



Research Collaboration Framework

February 2026

Purpose

This framework guides how the Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) engages in research collaborations. It supports transparent, equitable and strategically aligned partnerships that strengthen climate and health evidence, policy influence, and community impact. This framework applies to all research collaborations involving organisational participation by CAHA.

Core Principles of Collaboration

CAHA's approach is guided by seven core principles, adapted from successful partnership frameworks:

1. **Focus:** Aligning research with community needs to ensure relevance and impact, reflecting CAHA's dedication to community-centred outcomes.
2. **Values:** Fostering trust, commitment and mutual respect, which are foundational to effective collaboration.
3. **Equity:** Promoting a balanced sharing of resources and recognition to support all partners and CAHA's contributions.
4. **Benefit:** Cultivating reciprocal relationships that build capacity, generate knowledge and enhance health outcomes, in line with CAHA's mission.
5. **Communication:** Ensuring transparent, open and consistent dialogue to keep all parties aligned and informed.
6. **Leadership:** Offering proactive support and agile management to drive successful project execution, capitalising on CAHA's strengths in efficiency and expertise.
7. **Resolution:** Establishing mechanisms for conflict resolution, partnership evaluation, and smooth transitions to maintain long-term relationships.

These principles are the foundation of collaborations that are ethical, impactful and sustainable, addressing challenges such as resource disparities noted in global health research.

CAHA Contributions to Research

CAHA's primary value in research partnerships lies in sector integration, policy translation, and national health system engagement. CAHA contributes distinctive value to research partnerships through its position as Australia's national alliance focused on climate change

and health. Operating at the intersection of policy, professional leadership, health services, advocacy, and community engagement, CAHA enables research collaborations to connect academic evidence with real-world system priorities, workforce realities, and national policy contexts. CAHA's involvement can therefore strengthen both the strategic relevance of research and its potential for translation into practice and decision-making.

CAHA may contribute to research partnerships through:

- **National sector networks and stakeholder access**
Engagement with a broad alliance of health professional organisations, services, academic partners, community groups, and advocacy bodies, supporting sector consultation, stakeholder engagement, and pathways for recruitment or dissemination where appropriate.
- **Community-informed priority setting and system insight**
Ongoing engagement with members and partners provides visibility of emerging climate-related health risks, workforce pressures, and adaptation challenges, helping research align with nationally relevant priorities and real-world service needs.
- **Policy translation and advocacy expertise**
Experience in preparing submissions, briefings, and sector guidance enables CAHA to assist in translating technical findings into policy-relevant outputs and supporting engagement with decision-makers, professional bodies, and health system leaders.
- **Strategic dissemination and communication channels**
Established platforms including member communications, national forums, events, and collaborative initiatives that can extend research reach and support engagement with health professionals, organisational leaders, and policy audiences.
- **Partnership coordination and sector alignment support**
Capacity to assist with stakeholder introductions, proposal development, coordination discussions, and alignment of projects with emerging sector opportunities, policy developments, or funding priorities where relevant.

Through these contributions, CAHA supports research that is not only academically robust but also connected to the health sector landscape and positioned for meaningful uptake. Collaborations involving CAHA aim to strengthen the link between evidence generation, policy development, workforce readiness, and community health outcomes in the context of climate change. The nature and extent of CAHA's contribution will vary depending on the project scope, resourcing arrangements, and strategic alignment.

CAHA Research Partnership Expectations

To support effective, equitable, and sustainable research collaborations, CAHA seeks to establish clear expectations with research partners at the outset of any project. These expectations help ensure that CAHA's involvement strengthens research quality and sector impact while maintaining organisational capacity to contribute meaningfully across multiple initiatives.

CAHA expects that proposed collaborations will demonstrate clear alignment with CAHA's strategic priorities in climate change and health, including a focus on improving health outcomes, supporting system resilience, and advancing evidence-informed policy and

practice. Projects should also demonstrate a defined purpose for CAHA's involvement, with clearly articulated roles, responsibilities, and anticipated contributions.

In establishing partnerships, CAHA seeks transparency regarding:

- the intended scope of CAHA's involvement and decision-making role
- expectations for participation in governance structures, advisory groups, or working committees
- anticipated time commitments across proposal development, implementation, and dissemination phases
- timelines for funding applications, reporting, and project delivery
- plans for stakeholder engagement and communication

Where CAHA contributes substantive organisational expertise, stakeholder engagement, policy translation, coordination support, or dissemination infrastructure, partners are expected to recognise these contributions through appropriate resourcing arrangements wherever possible. This may include direct funding within grant budgets, formal recognition of in-kind contributions, or agreed support mechanisms that enable CAHA's sustained participation.

CAHA also expects that intellectual property, authorship, acknowledgement, and publication arrangements will be discussed and agreed at an early stage, consistent with recognised research integrity standards and equitable partnership practice.

Given CAHA's national role, organisational priorities and available resourcing, CAHA may prioritise involvement in collaborations that demonstrate strong strategic alignment, clear pathways to policy or system impact, and equitable partnership structures. Participation in any research initiative remains subject to approval through CAHA's internal governance processes.

Establishing these expectations at the outset supports transparent, respectful and productive partnerships, and helps ensure that collaborations involving CAHA generate meaningful benefits for the health sector and the communities it serves.

Collaboration Process

CAHA adopts a structured process for considering and supporting research collaborations to ensure that partnerships are strategically aligned, appropriately resourced, and capable of delivering meaningful sector impact. This process supports transparent decision-making while enabling CAHA to engage constructively with research partners across a wide range of initiatives.

1. Initial approach and concept discussion

Researchers or partner organisations seeking CAHA involvement are encouraged to make contact at an early stage of project development. Initial discussions typically clarify the purpose of the project, its alignment with CAHA's strategic priorities, the intended role for CAHA, and indicative timelines. Early engagement helps ensure that expectations are

realistic and that CAHA's potential contribution is clearly defined prior to proposal submission. Early contact does not constitute organisational commitment to participate.

2. Strategic alignment and internal review

Proposed collaborations will normally be reviewed by the CAHA Research Working Group, which provides advice to the CEO regarding strategic fit, organisational readiness, and the recommended level of involvement.

Review considerations may include:

- alignment with CAHA's mission and strategic priorities
- potential health system, workforce, or policy impact
- relevance to member organisations and stakeholders
- anticipated organisational effort and resourcing requirements
- reputational or partnership considerations

This review process supports consistent and transparent assessment of research opportunities while ensuring CAHA's engagement remains focused on initiatives with clear sector value.

3. Role definition and partnership agreement

For collaborations proceeding beyond initial review, CAHA and the research partner will agree on:

- the scope of CAHA's contribution
- governance arrangements and reporting expectations
- resourcing arrangements (financial or in-kind)
- authorship, acknowledgement, intellectual property and data considerations
- communication and dissemination plans

Formal agreements may be established where required to support clarity and transparency for all parties. Formal commitment to any research collaboration rests with the CEO in accordance with CAHA governance arrangements.

4. Project implementation and engagement

During the implementation phase, CAHA's involvement will reflect the agreed partnership scope. This may include participation in governance structures, stakeholder engagement activities, dissemination planning, or policy translation work. Communication arrangements are expected to support timely updates and shared awareness of project progress.

5. Review and completion

At project completion, collaborations may be reviewed to assess outcomes, dissemination reach, and partnership effectiveness. Lessons learned may inform future collaboration approaches and help strengthen ongoing relationships across the climate and health research community.

Participation in any research initiative remains subject to CAHA's internal governance approval processes. Where collaborations involve significant financial commitment, reputational risk, or strategic implications, matters may be referred to the CAHA Board in accordance with governance requirements.

Resourcing

To ensure that research collaborations are effective, equitable, and sustainable, CAHA seeks to establish appropriate resourcing arrangements for its involvement in research initiatives. Aligning organisational effort with suitable support enables CAHA to contribute strategically while maintaining capacity to engage across the broader climate and health agenda.

Where CAHA provides organisational expertise, stakeholder engagement, policy translation, coordination support, or dissemination infrastructure, partners are encouraged to consider appropriate provision for CAHA participation within project planning and funding proposals wherever feasible. This may include direct funding for staff time, support for specific project activities, or agreed recognition of in-kind organisational contributions.

CAHA recognises that resourcing structures vary across projects and funding schemes. In some circumstances, CAHA may contribute limited strategic advice or sector insight without dedicated funding where this aligns strongly with organisational priorities and can be accommodated within existing work programs. Early discussion of resourcing expectations is encouraged during partnership development to ensure clarity and support transparent collaboration.

Levels of CAHA Research Engagement

CAHA may participate in research initiatives in different ways depending on the strategic relevance of the project, the nature of the proposed activities, and available organisational resourcing. Clarifying the intended level of engagement at an early stage helps ensure that expectations are realistic and that CAHA's contribution is appropriately defined.

CAHA's involvement in research collaborations may include:

Strategic consultation or advisory input

Provision of limited strategic advice, sector insight, or review of project concepts or outputs, typically without ongoing operational involvement.

Dissemination and sector engagement partner

Supporting communication of research findings through CAHA's established networks, events, member communications, or sector briefings where aligned with organisational priorities.

Strategic collaboration partner

Participation in project governance, stakeholder engagement activities, or structured dissemination planning where CAHA's policy, advocacy, or sector coordination expertise supports project objectives.

Funded organisational research partner

Sustained participation in research initiatives involving defined organisational responsibilities, coordination roles, stakeholder engagement activity, or policy translation work supported through appropriate resourcing arrangements.

The nature and level of CAHA's involvement will be determined through the collaboration review and approval process, taking into account strategic alignment, anticipated impact, and organisational capacity. CAHA retains discretion to determine the appropriate level of involvement for any proposed collaboration.

Requesting CAHA Research Partnership

Organisations seeking CAHA involvement in research initiatives are encouraged to approach CAHA at an early stage of project development. Early engagement supports constructive discussion of alignment, scope, timelines, and the potential role for CAHA prior to submission of funding applications or formal project commitments.

To support efficient review, organisations may be asked to provide:

- a short description of the proposed project
- the intended purpose of CAHA's involvement
- anticipated project timelines and funding stage
- proposed governance or advisory structures
- expected level of organisational participation
- indicative resourcing arrangements where relevant

Providing this information at the outset helps ensure that proposals can be considered efficiently and transparently through CAHA's internal review processes.

Governance and Approval

All research collaborations involving CAHA are subject to organisational governance approval in accordance with CAHA delegations. This framework supports, but does not replace, CAHA's broader organisational governance policies and procedures.

The CAHA Research Working Group provides strategic advice on proposed research collaborations, including assessment of alignment, anticipated organisational effort, and recommended level of involvement. The Working Group supports consistent and transparent evaluation of opportunities but does not independently commit CAHA to participation in research initiatives.

Formal approval for CAHA's involvement in any research collaboration rests with the CEO in accordance with organisational delegations and governance requirements.

Where proposed collaborations involve significant financial commitment, strategic implications, reputational considerations, or long-term organisational obligations, matters may be escalated to the CAHA Board for consideration.

These governance arrangements ensure that CAHA's participation in research initiatives is transparent, strategically aligned, and supported through appropriate organisational oversight.