

Research Pathways Mentorship Program

As a professional association, Osteopathy Australia (OA) is engaged in a diverse range of activities, from membership information and continuing education to policy development and lobbying. All the organisations' activities have an overarching goal of enhancing and promoting the osteopathic profession. The Research Pathways Mentorship Program seeks to promote, encourage, and support research culture and leadership in osteopathy. OA recognises that guidance from an established research mentor can offer clinicians the opportunity to explore research career pathways and provide personalised feedback for those interested in research.

The Program will pair osteopaths interested in research (mentees) with established researchers (mentors) experienced in osteopathic research. The aim of the mentoring relationship is to facilitate the mentee's career development and research capabilities through access to one-on-one support from an experienced researcher.

The Program would be beneficial to osteopathic clinicians who are new to or interested in including research in their career journey. It will provide an opportunity for clinicians to seek guidance on potential research pathways, the transition from clinician to clinician-researcher or from novice/non-researcher to more experienced researcher, and guidance on participating in research and developing research ideas and questions.

Eligibility

Mentee criteria

- Mentees will be defined as practicing osteopaths who are not currently engaged in research activities or are new to research
- Undergraduate osteopathy students interested in undertaking a research degree or being active in research after graduation are also eligible to apply. Preference will be given to final-year undergraduates

Mentor Criteria

- Must hold a research qualification (Master's and/or Doctorate) plus at least three years of research experience post-degree (ECR's welcome)
- Must be affiliated with an Australian research institution/organisation
- Must be engaged in research relevant to osteopathy
- Can demonstrate their credentials as a leader or emerging leader in their field
- Must have some track record of awards, grants, and/or recent publications

Matching

Applicants are required to complete an Expression of Interest form that details their specific interests, previous experience, and what they hope to gain from or contribute to the mentoring relationship. Initial pairing of mentors and mentees will be undertaken by OA. A set of minimum requirements (refer to expectations and responsibilities section below) will be clearly defined prior to matching participants, with any additional or ongoing arrangements for mentorship activity negotiated directly between the mentor and mentee.

Duration

The Program will run for 12 months.

If either party wants to terminate their mentoring relationship, they may do so at any time following written notification to the Osteopathy Australia Research and Education Officer (research@osteopathy.org.au). If they wish, the remaining party will be paired with another person if available.

Expectations and Responsibilities

A set of minimum requirements must be met by participants in the Program. These are as follows:

- Completion of mentor or mentee training prior to starting the Program. Training consists of a brief online module (approx. 30-40min) that must be completed in your own time. The training aims to improve your skills in facilitating or participating in mentoring sessions, and your communication and conflict-resolution skills. **Training can count towards CPD hours.**
- Completion of a goal statement created between the mentee and mentor on commencement of the Program.
- Commitment to a minimum of four one-on-one meetings between the mentor and mentee throughout the Program. Meeting times and days are to be agreed upon between the mentor and mentee. Meetings can be held online, via phone, or in person.
- Completion of a progress report mid-way through the Program and a final report at the end of the Program by both mentees and mentors.

Benefits and Outcomes:

Expected benefits and outcomes of the Osteopathy Australia Research Pathways Mentoring Program include:

- Information on research pathways and how to be involved in research activities or how to transition into a research career
- Research guidance and advice
- Knowledge-sharing
- Enhanced leadership capabilities
- Increased engagement in research activities
- Opportunity to build professional and collaborative networks
- Gain an understanding of research processes

Mentors and mentees will receive a certificate of completion on the program's conclusion.

Participation may also be publicised (with permission) in print and electronically through Osteopathy Australia's website, social media pages, and magazine.

Need Help? If you have further questions, please contact Rebecca Sebastian, Research and Education Officer, Osteopathy Australia, on 02 9410 0099 or via research@osteopathy.org.au