

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title	Research Centre Development Manager		
Organisational Unit	Faculty of Health Sciences		
Functional Unit	National School of Allied Health		
Nominated Supervisor	Professor (Occupational Therapy)		
Classification	HEW 10		
CDF Level	CDF ₂ L	Position Number	10613605
Attendance Type	Full Time	Date reviewed	06-AUG-2026

ABOUT AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

ACU has a bold vision for its future. Our Vision 2033 is our landmark statement of strategic direction for ACU's mission as a Catholic university to constitute a 'Christian presence in the university world confronting the great problems of society and culture'. Our mission is to help shape the coming generations in Australia and beyond, by enabling flourishing lives, fostering thriving communities, and building a more ethical future.

Our Catholic mission informs everything we do – challenging us to respect the dignity of the human person, serve the common good, and embed ethical and social justice considerations throughout our teaching and research. We strive to live our core values of truth, excellence, and service.

We are a publicly funded university, and while we are young, we have grown significantly and we and we are making our mark: we are one of the largest university contributors to the care economy in Australia and rank among the top universities worldwide. We have seven campuses around Australia, more than 200 partner universities on six continents, and a campus in Rome, Italy.

We prioritise our staff, supporting their growth with a positive culture, generous leave, and flexible work arrangements. We invite all staff to engage with our mission in whatever way is most meaningful to them – whether as Catholics, as members of other churches and faiths, or as people with no religious affiliation but who are willing to embrace our vision, mission and strategic direction. We continue to invest in our facilities and workplaces and actively involve staff in shaping the future direction of the organisation.

For further information about the university please refer to ACU's [organisational structure](#).

ABOUT THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The Faculty of Health Sciences comprises three schools:

- Allied Health
- Behavioural and Health Sciences
- Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine

There are currently approximately 14,000 students (EFTSL) and 520 (FTE) staff in the faculty under the disciplines: occupational therapy, speech pathology, social work, exercise science, exercise physiology, nutrition science and PD_Research Centre Development Manager

dietetics, biomedical science, nursing, midwifery, paramedicine, digital health, physiotherapy, psychology and public health. The Faculty is represented across seven ACU campuses.

The Faculty's research broadly addresses the Future Healthcare Worker, Health across the Lifespan, and Human Performance, with some of our current research focused on Cardiovascular Disease, Metabolism, Health Services Research, Nutrition, Sports Performance and Rehabilitation, Psychology, and Mental Health.

An expanding portfolio of postgraduate courses is also available in coursework and research. Many postgraduate courses within the Faculty have been developed in conjunction with industries to meet specific needs of the professions and industry. Some postgraduate units are offered in flexible learning mode by online study. All students have professional and clinical experience that is supervised by specially qualified practitioners. Catholic hospitals and other public, private and specialty organisations, as well as schools and the health and sports industry, are involved with preparing for, promoting, and offering this valued and essential experience.

The goals of the Faculty are closely linked to and emanate from the Mission of the University. The areas of achievement by the Faculty include the key areas of teaching and learning, research and scholarship, community engagement in addition to specific objectives regarding internationalisation, quality and resource management. It has well-established procedures for evaluating performance and ensuring quality which involve students and representatives of the various statutory registration authorities and professional organisations, as well as recent graduates and employers.

Further information about the Faculty can be found at:

<https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/faculties-directorates-and-staff/faculty-of-health-sciences>

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH

The National School of Allied Health is located on six of the University's campuses: Brisbane, Strathfield, North Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Ballarat and is responsible for delivery of programs in four professional disciplines:

- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Physiotherapy
- Social Work / Human Services

Further information about the School can be found at: <https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/faculties-directorates-and-staff/faculty-of-health-sciences/school-of-allied-health>.

The School welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, and community perspectives in our commitment to culturally responsive classrooms and culturally safe environments. Substantial work has been undertaken over the last 10 years to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing in curricula, as well as to build cultural capability and responsiveness in staff. Our aim is to create sustained working and teaching environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, cultural mentors and academics can thrive. Underpinning this work is a strong ongoing focus on community engagement both within and external to ACU to truly privilege the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People within co-design, delivery, and evaluation of all of the School's activities. Support to undertake cultural activities is available and encouraged within the school, faculty and university for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.

POSITION PURPOSE

The Research Centre Development Manager is responsible for leading the strategic development, evaluation and business case preparation for a proposed university Centre. The role provides high-level leadership across academic, professional, government, industry, community and funding stakeholders to assess the Centre's viability, impact, governance, operating model, funding requirements and strategic benefits which align to university priorities and research impact objectives.

Working across the institution, the position will undertake comprehensive research, consultation, financial modelling, benchmarking and strategic analysis to deliver a compelling, evidence-based business case that supports executive and governing body decision-making. The position will develop the strategic plan, business case, external funding strategy, financial operating model and implementation roadmap required to position the proposed Centre for sustainable operation over a 5-10 year horizon.

The position is expected to act as an expert advisor and operate with a high degree of autonomy, judgement and influence. The role requires exceptional strategic thinking, commercial and financial literacy, executive communication, stakeholder engagement and delivery discipline. The successful candidate will be a high-performing individual able to work at pace, manage ambiguity and produce decision-ready outputs of consistently high quality.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Introduction

A number of frameworks and standards express the University's expectations of the conduct, capability, participation and contribution of staff. These are listed below:

- [ACU's Vision 2033](#)
- [Catholic Identity and Mission](#)
- [Code of Conduct for all staff](#)
- [ACU Capability Development Framework](#)
- [ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025](#)
- [ACU Staff Reconciliation Action Plan](#)

The [Capability Development Framework](#) describes the core competencies needed in all ACU staff to achieve the university's strategy and supports its mission.

Responsibility	Scope
Provide strategic leadership, expert advice and institutional influence with the development and delivery of a comprehensive Centre proposal. The proposal will need to translate institutional research priorities into a clear and sustainable Centre model; provide high-level advice to senior executives on strategic options, risks, investment requirements, anticipated outcomes, establishment plan and recommended pathways. The proposal will also include a five-year Business Case for executive decision-making, including strategic rationale, research agenda, impact framework, governance, organisational structure, workforce requirements, operating model, infrastructure implications and establishment plan.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Lead financial modelling and scenario planning, including revenue, expenditure and investment projections; assess	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are

Responsibility	Scope
operating models and return-on-investment scenarios; develop sustainability KPIs and options for reducing reliance on internal university funding over time.	implemented and have impact across the University
Analyse funding opportunities from government, industry, philanthropic, non-government, private and international sources; develop a sequenced external investment strategy; identify priority targets, value propositions, timing, decision-makers, partner roles and long-term funding pathways.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Identify and evaluate national and international research trends, comparator Centres, funding environments and competitive positioning; use benchmarking and evidence to shape the Centre model, implementation pathway and executive recommendations.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Act as a principal contact for stakeholders contributing to business case development; facilitate workshops, lead consultations and strategic planning activities; build productive partnerships across a complex group of stakeholders including academic, professional, government, industry, community, First Peoples, lived-experience, philanthropic and research stakeholders.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Develop governance structures, decision-making processes, risk management plans and compliance arrangements consistent with university policy, research governance, ethical practice, cultural safety, data governance and external partner expectations.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Plan and drive the development-phase workplan, including workshops, audits, consultations, expert review, executive reporting and document production, ensuring milestones are delivered to agreed scope, quality and timeframe	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Prepare concise, persuasive and evidence-based papers, presentations, briefings and recommendations for senior and executive leaders, committees, partners and potential funders; communicate with impact to gain support for actions that benefit ACU.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University
Establish measurable success indicators, maintain a decision and risk register, prepare implementation and transition plans, and produce a close-out and handover package for Centre establishment or alternative executive decision pathways.	The position contributes to activities; outcomes and goals; that are implemented and have impact across the University

HOW THE ROLE OPERATES

The position manages complex; difficult or challenging matters/issues/tasks on a regular basis; These matters are often impacted by internal/external factors (technical; policies and procedures; industrial; funding; academic).
The position is expected to demonstrate critical thinking to make recommendations; to meet changing demands; and provide business aligned solutions.
The position will need to influence and win the support of others to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

The position provides solutions to problems or situations of critical importance to the University or deals difficult or emotional people.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience:	• Qualification - Postgraduate qualification in business, finance, public policy, health, research management, commercialisation, philanthropy, strategy or a related discipline; or an equivalent combination of education, training and extensive senior-level experience • Experience - Proven expertise in leading complex strategic projects within any of the following sectors: higher education, research organisations, health, government, philanthropy, finance, or industry. • Experience - Demonstrated extensive experience in developing initiatives that convert research into practical outcomes, partnerships, or innovative products and programs. • Experience - Demonstrated success developing large-scale business cases, feasibility studies, financial models, operating models or strategic investment proposals for senior executive or governing body consideration where these have resulted in delivering sustainable, high-impact initiatives. • Skill - Exceptional strategic, commercial and analytical capability, including scenario modelling, revenue diversification, cost profiling, external income forecasting, investment analysis, risk assessment and sustainability planning, including performance monitoring and evaluation. • Experience - Proven experience in developing external funding pathways and strategic partnerships across government, non-government, philanthropic, private, industry, international or commissioned service channels. • Skill - influencing skills, including the ability to translate complex research, policy, stakeholder and financial information into clear recommendations for executive decision-makers. • Skill - Highly developed consultation, negotiation, workshop facilitation and relationship-management skills. Exceptional ability to influence and build effective relationships with key stakeholders (internal and external), demonstrated ability to work respectfully and effectively across diverse internal and external stakeholders. • Knowledge - Demonstrated commitment to ethical practice, cultural safety, First Peoples self-determination, inclusion of people with lived experience of disability, equity, workplace health and safety, and ACU mission-aligned conduct.
Core Competencies:	• Demonstrate confidence and courage in achieving ACU's Mission, Vision and Values by connecting the purpose of one's work to ACU's Mission, Vision and Values. • Understand the business environment in which ACU operates and adopt a university-wide point of view to seize opportunities and improve commercial viability. • Display openness and resilience, inspire others to change and act to make change happen with ACU's strategic goals and Mission at the heart of all outcomes. • Work collaboratively internally and externally to ACU to capitalise

	on all available expertise in pursuit of excellence. • Communicate with purpose. Gain the support of others for actions that benefit ACU. Negotiate for mutually beneficial outcomes that are aligned with the Mission, Vision and Values of the University.
Essential Attributes:	Demonstrated commitment to cultural diversity and ethical practice principles and demonstrated knowledge of equal employment opportunity and workplace health and safety, appropriate to the level of the appointment.
Working with Children and vulnerable adults check	Evidence of the ability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults, and contribute to and protect their safety and wellbeing. The successful applicant of this position will be required to hold a valid working with children clearance for the State or Territory in which the position is located.
Pre-employment declaration and background check	Preferred candidates will be required to complete mandatory pre-employment declarations and background checks, including those related to gender-based violence and foreign interference, in line with ACU's compliance requirements.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

For further information about the structure of the University, refer to the Organisation Chart
<https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/leadership-and-governance/leadership/organisational-structure>

