



Life  
Course  
Centre

The Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence  
for Children and Families over the Life Course

# Partnerships and Engagement in Programmatic Research Teams

**Professor Janeen Baxter**, University of Queensland  
ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellow  
Director, Life Course Centre

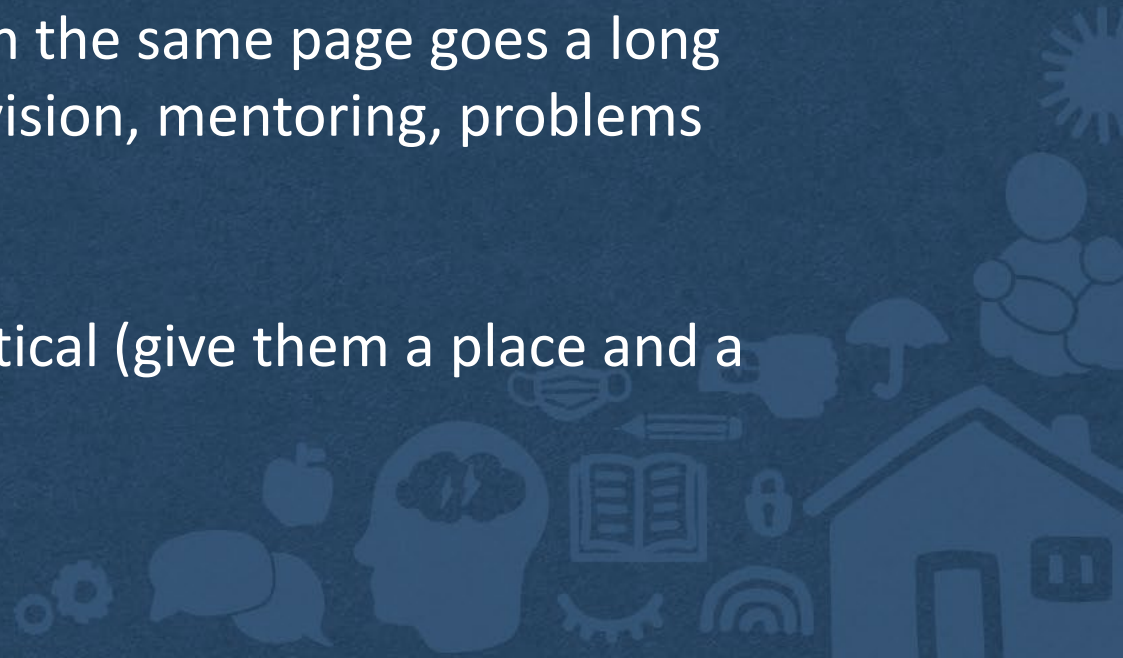
# Key Points

Find the unifying, enduring vision and glue

The CI team and team dynamics are critical – choose wisely and develop a strong governance structure so everyone knows where they fit

Team culture – a core group of CIs who are all on the same page goes a long way to building commitment, goodwill, shared vision, mentoring, problems solving

Deep engagement with partners – often – is critical (give them a place and a voice)







# Life Course Centre

ARC Centre of Excellence for Children  
and Families over the Life Course

## The Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Children and Families over the Life Course (Life Course Centre)

- National research Centre, established in 2014, re-funded for further 7 years in 2020.
- Investigating the factors underlying disadvantage to provide life-changing solutions for policy and service delivery.
- A collaboration between 4 Australian universities + partnerships with government and non-government organisations, international universities and research affiliates.



**Australian Government**

**Australian Research Council**



**THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND**  
AUSTRALIA



**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE**

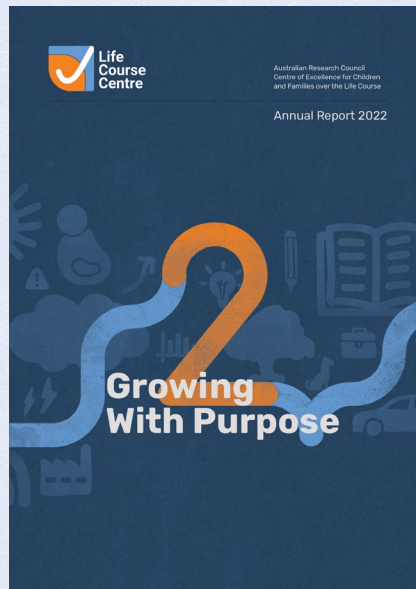


# Our Vision



Our vision is to leverage evidence-based research to develop new knowledge, technology and practices to benefit Australian children and families living in disadvantage.

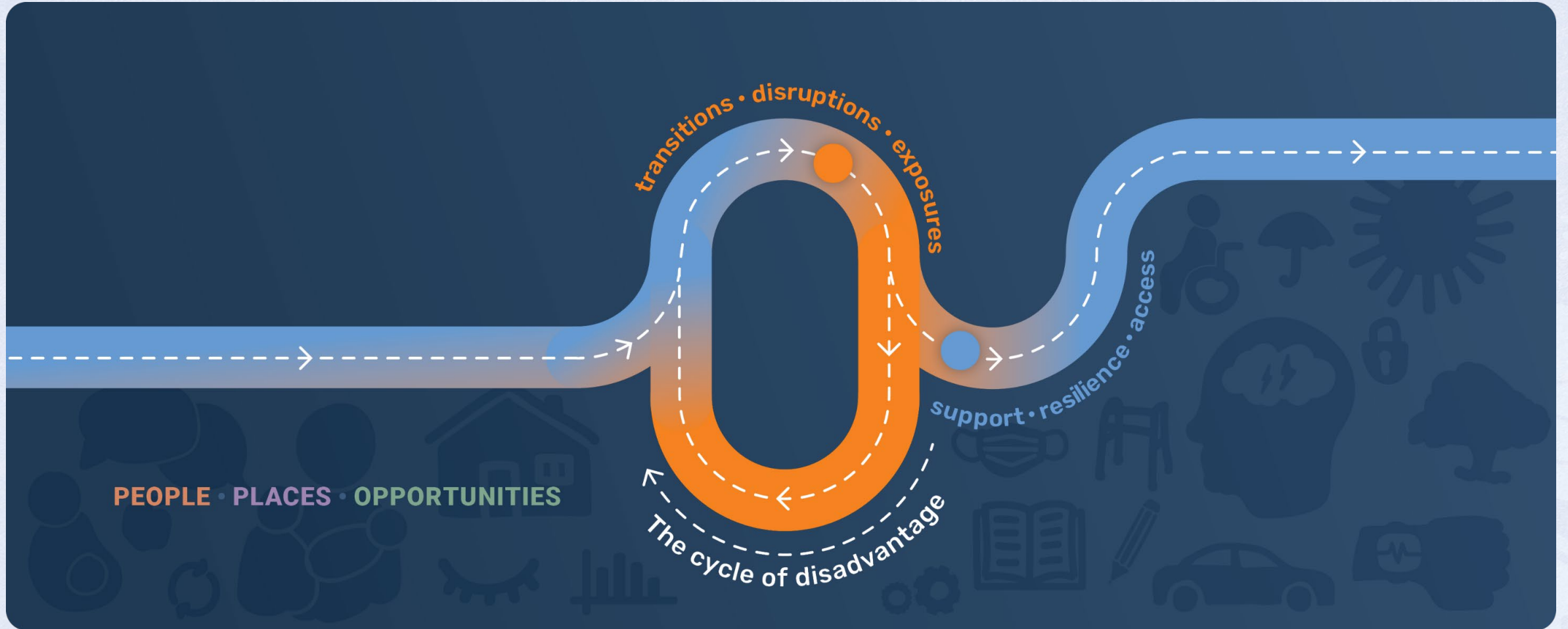
Informed by life course theory and enabled through diverse disciplines, we aim to:



- **Identify the drivers** of deep and persistent disadvantage
- **Develop and trial new solutions** in policy and practice
- **Build capacity** across government, researchers and non-government organisations
- **Develop data and technical infrastructure**
- **Strengthen collaborations** between universities, NGOs, and government organisations
- **Destigmatising disadvantage**



# The life course





Differences  
Experiences  
Choices



Context  
Environment  
Circumstances

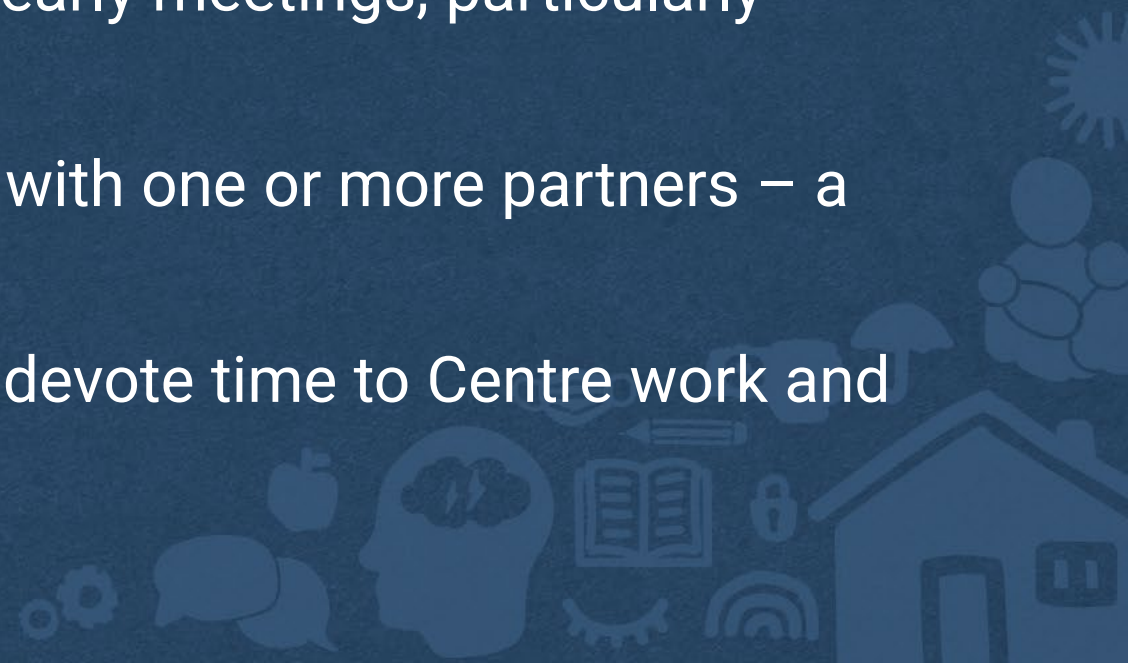
# Our Research Program

Employment  
Education  
Family



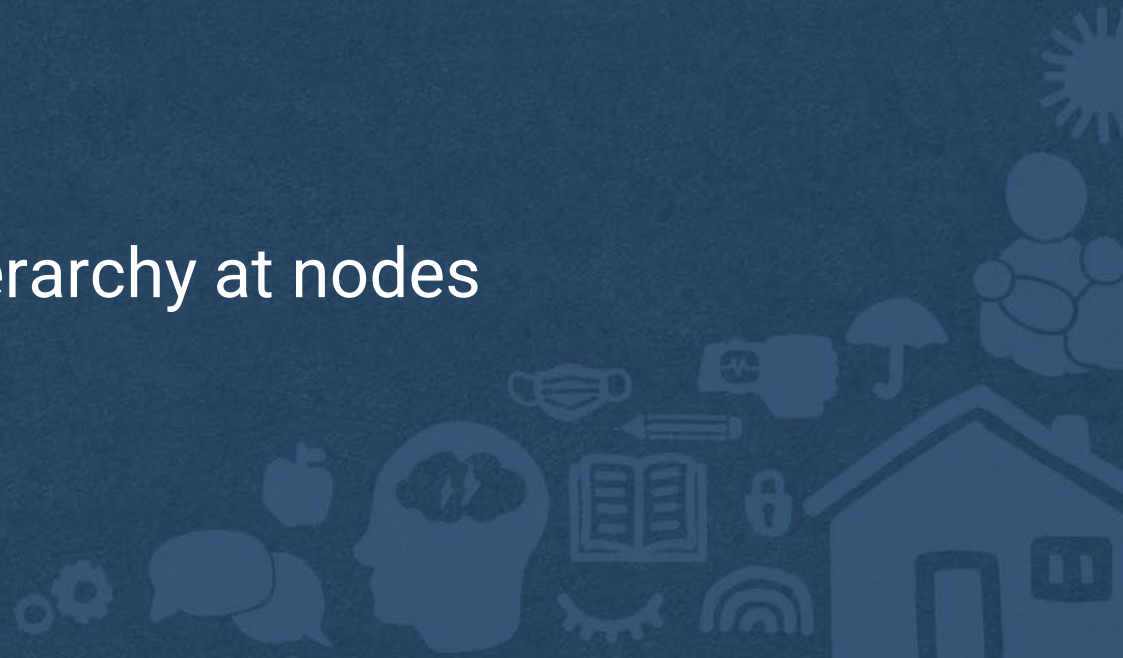
# Choose the right Chief Investigators

- A record of successful collaboration is more important than a stellar research record – mainly senior but also some mid-career
- Know what motivates them – and that it fits the Centre's vision
- They must have institutional support
- They must gel well with their fellow CIs in early meetings, particularly across nodes and across disciplines
- They must be outward looking – engaged with one or more partners – a team builder not a solitary academic
- They must be committed with capacity to devote time to Centre work and leadership



# Engage with the CI team regularly

- Be prepared to invest significant time in engaging with people
- Group meetings:
  - Small group discussions before the UQ EOI
  - All-CI meeting face-to-face before the ARC EOI
  - Two all-CI meetings during the full bid process
  - Interview team face-to-face practice before the interview
- Individual meetings and conversations
- Visits to nodes
- Engagement within UQ, engagement with hierarchy at nodes





# Life Course Centre Interview Team (in Centre colours)





# Our People



**Prof Janeen Baxter**  
*Sociology*



**Prof Deborah Cobb-Clark**  
*Applied Economics*



**Prof Wojtek Tomaszewski**  
*Sociology & Education*



**A/Prof Francis Mitrou**  
*Economics & Population Health*



**Prof Nick Glozier**  
*Psychiatry & Epidemiology*



**Prof Guyonne Kalb**  
*Labour Economics*



**Prof Karen Thorpe**  
*Developmental Science*



**Prof Abigail Payne**  
*Public Economics*



**Prof Cameron Parsell**  
*Social Work*



**Prof Agnieszka Tymula**  
*Neuroeconomics*



**A/Prof Abdullah Mamun**  
*Demography & Statistics*



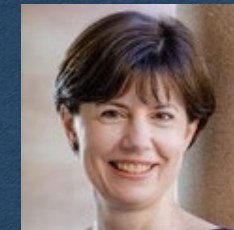
**Prof Simon Smith**  
*Sleep Science*



**Prof Mark Stevenson**  
*Epidemiology & Urban Planning*



**A/Prof Hayley Christian**  
*Public Health*



**A/Prof Alina Morawska**  
*Parenting & Family Psychology*



**Prof Zhi Huang**  
*Data Science*







# Key Partners



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Social Services**



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**



**Brotherhood of St Laurence**  
Working for an Australia free of poverty



**Anglicare WA**  
FOR TODAY. FOR TOMORROW.



**Customer  
Service**



**NATIONAL  
Growth Areas  
ALLIANCE**

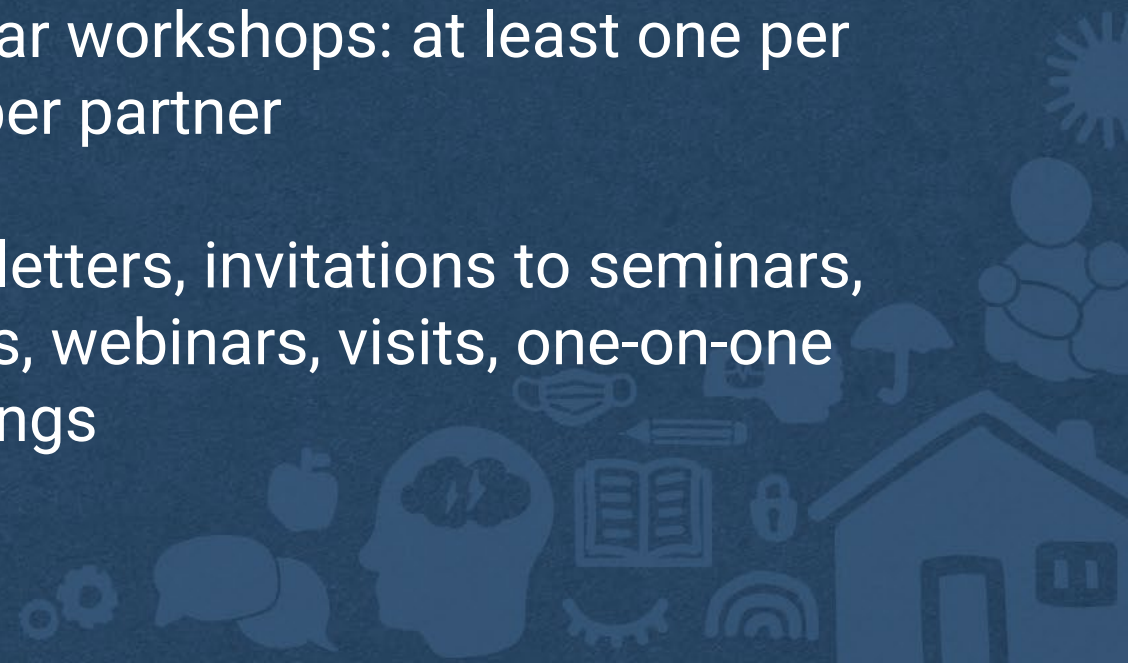




# Ongoing engagement/management

- > Annual partner summit  
– face to face
- > Engagement officer  
(Professional UQ HEW7)
- > Advisory committee  
membership

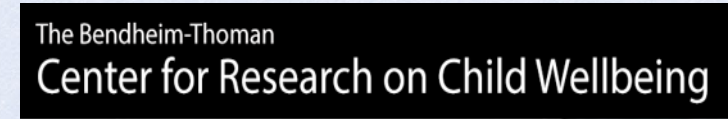
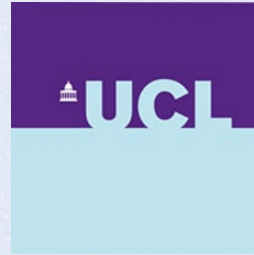
- > Management committee meetings  
(4 per year) with key partner, DSS
- > Data for policy: advisory committee  
and input to strategy and events
- > Regular workshops: at least one per  
year per partner
- > Newsletters, invitations to seminars,  
events, webinars, visits, one-on-one  
meetings



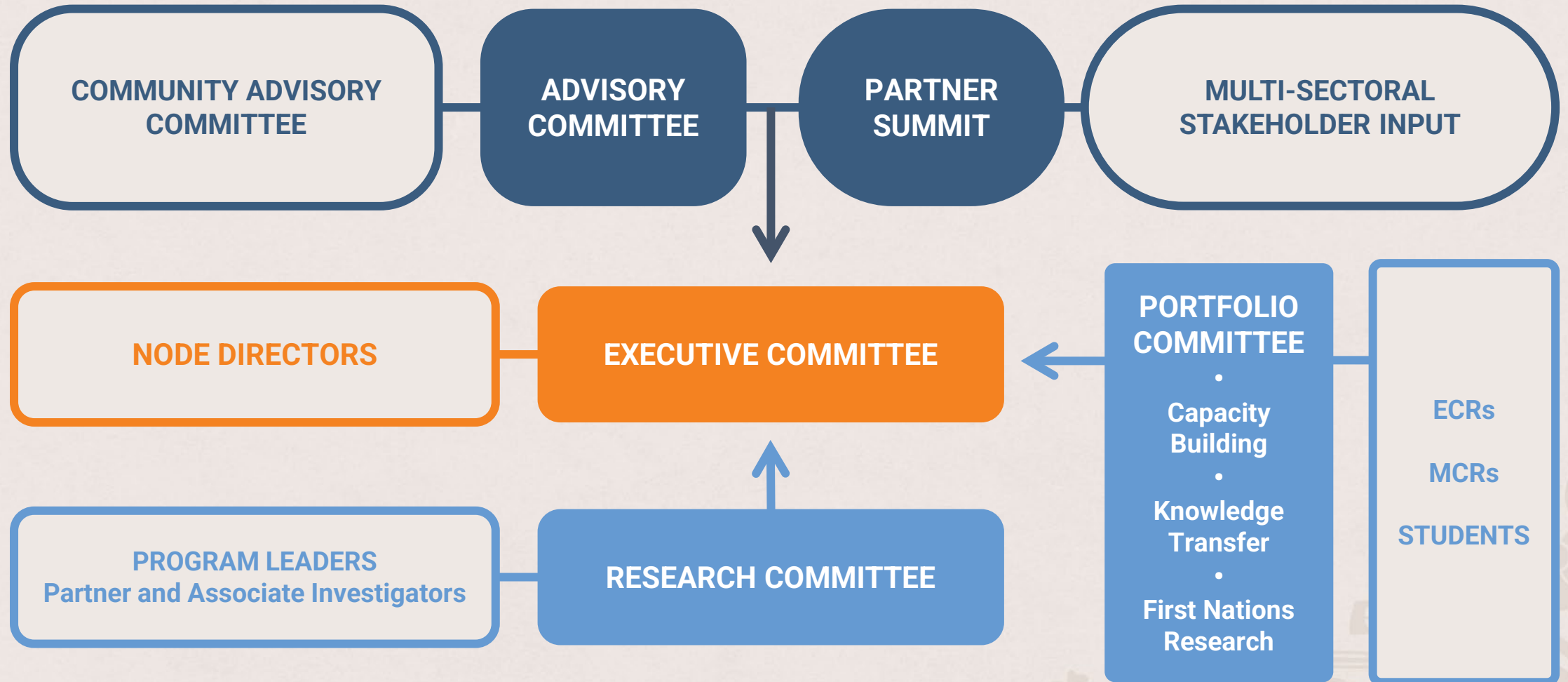




# Global Network



# Governance Structure





[lifecoursecentre.org.au](https://lifecoursecentre.org.au)

