

## Outline of the JJNSW Research Approval Process

The JJNSW Research and Information Unit (RIU) is responsible for the coordination and oversight of all research, evaluation and statistical projects involving young people under the supervision of, and personnel employed by, Juvenile Justice NSW.

Inquiries about conducting research within JJNSW are welcomed by the RIU from all interested parties who meet the eligibility criteria.

Applications may be submitted by internal or external researchers, and/or academics, or for the fulfilment of a post-graduate educational qualification.

While JJNSW recognises the complexities faced by research applicants, and is keen to support the approval of research without sacrificing rigour, NO research project, internal or external, can be implemented without written 'Approval to Commence' from the JJNSW Executive Director.

This factsheet outlines the process for applying for such approval.

The RIU is available to answer questions regarding all aspects of the application process.

### ***For more information:***

Email the Research & Information Unit  
[Research.JJ@justice.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Research.JJ@justice.nsw.gov.au)

## Step 1: The Initial Enquiry

After reading all JJNSW information on research, interested applicants should contact the RIU to discuss their research interests. Applicants are advised to have their specific research questions formulated prior to contacting JJNSW.

### ***1.1 Initial Screening by RIU***

If the research question is within JJNSW's priorities and is seen as potentially offering some benefit, the applicant will be asked to submit a short proposal (approximately two pages) to the RIU.

## Step 2: The Research Proposal

The research proposal should outline the research question(s), planned methodology, likely research sample, and any costs or risks that have been identified.

The proposal must also acknowledge the applicant's commitment to undertake an Aboriginal ethics approval process, should the proposal be supported. This would include an application to the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) or Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Ethics Committee.

### ***2.1 Second Screening by RIU***

The RIU will review the initial proposal and assess the benefits and viability of conducting the research (i.e. can JJNSW support it and what is the potential impact on research and provision of service?).

### ***2.2 JJNSW Executive Director's endorsement of 'In Principle' Support***

If the project is deemed beneficial, viable and suitable for JJNSW, the Executive Director will grant 'in-principle' support for the project and the applicant will be invited to submit a full research application.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Applicants can only submit a full application to conduct research AFTER this invitation has been issued. The RIU will provide the applicant with the “Application for Approval to Conduct Research” form at this point.

## Step 3: The Research Application

The completed application form should detail:

- The project's rationale and hypotheses with a detailed explanation of the benefits of the research to JJNSW;
- Details of the proposed methodology (including sample size and a copy of all instruments/data collection tools to be used);
- Details of the proposed means of analysing and evaluating results;
- Details of all operational and Central Office resources required to assist the research project;
- Details of all potential costs that may be incurred by JJNSW;
- The identity, qualifications and experience of researchers/interviewers (and Working with Children Check (WWCC), where applicable );
- Details of any potential conflicts of interest (perceived or real) – this may include role conflicts where JJNSW staff wish to conduct research in their place of employment; and
- A proposed schedule for data collection, including estimated time frames at each data collection site;
- Details of intended publication and dissemination of results.

JJNSW does not have an ethics committee, and therefore cannot formally consider the human ethics perspective of research proposals. As such, **evidence of approval by a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)-registered Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) MUST be provided with your application.**

Due to the significant over-representation of Aboriginal young people under supervision by JJNSW, **ethics approval MUST be sought from the AH&MRC Ethics Committee or AIATSIS Ethics Committee, or similar.**

The completed application form, and all supporting documentation, should be submitted to the RIU.

### **3.1 Third Screening by RIU**

The RIU will review the application (and its attachments) to ensure all areas have been addressed and all supporting documentation has been received.

If the RIU considers the research appropriate, and all supporting documentation has been received, the application will be forwarded to the JJNSW Research and Evaluation Steering Committee (RESC) for further assessment and endorsement.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Applications without evidence of ethics approval(s) or WWCC clearance (where necessary) will NOT be processed further.

### **3.2 Consideration by the JJNSW Research and Evaluation Steering Committee (RESC)**

The JJNSW RESC aims to ensure that all research is applicable to the strategic direction of JJNSW.

The RESC will review the application, examining the proposed benefit to JJNSW against the probable costs and risks of implementing the project.

They will also review the project time line included in the research application, to assess competing designated time periods for data collection at proposed centres/community offices, as well as the impact of maintaining larger scale research projects in JJNSW.

### **3.3 Approval by the JJNSW Executive Director**

If the RESC believes the research is of significant benefit to JJNSW, and all relevant HREC approvals have been received, the application will be sent to the JJNSW Executive Director with a recommendation for approval.

The RIU will notify the applicant of this recommendation as soon as practicable.

## Step 4: The Research Agreement

Once the Executive Director has approved the project, the applicant will be provided with a copy of JJNSW's Research Agreement outlining the conditions for conducting research in JJNSW.

These conditions are provided in the *Conditions of Approval for Conducting Research within JJNSW Factsheet*.

The applicant will be required to sign two copies of this agreement, accepting the conditions, and return them to the RIU as soon as possible for the Executive Director's signature and approval to commence.

## Step 5: Approval to Commence Research Project

A formal letter approving commencement of the research project will be sent to the applicant, together with a copy of the agreement signed by both the applicant and the Executive Director.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The implementation of research CANNOT begin until a letter of approval has been received from the Executive Director of JJNSW.

## Step 6: Implementation of the Approved Research Project

Once the researcher has received the approval letter from the Executive Director, the researcher can commence their project.

If there are problems faced during the implementation of a research project, the researcher is encouraged to contact the RIU to attempt resolution.

An important proviso for consideration of research with young people in custody is that there should be minimal disruption to their normal daily activities. Similarly, where staff are participating, the project must not adversely affect their work requirements and efficiency, or interrupt their daily routines.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research that imposes unacceptable levels of disruption to the Juvenile Justice Centre or Community Office WILL NOT BE APPROVED or MAY HAVE APPROVAL WITHDRAWN.

## Reporting Requirements

### ***Progress reports***

Researchers will be asked to provide progress reports, on a six monthly basis.

Progress reports are to be submitted to the RIU upon request.

The RIU should be kept informed of any serious problems or difficulties affecting the research.

### ***Modifications***

The Executive Director must approve any significant change to the research design or methodology after approval to conduct research has been given.

Researchers should seek approval for any amendments to their research project via the RIU **PRIOR** to implementing such changes.

### ***Completion of the project***

At the completion of the project, the researcher **MUST** provide information back to JJNSW regarding their findings, as specified in the Research Agreement.

It is a condition of approval that all researchers forward a copy of the final research report and a summary paper to the RIU.

## Publication/Presentation of Results

All researchers are required to submit a copy of any report, manuscripts, presentation, or conference paper to the RIU **PRIOR** to their publication or presentation.

**PLEASE NOTE:** No data can be released or presented publicly without the **PRIOR** approval by the JJNSW Executive Director.

In order to enable consideration, and approval in time for publication/presentation, **researchers MUST submit a copy of the report/manuscript/presentation/conference paper to the RIU AT LEAST ONE MONTH PRIOR to publication/presentation.**

The Executive Director requires that a disclaimer be attached to the published report, presentation, or conference paper, clearly stating that **"the views expressed in this report/presentation do not necessarily represent any official views of JJNSW"**.