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Introduction

The Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) has a national and international reputation for excellence thanks to a community of highly committed staff. Each year, we celebrate the work of our staff through the MDHS Staff Excellence Awards. In 2026, nominations for awards will be open under three themes: **Global, Place and Community; Discovery;** and **Education** reflecting the priorities outlined in our strategic plan [Advancing Health 2030](#).

Successful nominations will demonstrate alignment with the Faculty's values; [Respect, Accountability, Compassion, Integrity, and Collaboration and Teamwork](#). Nominations are welcome from peers, colleagues or managers, fostering a culture of recognition and shared celebration of excellence. The MDHS Staff Excellence Award applications are by nomination only; individual self-nominations are not accepted.

The awards are not a recognition of lifetime achievement, and, where it makes sense, preference will be given to initiatives that were conducted in, or came to fruition within, the last 12 months.

Overview of award themes and categories

The MDHS Global, Place and Community Awards recognise excellence in engagement and collaboration with our students, staff, alumni and partners to achieve shared outcomes that are for the benefit of our communities and society through five awards:

- The Award for Indigenous Health and Wellbeing
- The Award for Partnership and Collaboration for Public Benefit
- The Award for Building an Inclusive, Values-Driven Faculty Community
- The Award for Mentor Excellence
- The Award for Professional Excellence and in Demonstrating Impact

The MDHS Discovery Awards recognise outstanding research that demonstrates excellence and impact from discovery to translation. The awards are open to early, mid-career and established researchers and will be assessed at the level of the nominees' experience. The Discovery Awards are the:

- Award for Graduate Researcher Supervision
- Award for Interdisciplinary Research
- Award for Research Achievement: early career researcher (individual)
- Awards for Research Achievement: mid-career researcher (individual)
- Award for Research Achievement: senior career researcher (individual)

The MDHS Education Awards recognise excellence in contributions to teaching and student learning. The four awards are the:

- Award for Sustained Excellence in Learning and Teaching
- Award for Learning and Teaching Achievement
- Award for Program Innovation
- Award for Education for Collaborative Practice

Prizes

All 2026 MDHS Staff Excellence Awards are valued at \$5,000 each. The award money will be paid to the recipient's school, department or centre to support a project or activity related to the recipient's career development or work of benefit to the University and the recipient. The award money must be spent by 31 December 2027 in accordance with the [University's Financial Code of Conduct Policy](#) and approved by the recipient's finance department. All awards will be celebrated at the end of year staff celebration in December.

Key Dates

- Tuesday 25 August 2026 - nominations open.
- Monday 5 October (11.59pm) 2026 - nominations close.
- December 2026 - award winners announced at the All Staff End of Year Celebration.

Eligibility criteria

Nominations are welcome from staff in continuing, contract, sessional or honorary* roles. Nominations must come from peers, colleagues or managers. Individual self-nominations are not accepted. Nominees should have been working at the University for at least two years. Some awards are specific to either academic or professional staff; where this is the case, this is specified in the award descriptions. Team nominations are encouraged, including from interdisciplinary teams across multiple schools, departments and centres. Students can also be part of teams.

*Award prizes are for professional development and will be managed as a reimbursement of costs for honorary staff to reduce any tax liability for the individual.

Nomination process and documents

Nomination to be completed at <https://mdhs.awardsplatform.com/> by the nominator.

The nomination form must include a brief (c.500-word) response to the award criteria and description of what the nominee(s) have done that has resulted in outcomes or impact. The form should include headings for clarity. Nominators can provide evidence to support the nomination in the respective award category, using the forms of evidence that best make their case. This can be supported by appropriate evidence such as feedback from colleagues, students and partners, relevant statistics, stories and references.

Optional supporting material of up three documents may include additional feedback, internal and/or external references, websites and other supporting documents.

Global, Place and Community Awards

The MDHS Global, Place and Community Awards recognise exemplary contributions that reflect the strategic priorities of Advancing *Health 2030*, in the areas of Global, Place and Community. At the heart of these awards is a commitment to meaningful collaboration and innovation, with our students, staff, alumni and partners – driven by innovation, inclusion, and a shared vision for the benefit of our communities and society.

Nomination Criteria for Global, Place and Community Awards

Nominators should provide evidence to support the nomination in the respective award using the forms of evidence that best make their case and demonstrate impact. These may include and are not limited to the following:

- Demonstrated collaboration with Faculty (students, academics, professional staff) communities and external partners.
- Demonstrated community/partner involvement, reciprocity and co-design and co-creation.
- Identification of the challenge /objective of the initiatives and quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate the outcomes learning and impact of the collaborative initiatives. This may include, where appropriate, references from external partners.
- Clear alignment with Advancing Health 2030 and Faculty Values.
- Preference will be given to initiatives that were conducted in, or came to fruition, over the last 12 months except for Award for Mentor Excellence*.

Global Place and Community Award Descriptions

Award for Indigenous Health and Wellbeing

This award recognises excellence and innovation in the development and delivery of curricula, or research, or initiatives that improve Indigenous health and wellbeing or outcomes for Indigenous students. Initiatives may include educational and research activities or collaborative initiatives with Indigenous organisations or other partners that contribute to advancing Indigenous health. The award is open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff where co-design and collaboration with Indigenous people is evident.

Award for Partnership and Collaboration for Public Benefit

This award recognises new models of collaboration and knowledge sharing between industry, health, research, or community partners in local or global arenas that have made a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities. This may include a wide range of activities from engaging in public debate to influence the health of communities to developing research programs or other initiatives involving other institutions, industries, organisations, governments or community groups. Collaborations will be assessed relative to opportunity.

Award for Building an Inclusive, Values-Driven Faculty Community

This award recognises new initiatives or demonstrated commitment to building a diverse, values-driven faculty community. People in our faculty community include students, staff and honoraries. Activities might include but are not limited to co-curricular and extra-curricular programs, recruitment, selection and retention efforts, system and process design, teaching, student or staff support projects or networks, or community outreach projects. The work should reflect the objectives outlined in Advancing Health 2030, in particular those listed under Community.

Award for Mentor Excellence*

This award recognises excellence in the mentoring across Faculty colleagues, encompassing both professional, academic staff. Award recipients will have made outstanding contributions through a sustained record of effective mentoring, demonstrated exceptional interpersonal and development support, and shown a deep respect for the individual growth of their colleagues. Nominees should demonstrate a dedication to nurturing the careers of their colleagues aligned to Advancing Health 2030 and the Faculty Values.

Award for Professional Excellence in Demonstrating Impact (open to professional designation staff only)

This award recognises excellence in professional staff (professional stream) who apply our faculty values of Respect, Accountability, Compassion, Integrity, and Collaboration and Teamwork to create and drive impact that aligns to the purpose and vision of Advancing Health 2030. Activities could be administrative, operational, engagement or any professionally delivered project or initiative.

Discovery Awards

The MDHS Discovery Awards recognise outstanding contributions towards the delivery of high-impact research and the building of a world-leading research community. They celebrate the research that helps achieve the goals of Advancing Health 2030, including recognition of researchers, external partnerships, collaborations across disciplinary boundaries, and graduate research supervision. These awards complement other forms of research recognition that arise through publications, external grants, early-career grants, fellowships, and academic societies.

Nomination Criteria for Discovery Awards

Nominators should provide evidence to support the nomination in the respective award using the forms of evidence that best makes their case and demonstrate impact. These may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Clearly outline the challenge or problem that the research is trying to address.
- Research outcomes with demonstrated impact.
- The membership of teams that contributed to the outcomes, including aspects such as inclusion of graduate researchers and early-career researchers and the presence of collaborators from diverse disciplines and organisations.
- Evidence of testimony from beneficiaries of the research or activity.
- Trajectories of research programs from conception to communication or deployment of outcomes.
- Demonstrated alignment with Advancing Health 2030.
- Demonstration and promotion of Faculty Values.
- Preference will be given to initiatives that were conducted in, or came to fruition, over the last 12 months except for *Award for Graduate Researcher Supervision (Individual).

Discovery Award Descriptions

Award for Graduate Researcher Supervision (Individual)*

Nominees must demonstrate a sustained record of high-quality graduate researcher supervision at the University of Melbourne, assessed relative to opportunity and disciplinary norms. They should exhibit exemplary supervisory practices that foster both research excellence and broader professional skill development. These practices should support graduate researchers to become well-rounded, independent, and successful in their chosen fields. This award is open to individual supervisors only.

The specific nature of the award means that it relies on distinct kinds of evidence. Below are characteristics to consider in making a nomination, but these are only indicative, and nominators should select the forms of evidence that best makes their case.

- Approaches to supervision that influence, motivate, and inspire candidates to excel.
- Fostering of candidates' development of critical thinking skills, analytical skills, scholarly values, capacity as communicators, and planning, design, and execution of projects.
- Shaping of outstanding research outcomes for candidates as recognised by awards for theses, publications in leading venues, and appointment to competitive postdoctoral positions.
- Approaches to feedback that foster independence and leadership and are reflective of the diverse needs and styles of individuals.
- Support for the development of candidates as individuals, including their career development, induction into their global academic community, and engagement with users of their research.
- Contribution to the development and practice of high-quality supervision practices and graduate research environments within faculties or for the wider University.
- Demonstration and promotion of Faculty Values.
- Evidence should be provided from diverse observers, such as committee chairs, independent colleagues, and graduates who have had significant postdoctoral experience, and can be supported by testimony from current and recent candidates.

Award for Interdisciplinary Research (Individual or Team)

Nominees will have demonstrated exceptional leadership in interdisciplinary research establishing or advancing impactful collaborations and programs that span multiple disciplines and typically involve partnerships across faculties or schools.

Award for Research Achievements: early career researcher (Individual)

Nominees for this award should be early career researchers (less than 6 years' experience) and will have an outstanding research achievement relative to individual and professional opportunity and career-stage.

Award for Research Achievements: mid-career researcher (Individual)

Nominees for this award should be mid-career researchers (6-10 years' experience) and will have an outstanding research achievement relative to individual and professional opportunity and career-stage.

Award for Research Achievements: senior career researcher (Individual)

Nominees for this award should be senior career researchers (more than 10 years' experience) and will have an outstanding research achievement relative to individual and professional opportunity and career-stage.

Education Awards

The MDHS Education Awards recognise outstanding and diverse contributions and achievements to shape the next generation of health professionals, aligned with key University and Faculty strategies including the [Advancing Students and Education Strategy](#) and [Advancing Health 2030](#).

Nomination Criteria for Education Awards

Nominators should provide evidence to support the nomination in the respective award using the forms of evidence that best make their case and demonstrate impact.

Nominations for the *Award for Sustained Excellence in Learning and Teaching* and the *Award for Education for Collaborative Practice* must address *all* selection criteria below. Nominations for the *Award for Learning and Teaching Achievement* must address a selection of *three* of the first five selection criteria below and must address the *final* criterion, on Faculty Values.

- Approaches to learning and teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.
- Development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field.
- Approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning.
- Respect and support for the development of students as individuals.
- Scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching.
- Demonstration and promotion of Advancing Health 2030 and Faculty Values.

Note: *The Award for Program Innovation* has its own criteria outlined under the award description below.

Education Award Descriptions

Award for Sustained Excellence in Learning and Teaching

This award recognises staff (individuals or teams) who demonstrate sustained excellence in learning and teaching with reference to all criteria above. The award provides holistic recognition of excellence in learning and teaching, aligned with the University's leading award for learning and teaching excellence and informed by the national learning and teaching citations and awards.

Award for Learning and Teaching Achievement

This award recognises staff (individuals or teams) who demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. The criteria are the same for those of the *Award for Sustained Excellence in Learning and Teaching*. However, nominations for the *Award for Learning and Teaching Achievement* must address a selection of three of the five criteria and the final criterion to demonstrate faculty values. As such, this award is inclusive of staff who may have less capacity to demonstrate achievement against all five criteria required for nominations for the *Award for Sustained Excellence in Learning and Teaching*. Reasons for this may include, but are not limited to, relative newness to teaching or to teaching in the Faculty, or employment in a role that does not readily enable performance in relation to all criteria.

Award for Education for Collaborative Practice

This award recognises excellence in interprofessional education for developing student readiness for collaborative practice. Interprofessional education occurs when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care (World Health Organisation, 2010). Contributions can be those that enhance a range of capabilities for collaborative practice aligned with the principles, attributes, activities and outcomes of the Faculty's [Collaborative Practice Ready Curriculum Framework](#). Teams should demonstrate excellence in the design and facilitation of interprofessional education for collaborative practice. The award is open to teams that may comprise continuing, fixed-term and sessional academic and professional staff in the Faculty; staff of other faculties and institutions; students; patients; community members, and industry partners. Teams are

welcome to include members of the MDHS Collaborative Practice Centre, and indeed, engagement with the Centre is encouraged for all seeking to enhance collaborative practice readiness.

Award for Program Innovation (refer to specific criteria below)

The Award for Program Innovation is intended for academic or professional programs or services that support and enhance learning and teaching at MDHS faculty, school or department level and are broader in scope than those in one or two subjects. Programs or services may run within or across year levels. They may focus on a particular group of students or MDHS students more broadly and can include collaborative programs involving external partners. Teams should demonstrate excellence in the design and facilitation of programs or services. The award is open to teams of academic and professional staff in the Faculty, staff of other faculties and institutions, students, patients, community members, and industry partners. The selection criteria for this award are different from those of the other MDHS Education Awards to maximise opportunity for diverse programs to be recognised (see below).

Nominations for the Award for Program Innovation must address all criteria below:

- Distinctiveness, coherence and clarity of purpose.
- A positive influence on student learning and student engagement.
- Breadth of impact.
- Concern for equity and diversity.
- Demonstration and promotion of Advancing Health 2030 and Faculty Values.

Further information

Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Nominations here: <https://mdhs.awardsplatform.com/>

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