



# Aurum Project Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2020

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Source: National Health and Medical Research Council Australia

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## Introduction

Australian and international members of the Homeopathy, Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) and Natural Medicine Research community have an expectation that research must be conducted responsibly, ethically and with integrity.

The *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* published by the National Health and Medical Research Council articulates broad principles that establish a framework for responsible research conduct providing a foundation for high-quality research, credibility and community trust. It outlines the expectations for the conduct of research in Australia or research conducted under the auspices of Australian institutions.

The Aurum Project (AP) acknowledges the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and has adapted it in this document for the conduct of research into CAM. Herein called the *Aurum Project Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

The primary responsibility for ensuring the integrity of research lies with individual researchers and AP. The AP Code sets out principles and responsibilities that both researchers and the Aurum Project are expected to follow when conducting research.

The AP Code provides the Australian CAM community, and those responsible for funding research, with confidence in the integrity of research. This AP Code does not incorporate the laws, regulations and guidelines and other codes of practice that apply to the conduct of research. Those responsible for the conduct of research are expected to be aware of and comply with the applicable laws and codes.

A breach of the AP Code occurs when there is a failure to meet principles and responsibilities on a spectrum from minor breaches to those that are more serious. A serious breach of the AP Code that is carried out with intent, recklessness or negligence may be referred to as research misconduct.

The *Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the AP Code* outlines the methods used to investigate and manage potential breaches and determine any corrective actions to ensure the integrity of the research record.

Compliance with this AP Code is a requirement for membership of an Aurum Project Research Team or Research Pod, individual or collaborative research support and auspiced research activity by The Aurum Project or receipt of research funding by The Aurum Project.

## Principles of responsible research conduct

*The principles (P1–P8) are the hallmarks of responsible research conduct:*

- **P1 Honesty** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
  - Present information truthfully and accurately in proposing, conducting and reporting research.
- **P2 Rigour** in the development, undertaking and reporting of research
  - Underpin research by attention to detail and robust methodology, avoiding or acknowledging biases.
- **P3 Transparency** in declaring interests and reporting research methodology, data and findings
  - Share and communicate research methodology, data and findings openly, responsibly and accurately.
  - Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.
- **P4 Fairness** in the treatment of others
  - Treat fellow researchers and others involved in the research fairly and with respect.
  - Appropriately reference and cite the work of others.

- Give credit, including authorship where appropriate, to those who have contributed to the research.
- **P5 Respect** for research participants, the wider community, animals and the environment
  - Treat human participants and communities that are affected by the research with care and respect, giving appropriate consideration to the needs of minority groups or vulnerable people.
  - Ensure that respect underpins all decisions and actions related to the care and use of animals in research.
  - Minimise adverse effects of the research on the environment.
- **P6 Recognition** of the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be engaged in research that affects or is of particular significance to them
  - Recognise, value and respect the diversity, heritage, knowledge, cultural property and connection to land of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
  - Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to research being undertaken, so that they freely make decisions about their involvement.
  - Report to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the outcomes of research in which they have engaged.
- **P7 Accountability** for the development, undertaking and reporting of research
  - Comply with relevant legislation, policies and guidelines.
  - Ensure good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research.
  - Consider the consequences and outcomes of research prior to its communication.
- **P8 Promotion** of responsible research practices
  - Promote and foster a research culture and environment that supports the responsible conduct of research.

## Responsibilities of The Aurum Project

*To foster responsible research conduct (R1 - R30), The Aurum Project will:*

- **R1 Establish and maintain** good governance and management practices for responsible research conduct.
- **R2 Identify and comply** with relevant laws, regulations, guidelines and policies related to the conduct of research.
- **R3 Develop and maintain** the currency and ready availability of a suite of policies and procedures governing the responsible conduct of research.
- **R4 Provide ongoing training and education** that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles.
- **R5 Ensure supervisors of research trainees** have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources.
- **R6 Appoint a Research Integrity Advisor** who assists in the promotion and fostering of responsible research conduct and provides advice to those with concerns about potential breaches.

- **R7 Support the responsible dissemination of research findings.** Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- **R8 Provide access to facilities** for the safe and secure storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference.
- **R9 Facilitate the prevention and detection** of potential breaches of the AP Code.
- **R10 Provide mechanisms** to receive concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the AP Code. Investigate and resolve potential breaches of the AP Code.
- **R11 Ensure that the process for managing and investigating** concerns or complaints about potential breaches of the AP Code is timely, effective and in accord with procedural fairness.
- **R12 Support the welfare** of all parties involved in an investigation of a potential breach of the AP Code.
- **R13 Base findings of investigations** on the balance of probabilities and ensure any actions are commensurate with the seriousness of the breach.

## Responsibilities of researchers

*Researchers will uphold the principles of responsible research conduct in all aspects of their research. To this end, researchers will:*

- **R14 Support a culture of responsible research conduct** at The Aurum Project and in their field of practice.
- **R15 Provide guidance and mentorship** on responsible research conduct to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct.
- **R16 Undertake and promote education** and training in responsible research conduct.
- **R17 Comply with the relevant laws**, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics guidelines and policies related to responsible research conduct. Ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained prior to the commencement of research, and that conditions of any approvals are adhered to during the course of research.
- **R18 Ensure that ethics principles** of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence and respect are applied to human research.
- **R19 Engage with children and young people** according to the principles laid out in Chapter 4.2: Children and Young People, in the National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human research (2007) (updated 2018)
- **R20 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** and respect their legal rights and local laws, customs and protocols.
- **R21 Ensure that the 3Rs** (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) are considered at all stages of research involving animals and minimise the impacts on animals used in research and in so doing support the welfare and wellbeing of these animals.

- **R22 Adopt methods appropriate to the aims** of the research and ensure that conclusions are justified by the results.
- **R23 Retain clear, accurate, secure and complete records** of all research including research data and primary materials. Where possible and appropriate, allow access and reference to these by interested parties.
- **R24 Disseminate research findings responsibly**, accurately and broadly. Where necessary, take action to correct the record in a timely manner.
- **R25 Disclose and manage** actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- **R26 Ensure that authors of research outputs** are all those, and only those, who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research and its output, and that they agree to be listed as an author.
- **R27 Acknowledge** those who have contributed to the research.
- **R28 Cite and acknowledge** other relevant work appropriately and accurately.
- **R29 Participate in peer review** in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely and maintains the confidentiality of the content.
- **R30 Report suspected breaches of the AP Code** to the relevant authority.

## Definitions

### **Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)**

Complementary and Alternative Medicine is a broad term used to include a wide range of health care practices, therapies and procedures that are not presently considered within the domain of conventional medicine. Examples being massage therapy, naturopathy, herbal medicine and homeopathy. Natural Medicine is another broad term which is equivalent to CAM.

### **The 3Rs**

The 3Rs are three principles that underpin a systematic framework to achieve the goal of humane experimental techniques. The principles are: Replacement of animals with other methods; Reduction in the number of animals used; and Refinement of techniques used to minimise the adverse impact on animals.

### **Balance of probabilities**

The civil standard of proof, which requires that, on the weight of evidence, it is more probable than not that a breach has occurred.

### **Breach**

A failure to meet the principles and responsibilities of the Code. May refer to a single breach or multiple breaches.

### **Conflict of interest**

A conflict of interest exists in a situation where an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of a person are or may be unduly influenced by other interests. This refers to a financial or non-financial interest which may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest.

### **Peer review**

The impartial and independent assessment of research by others working in the same or a related field.

## Research

The concept of research is broad and includes the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

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## Development of the AP Code

(Review frequency - 2 yearly)

Policy Identifier / Version	The Code developed by the AP Director	Date Review	The AP Code reviewed and accepted by the AP Board (President)	Date AP Code accepted
AP Research Code.V1	Linlee Jordan	10th July 2020	Nyema Hermiston	5th August 2020