

Research Priorities and Principles at CRC

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What are CRC's research principles?

All of CRC's research adheres to high ethical standards, informed by:

- The [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#) developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
- The [AH&MRC Ethical Guidelines](#) developed by the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW

We encourage all research collaborators and independent evaluators to conduct their research in alignment with these guidelines.

It is important to acknowledge the unique considerations for First Nations people in our research

The over-representation of First Nations people in Australia's prison system is a national shame. We recognise the harm caused by these systems and the tireless advocacy of First Nations individuals, families and communities to reduce the criminalisation of their kin.

Given the significant proportion of First Nations people in the criminal justice system (and the high proportion of CRC's clients who are First Nations), it is crucial that any research overseen by CRC actively centres the voices and expertise of First Nations people.

All research should be informed by the following key principles outlined by the [AH&MRC Ethical Guidelines](#), in particular:

- Net benefits for First Nations people
- First Nations community control of research
- Cultural sensitivity
- Reimbursement of costs
- Enhancing First Nations skills and knowledge

As an example of implementing these principles in the CRC context, research projects might involve establishing an Aboriginal Reference Group to guide the research process.

Decolonial research methodologies and the principles of [Indigenous Data Governance and Sovereignty](#) should also be considered and incorporated into research involving CRC.

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People with lived experience provide invaluable contributions to our research

CRC aims to ensure that all research projects give specific regard to people with lived experience of the criminal justice system (CJS), such as:

- Fostering empowerment and [co-design and/or co-production](#) of research by people with lived experience of the CJS
- Acting with respect and dignity (for instance, by adhering to CRC's [language guide](#))
- Providing opportunities (such as co-authoring, presenting and the development of other skills) for people with lived experience

All research participants who are not employed by CRC should receive remuneration for the time they spend contributing to the study, preferably in cash rather than vouchers.

What are CRC's research priorities?

It is important that the research we undertake aligns with CRC's values and principles. We aim to conduct and contribute to research projects that are aligned with six key research priorities.

1	<p>To explore the effectiveness of and good practice in community based through-care and post-release programs that support people to build meaningful pathways out of the justice system, including the following:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Transitional support (including housing support, AOD support, family and domestic violence support) and other through-care and post-release support programs ✓ Programs or support for specific cohorts of people who are under-served or excluded from most services (First Nations people, women, people with complex health needs including mental illness, cognitive impairment and intellectual disability) ✓ Transformative activities for people in contact with criminal justice system (arts and music programs) ✓ Gaps and opportunities in service provision for people who are being released from prison or are at risk of contact with the criminal justice system ✓ Other community or prison-based programs that can inform and improve CRC practice
2	<p>To understand the needs and experiences of people with lived experience of the criminal justice system, including people who are more broadly impacted such as families and communities, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ First Nations people ✓ People who are currently in prison (particularly regarding access to education, training and genuine work opportunities) ✓ People who leave prison (including breaking the cycle of imprisonment and homelessness when in the community) ✓ People who have had complex health and social trajectories and multiple levels of disadvantage ✓ People who have histories of victimisation, resistance to violence and trauma ✓ Staff who work with people in community-based transition programs (CRC staff and staff with lived experience of incarceration in particular) ✓ Family members and friends of people in prison (particularly regarding visits, respectful treatment and access) ✓ Communities receiving people exiting prison and assisting them in their reintegration

3	<p>To explore the drivers and the means of reducing the over-representation of marginalised and disadvantaged people who are impacted by the criminal justice system, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ First Nations people ✓ People with mental illness ✓ People with physical and/or intellectual disabilities or cognitive impairments ✓ People who have experienced family violence, disadvantage, trauma and social exclusion ✓ People who use substances ✓ People with culturally diverse backgrounds and racialised communities ✓ People who are LGBTIQ+ ✓ Parents/carers, families and communities
4	<p>To ensure that people with lived experience of incarceration are given a voice in research pertaining to the criminal justice system and related social disadvantage, including:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Research being co-designed by people with lived experience ✓ Inclusion of subjective perspectives and qualitative accounts of people with lived experience ✓ Development of good practices in using language to transform the discourse around people affected by the criminal justice system
5	<p>To investigate the costs and cost-effectiveness of community programs and alternatives to incarceration, with a particular focus on:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Longevity of funding that can ensure stability for both clients and staff ✓ Medium to long-term support to clients that enables meaningful change ✓ Development and use of relevant performance indicators that reflect the type of support and realistic outcomes
6	<p>To explore the means of reducing the prison population, including (but not limited to):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Systemic drivers of offending and recidivism and the means of dismantling these ✓ Programs that provide alternatives to incarceration, including abolitionist approaches and transformative and restorative justice ✓ Diversionary pathways from custody into community