

Position description

Position title:	Animal Ethics Officer (0.8 FTE)
Employer:	Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute
Team:	Animal Ethics Office
Supervisor/Manager:	Animal Ethics Manager
Date:	November 2024

Background

The Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute is an independent, internationally renowned medical research facility focused on cardiovascular disease (including stroke and hypertension), diabetes and their complications, such as kidney disease. We have a long and distinguished history, spanning almost 98 years with our work critical to today's healthcare challenges. We are a key player in research, translation, education, advocacy, and health promotion with a staff of more than 450 (including scientists, clinicians, and students).

The Alfred Research Alliance (formerly AMREP) is a collaborative partnership between Alfred Health, Monash University, Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, Burnet Institute, La Trobe University and Deakin University at the Alfred Precinct in Melbourne. The Alliance brings together more than 8000 health professionals, researchers, and support staff, providing a collaborative environment to integrate medical research with education and healthcare.

Team

The Alfred Research Alliance Animal Ethics (AE) Office, administered by the Baker Institute, works with AMREP Animal Services Pty Ltd to manage all matters related to the care and use of animals for scientific and teaching purposes at the Alfred Precinct.

One of the key aspects to this is providing administrative support to the two Animal Ethics Committees (AECs) and investigators at the site. This includes, but is not limited to, providing training and education opportunities for Alfred Research Alliance members, managing the animal use licences for the various Alliance organisations, coordinating the inspections of animal facilities and monitoring compliance.

The AECs ensure a uniform and high standard of animal welfare and ethics in the care and use of animals for scientific and teaching purposes throughout the Alfred Precinct. They review applications to use animals for scientific or teaching purposes to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

As well as supporting the AECs, the AE Office also develops and implements compliance and education programs to ensure that all activities involving the care and use of animals are conducted in accordance with *the Australian Code* and other legislation.

Nature of environment

The Alfred Research Alliance is a unique environment incorporating a continuum of research extending from basic science through to human clinical trials, health care, and health promotion in the community setting. Staff include clinicians, allied health professionals,

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researchers, clinical, administrative staff, research support staff, animal care staff, and students.

Key job requirements, responsibilities, and duties

The appointee will be nominated as AEC Secretary to one of the two AECs at the Alfred Research Alliance, covering for the alternative AE Officer during periods of leave.

Maintaining currency and a working knowledge of *the Australian Code*, The Act and associated Regulations, Regulatory Guidelines, and internal documents, as well as building and sustaining effective working relationships with a network of colleagues, and other stakeholders to proactively support and facilitate research are important parts of this role.

The service delivery standards of the AE Office must be maintained at all times and all members of the AE Office are expected to be solution-focused while ensuring that compliance is maintained.

The appointee will attend team meetings with the other AE Office members and be expected to participate in the continuous development and improvement of office procedures.

The AE Officer reports to the Animal Ethics Manager and will work closely with all members of the AE Office, AEC members, AMREP AS Management and investigators.

Key accountabilities of this role include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Manage the business and administrative requirements of their allocated AEC, ensuring that accurate and comprehensive records of all AEC business are maintained and that items are submitted by required deadlines for AEC review. This also includes being the first point of contact for matters related to your AEC, providing advice on AE policies, procedures, and facilitating the submission of applications, conducting pre-reviews where appropriate.
- 2) Support the recruitment of new AEC members by facilitating any potential members to observe an AEC meeting and organising facility tours for them once onboarded.
- 3) Manage the processes for the review of controlled documents that require AEC approval to ensure that they are reviewed and approved before their expiration date and that they are promptly uploaded to the AE website upon approval.
- 4) Work with the AEC Chair to ensure that any issues that come up during AEC meetings are discussed at subsequent Chair meetings, ensuring that notes from the Chair meetings are on the next agenda for the information of the AEC members.
- 5) Support the development, implementation, and ongoing maintenance of a number of programs managed by the AE Office, such as the training and education program, the facility inspection program and the post-approval monitoring program. This will be done as required on the direction of the AE Office member responsible for the specific program.
- 6) Assist in the annual reporting procedures at the beginning of each year to ensure that external deadlines are met and that all reports are reviewed by the AECs and that the outcomes of review are processed in a timely manner.
- 7) Work to ensure the integrity of the AE databases by assisting in the investigation and fixing of integration errors and conducting regular data integrity checks. This may involve participation in testing bug fixes and new features.
- 8) Assist in the AE Office communication strategy by ensuring website content relevant to the AE Officer role is kept up to date (i.e. meeting dates, controlled documents etc.) and providing content for newsletters and/or sitewide communication as required.

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This role may be directed to perform other duties that relate to the AE Office, as directed by the AE Manager, from time to time and it is a condition of employment that this role complies with any such reasonable requirement.

Meet statutory requirements of the company

Employees of the Baker Institute must comply with and maintain up-to-date and accurate knowledge in:

- OHS legislation
- EEO legislation
- Privacy legislation
- Confidential Information Policy
- Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute Code of Conduct
- Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute Values
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute Intellectual Property Agreement.

Requirements of the position holder

Education level

- A relevant tertiary qualification in the field of biological, clinical, or zoological sciences, or
- Extensive experience in a similar role in a research or higher education environment; or
- An equivalent combination of relevant experience and education/training.

Experience

- Experience in office administration, including preparing meeting agendas, minutes, and correspondence.
- Experience in an animal ethics administration role in a research or higher education environment is desirable.
- Experience in a research environment, particularly animal-based research is desirable.

Knowledge

- Understanding of laboratory animal science and animal ethics procedures.
- Knowledge of relevant animal welfare legislation and codes of practice concerning the use of animals for scientific purposes is desirable.

Skills

- A high level of interpersonal skills that enable the appointee to liaise effectively with a wide range of people at a variety of levels internal and external to the Baker Institute.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to convey information and ideas clearly and succinctly to individuals and groups.
- Excellent administrative and organisational skills, including the ability to manage competing priorities and meet strict deadlines.

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- Demonstrated ability to professionally handle sensitive and confidential information and use appropriate judgment and discretion.
- The ability to effectively interpret policies, procedures, and guidelines to provide clear and consistent advice and support to researchers, licence holders and Animal Ethics Committees on the ethical conduct of research and regulatory obligations.
- Strong IT skills, including database entry and reporting.
- A comprehensive understanding of the Australian legislative framework governing the use of animals in research and teaching.

Attributes

- Systematic approach to tasks and strong attention to detail.
- Self-motivated individual who can work independently and exercise good judgement.
- A history of professional and respectful behaviours and attitudes in a collaborative environment and capability to facilitate successful interactions.
- Strong problem-solving skills and adaptability, with a demonstrated ability to manage competing demands, deal with ambiguity, establish priorities, organise tasks and meet deadlines.
- The ability to work effectively in a team environment, collaborate widely both internally and externally, and establish effective interpersonal relationships with a wide variety of people.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and comply with privacy requirements.
- Cooperates with others to achieve organisational objectives within a compliance framework.
- Capable of always maintaining composure.
- Adapts readily to changing circumstances and new responsibilities (which may include activities outside own preferences) in the interests of achieving objective/compliance.

Summary of position

The AE Officer is responsible for managing the administrative requirements of their allocated Animal Ethics Committee (AEC), including organising meetings, processing invoices, preparing agendas and/or minutes, pre-reviewing submissions to ensure they are ready for AEC review and corresponding with stakeholders to ensure that necessary documents or reports are submitted within acceptable timeframes.

The appointee will be the first point of contact for matters related to your allocated AEC, managing general enquiries from investigators and providing advice to applicants on AE policies, procedures, and administrative processes.

As the Baker Institute evolves to meet its changing strategic and operational needs and objectives, so will the roles required of its staff members. As such, staff should be aware that this document is not intended to represent the position that the occupant will perform in perpetuity.

This position description is intended to provide an overall view of the incumbent's role as at the date of this statement. In addition to this document, the specifics of the incumbent's role will be described in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) developed by the incumbent and relevant supervisor as part of the Baker Institute's performance appraisal and development process.

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The Baker Institute is an Equal Opportunity Employer and we encourage interest from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and members of the LGBTIQ+ community for roles within the Institute. We value diversity, inclusivity, gender equity and we promote family-friendly practices. We are a proud recipient of an inaugural Athena SWAN Bronze Award from Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE).