

# NEW STUDENT HANDBOOK

A guide for all new and prospective students on  
undertaking a higher degree by research at the  
Telethon Kids Institute





## About the Telethon Kids Institute

Telethon Kids Institute is one of the nation's leading medical research organisations with impressive facilities in Western Australia. Led by Australian researcher and paediatrician Professor Jonathan Carapetis, Telethon Kids is home to more than 500 staff and postgraduate students who are dedicated to tackling the major causes of childhood disease, disability and disadvantage.

Officially opened in June 1990 by founding director Professor Fiona Stanley, the Institute was among the first to adopt a multidisciplinary approach to research. The Institute is home to basic scientists, population scientists, clinical researchers and clinicians, who seek to investigate the causes, prevention and management of childhood disease and disability. Our research teams are among the world's best and we have strong affiliations with Perth Children's Hospital and all major Western Australian universities, particularly The University of Western Australia and Curtin University.

Telethon Kids is dedicated to developing young researchers and providing them with the skills and experience necessary for a successful independent research career. The Institute offers a range of Honours, MD, Masters, and PhD research projects for prospective students to complete under the supervision of our experienced researchers. Students are also provided with several development opportunities to ensure they receive adequate training for their future careers.

The Institute currently has over 100 students conducting their research with us, from both domestic and international universities. Students are conducting research in a wide variety of areas, from lab-based experiments to population-wide studies. Representatives from the student body, our Leadership & Organisational Development team, and members from various research groups and professional services work together to ensure students are well supported and enjoy their time with us.





## About this Handbook

This handbook gives new and prospective students an overview of the student program at Telethon Kids, covering important topics such as enrolment, expectations, resources, and student life. The aim of this handbook is to provide all students with adequate information to ensure their placement with Telethon Kids is a rewarding, productive, and enjoyable experience.

This handbook does not outline university and course-specific requirements and milestones, and should be used in conjunction with other relevant university and higher degree by research resources. Refer to your enrolling university school for information on these. Contact details for graduate research schools are available on page 5.





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## Starting at the Institute

### Enrolment

Students at the Institute enrol for a higher degree by research through a university and undertake their project at Telethon Kids under the supervision of Institute researchers. Most universities welcome student placements at research institutions for the experience they provide. Eligibility and conditions for completion are primarily determined by the enrolling university. Speak to your relevant university school for more information on these.

The enrolment process varies between universities and is to primarily be conducted by the student, though supervisors may assist with the application as needed. Questions on enrolment should be directed to the nominated university's graduate research school.

### Graduate Research School Contacts for WA Universities

#### The University of Western Australia

Phone: (08) 6488 2807 or (08) 6488 7244

Email: [hdrenquiries-fhms@uwa.edu.au](mailto:hdrenquiries-fhms@uwa.edu.au)

#### Curtin University

Phone: (08) 9266 3337

Email: [GRS.futurestudents@curtin.edu.au](mailto:GRS.futurestudents@curtin.edu.au)

#### Murdoch University

Phone: (08) 9360 6927

Email: [graduateresearchdegrees@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:graduateresearchdegrees@murdoch.edu.au)

#### Edith Cowan University

Phone: (08) 6304 2628

Email: [grs@ecu.edu.au](mailto:grs@ecu.edu.au)

#### Notre Dame University

Phone: (08) 9433 0555

Email: [future@nd.edu.au](mailto:future@nd.edu.au)







## Key Contacts

The following list of contacts are available to help prospective and new students with enquiries regarding the Institute's student program, scholarships and awards, and student life.

### Leadership & Organisational Development

The Leadership & Organisational Development team manage the Institute's student program, and are the first point of contact for all students. The team can assist with scholarship enquiries, professional development, and questions regarding student life and other student-related services. Our Leadership & Organisational Development team can be contacted on [study@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:study@telethonkids.org.au).

### Student Leaders

The Student Leaders are a group of Telethon Kids students who represent the student body. Leaders sit on several councils and committees, and chair the Student Leadership Group meetings. With the help of student volunteers, Leaders organise several student-only events. Leaders can assist with general enquiries regarding student life at the Institute, student resources, upcoming events and volunteering opportunities. Our Student Leaders' contact details are below.

#### 2018 Student Leaders

Yasmine Khandan (Honours Representative)  
Wetlabs, Immunology & Inflammation  
[Yasmine.Khandan@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Yasmine.Khandan@telethonkids.org.au)

Simone Mahfouda  
Population Sciences, Youth Mental Health  
[Simone.Mahfouda@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Simone.Mahfouda@telethonkids.org.au)

Kelly Martinovich  
Wetlabs, Respiratory Health  
[Kelly.Martinovich@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Kelly.Martinovich@telethonkids.org.au)

Hayley Passmore  
Population Sciences, Alcohol and Pregnancy & FASD Research  
[Hayley.Passmore@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Hayley.Passmore@telethonkids.org.au)

James Read  
Wetlabs, Immunology & Inflammation  
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Penelope Strauss  
Population Sciences, Youth Mental Health  
[Penelope.Strauss@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Penelope.Strauss@telethonkids.org.au)

Niamh Troy  
Wetlabs, Respiratory Health  
[Niamh.Troy@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Niamh.Troy@telethonkids.org.au)





## Supervision

### Forming a Supervisory Team

The supervisory team is an important source of support, guidance, and feedback for a student throughout their candidature.

Prior to enrolment, students should have either formed their supervisory team, or contacted one or more potential supervisors. Potential supervisors and university schools may be able to assist students with finding additional supervision. Students should aim to have between 3 and 5 supervisors to ensure support continues throughout their candidature, as supervisors have a range of commitments and will not always be available.

Supervisory roles differ between universities; in most cases, students are assigned a primary supervisor who provides core guidance and support to the student, supplemented by additional supervisors. Some universities will also appoint a coordinating supervisor, who is the main signatory on a student's candidature but may not necessarily be the main source of knowledge or support. In some cases, a supervisor may take on both the primary and coordinating supervisor roles.

### Supervision at Telethon Kids Institute

Telethon Kids Institute is included in the UWA structure as the Centre for Child Health Research under the university's Medical School. Due to this affiliation, a student enrolling through this university may have their primary supervisor located at the Institute, dependent on their staff/adjunct status. Further supervisors can be located either within the Institute or externally.

Students enrolled through other universities will have a primary supervisor located at the university and further supervisors located at the Institute and externally. A student must have at least one Institute supervisor to conduct their project within the building.







## Supervisor Responsibilities

The main role of a student's supervisor is to provide guidance and support throughout a student's candidature to ensure they complete their project to a high standard, using appropriate methods, within the stipulated timeframe.

Supervisors have responsibility for the following aspects of the student's candidature:

- **Project Design** – to ensure the student is working on an appropriate research topic, using the most appropriate methods, and to assist the student with their proposal where required
- **Timeframes** – to ensure the student completes their project within the stipulated timeframe
- **Communication** – to be reasonably available for consultation and meetings, and to respond to the student's communications in a timely manner
- **Feedback** – to ensure the student receives adequate and timely feedback on their written work as requested
- **Support** – to ensure the student receives support and guidance from the supervisory team as requested, or where the supervisor may deem fit

Though they may assist where required, it is not the supervisor's responsibility to organise meetings, direct the student's professional development, or inform the student of the academic regulations and administrative requirements of their degree; these responsibilities fall with the student.

For more information on student responsibilities see page 9.





## Student Responsibilities

Students conducting their research with Telethon Kids Institute are expected to show initiative and lead their research project, with the support of their supervisory team and Leadership & Organisational Development.

Students have responsibility for the following aspects of their program:

### Research and Training

- **Project Plan** – to, with the assistance of their supervisors, develop a detailed research proposal, and a corresponding financial and operational plan for their project
- **Timeframes** – to be aware of their project milestones and complete their research project within the stipulated timeframe, or explain why the project may exceed this timeframe
- **Communication:**
  - **Meetings** - to initiate frequent meetings with their supervisory team regarding their project, including generating and distributing agendas and minutes
  - **Information Sharing** - to frequently contact their supervisory team and share any relevant information regarding their project
- **Feedback** – to establish mutually acceptable timelines for feedback from their supervisors on written work
- **Support** – to alert their supervisory team and/or Leadership & Organisational Development of any issues they may be facing that will hinder the timely completion of their project
- **Professional Development** - to take responsibility for their own professional development and academic career

### Community and Administration

- **Reputation** – to uphold the academic standards and reputations of both their supervisors and the Institute
- **Student Culture** – to participate in student activities, and promote the student experience at Telethon Kids Institute
- **Policy and Course Requirements** – to maintain awareness of the academic regulations and administrative requirements of their degree, and to complete all paperwork and other degree obligations in a timely fashion
- **Recordkeeping** – to ensure their supervisors, university contacts, and Leadership & Organisational Development are informed about changes to their contact details and candidature





## PhD Student Responsibilities

Students completing a Doctor of Philosophy, on top of the responsibilities mentioned on page 9, have additional expectations that must be fulfilled for successful completion of their course.

### Student Advisory Panel

The Student Advisory Panel is the Institute's process of ensuring all PhD projects are reviewed prior to submission to the student's university.

This process comprises of a research Panel, composed by the student, which scientifically evaluates the student's proposal and provides feedback prior to formal submission to the university. This is a compulsory process for all internal PhD students, except those enrolled through university schools with their own review system. For more information on the Student Advisory Panel process see the Appendix.

### Institute Milestones

On top of the student's university milestones, Telethon Kids Institute has one additional yearly presentation milestone that must be fulfilled by all internal PhD students.

PhD students are expected to present their research to a Telethon Kids approved audience each year of their candidature. Presentations for the first, second, and third year may be short, however the final year presentation must be a formal, hour-long seminar of the student's full project at the Institute's Seminar Series. For more information on PhD milestones see the Appendix.

### Final Year Presentation

As mentioned above, a PhD student's final-year presentation must be a formal, hour-long seminar showcasing their full project at the Institute's Seminar Series. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they book their presentation date with the organising committee in advance to secure a place. All internal PhD students must complete this milestone for successful completion of their candidature. For more information on the Seminar Series and final-year presentation speak to the Leadership & Organisational Development team.





## Student Resources

### Scholarships and Awards

Telethon Kids provides both individual funding for students as well as a range of competitive scholarships and awards to support them during their candidature.

### Institute Support Funding

The Institute allocates internal PhD, Honours, and Masters students yearly funding to support them during their candidature.

Funding amounts for full-time students are outlined below, with part-time students receiving funds pro-rata depending on their enrolment:

- PhD - \$2000 per annum for up to 3 years
- Masters by Dissertation (MPhil or equivalent) - \$2000 per annum for up to 2 years
- Honours - \$1000 per annum for up to 1 year

To receive these funds in full, students must:

- Be primarily located at the Telethon Kids Institute for a minimum of 6 months
- Be under the supervision of at least 1 Telethon Kids student supervisor
- Undertake a certain amount of professional development opportunities

### Awards and Scholarships

The Institute has a range of scholarship opportunities for both current and future students to support them during their candidature. Each year in September a range of full, top-up, and travel scholarships are announced. All students are encouraged to apply for these funding opportunities. More information on our current scholarship opportunities and eligibility criteria can be found on our website.

### Office Resources for New Students

The Institute provides new students with a range of resources to assist them in completing their research. Allocation of resources is dependent on the student's location, study load, project design and research requirements.

### Accommodation

All students of the Institute are provided with a workspace for the duration of their placement. Students who are not at the Institute full-time may be required to share their workspace with others. Every effort is made to seat students close to their research group, however this is not always possible. Student workspace locations may change over time.





## Hardware and Software

Masters and PhD students who are primarily located at the Institute may be eligible to receive an Institute laptop, to be purchased with support funds from their enrolling school. Masters and PhD students who are located at the Institute for at least 60% of the working week should approach their enrolling school for these funds. In the event a student's enrolling school is temporarily unable to provide funds the Institute will provide an interim computer until funds are received. Students who are at the Institute less than 60% of the working week will be assigned a desktop or laptop workstation to be shared with others.

The IT team only supports computers owned by the Institute. Therefore, students wishing to use their own personal computer/device will need to make other support arrangements.

The Institute provides the following software as standard on all computers:

- Microsoft Office Suite
- EndNote
- Antivirus Software
- Adobe Acrobat Reader DC

If a student requires additional software for their project, this is to be discussed with their supervisor and the IT team. The cost of additional software must be covered by the student's supervisor.

## Telethon Kids Email

Some students may be provided with a Telethon Kids email account. Students with a Telethon Kids email will receive all important student correspondence from the Institute to this email address. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they frequently access this mailbox. For convenience, emails may be forwarded to another more frequently monitored mailbox.

## Office Consumables

Students have access to a range of basic office supplies to use throughout their placement, including printing and laminating facilities. These consumables are charged to the supervisor's project.

## Employee Assistance Program

The Institute provides an Employee Assistance Program for all staff and students. This program provides free, professional, and confidential counselling to staff, students, and their immediate family. This service may be used for either personal or work-related issues which may be affecting general wellbeing. Staff and students may access up to 4 free counselling sessions per year.





## Student Life

Telethon Kids Institute provides students with several opportunities to meet other students and staff members, develop professionally and personally, and have a say in student services and the student experience. The below list outlines some of these opportunities which students may be interested in participating in.

### Student Development Program

The Student Development Program is a two-day, student-only event, organised by Student Leaders with the help of student volunteers. The aim of this event is to provide students with an opportunity to develop on a professional and personal level, and meet students from different research areas. The Program is held off-site and includes workshops, presentations, and fun team building activities.

### Student Symposium

The Student Symposium is a one-day, student-only event, organised by Student Leaders with the help of student volunteers. The event consists of student presentations, as well as talks from guest speakers. Students are invited to submit an abstract for presentation in either 3-minute or 10-minute thesis format. The Symposium is a safe place for students to practice presenting and receive feedback from their peers. Presenting at the Symposium satisfies PhD students' first three yearly presentation milestones.

### Student Circle Morning Teas

Every Friday at 10:30am the Institute's student group, the 'Student Circle', holds a morning tea for all students in the Atrium. This informal catch-up is to discuss all topics of relevance to students including funding opportunities, resources, support, and upcoming events. Feedback from these meetings is provided to the Student Leadership Group by Student Leaders in attendance.







## Student Leadership Group

The Student Leadership Group (SLG) is the Institute's formal committee for students, chaired by the Student Leadership Group. The Group aims to support research students at the Institute through various initiatives and services. The SLG consists of representatives from the student body, Leadership & Organisational Development, our Research Development team, the Institute's Leadership Team, and supervisory body. The Group discuss all activities related to student recruitment, development, funding, and support. Student Leaders also provide the Group with any feedback or comments received at the Student Circle morning tea.

## Professional Development

The professional development program at Telethon Kids Institute is dedicated to the development of all staff and students. Throughout the year, a number of different workshops and presentations are held, which are free for all staff and students to attend. The Leadership & Organisational Development team also frequently schedule student-only events, to provide students with an opportunity to develop their research skills with peers. All enrolled students will have access to the Institute's Training Calendar, from which they can RSVP to development opportunities.

## Social Club

The Institute's Social Club is run by a volunteer committee, with representatives from all areas of the Institute. Past events include sundowners, Easter and Christmas breakfasts, Melbourne Cup lunch, morning teas, and sporting events. Annual memberships for students are offered at a discounted rate of \$40/year.





## Further Information

For further information on undertaking a student research project at Telethon Kids Institute:

- Read our Student Project Booklet, available on the Telethon Kids Website, for upcoming research project opportunities designed by our research teams. This booklet is updated on a yearly basis, and includes projects for Honours, MD, Masters, and PhD students.
- Speak to our student supervisors about their projects and upcoming student opportunities. Within the Project Booklet each project will have a nominated contact person whom you may speak to for further information. Timelines and eligibility criteria are usually a guide only, and research teams may be flexible with these.
- Visit the Student Opportunities page on our website for more information on upcoming scholarships and awards.
- Attend the annual Prospective Student Evening held in August to meet potential supervisors, discuss student opportunities, and learn more about our research. More information on this is available on our website.
- Contact your selected university to discuss eligibility criteria, admission periods, and completion criteria for your course, as these differ by university. Contacts for WA university graduate research schools are available on page 5.





## Appendix

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## Telethon Kids Institute – PhD Milestones

### Year 1

#### Compulsory

Research Proposal (6-month mark)

- Student Advisory Panel
- Submission of Research Proposal and Student Advisory Panel feedback (6 months)

Confirmation of Candidature (12-month mark)

- Oral presentation (proposed research or early data) to Telethon Kids Institute audience, or other approved audience
- Submission of substantial piece of writing (e.g. literature review)
- Submission of Annual Progress Report
- Submission of Confirmation of Candidature

#### Highly Recommended

- Appointment with UWA Reference Librarian (set up research alerts, learn EndNote)
- Attendance at Leadership & Organisational Development Induction with Ben Andrews
- Involvement with Student Circle (attending morning teas, volunteering for events)
- Attendance at 'Introduction to Scientific Writing' workshop
- Identifying and joining professional societies (e.g. ASMR)

### Year 2

#### Compulsory

- Oral presentation (either on proposed research or early data) to Telethon Kids Institute audience, or other approved audience
- Submission of Annual Progress Report

#### Highly Recommended

- Involvement with Student Circle (attending morning teas, volunteering for events)
- Involvement in grant writing (including small grants such as travel funding)
- Identification of independent mentor
- Attendance at national/international conferences
- Networking, collaborating and building professional networks for future career
- Attending professional development opportunities (e.g. presentation skills workshop, writing workshop)





## Year 3

### Compulsory

- Oral presentation to Telethon Kids Institute audience, or other approved audience
- Submission of Annual Progress Report

### Highly Recommended

- Involvement with Student Circle (attending morning teas, volunteering for events)
- Appointment with Research Development to discuss future career opportunities
- Attendance at 'Writing Workshop'
- Involvement in the writing of a grant/funding opportunity

## Final Year

### Compulsory

- One hour oral presentation of thesis at Telethon Kids Research Seminar Series (put in nomination form when called for to secure presentation date in advance)
- Submission of Thesis

### Highly Recommended

- Discussion of future career opportunities with supervisors
- Submission of post-doctoral fellowship application





## Student Advisory Panel (PhD Only)

### Overview

The Student Advisory Panel allows PhD students to have their research proposal reviewed prior to submission to their university. The research proposal is presented to a Panel made up of the student’s supervisors and independent experts, who will provide feedback and assist the student in shaping their research project.

**This is a compulsory process for all internal PhD students, except those from the UWA School of Psychology. Students enrolled through universities with their own review process should speak to their supervisor about which process to follow. This presentation is separate to the first-year oral presentation of proposed research/early data to a Telethon Kids Institute audience or other approved audience.**

### Timeline

Timeframe	Action
1-3 months	Preparation of research proposal
4 months	Presentation of research proposal to Panel
5-6 months	Revision of research proposal utilising Panel feedback
6 months	Submission of updated research proposal and Panel feedback form to Student Admin, and relevant UWA school for sign off and submission to GRS

### Panel Members

#### Compulsory

Panel Chair	An experienced Institute/SPACH supervisor, who is not associated with the project/student
Coordinating and/or Principal Supervisor	Either the student’s Coordinating or Principal supervisor, or both
Independent Expert	An expert in a relevant field to the project who can complement the expertise of the supervisors

#### Optional

Co-Supervisors	The student’s other supervisors, or those related to the project
Additional Expert	Additional external appointee, who is an expert in the student’s area of research

### Role of Panel Chair

- Oversee the review of the student’s progress
- Advise and support the student and their supervisors
- Chair Student Advisory Panel meeting







## Role of the Advisory Panel

- Give constructive feedback on the scope of the project, methodology and project design
- Ensure the research project is appropriate, can be completed within the timeframe available, will be appropriately resourced and complies with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures
- Work to put in place measures to assist the student if progress is unsatisfactory

## Suggested Timeline

*The below may need to be modified based on discussions between the student and supervisors to suit each project and set of individual circumstances.*

**1-3 months**: Begin preparing research proposal.

**2 months**: Begin contacting potential Panel members.

**3 months**: Finalise Panel members, and arrange a date/time for the meeting. Book a meeting room and conference phone (if required) for the meeting.

**4 months**: Present research proposal to Student Advisory Panel. Assessment by the Panel to be submitted to Student Admin and the Graduate Research Coordinator.

**5 months**: Revise research proposal, to accommodate feedback and suggestions from Panel.

**6 months**: Submission of amended research proposal to Student Admin and relevant Graduate Research Coordinator. Your Graduate Research Coordinator will submit on your behalf to the relevant university school.

## Things to Note

- The composition of the Panel should be chosen as much possible by the student, though supervisors may make recommendations on potential Panel members.
- The student's presentation to the Panel should be in a private meeting room to better facilitate in-depth discussions. Meeting rooms should be booked at least 3-4 weeks in advance. Rooms can be booked on the Institute's Resource Booking System.
- Panel members do not need to be in physical attendance, and may attend the meeting via Skype/conference call. Equipment for this can be booked on the Institute's Resource Booking System.
- The Student Advisory Panel should complete and submit the Panel Feedback Form (available on Telescope) as soon as possible to Student Admin and the relevant university school as appropriate.

