

This is a concise version of the Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Directors on 21 June 2017

# Sax Institute Strategic Plan 2017–2022

# The Sax Institute

## Our Mission

To improve health and wellbeing by driving the use of research in policies, program and services.

## Our Vision

The Sax is a national and international centre of excellence in embedding research into the fabric of policy, program and service delivery decisions.

## Our Purpose

1. Pave the way for more high-impact research by building research platform, partnerships and skills
2. Deliver new intelligence that helps our partners address challenges in policy, program and service delivery
3. Connect decision makers with what is known from research so that can access the right evidence at the right time

## Our Values

### We have:

**Impact** – we help our partners solve problems and find solutions

and

**Integrity** – we're genuinely committed to doing things well and doing things right.

### We are:

**In touch** – we understand the needs of both decision makers and researchers

**Innovative** – we enable breakthrough ideas that lead to change

**Independent** – we have strong connections with the policy world and our research organisation members but value being an independent broker.

# Summary of our position: June 2017

There is the opportunity for the Institute to have a greater impact on policies, programs and services and to be sustainable into the future. In order to achieve this potential, we will need to:

- Better strategically position our assets, programs and services and to continue to innovate to stay at the cutting edge. Given the rapidly changing external environment, we anticipate that we will need to continue to modify and develop our portfolio and balance of services, assets and programs to stay relevant and provide value. Strengthened capacity and systems will be required to support this work
- Establish new partners and members across Australia and work with them in more flexible ways that better meet their needs. A stronger profile and more effective partnership approaches will be needed
- Strengthen our financial sustainability to provide more security against changes in the environment and to enable a more strategic approach to innovation and business development. This will require more effective internal processes to ensure efficiency, new sources of income that can yield a greater profit and a greater diversity of untied funding sources.

# Objectives of the Strategic Plan July 2017–June 2022

The Strategic Plan has two objectives. By June 2022, we aim to:

## 1. Have a greater impact on health and wellbeing and on the use of research in policies, program and services.

Our goal is to be more effective in achieving our mission. Specifically, we aim to have:

- **More examples of our work having a significant impact:** We will measure this through case studies of our impact on policy, programs and services and on health. Our target by June 2022 is to have at least 35 examples of impact on policy, programs and services per year and four examples of impact on health
- **A significant impact on more agencies across Australia and beyond health:** We will measure this by the number of agencies having a substantial program of work with the Institute. Our target by June 2022, is to have at least five partners with \$0.5M - \$1M business per annum (including three partners outside of NSW and/or outside of health) and a further three partners with business of \$1M or more (including two partners outside of NSW or outside of health)
- **More effective programs and services:** We will measure this by assessing the views of our stakeholders in regular surveys and by assessing our national and international reputation for leadership through invitations to speak. Our target is to have eight national and three international invitations a year by June 2022.

## 2. Achieve greater financial sustainability

By 2022, we will have greater financial capacity to withstand changes in our environment and to invest in innovation and business development. Specifically, we will have:

- **Greater reserves** with a target of net equity of \$5M by end FY 22
- **Increased income** with a target of \$23M by end FY 22
- **Increased annual surplus** with a target of \$1M per annum by end FY 22
- **More diverse sources of untied income** with a target of at least three sources of untied income greater than 0.5M per annum by end FY22
- **Increased investment in innovation and business development.** In FY18, we will develop measures of this investment and generate future year targets.
- **Stronger business processes.**

# Strategies

To achieve our target growth in impact and financial sustainability, we must expand our existing client base while maintaining our reputation for delivering cutting edge, high quality programs and services that meet the needs of policy and practice agencies and researchers. This will necessitate a stronger profile nationally and in areas outside of but related to health, and more flexible and attuned approaches to working with our partners, members and clients. Greater financial sustainability will require smarter business practices that ensure what we do is strategic, properly funded and provides more diverse sources of untied funds.

The Institute has three purposes and associated programs, all at different levels of development. To achieve our impact and sustainability targets, we will need to ensure that: all our programs are strategic and highly attuned to the external environment (particularly research assets, Purpose 1); that we build on existing strengths and stay at the cutting edge (particularly in knowledge exchange, Purpose 3); and that we significantly expand our work in delivering new intelligence including evaluation and analysis (Purpose 2).

We will achieve our impact and financial sustainability targets through seven interlinked strategies; the strategies and associated strategic actions are shown below and the targets for each action are in **Table 1** (see page 8).

We will:

## **1. Deliver cutting edge programs and services by augmenting our internal/external skills and our external engagement and by strengthening our systems**

By June 2022, we will be recognised as always delivering best-quality services and programs and as the first port of call for difficult and challenging problems. Our work will be best-practice and cutting-edge and we will have the skills, expertise and systems to deliver rapidly and responsively.

We will:

- Build our capacity to innovate by identifying and addressing any skill gaps with stronger internal skills and better ways of tapping external expertise, including from our members
- Expose our key staff to national and international developments in their areas and encourage their engagement with public debate
- Ensure our services and programs are cutting edge by systemising our approach to feedback and by increasing funding for innovation.

## **2. Build long term, significant and more diverse partnerships by strengthening our relationships and ways of working with existing and potential partners and members**

By June 2022, we will have the skills and systems to make smart decisions for the future that better position our services, programs and research platforms in a rapidly changing environment. We will select business opportunities that align with our strategic positioning. We will ensure our partners' and members' needs determine the solutions we deliver. We will be an organisation that takes the

time to understand the needs of our partners and has flexible programs and services to meet their needs. Our members will value their connection with the Institute.

We will:

- Build a more focused and needs-based member program with a clearer value proposition and create greater value from our research connections
- Develop more effective ways of being attuned and responding to the needs of our partners supported by better business models
- Develop new and strengthen existing relationships with potential partners nationally and in areas outside of but aligned to health.

### **3. Grow our national and international profile by strengthening our thought leadership and by targeting new audiences**

By June 2022, we will be recognised as an international and national leader in helping agencies to harness research. Policy agencies will recognise us as a leader in helping them access evidence from research, knowledge exchange professionals will see us as being at cutting edge of our field, and key targets in the philanthropic and corporate sector will regard us an innovative thinker that adds value by harnessing the power of research to make societal change. We will have: more partners outside of, but aligned with, health such as NSW Treasury and the NSW Department of Family and Community Services; non-government partners such as in the corporate and philanthropic sectors; more national – and potentially international – partners; more major partners with a significant long-term investment in the Institute.

We will:

- Strengthen our current profile through more consistent and effective messaging and by exploring innovative strategies with the potential to rapidly build profile
- Publish, comment publicly and host events to position the Institute as a thought leader in helping agencies harness research
- Strengthen our profile with new audiences, particularly state and federal ministerial staff, corporate and philanthropic organisations and opinion leaders inside and outside of health.

### **4. Strengthen our long term financial capacity by making more strategic decisions about business opportunities, developing new sources of revenue and improving internal processes**

By 2022, we will have sufficient profit to well support our programs, invest in innovation and build our reserves.

We will:

- Strengthen our income streams where there is opportunity for building untied funds
- Strengthen our internal processes (including a corporate marketing strategy) to ensure an appropriate profit level is achieved for all programs

- Continue to improve the engagement of our staff, their alignment with the values and purpose of the organisation and their skills
- Continue to build our systems, including a better use of technology.

## **5. Strategically position our research platforms to ensure that they remain valuable in a rapidly changing environment**

By June 2022, we will have a portfolio of research platforms of key significance to health and other sectors. These will be strategically positioned and financially sustainable. We will be recognised as a national expert in managing platforms for research to inform policy, practice and service delivery.

We will:

- Develop a more strategic portfolio of research assets, by enhancing existing assets, retiring assets and developing new assets as required
- Develop a sustainable funding base for all of our research platforms, by expanding the user base and by attracting support from the corporate sector
- Develop best practice approaches to managing our assets and use cutting-edge technologies
- Develop a strategic and financially sustainable approach to (a) training and (b) hosting large scale multi-institution collaborations and expand this work.

## **6. Significantly expand our capacity, programs and services to better provide new intelligence that helps our partners address challenges in policy, program and service delivery**

By 2022, we will have a diverse portfolio of services to provide new intelligence to our partners, and this work will be making a major contribution to our income and surplus. We will be the go-to place to help solve wicked problems.

We will:

- Strengthen our existing approaches to providing new intelligence
- Implement at least three new ways of delivering intelligence to better meet the needs of policy, program and service delivery agencies
- Establish thought leadership platforms to inform policy, programs and service delivery.

## **7. Strengthen our existing and develop new approaches to provide an internationally leading capability in connecting decision makers with what is known from research**

By June 2022, we will build on our existing systems and reputation to extend and consolidate our reputations as an international leader in helping decision makers connect to what is known through research.

We will:

- Develop an internationally recognised centre of expertise in synthesis for policy that enables policy makers to access: rapid alerts about key new research findings; compelling brief summaries of research findings and their implications for policy; rapid reviews to inform specific policies or programs work; and in-depth analytic and thought leadership reports
- Build on our existing work to develop a portfolio of well-established, innovative and demonstrably effective approaches to facilitating: exchange between researchers and health decision makers; agreement about the meaning and implications of research; consideration of the evidence in relation to policy, practice and service delivery options
- Establish and test approaches to ensuring the outcomes from our own activity (including Analysis for Policy, the 45 and Up Study, The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre (TAPPC) and SEARCH (the Study of Environment on Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health)) is known and has an optimal chance of impacting on policy and practice.

**Table 1. Strategic actions and targets**

STRATEGIC ACTION	TARGET
<b>1. Deliver cutting edge programs and services by augmenting our internal/external skills and our external engagement and by strengthening our systems</b>	
Build our capacity to innovate by identifying and addressing any skill gaps with stronger internal skills and better ways of tapping external expertise, including from our members	By end of FY 22, we will have in place nationally recognised internal expertise in at least four new areas and well-integrated advisory systems
Expose our key staff to national and international developments in their areas and encourage their engagement with public debate	By end of FY 22, we will have in place at least five active international collaborations that are informing our work in a range of ways including yielding additional funds, providing additional expertise, providing professional development opportunities for our staff
Ensure our services and programs are cutting edge by systemising our approach to feedback and by increasing funding for innovation	By end of FY 22, we will be routinely collecting and using stakeholder and external expert feedback
<b>2. Build long term, significant and more diverse partnerships by strengthening our relationships and ways of working with existing and potential partners and members</b>	
Build a more focused and needs-based member program with a clearer value proposition and create greater value from our research connections	By FY22 we will have many examples of tailored and deep relationships with our members, they will be satisfied with their relationship with the Institute (survey 3) and our members will be spread more nationally
Develop more effective ways of being attuned and responding to the needs of our partners supported by better business models	By FY22 our partners will agree that we understand their needs and are responsive (survey 3). We will have in place at least five partnerships of \$0.5-\$1M and a further three partners at \$1M per annum or more
Develop new and strengthen existing relationships with potential partners nationally and in areas outside of but aligned to health	By FY22 we will in place at least three partnerships at \$0.5M to \$1M and a further 2 partnerships at \$1M or more with agencies outside of NSW or outside of health



<b>3. Grow our national and international profile by strengthening our thought leadership and by targeting new audiences</b>	
Strengthen our current profile through more consistent and effective messaging and by exploring innovative strategies with the potential to rapidly build profile	By end FY 19 (survey 2) our key target audiences will understand the breadth of what we do and how they can work with us
Publish, comment publicly and host events to position the Institute as a thought leader in helping agencies to harness research	By FY 22 we will: regularly receive international invitations to speak on our area of expertise; be approached regularly for public comment on the issue of making evidence useful; have an events program that attracts key influencers in health decision making, research, politics, philanthropy and the media
Strengthen our profile with new audiences, particularly state and federal ministerial staff, corporate and philanthropic organisations and opinion leaders inside and outside of health	By FY 22 we will we be well known to the relevant politicians and have established relationships with at least four corporate or philanthropic foundations
<b>4. Strengthen our long term financial capacity by making more strategic decisions about business opportunities, developing new sources of revenue and improving internal processes</b>	
Strengthen our income streams where there is opportunity for building untied funds	By end of FY22, our target is to have at least one untied funds major contributor from the corporate and philanthropic sector and least three sources of greater than 0.5M per annum by end FY22
Strengthen our internal processes (including a corporate marketing strategy) to ensure an appropriate profit level is achieved for all programs	By end FY 19, we will have established approaches, across all programs, to both the pricing (margin) and commercial implications of all new business that the Sax contemplates undertaking. Our corporate marketing strategy will be fully implemented. We will continue to monitor the impact of our processes and adjust where necessary  By end FY 22, we will generate a net surplus of \$1M per annum
Continue to improve the engagement of our staff, their alignment with the values and purpose of the organisation and their skills	By end of FY 19 the Annual Performance goals of individual employees will be fully aligned with the overall performance of the organisation; personal consequence of both over or under achievement of set, agreed annual goals will be in place. The Institute will be a recognised employer of choice with clearly articulated career opportunities
Continue to build our systems, including a better use of technology	By end of FY 19, secure, mobile, remote access systems will be fully established; our IT systems will offer the highest level of data security access to all clients
<b>5. Strategically position our research platforms to ensure that they remain valuable in a rapidly changing environment</b>	
Develop a more strategical portfolio of research asset, by enhancing existing assets, retiring assets and developing new assets as required	By end FY 22, all research assets will be financially sustainable and integrated with and essential to the work of our key partners. Key partners and philanthropic and corporate funders will agree the value
Develop a sustainable funding base for all of our research platforms, by expanding the user base and by attracting support from the corporate sector	By end FY 22, the research asset portfolio will be a major contributor to the Sax Institute annual profit

Develop best practice approaches to managing our assets and use cutting edge technologies	By end FY 22, through leveraging of expertise from revised governance structures we will have in place: nationally recognised approaches to the management of our research assets and international collaborations that enable world leading innovative technologies within all research assets
Develop a strategic and financially sustainable approach to (a) training and (b) hosting large scale multi-institution collaborations and expand this work	By end of FY19, we will identify a long-term goal for the extent of the training programs provided by the Institute.  By end of FY 19, we will have in place models for hosting multi-institution collaborations, that maximise the effectiveness of the collaborations and add value to both the purpose and financial stability of the Institute. We will be able to identify a long-term goal for this work at the Institute
<b>6. Significantly expand our capacity, programs and services to better provide new intelligence that helps our partners address challenges in policy, program and service delivery</b>	
Strengthen our existing approaches to providing new intelligence	By FY 22, all programs of the Division will be performing strongly and making a major contribution to increased income and surplus
Implement at least three new ways of delivering intelligence to better meet the needs of policy, program and service delivery agencies	By FY 22, we will have in place three new approaches to analysis and evaluation
Establish thought leadership platforms to inform policy, programs and service delivery	By end of FY 22, we will be producing six thought leadership reports and associated events per annum
<b>7. Strengthen our existing and develop new approaches to provide an internationally leading capability in connecting decision makers with what is known from research</b>	
Develop an internationally recognised centre of expertise in synthesis for policy that enables policy makers to access: rapid alerts about key new research findings; compelling brief summaries of research findings and their implications for policy; rapid reviews to inform specific policies or programs work; and in-depth analytic and thought leadership reports	By end of FY22, the synthesis centre will be well established, with an international reputation and use across Australia. Users will regard the synthesis products as valuable
Build on our existing work to develop a portfolio of well-established, innovative and demonstrably effective approaches to facilitating: exchange between researchers and health decision makers; agreement about the meaning and implications of research; consideration of the evidence in relation to policy, practice and service delivery options	By end of FY22, our exchange and dialogue work will be well established, with an international reputation and use across Australia. Users will regard the dialogue and exchange processes as valuable
Establish and test approaches to ensuring the outcomes from our key program (including Analysis for Policy, 45 and Up Study, TAPPC, SEARCH) is known and has an optimal chance of impacting on policy and practice	By end of FY22, we will have processes established for developing and disseminating products from our key programs; with at least 12 products each year