

Position description

Position title	Head, Prevention
Date established	August 2023
Reports to	CEO
Employment status	3 year maximum-term contract, full time (1.0 FTE)

Background

The Sax Institute is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that improves health and wellbeing by driving better use of evidence in policies, programs and services.

The Institute has an international reputation as an Evidence Specialist, and nearly 20 years' experience in translating research findings into policy drawing on our own expertise as well as that of our more than 50 member organisations. We work with governments, health organisations, research organisations and a network of experts nationwide to analyse policy problems and find the best evidence-based solutions.

Division Information – The Prevention Centre

The Prevention Centre is Australia's leading national collaboration of researchers, policy makers and practitioners working together to prevent chronic disease. Established within the Sax Institute in 2013, the Prevention Centre has developed world leading expertise on systems approaches and delivered an extensive body of research evidence and led innovations in co-design, science communication, and capability building for emerging leaders in prevention. It also supports research translation by hosting the Collaboration for Enhanced Research Impact (CERI) in partnership with 11 NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence (CREs). The central roles and functions of the Prevention Centre are now an established and widely recognised core-infrastructure of Australia's prevention system.

Purpose of position

Reporting to the CEO, The Head, Prevention is one of seven senior executive positions within the Sax Institute. This position will lead, guide and inspire the next generation model of the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre (Prevention Centre) as an integral and embedded program of the Sax Institute. The ongoing body of work will continue to be co-designed with policy funding partners and the prevention research community; build on the innovations and developments to-date; and contribute to the Sax Institute's mission and strategy to improve Australians' health and wellbeing by driving the use of evidence in policies, programs and services.

This role will build on the partnerships that currently exist with research institutions, government and non-government organisations

Key accountabilities

Executive leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute to the development and strategy of the Institute ▪ Develop and implement annual plans, budgets and performance measures ▪ Together with the Executive team, drive and develop collaboration across the Institute
Build system leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide strategic leadership to ensure the Prevention Centre (PC) maintains its relevance and currency as a recognised national leader on systems approaches for the prevention of chronic disease. ▪ Work with the PC’s funding partners (Governance Authority) and other policy partners to co-design and refine the PC work program to ensure the priorities and outputs support policy and practice across the Australian prevention system. ▪ Review, further develop and implement the PC’s Emerging Leaders Strategy to build prevention system leadership, capacity and capabilities across Australia; with particular focus on nurturing successful research-policy partnerships, research translation and research impact. ▪ Advance the field of prevention through thought leadership and methodological, conceptual and empirical work that also improves the PC’s and the wider prevention community’s funding success.
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convene and lead robust research, policy and practice dialogues that tackle difficult and complex prevention challenges, and support collaboration and alignment of research and policy, and across research centres and research programs. ▪ Expand the Collaboration for Enhanced Research Impact (CERI) to support effective, aligned and policy-relevant translation and impact of Australian prevention research. ▪ Develop new and ongoing collaborations between the PC, policy and practice partners, and the research community to inform applied and policy relevant prevention research. ▪ Expand partnerships and collaborations with Australian and international research centres, universities and other research institutes working on the prevention of chronic disease.
Incubate and drive new knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop new partnerships with philanthropic foundations and sectors within and outside of health to support applied prevention research and the social, economic and other co-benefits of prevention. ▪ Collaborate with the research sector to secure new funds for incubating applied research, new development projects and seeding grants, and other knowledge-synthesis initiatives to support priority policies and programs. ▪ Co-design and support new research applications to existing funding schemes, for example, NHMRC Partnership Grants, Synergy Grants, Centres of Research Excellence or Australian Research Council Linkage Grants.
Systems approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide scientific and applied leadership on the use of systems thinking, methods and tools to understand and solve complex problems in research, policy and practice. ▪ Apply systems approaches to inform the leadership, priorities and strategies underpinning the PC workplan, coordinating functions and partnerships.
Science communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build the case for investment in prevention and prevention research, and support policy and political discourse on the value of prevention through the PC communication resources and channels. ▪ Build and utilise the science communication capacity of the PC to support effective translation of prevention research across Australia.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Inform and boost public discourse on prevention to generate public appreciation of and demand for government action on prevention.
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Selection criteria: Qualifications, Skills, Experience and Personal qualities

To be successful the Head, Prevention should demonstrate the following technical and behavioural competencies:

- PhD or equivalent in public health, chronic disease prevention or a relevant related field.
- Extensive experience of building partnerships between research institutions and government and non-government organisations.
- At least 10 years of experience in prevention policy or program delivery, or working in close partnership with government and NGOs to support policy and program delivery.
- Strong track record of leading prevention / public health research. A senior academic affiliation with an Australian university is highly desirable.
- Sound understanding of system science, with demonstrated ability to apply systems thinking to support strategic systemic change in applied settings, and the use of systems science to inform and guide research questions and methods in prevention / public health.
- Demonstrated experience in leading and managing teams, particularly through periods of change, and with proven ability to support, develop, mentor and inspire effective multi-disciplinary teams.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to develop persuasive and compelling funding proposals and negotiate complex agreements.
- Ability to effectively prioritise and manage complex projects, meet deadlines, and work collaboratively across research disciplines, and policy and practice in health and non-health sectors.