

POLICY FELLOWS PROGRAM

Application information



What is the ACN Foundation Policy Fellows Program

The program is the first nursing-specific health policy program to be offered in Australia. It demonstrates a commitment from the ACN Foundation to invest in the future of nursing and nursing leaders who will have the knowledge and skills to go on to positively influence health policy and Australia's health care system.

ACN is the national leader of the nursing profession and a community of dynamic and passionate nurses. We are dedicated to our intent of advancing nurse leadership to enhance the health care of all Australians and the program is one of ACN's many initiatives in achieving that goal.

How will the program advance my career goals?

If you aspire to becoming a foundational leader of the nursing profession, with expertise and skills in nursing health policy development and implementation then the program is for you.

Globally, nurses make up more than half of the health care workforce, so there is significant potential for nurses to become active health policy advocates and activists. Nurse involvement in health policy is a significant factor in informing positive change for nurses, patients, and healthcare.

The program provides you with the policy and advocacy skills to ensure that the nursing voice is heard, not just locally but nationally and globally.

Will the program suit me?

If you are in the early or mid-stage of your health-related career and aspire to advance your understanding and contribution to the health policy debate and discussion through the lens of nursing health policy development, then the program will suit you.

The program will equip you with the skills and expertise you need to develop and write robust evidence-based nursing health policy. You will also learn advocacy skills and media skills including communicating with politicians and key stakeholders such as consumers and diverse communities.

What are the benefits?

As a successful applicant for the program, you will receive targeted online education (six interactive modules), participate in a series of four Masterclasses and be offered mentoring opportunities with policy experts at ACN; you will be supported through out by dedicated ACN staff from the Policy and Advocacy team. You will also be funded to attend two of ACN's signature annual events; the Policy Summit (usually held in March) and the National Nursing Forum (NNF) (usually held in August).

You will apply what you are learning to a real time project that will be allocated to you according to ACN's existing policy work, for example, contributing to Policy Chapters, Working Groups or specialist task force or Advisory Committees.

What is the nature and extent of my commitment as a Policy Fellow

When you accept the offer of a Policy Fellow that means that you are agreeing to participate in all the formal and informal elements of the program. It also means that you have committed to devoting the equivalent of 10 hours per week to the program over the calendar year that the program is offered.

Depending on the nature of your project you may also be required to attend and participate in the Policy Summit or the NNF the subsequent year.

On completion of the program, ACN also offers Policy Fellows opportunities to extend and further apply their developing policy expertise by participating in ongoing or new specific ACN projects, for example, as the Chair or Deputy Chair of a Policy Chapter or taking the lead in a discrete policy project.

How do I apply

There are only seven Policy Fellows appointed each year, although that number may be increased for outstanding candidates. the program was offered for the first time in 2019 and since then it has become a prestigious and popular award, so competition is fierce. Applications are usually called for in October each year; see the ACN website for the most up to date details.

There is a guide for applicants, and you are strongly advised to read it before submitting your application; it is available here .

For further details please contact the Policy and Advocacy team at policy@acn.edu.au

What are the program objectives?

The learning objectives of the program facilitate your ability to:

- a. strengthen skills and knowledge around utilising evidence-based research to inform health policy and decision-making.
- b. appropriately identify current gaps in health policy and define related policy questions.
- c. conduct systematic reviews in accordance with current accepted research and academic conventions and critically appraise evidence in the international and local literature.
- d. utilise and apply research findings from the national and international literature for use in local contexts.
- e. develop policy recommendations for a current health policy issue in Australia in at least one of the following policy documents: policy brief, statement, commentary, issues paper, white paper, discussion paper and/or scoping review.
- f. effectively demonstrate the ability to communicate key policy issues and recommendations to senior government officials, political leaders, and organisations.