



UNSW
Kirby Institute



UNSW
SYDNEY

Kirby 2030

Strategic Plan 2025-2030



Kirby 2030: Strategic Plan 2025–2030

The Kirby Institute at UNSW Sydney is a successful research organisation that improves the health of people impacted by infectious diseases in Australia, our region and globally. Over the course of this strategic plan, we intend to enhance this societal impact.

Our success is marked by close community partnerships, productive collaborations with academia, health service providers, industry and government, and a broad-spectrum of impactful bench to community research. It is these relationships that allow us to find new, high-quality, equitable health solutions to prevent and treat diseases we know well, like HIV, viral hepatitis, human papillomavirus (HPV) and sexually transmissible infections, as well as respond to other challenging infectious disease threats, like antimicrobial resistance, neglected tropical diseases and respiratory pathogens like COVID-19.

The world faces complex infectious disease threats, accelerated by the impacts of climate change, as well as socio-political issues like population growth, inequitable health systems, gender and sexuality discrimination and the increasing threat of coordinated campaigns of misinformation. This makes our mission to provide the evidence base required to prevent, diagnose and treat infectious diseases, with a focus on health equity, more urgent than ever.

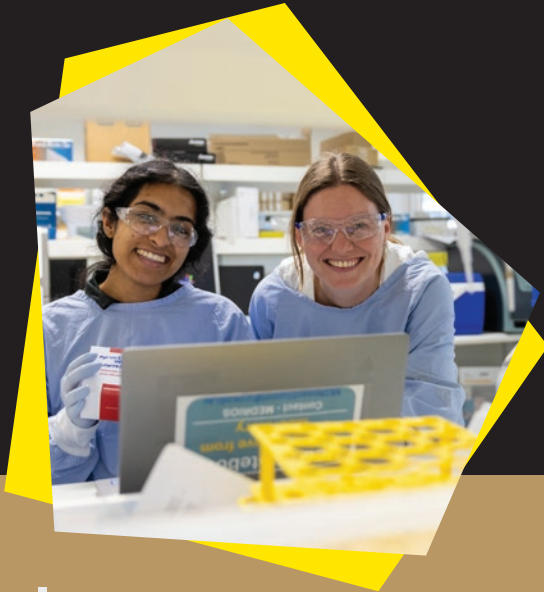
Our plan has been developed through extensive consultation and will help ensure that we can continue to improve the health and wellbeing of the people most impacted by infectious diseases.

It sets the Kirby Institute on a path to navigate evolving economic, diverse geographic, and complex socio-political landscapes to find practical, sustainable, accessible, evidence-based health solutions to current and future infectious disease threats.

Vision

A world free of infectious disease.

At the Kirby Institute, we actively pursue new and better ways to prevent, diagnose, and treat infectious disease and related health challenges. We do this with a focus on health equity.



Purpose

Ensure no infectious disease is left unchallenged.

Our work has global impact – with a strategic focus on Australia and the Asia-Pacific region – improving and protecting human health, wellbeing, and the ability to thrive.

By understanding the way infectious diseases behave from the molecular through to the population level, we predict and plan for future threats and challenges.

Values

At the Kirby Institute, it is not just our outcomes that we are renowned for – it is also how we conduct our research. There are four values that are key to our success. They drive everything we do:

Equity

All people have a right to high-quality, accessible, and appropriate health care and prevention services – no matter who they are, where they were born, or which communities they belong to.

Impact

We work with people, for people. This ensures our research will have a direct societal impact, through transforming healthcare practice and policy.

Collaboration

We work with a diverse range of partners, including at-risk communities, governments, health care professionals, other research organisations, and industry, in Australia and abroad. This strong collaborative approach leads to better-informed research and more effective solutions.

Excellence

We produce research that is innovative, rigorous, reliable, adaptive, and responsive. Our excellence in research not only serves to inform the best possible solutions; it elevates our work to the global stage where it can transform health and save lives.



About the Kirby Institute

The Kirby Institute is a world-leading health research institute at UNSW Sydney.

We work to eliminate infectious diseases, globally. Our specialisation is in developing health solutions for the most at-risk communities. Doing so ultimately builds a safer, healthier world for everyone.

What makes these solutions unique is that they are designed to be scaled for maximum impact across diverse communities, populations, and regions.



Our research

We prioritise the health of those most in need.

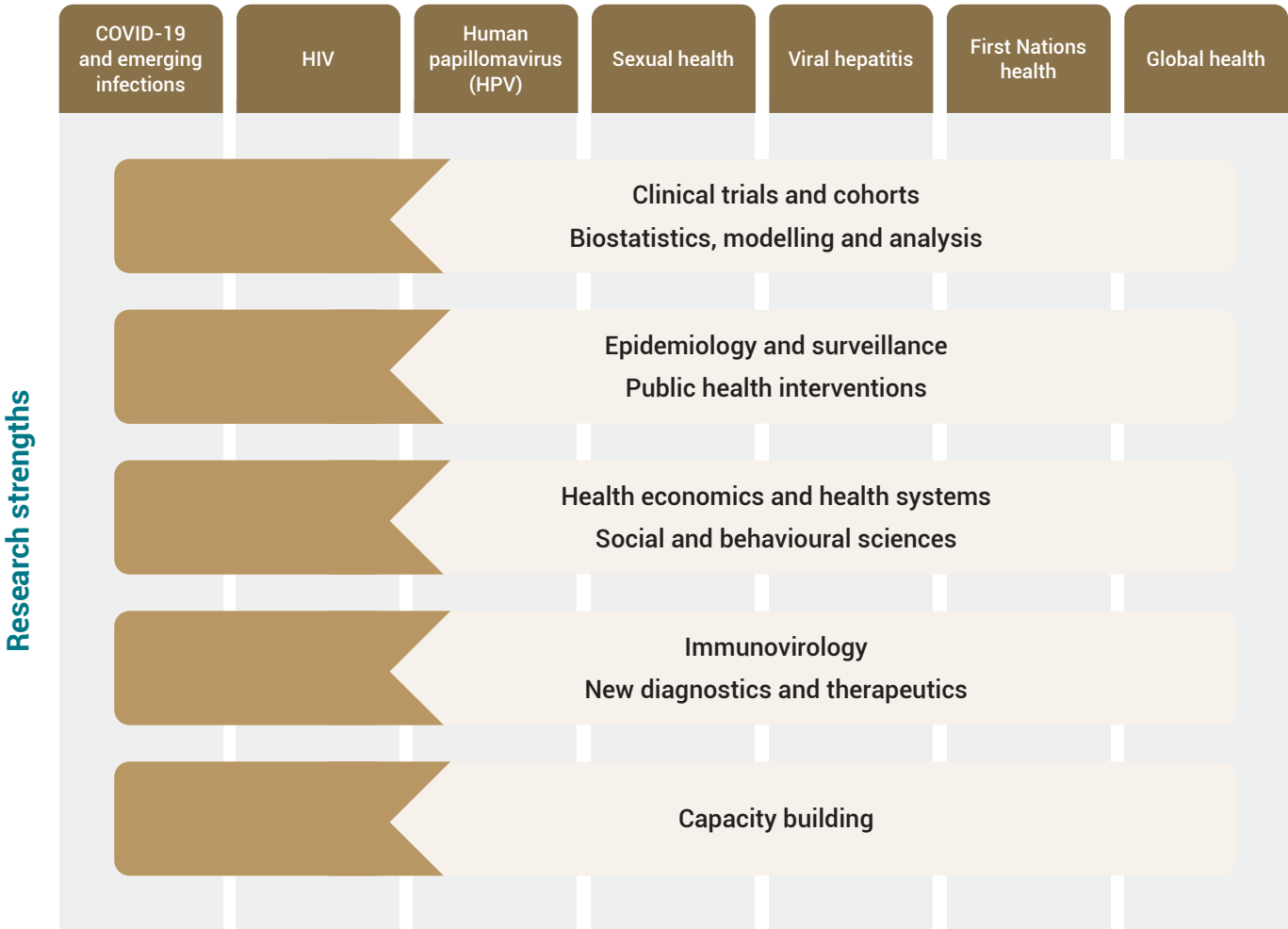
All people deserve equal access to high-quality health care, no matter who they are, where they were born, or which communities they belong to. Yet too often, those most at risk miss out.

By working with communities most affected by disease, we are able to implement more effective solutions that benefit all.

Our work began with HIV. What we've learned, we now apply to a wide range of infectious diseases.



Focus areas





Kirby 2030 pillars

**Excellence and
partnership**

**Societal
impact**

Innovation

Cultivation

01

Excellence and partnership:

Provide global leadership and expertise across the broad spectrum of interdisciplinary infectious disease research, through partnerships.

Research that is innovative, rigorous and conducted in collaboration with affected communities improves health, delivers equity and save lives.

We will build upon our excellent track record in conducting high-quality, interdisciplinary research to further elevate our position as global leaders. This will involve improving internal systems for collaboration, empowering our research teams to be nimble and adaptive, and identifying strategic areas for research expansion.

Our collaborations will continue to be the lifeblood of our success. We will nurture our diverse partnerships – across community, government, healthcare, research and industry – through optimised engagement strategies, and an even stronger focus on the co-design of research.

Crucial to our success will be an exploration of new and expanded models for research partnerships. As part of this, we will explore funding options that can facilitate greater research agility, enabling us to retain and attract world-class teams, and to adapt and respond to outbreaks as they emerge.

02

Societal impact:

Drive translation of research into health policy and practice to improve health and societal outcomes.

As researchers, we cannot just develop a health solution; we have to ensure our solutions can be implemented in the real world.

At the Kirby Institute, we have a strong track record of undertaking research that makes a real difference to the lives of people impacted by infectious diseases. We know that research that is conducted in close collaboration with community has the best outcomes for success. As our research scope expands and evolves, so do the communities we work with, and this necessitates an adaptive stakeholder engagement strategy that ensures the relevance of our research and facilitates its rapid adoption into health policy and practice.

We recognise our responsibility to generate knowledge and evidence to keep our society ahead of infectious disease threats, and we believe that individuals and communities can benefit from our knowledge to inform decision making in health. Our institute is made up of exceptional researchers across a range of fields, and it is our goal to find better ways for them to share their expertise with relevant publics, as well as to ensure we are communicating the right messages, in the appropriate places, to the people who most need to hear them.

Objectives in this pillar

- **Research excellence:** Expand and enhance our diverse portfolio of pioneering, high-quality research in reducing the health and societal impacts of infectious diseases.
- **Internal collaboration:** Enhance cohesion across the full spectrum of research approaches and networks to improve our response to infectious diseases and related health challenges.
- **Partnership:** Deepen and develop partnerships with at-risk or impacted communities, scientific collaborators, government, industry, donors and other stakeholders at international, national and local levels.
- **Agility:** Leverage our capability to effectively anticipate, identify and respond to emerging challenges and threats.

Objectives in this pillar

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Further enhance our engagement and collaborations with communities and other stakeholders to develop, conduct and translate our research.
- **Communicate success:** Amplify our influence by improving our capability to disseminate research findings and best practice.
- **Demonstrate impact:** Better leverage evaluation to demonstrate our impact across research, education and public health.

03

Innovation:

Ensure our organisation is adaptive and responsive to change.

Like all living things, infectious diseases constantly evolve to survive and evade elimination. This is why our organisation needs to be constantly adaptive; so that we can respond to complex infectious disease threats.

Our pursuit of research excellence and health impact is reliant on a high-functioning, adaptive, collaborative organisation that is robust and can support researchers to do what they do best.

We will conduct an analysis of our institute-wide systems and processes and identify areas where we can innovate to create more streamlined pathways. We will strengthen both our governance and financial models to ensure the best allocation of our resources to generate efficient and impactful research. This includes revitalising both our internal and external structures to create better opportunities to enhance our sustainability through philanthropy, and leveraging global funding opportunities that align with our institute's goals.

Objectives in this pillar

- **Sustainability:** Strengthen our governance and financial sustainability.
- **Efficiency:** Ensure complementarity of our research and administrative processes and systems.

04

Cultivation:

Nurture our people and culture.

Our people and culture are our greatest asset, and our strategy is designed to support every staff member and student to perform to the best of their ability.

Our research history, working with populations most impacted by disease, has taught us that promoting diversity, equity and inclusion is not just the right thing to do – it ensures the best outcomes. Ensuring our research teams are diverse and representative will make every element of our strategic plan more achievable. Part of this is a deep understanding of our responsibility to Australia's First Nations people, and a strong commitment to First Nations cultural training and supporting First Nations leadership for First Nations research.

We have a bright, passionate and high-achieving workforce, but we need better approaches to career progression, and investment in emerging leaders. This strategy will focus on ways we can cultivate this talent, as well as attract new talent in areas where it is needed.

Objectives in this pillar

- **Diversity:** Promote diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **Retention:** Future-proof the Kirby Institute as a workplace of choice.
- **Teamwork:** Bring our community closer together, bolster knowledge sharing and foster creativity.

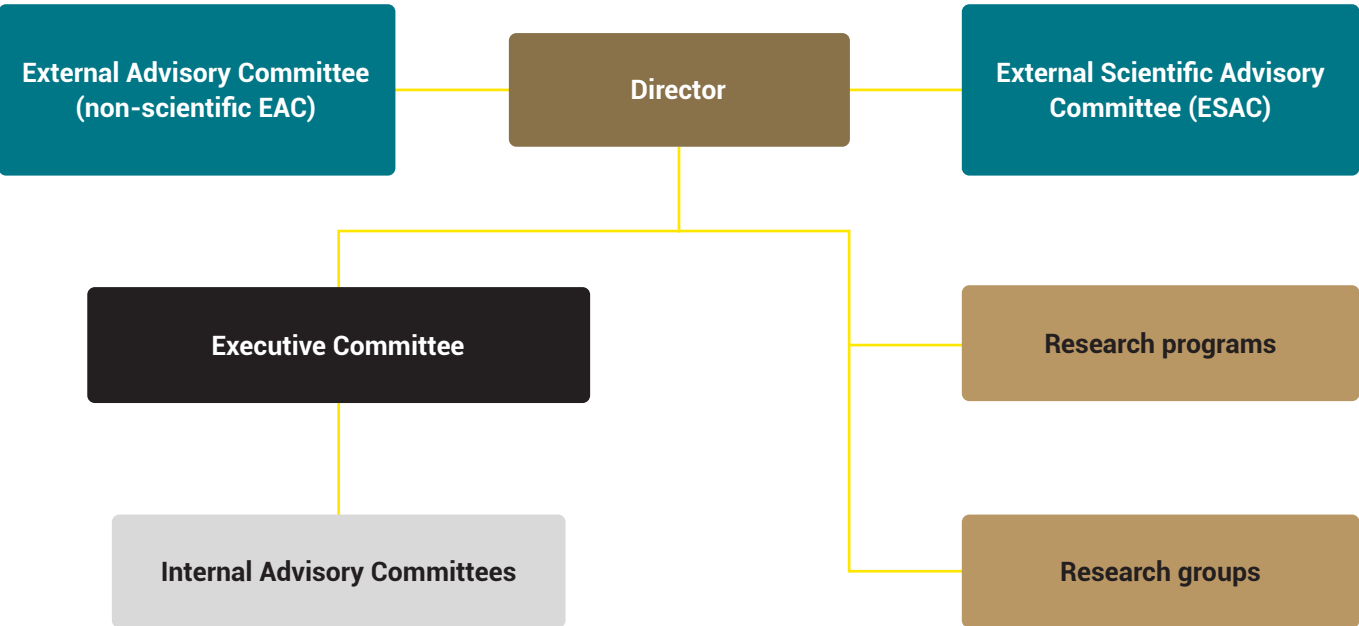




Yandamanjang means 'we are all walking together' in the Dharawal language, which symbolises our approach to First Nations research at the Kirby Institute. To support the Kirby Institute's Yandamanjang First Nations Health Research Program, First Nations artist Daniel Evans created this artwork which symbolises 'connection through unity'.

"Creating unity begins with fostering genuine connections – listening to First Nations voices, understanding their health practices, and respecting their knowledge," said Daniel Evans.

Governance schematic





Implementation and review

Our Strategic Plan will be implemented by translating the objectives into actionable steps, assigning clear responsibilities, and communicating the plan to all levels of the organisation.

Regular monitoring and review will track progress, ensuring we adapt to changes, and that our plan remains aligned with organisational goals for ongoing success.





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Cover image: Project coordinator Mackenzie Sitobata conducts community engagement for national HPV cervical screening program, Mele Village, Vanuatu. Taken by Saltbush Media, Nathan Price for the Kirby Institute.

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