

Purposeful Focus. Global Impact.

Turning care into discovery, *and discovery into care*



Acknowledgement of Country

Mater acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where we live and work.

We respect their historical and continuing spiritual connections to country and community and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. As health, education and research ministries, we commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

'The Heart to Heal, the Strength to Grow'
artwork by David Williams of Gilimbaa.

Message from the Board Chair and Mater Group CEO

Over the past century, Mater has earned a reputation for combining compassionate care with innovation, continually seeking better ways to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities. Research has been central to that mission, enabling discovery, informing practice, and ensuring that patients benefit from advances in knowledge, technology, and treatment.

This strategic plan sets out Mater Research's direction for the years ahead. It reflects a clear and deliberate ambition: to maximise our impact by focusing our effort, investment, and expertise where we can make the greatest difference. In a rapidly evolving research environment, success requires more than excellence alone. It requires clarity of purpose, thoughtful choices, strong partnerships, and a commitment to long-term sustainability.

Mater Research occupies a unique position within the Mater Group. The close connection between our researchers, clinicians, and healthcare services creates

opportunities that few organisations can match. It allows us to identify the challenges that matter most to patients, translate discoveries more rapidly into practice, and ensure that research remains closely connected to real-world health outcomes. This integration of care and research is one of our greatest strengths and a defining feature of our future.

The priorities outlined in this strategy build on that foundation. They recognise our established strengths, acknowledge emerging opportunities, and provide a framework for making informed decisions about where we invest our resources and attention. At the same time, the strategy reinforces

the importance of developing our people, strengthening our culture, expanding partnerships, and ensuring that our research enterprise remains sustainable and resilient.

Importantly, this strategy belongs to all those who contribute to Mater Research's success. Our achievements are made possible by dedicated researchers, clinicians, professional staff, students, partners, donors, volunteers, and research participants who share a commitment to improving lives through discovery and innovation.

As we look to the future, we do so with confidence in the quality of our people, the strength of our organisation, and the impact we can achieve together. We commend this strategy to our community and look forward to the discoveries, partnerships, and outcomes it will help create.



Dr John Rivers
Board Chair,
Mater Research



Professor Julia Strickland-Bellamy
Group Chief Executive
Officer, Mater



A Message from the Executive Director

Research has always been at the heart of Mater's contribution to improving health outcomes. Through discovery, clinical investigation, implementation and collaboration, we work every day to advance knowledge and translate evidence into better care for patients and communities.

As we look ahead, we have an opportunity to build on the strong foundations established over many years while being deliberate about where we focus our efforts for the greatest impact. Our new strategy—*Purposeful Focus. Global Impact*—has been developed with that objective in mind. It provides a clear direction for the future and a framework to guide our decisions, investments, and priorities in an increasingly complex and competitive research environment.

A central theme of this strategy is focus. Mater Research has significant strengths across a broad range of disciplines, but our greatest opportunities lie in concentrating our efforts in areas where we can make a distinctive contribution and where

strong alignment exists between research excellence, clinical need, and community benefit. By doing so, we will strengthen our impact, create new opportunities for collaboration, and enhance our ability to translate research into meaningful outcomes.

Our new strategy also recognises that success depends on more than research programs alone. Our people, partnerships, culture, infrastructure, and support systems are all critical to enabling high-quality research. Continued investment in these foundations will help ensure that researchers at all career stages are well supported and that Mater Research remains an attractive place to build a career, collaborate, pursue new ideas and deliver benefit.

Importantly, this strategy is not solely about organisational priorities. It reflects the collective ambitions of our research community and the contribution we want to make to healthcare and society. The challenges facing health systems today are complex, but they also create opportunities for innovation, discovery, and meaningful progress. By working together across disciplines, professions, and organisations, we can continue to address questions that matter to patients and deliver research that makes a difference.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this strategy. I am excited about what we can achieve together over the coming years and look forward to working with our researchers, clinicians, professional staff, students, and partners as we bring this vision to life.



Professor Allison Pettit
Executive Director,
Mater Research Ltd

Mater Group

Mater is a ministry of the Catholic Church, inspired by the enduring spirit and values of Mercy.

As a for-purpose private hospital and healthcare provider, Mater brings together a network of hospitals and health services with a world-leading research institute, a nationally recognised training organisation, and a philanthropic foundation.

United by a shared Mission to respond to unmet healthcare needs in the community, the Mater ministry is supported by its education, research and foundation subsidiaries that help enable the delivery of compassionate care, drive medical discovery, and shape a healthier future for all.



Mater Health comprises all our hospitals and healthcare services across Queensland. These services combine to help Mater offer comprehensive healthcare to meet identified community needs.



Mater Research is an internationally-recognised leader in medical research, which connects its findings from bench to bedside—translating medical research into clinical practice that delivers better outcomes for our patients and the wider community.



Mater Education is a nationally-accredited, hospital-based independent Registered Training Organisation—the only one of its kind in Queensland. It offers a range of courses for students, from trainees through to highly-experienced practising clinicians.



Recognised as one of Australia's largest and most impactful fundraising organisations, Mater Foundation raises funds by engaging people and businesses to partner with Mater, improving health through a wide range of fundraising and philanthropy opportunities.

Our Mission

We bring God's mercy to our communities through compassionate, transforming, healing care.

Since it was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1906, Mater has been guided by this clear and unwavering Mission.

Our Vision

Empowering people to live better lives through improved health and wellbeing.

Mater believes every individual has the right to access world-class healthcare services, and is committed to supporting good health spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically.

Our Values

- We honour and promote the dignity of human life and of all creation.
- We act with compassion and integrity.
- We strive for excellence.

Our Identity and Partners

Who we are



Mater Research is a medical research institute dedicated to improving health outcomes for people across Queensland and beyond.

Founded in 1998 to formalise more than a century of clinical inquiry by the Sisters of Mercy, we are driven by a clear bench to bed side philosophy, asking the right questions and translating discovery into real world impact.

We are proud to be part of the Mater Group, one of Australia's leading not for profit health care providers, firmly embedding research within frontline healthcare.

We are strengthened by the Mater Foundation, whose unwavering commitment mobilises and inspires our community to generously support research and care at Mater.

What we do



By integrating closely with Mater Health's clinical services, we conduct impactful research that reflects Mater's core capabilities and areas of focus.

Our work spans the full research lifecycle, from discovery to implementation, clinical trials and health system improvement, ensuring discovery is guided by clinical need and evidence directly informs practice and policy.

We contribute to the health and medical research ecosystem's overall capability, by developing the next generation of clinician-researchers and discovery scientists, supported by the infrastructure and pathways needed to deliver high-value, rigorous research.

Who we partner with



Collaboration underpins our identity. We are closely aligned with The University of Queensland through a formal Alliance, establishing the Mater Research Institute-UQ (MRI-UQ), combining academic excellence with clinical depth.

We are a founding partner of the Translational Research Institute (TRI), enabling collaboration with national leaders in state-of-the-art facilities.

Together with our partners, clinicians, patients and community, we translate research into better health outcomes today and into the future.

Our sector



Australia's health and medical research sector is globally recognised for its impact and strong clinical translation. This ecosystem is guided by a coordinated National Health and Medical Research Strategy, released in early 2026, to improve alignment, efficiency and impact.

Ongoing funding pressures, including gaps between grant funding and the true cost of research, are driving the need for more sustainable models where diverse sources of investment play a critical role in supporting innovation, capability and translation.

Within this environment, Mater Research is uniquely supported by Mater Foundation's strong philanthropic base, providing reliable funding that complements competitive grants and under-funded research.

Turning care into discovery,
and discovery into care



Our ambition is to be a recognised leader in clinically driven, translational research—delivering measurable improvements in care and outcomes across Queensland and beyond.

Our new strategic plan **“Purposeful Focus. Global Impact”** sets a clear direction for how we will deliver greater impact through three priorities:

Refining *our focus*



Our clearly defined flagship research areas will guide investment, attract partnerships, and align with national funding priorities.

- We will refine our focus to:
 - Women's and Babies' health
 - Cancer
 - Brain health / neuroscience
 - Modulating inflammation to promote health
 - Clinical Trials aligned to Mater's areas of clinical care
- Maintain breadth in the type of research approaches we use, applied to our focus areas:
 - Genomics and multi-omics
 - Models of care development and evaluation
 - Preclinical model innovation
 - Diagnostic precision and personalisation
 - Drug target identification and validation
 - Cell-based and immuno-therapies
- Strengthening our reputation and brand to achieve national and international recognition of our research, outcomes, and impact
- Increasing opportunities for Mater patients, regardless of location, to participate in clinical trials and other research projects

Elevate to enable *our purpose*



We will elevate our core in order to achieve on our research ambition.

- Build a strong and resilient workforce, valuing equity, diversity and inclusion. We will strengthen our workforce by building a culture of reciprocal value, including acknowledgement and recognition of our workforce and students to support recruitment and retention
- Embed research into clinical care at Mater, and strengthen clinician-researcher integration
- Boost our research development capabilities including biobanking, access to biostatistical support, and grant writing and development support
- Embedding meaningful consumer engagement into how we design and prioritise research
- Design creative service models to achieve greater efficiencies in our operations
- Leverage and, where necessary, strengthen external partnerships to fill key capability gaps where internal investment is not justified, including drug discovery

Intentional investment *and growth*



We will further grow our financially sustainable business model through:

- Deliberately pursuing targeted commercial growth of clinical trials
 - Urgently develop a clear and compelling business plan for expansion and identify investment priorities
 - Expand our trial capabilities, particularly in Phase 1 trials, regional trial delivery, and the inclusion of under-represented groups in trials
- Establishing a world-class trials ecosystem at Mater to position ourselves as a preferred trial site globally
- Pursuing growth in industry funding through contract or consultancy research opportunities
- Developing considered and proactive disinvestment approaches
- Modernising our AI, digital, and data platforms and capabilities
- Pursuing targeted, ambitious, recruitment of research talent in key areas
- Making direct contributions to Mater's health system performance through targeted research in response to both clinical and operational challenges



Refining our focus

Mater Research will sharpen our research focus to maximise impact, strengthen our reputation, and deliver meaningful outcomes for patients at Mater and beyond. We will concentrate on a defined set of flagship research areas: Women's and Babies' Health, Cancer, Brain Health, Inflammation, and our Mater Clinical Trials ecosystem aligned to Mater's clinical strengths.

Within these areas, we will apply a diverse range of research approaches spanning discovery to translation, including genomics, advanced preclinical models, precision diagnostics, therapeutic development, and models of care.

By focusing our efforts, we will build a clearer, more recognisable identity that elevates our national and international profile. Central to this is improving equitable access, ensuring all Mater patients—regardless of location—can participate in research and clinical trials.

Key objectives

- **Define and focus flagship research priorities**
Align investment, partnerships, and activity to core areas: Women's and Babies' Health, Cancer, Brain Health and Neuroscience, and Inflammation Modulation, alongside provision of world class clinical trials linked to Mater areas of clinical care.
- **Maintain methodological breadth to elevate innovation in our focus areas**
Apply diverse research approaches including genomics and multi-omics, preclinical models, precision diagnostics, therapeutic development, cell and immune-based therapies and models of care innovation.
- **Strengthen reputation and brand**
Build a clear, consistent identity that enhances national and international recognition of our research, outcomes, and impact.
- **Expand access and participation in research**
Increase opportunities for all Mater patients to participate in research by extending clinical trials to regional locations and under-represented populations, promoting equitable access.

Within this first pillar of our strategic plan, we will also deliver on the following objectives aligned to Mater Group's overall strategy:

Magnify our Impact

Continue to strengthen Mater's leading maternity and neonatal services and broaden women's health and other identified specialties to grow our impact

- Identify opportunities to build on Mater Research's maternity and neonatal agenda to become a global leader in outcomes

Develop an integrated cancer service strategy for Mater, building on existing surgical cancer service expertise, partnerships, and Mater Research

- Contribute to the development of Mater's cancer strategy and service model to include partnerships, research, growth, and promotion
- Expand Mater Research's efforts to support the development of novel and emerging cancer treatments





Elevate to enable *our purpose*

This pillar focuses on strengthening the foundations that enable high-impact research by investing in our people, capabilities, and systems. We will build a resilient, inclusive workforce that is supported, recognised, and empowered to thrive, while deepening integration between research and clinical care.

We will enhance our core research capabilities, spanning biobanking, biostatistics, grant development, and consumer engagement, to better support high-quality, competitive research. At the same time, we will improve operational efficiency through more effective and innovative service models and build a connected network of our support teams to better elevate our frontline activities.

Where appropriate, we will leverage strategic partnerships to complement internal capabilities, ensuring access to specialised expertise and infrastructure while maintaining a sustainable and focused investment approach

Key objectives

- **Build a strong, inclusive, and supported workforce**
Strengthen recruitment and retention through a culture of recognition, development, and equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Embed research in clinical care**
Deepen integration between clinicians and researchers to ensure research is a core part of care delivery at Mater.
- **Strengthen research development capabilities**
Enhance support in biobanking, biostatistics, grant writing, and consumer engagement to improve research quality and competitiveness.
- **Improve operational efficiency**
Develop a "one team" culture within our operational and shared corporate service functions and design and implement innovative service models to drive greater effectiveness and sustainability, emphasising the connection between our support functions and our frontline purpose.
- **Leverage strategic partnerships**
Build and utilise external partnerships to address capability gaps where internal investment is not viable (e.g. drug discovery).

Within this pillar of our strategic plan, we will also deliver on the following objectives aligned to Mater Group's overall strategy:

Magnify our Impact

Become a career destination employer with a leading employee value proposition (EVP).

Our EVP is underpinned by a positive culture, leadership, flexibility, wellbeing, inclusion and recognition.

- Embed clinical research into Mater's workforce





Intentional investment and *growth*

This pillar focuses on further strengthening our financial sustainability while deliberately investing in areas that drive growth, impact, and competitive advantage. We will pursue targeted expansion of our clinical trials portfolio, supported by a clear business plan and focused investment in priority capabilities.

We will grow industry engagement through contract and consultancy research, while taking a disciplined approach to disinvestment to ensure resources are directed to areas of greatest impact and alignment. At the same time, we will modernise our digital, data, and AI capabilities to support innovation and performance.

Strategic recruitment in priority areas will build critical capability and elevate our international standing, while targeted research initiatives will directly contribute to Mater's health system performance, addressing key clinical and operational challenges.

Key objectives

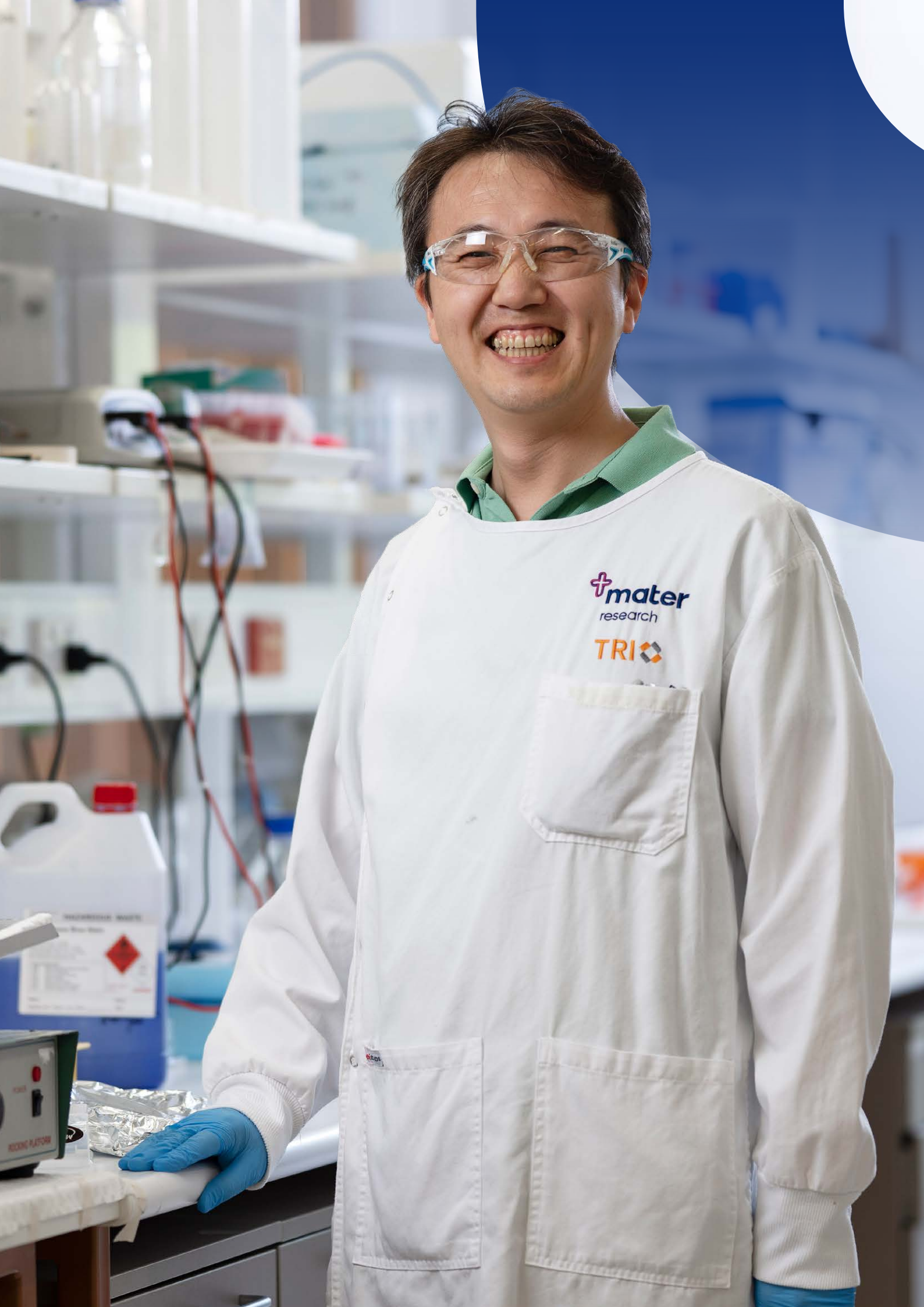
- **Expand and commercialise clinical trials**
 - Deliver a targeted growth strategy for clinical trials, with a clear business plan and investment priorities
 - Expand our trial capabilities (including Phase 1 trials, regional delivery, and inclusion of under-represented groups) to position ourselves as a preferred trial site.
- **Grow industry-funded research**
Increase revenue through contract and consultancy research with industry partners.
- **Implement proactive disinvestment**
Reallocate resources from lower-value activities to priority growth areas.
- **Modernise digital, data, and AI capability**
Invest in platforms and tools that enable innovation, efficiency, and data-driven decision-making.
- **Recruit strategically in priority areas**
Attract high-impact research talent aligned to key growth and focus areas.
- **Contribute to health system performance**
Deliver targeted research that addresses clinical and operational challenges within Mater.

Within this pillar of our strategic plan, we will also deliver on the following objectives aligned to Mater Group's overall strategy:

Magnify our Impact

Strengthen Mater Research's agenda in areas of specialisation and translational clinical trials

- Embed clinical trials in all Mater hospitals and establish a dedicated clinical trial hub.
- Contribute to the development of a scalable phase one clinical trial model that leverages Mater's clinical service capacity and infrastructure



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