

International Osteopathy Research Leadership and Capacity Building Program



Swedish Osteopathic Association



Executive Summary

The proposed International Osteopathy Research Leadership and Capacity Building Program (referred to as 'Program' hereafter) provides essential research mentoring/career development and capacity building across the international osteopathy community. The Program will establish the next generation of international osteopathy research leaders critical to the global advancement of the profession and a thriving, growing research culture necessary in the contemporary health care landscape. The Program will run over an initial 3 years (with an intention of developing a sustainable resource for the field) and competitively recruit a cohort of approx. 10-12 early to mid-career osteopathy researchers who will attend an annual 5 day/4 night residential at the University of Technology Sydney [UTS], Sydney.

The Program is designed and facilitated by senior health researchers at the Faculty of Health, UTS with extensive track record and world-leading success in research mentoring and research capacity building. The UTS team is ideally placed having close positive ties to the osteopathy profession and field yet being positioned in a leading Faculty of Health at a top 120 world university.

Background: What is the International Osteopathy Research Leadership and Capacity Building Program?

The Program is modelled on the experience of Distinguished Professor Jon Adams (Faculty of Health, UTS) as a Senior Fellow and Senior Mentor on the Oxford International Research Leadership Programme at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford. The Oxford Program now in its eleventh year, is the world leader in health research capacity building providing an excellent vehicle for primary health care to establish and develop the next generation of research leaders. Based on the Oxford program's success and his insights as a Senior Fellow, Distinguished Professor Adams and the wider UTS team have founded a number of world-first International Research

Leadership Programs since 2014 – all ongoing Programs which have recruited >50 international Fellows and to date, have produced in excess of 150 peer-reviewed publications and initiated internationally significant collaborative research projects.

While there are a number of pockets of excellence in osteopathy research in Australia and worldwide and the field has made advances in recent years, there remains a lack of co-ordinated, international collaboration and mentorship infrastructure for those seeking to enter or further develop a research career in or relevant to osteopathy. In order to ensure osteopathy research can build upon current successes and further grow its ranks, initiatives and profile, the Program moves beyond funding/support for any one particular research project to instead develop a 'critical mass' of talented early career researchers (in close collaboration with senior researchers) able to undertake high quality and internationally regarded osteopathy research which examines clinically and professionally relevant research questions now and for years into the future.

The Program will provide emerging researchers and researcher-practitioners a unique opportunity to mix with others committed to the scientific examination of areas relevant for osteopathy, to reflect and strategize in the context of not only their own career but the bigger picture of osteopathy and musculoskeletal health care research and the challenges/opportunities facing the national and international field.

Aims of the Program

The ultimate goal of the Program is to identify, nurture and support future emerging researchers (including those with methodological/disciplinary backgrounds and/or clinical backgrounds) focused upon investigation of osteopathy and issues relevant to osteopathy. The Program aims to help develop and lead a sustainable international osteopathy research culture able to meet the evidence needs of osteopathy patients, practitioners, policymakers and the wider profession. The Program will provide emerging osteopathy researchers a unique opportunity to also mix and collaborate with senior researchers (with expertise in a range of relevant methodologies and disciplines) examining osteopathy and to reflect and strategize in the context of both personal and professional development. On a broader level, the Program will help ensure that the osteopathy profession build upon current research successes and capacity to further grow its ranks, initiatives and profile over coming years. The Program will provide a unique opportunity for the field to instil mentorship at the highest level necessary for planning and developing the broad evidence-base for osteopathy practice and use on the national and international stage. The Program will draw upon rigorous, established methods and multi-disciplinary perspectives from across public health, health services research and clinical science to promote and conduct collaborations across and beyond the profession in order to help strengthen and further grow the integration and standing of osteopathy within wider health care, teamwork and systems.

What is involved?

Those chosen for the Program via competitive application will be known as the 'Fellows' of the Program and will attract Honorary Appointments as *Visiting Scholars/Fellows* with the Faculty of Health, UTS. Program Fellows will be required to participate in an annual residential (4-day visit to UTS) to be held at UTS. The Program will cover the cost of accommodation (5 days, 4 nights), an invited Program dinner as well as a reimbursement for flights for each Fellow. All other expenses will be the responsibility of the Fellow.

Upon each 4-day visit, Fellows will be joined by guest speakers and senior academics from both the hosting University and the wider osteopathy/health care research community and engage in sessions on specific expert topics such as but not confined to: research skills training; networking; the art of getting published and cited; writing a successful grant for external competitive funding; successfully collaborating in multi-disciplinary research teams and other research development and career advancement issues. In addition, the cohort will be encouraged to run self-sufficient sessions where they provide collegial support to work through challenges/opportunities they face/identify within their professional career and develop collaborative projects with appropriate design guidance and facilitation.

Importantly, Fellows will also be introduced to leading osteopathy resources and active databases (e.g. ORION in Australia and ORC-NZ in New Zealand) and will be encouraged to collaborate on secondary data analyses, developing new sub-studies and producing extensive publications and output. Drawing upon these established datasets and networks provides a 'value-add' for the Program and other leading osteopathy-focused research initiatives, guaranteeing excellent capacity building and collaborative infrastructure as well as ensuring timely output and successes (peer reviewed journal articles).

Throughout the rest of each Program year the Fellows will be provided with distance mentoring and support from senior researchers facilitating the Program when and as necessary. Each Fellow will be expected to co-author and submit at least one peer-reviewed journal article with at least one other Program Fellow and/or Associated Program academic per annum while on the Program. Active research collaboration across the cohort and Program-related academics will be strongly encouraged.

Eligibility for the program

To be eligible for the program, applicants must be either: a) enrolled in a PhD relevant to osteopathy; or b) within seven (7) years of PhD award (at date of application deadline) in a topic relevant to osteopathy *and* hold a position at a research institution/university or equivalent research-appropriate organisation. Candidates with equivalent experience and skills may also be considered at the discretion of the selection panel.

Candidates must also be able to show:

- a) an emerging track record in rigorous critical scholarship, research output and development/facilitation relevant to osteopathy (relative to stage of career);
- b) a potential and commitment to further develop and contribute to the national and international field of critical osteopathy research as well as broader multidisciplinary research collaborations.

A selection committee will identify successful Fellows from all submissions in accordance with selection criteria above. Please also note: selection will also take into account an ability to identify a good spread of Fellows across different areas of interest, areas of expertise, gender, geography, etc. in order to facilitate and promote appropriate networks and collaborations. All short-listed candidates will be interviewed via Skype/teleconference prior to final selection.

How will candidates apply?

Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria above and wish to apply must complete and return an official Program Application Form (<https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/complementary-and-integrative-medicine>) and brief CV (max. 2 pages) which will be promoted over a number of months via various national and international channels.

Applications for Program Fellowships close at 12 midnight (AEST), 14th December 2019. Completed applications are to be submitted via email to rhiannon.derrig@uts.edu.au. The official Program application can be accessed via the UTS:ARCCIM website <https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/our-research/complementary-and-integrative-medicine> and will be also accessed and promoted via social media. An application form can also be requested via emailing rhiannon.derrig@uts.edu.au.

All successful candidates will be appointed as Visiting Research Scholars/Fellows at ARCCIM, UTS in line with UTS policy and will be required to gain visa/travel approval (as necessary) for attendance at the Program annual residential in Sydney, Australia (initial residential is scheduled for 8-12 June 2020). Any appointed Fellow who does not attend all the residential program will be ineligible to claim the flight reimbursement and other financial support provided by the program.