships will be diverse, embracing multiple sectors and disciplines – whomever needs to be part of the team will be welcomed.

Delivering on Challenges, regardless of scale, requires:

- Unified commitment to vision and principle
- Agile teams and support structures
- Strong governance
- Genuine partnerships with funders, community and government, all involved from beginning
- Range of funding sources
- A willingness to take risks, acknowledging that if we fail, we fail fast and learn
- Transparency and accountability, setting targets, monitoring, reporting





Leading global research: PhD candidate Kalindu Rodrigo and Dr Timothy Barnett are developing a diagnostic test for antibiotic-resistant skin infections.

Our Outreach Program aims to inspire the next generation about child health research



MAKING IT HAPPEN

Our previous two strategic plans set out to create a new blueprint for a medical research institute, one that embraces its community and judges itself by its ability to make a difference.

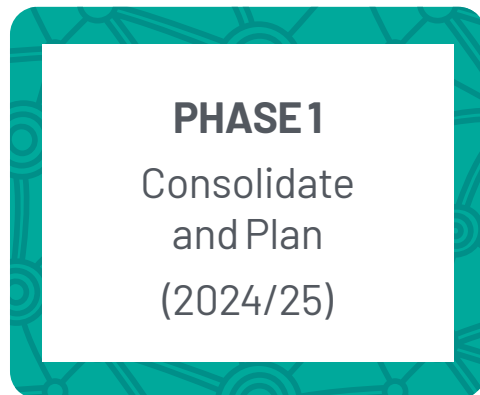
Those plans laid the foundation for **Research Reimagined**, where we now pull those pieces together to deliver on our purpose.

It requires us to be brave - to focus on the most important and complex challenges, be humble and inclusive as we build deeper, more impactful partnerships.

As a 10-year vision, we know that there will be challenges and changes along the way.

It is critical that we set objectives systematically, track outcomes and report on performance annually.

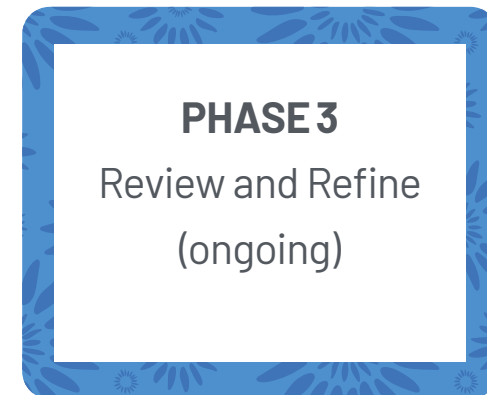
We will update this plan, as a dynamic document, as required.



PHASE 1
Consolidate
and Plan
(2024/25)



PHASE 2
Embed new model
and Operationalise
(2025 - 2028)



PHASE 3
Review and Refine
(ongoing)

Research that has impact: Archie and Henry Cooper both contracted RSV when they were 7 weeks old. Research from The Kids is informing the vaccine rollout.



What can you expect to see



More tangible outcomes, delivered sooner, having impact on child health and happiness



A strong network of partnerships, locally, nationally and globally – some where we lead, some where we follow, many where we walk alongside as true collaborators



A dynamic and generous scientific environment where all ideas are welcome and teams work together to solve important problems



Efficient, streamlined and cutting-edge services and platforms to support research and impact



A high performing organisational culture with strong alignment to our purpose and values



Openness and transparency, as we monitor progress and hold ourselves to account



Effective governance and a financially sustainable organisation



An engaged and empowered workforce: Dr Sebastien Malinge and Chloe Buckingham are dedicated to revolutionising cancer treatments for children, working with local, national and global collaborators.

OUR VALUES

Collaboration

Our work is better when we work together

We seek and respect the contributions of our colleagues, partners, the community, and all who share our vision

Courage

No problem is too big or too difficult

We will have the courage to take on the toughest challenges and will use our expertise and evidence to help those who need it most

Evidence

We do not compromise on quality

We commit to research excellence as the solid foundation that empowers us to challenge, innovate and advocate

Respect

We are honest, ethical and fair

We promote inclusivity and equity and celebrate the richness of diverse views, cultures and experiences

THE INSTITUTE WAY

At The Kids, our people strongly connect with our Vision and Purpose. It's not simply a place where we work, but also where we feel we belong.

Together, we developed "The Institute Way," a set of beliefs and behaviours that drives our culture and shared expectations and brings our Values to life.

It's what we sign up for.

We are an Institute of world-class researchers and those who support them, committed to maintaining the very highest levels of excellence. Relentlessly curious, we demand this of ourselves and of each other. The pride we share in our collective impact means we will never cut-corners, accept 'good enough' or compromise on the quality of our work.

We are honest, ethical and fair. We appreciate the importance of different perspectives, knowledge, skills and abilities, and we value and recognize all contributions, always. We believe in open, transparent communication and decision-making at every level, and we treat one another with kindness and empathy.

We seek and give feedback constructively, never being too busy or too important for one another. By being humble, kind and inclusive, we respect one another and ourselves. We foster innovation and share learnings, knowing that even with every failure, we learn and grow.

We seek out opportunities to collaborate with each other, with our partners and with the community, because we know that our work is better when we work together. We embrace the opportunity to constantly learn from one another, valuing and respecting each other's expertise and contribution to a team science approach that delivers real impact to our community.



DISCOVER • PREVENT • CURE

thekids.org.au

