



WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub



Highlights

Facilitating Collaboration, Impact and Growth (2019-2025)

November 2025



Powered by



In partnership with



A message from our partners





The Government of Western Australia

It is remarkable to reflect on how far the Western Australian Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) has come in such a short time, driving innovation and making a substantial contribution to the growth of the biomedical sector. Founded just over seven years ago, as one of five Innovation Hubs developed by the Western Australian Government, WALSIH has rapidly evolved into a cornerstone of our state's innovation ecosystem.

Since WALSIH was established in 2018, it has helped biomedical companies secure over \$143.5 million in funding, hosted more than 235 events for the sector and brought their global connections closer to Perth.

These achievements are a testament of the partnership and collaboration that went into creating WALSIH. This includes the Cook Government's commitment to ensuring we are harnessing WA's unique strengths in medical research and biomedical innovation. This vision was bolstered by the talent and capability of our partners, The University of Western Australia, and MTPConnect, to realise these opportunities to the fullest.

I acknowledge the foundational contributions of Professor Kevin Pflieger, Sue MacLeman, Professor Dawn Freshwater, Fiona Roche, and Dr Deb Cousins, whose leadership brought WALSIH to life. Today, under the guidance of Dr Tracey Wilkinson and Professor Pflieger, WALSIH continues to thrive, supported by an exceptional team from MTPConnect and UWA's Perth Biodesign.

Innovation hubs like WALSIH are more than just services, they are communities of ideas, collaboration, and opportunity. They attract investment, promote partnerships, and drive innovation. Our Government is proud to support WALSIH as we commit to advancing the State's medical innovation, which will deliver benefits for not just our economy but for the health of all Western Australians and beyond.



Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
**Minister for Medical Research;
Science and Innovation**
Western Australian Government

MTPConnect

Australia's Life Sciences
Innovation Accelerator

MTPConnect

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) was envisioned as a dynamic, collaborative hub that would help unlock Western Australia's largely untapped potential in the health and medical life sciences (HMLS) sector, with MTPConnect contributing its expertise, funding, resources and networks to support the growth of the state's HMLS industry.

MTPConnect was established by the Australian government as an Industry Growth Centre in 2015. We now operate as Australia's life sciences innovation accelerator, an independent, not-for-profit organisation championing growth of Australia's vibrant life sciences sector by backing companies to develop new medical products, and access global markets through trade missions and collaborations. Achieving this requires a coordinated national approach and we are pleased to have worked closely alongside the WA Government and The University of Western Australia to build WA's burgeoning HMLS sector since 2018.

Seven years on, this report outlines how WALSIH's impact has far exceeded expectations, becoming a cornerstone for HMLS innovation, commercialisation and connectivity in WA. It is a national exemplar of how strategic partnerships can supercharge innovation.

We believe WALSIH's success largely lies in its partnership structure with all partners co-funding and supporting activities. By embedding MTPConnect within the WA ecosystem and working hand-in-hand with the WA Government and The University of Western Australia, WALSIH was established from day one to be agile, inclusive and deeply connected. This partnership model allows for smooth collaboration across silos – linking researchers, clinicians, entrepreneurs and investors – and serves as an effective conduit between WA and the rest of Australia – and the world.

Combining deep local knowledge with national connectivity has been a recipe for successfully sparking collaborations and partnerships, enabled by embedding

MTPConnect's WALSIH staff within our national stakeholder engagement team.

We know that access to funding is the biggest challenge facing HMLS innovators and our WA team has helped address this by supporting an increasing number of WA applications to be competitive in national funding programs. These efforts have made a difference, with a number of WA companies awarded funding through MTPConnect's highly competitive accelerator programs. In MTPConnect's [BioMedTech Horizons Program \(Rounds 2, 3, 4\)](#), WA medtech projects received 17 per cent of total funding. Twenty-five per cent of MTPConnect's Clinical Translation and Commercialisation Medtech program awardees are based in WA. Most recently, 37 per cent (three of eight) of pharmaceutical innovation projects awarded funding through MTPConnect's [Targeted Translation Research Accelerator Drugs and Devices program](#) were from WA. And we know this has a positive knock-on effect as funded companies are then well suited for investment that amplifies their grant funding.

WALSIH is a model of partnership that works, and one we're proud to continue to champion.

Congratulations to the WALSIH team and our WA partners on seven years of exceptional job growth and economic impact through health innovations. And a big thank you to the HMLS community who have come along with us on this journey. We look forward to continuing to work together to advance innovation and improve lives and livelihoods in WA and beyond.



Stuart Dignam
Chief Executive Officer
MTPConnect



The University of Western Australia

The University of Western Australia (UWA) is proud to be partnering with the WA Government and MTPConnect to serve the Western Australian health and medical life sciences sector, and consequently the people of WA, Australia and the world who will benefit from the translation of WA biomedical and health innovation.

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) has evolved over the last seven years to become a truly inspiring partnership, not only of the three parties named above, but of all the amazing researchers, innovators, clinicians, consumers and industry professionals that have contributed to the numerous workshops, networking events, roundtables, programs, delegations, mentoring meetings, consultations and collaborations.

Western Australia has a wonderful ecosystem of dedicated individuals and organisations striving to improve people's health and wellbeing, willing to go above and beyond to help each other. This is the secret sauce of WA. WALSIH therefore plays a critical role in being the concierge, the connector and the facilitator, reducing the friction so innovation can accelerate.

UWA is also proud to administer Perth Biodesign, which celebrates its 10th anniversary next year. This initiative trains innovators using the internationally recognised Stanford Biodesign methodology to identify and validate unmet needs through clinical immersion and develop new technologies to address them. Through needs-driven innovation, Perth Biodesign has created a powerful flywheel effect: trained innovators become successful entrepreneurs creating high-quality jobs; successful companies strengthen the ecosystem and attract global investment; and a stronger ecosystem enhances WA's reputation, attracting top talent.

The program has evolved into a comprehensive portfolio addressing unmet workforce development needs across the sector, with alumni now leading commercialisation programs, directing innovation portfolios, and shaping health technology policy across industry, academia, healthcare, and government.

Through the WALSIH partnership, UWA is pleased to offer the highly-successful Perth Biodesign Flagship program and industry PhD research engagement program (iPREP), along with mentoring and connections, strategy and policy advice, and international partnerships, including the Biodesign BioBridges. This combined with Biodesign bootcamps, UWA Capstone, Biodesign NEXT, the Springboard Medical Manufacturing Alliance, Westside Collaboration Space and Floreat Innovation Park, UWA is pleased to be supporting biomedical and health innovators at multiple stages of their journey towards impact.

UWA is excited to continue this partnership with the WA Government and MTPConnect – so much has been achieved and there is still so much potential to be realised!



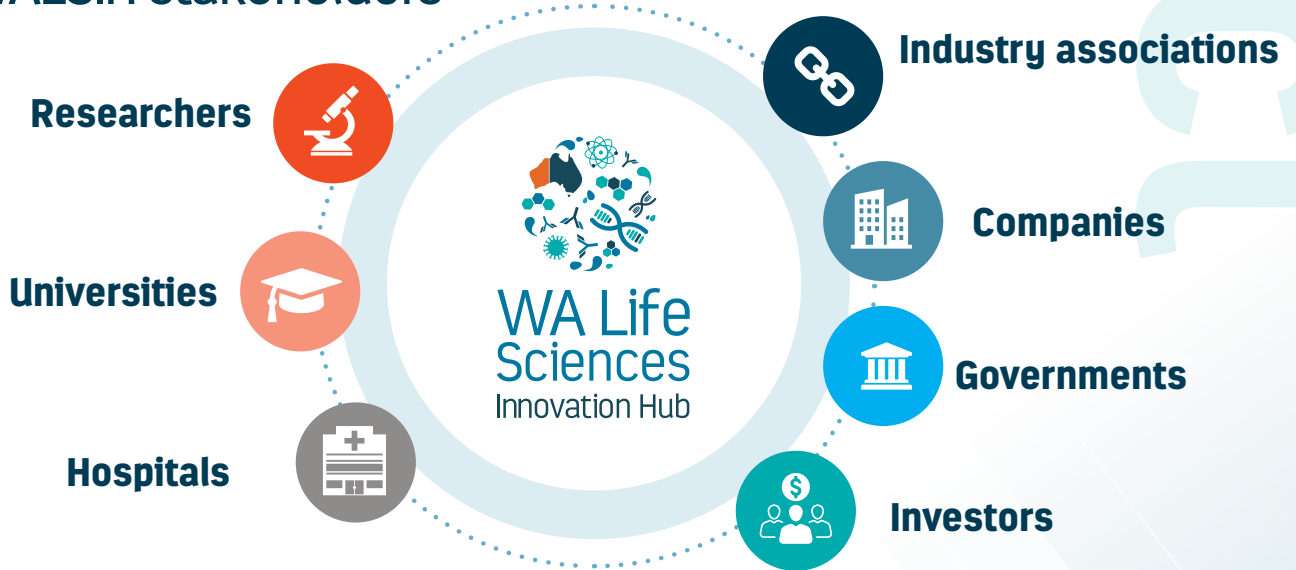
Prof Anna Nowak | Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
The University of Western Australia (UWA)

Connect

Today, WA has a vibrant, connected, and growing health and medical life sciences (HMLS) ecosystem and WALSIH has been a key driver of this growth and success. WALSIH occupies a unique position in the WA HMLS innovation ecosystem, rooted in a seven-year partnership between government, academia and a not-for-profit industry growth centre.










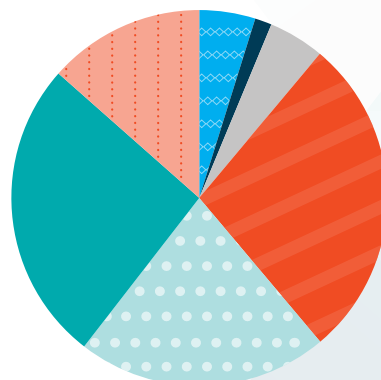
WALSIH stakeholders



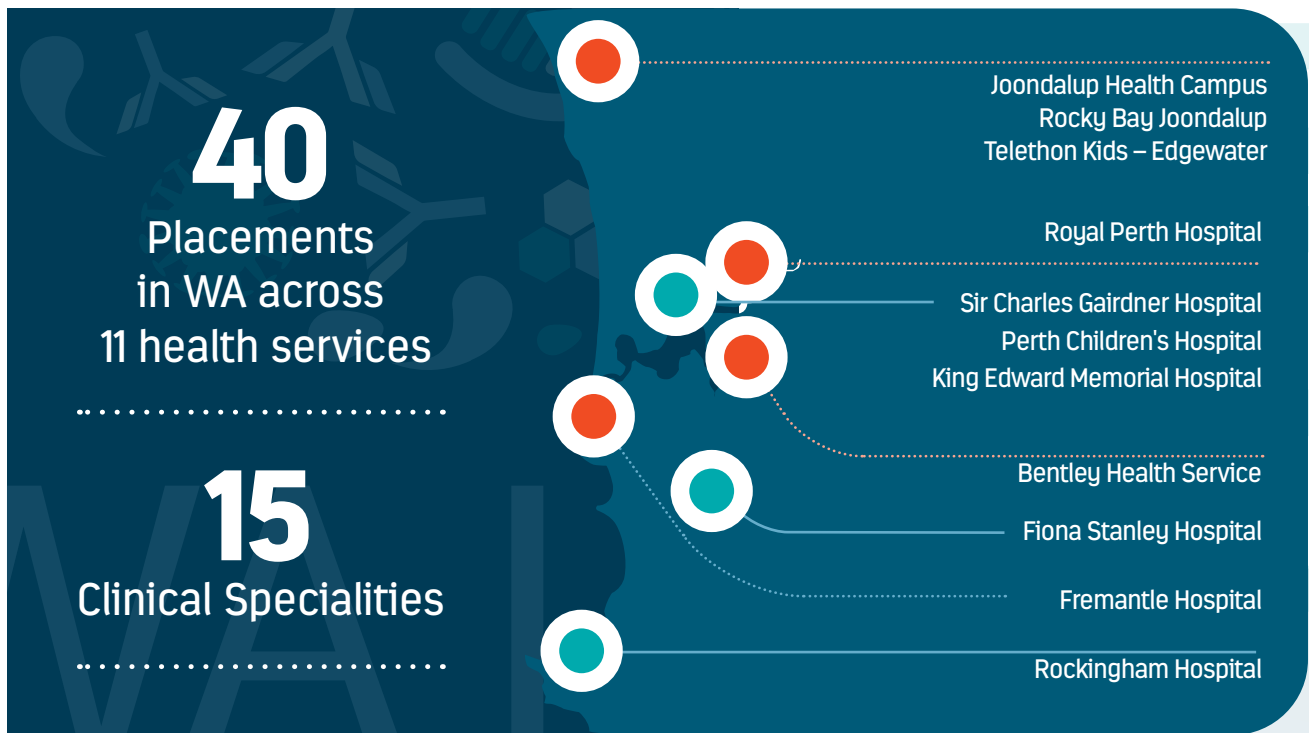
WALSIH engagements with stakeholders

WALSIH operates at the nexus of industry, government and research: engagements of MTPConnect WA staff with stakeholders by category since 2019.

-  Public sector 651, **28%**
-  Service providers and accelerators 610, **26%**
-  Startup and SME 507, **22%**
-  Universities and institutes 316, **13%**
-  Funders 113, **5%**
-  Other 113, **5%**
-  Large MedTech and Pharma 34, **1%**



Collaboration with WA Health Service Providers by Perth Biodesign programs



11,800+ downloads of **30** MTPConnect
Podcast episodes with WA guests



Connecting WA to the world



131
organisations
on 30 out-bound
delegations



22
in-bound
delegations
and site tours

Global Partnerships Amplify Impact

Through Perth Biodesign

Texas Medical Center, New
England Medical Innovation Center,
AstraZeneca, Biodesign programs
across Australia, APAC & USA

Through MTPConnect

Biocom California, Korean Health
Industry Development Institute,
Medical Alley, The Ministry of Health
of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Transform

As a high-tech, knowledge intensive industry, growth of the HMLS sector relies on a highly skilled, agile workforce that can translate research into commercial outcomes, manufacture advanced medical products, meet global quality and regulatory standards, run clinical trials, and navigate international approval and reimbursement pathways.

Training and innovation in action



Building WA's innovation workforce

Perth Biodesign Flagship program

Average NPS
86

30% ↑

increase in healthtech innovation capability pre – post program

800-strong alumni community

Connecting research and industry – iPREP (since 2020)

95%

iPREP participants report improved industry readiness, skills transferability and career development

70

R&D projects

36

Industry partners – **30%** repeat partners

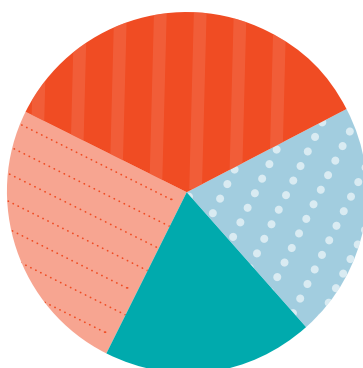
35%

of projects result in a job offer, which has led to 20 PhDs employed post-placement



Disciplinary diversity in Perth Biodesign participants fuels breakthrough thinking

- Clinician **36%**
- Business / Corporate **25%**
- Researcher **21%**
- Engineering / Technical **18%**



Propel

WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub Highlights

The collective actions of WALSIH's UWA/Perth Biodesign and MTPConnect teams have been a powerful catalyst accelerating growth of the WA HMLS ecosystem. Creating, supporting, advising and funding WA start-ups and SMEs has helped create hundreds of jobs, attract significant investment into WA and retain HMLS companies in the state.

From unmet needs to commercial solutions

4

new start-ups seeded
(joining a portfolio of **9** created since Perth Biodesign's inception)

120+

companies supported by MTPConnect WA-led concierge service and UWA-led advisory through **1000+** consultations

148

grant applications supported by MTPConnect's WA team, resulting in **\$55M+** of non-dilutive funding

73

digital health companies/innovations supported through specialised programming



Boosting Medical Product Manufacturing

\$1M+ injected into **5 companies**

15 jobs created and **3 companies on-shored** manufacturing previously done overseas

Tangible impact:

progress of companies directly supported by WALSIH[^]



628+
jobs created

40+
internships



\$143.5M+

funding: **\$55M** of supported funding + **\$88.5M+** of follow-on funding/revenue

TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE CONTRIBUTION

\$375M*

[^] company-reported outcomes from 40 companies who have received strong support from WALSIH

**Economic value of the health and medical research sector in Western Australia*, delivered by Deloitte Access Economics for AAMRI WA Chapter demonstrates an economic return of \$2.61 for every \$1 invested in WA medical research.



WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub

Powered by

In partnership with



WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub

Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research Building
6 Verdun Street
Nedlands WA 6009

WALSIH.AU