Pre-Platform Pilot MRFF/NCRI Incubator Grant - Collaborators' Meeting

Thursday 21 May 2026 | 9.00 am - 4.00 pm | Room 304, Susan Wakil Health Building, University of Sydney

Welcome pack

33 delegates | Decision-focused strategy day

Final report deadline: 27 Sept 2026

Thank you for joining us today. Some colleagues have been closely involved in the Incubator Grant from the beginning; others are newly joining the conversation. This welcome pack is therefore designed to bring everyone onto shared ground: why a **Safer Birth at Term** platform is needed, what the Incubator Grant set out to achieve, what progress has been made, and what decisions we need to make together.

The afternoon strategy workshop from 2 pm – 3.25 pm (pages 4 and 5) is a key part of the meeting which we hope you will engage with and enjoy. Please see which of the 3 groups you have been assigned to and read the instructions carefully. By the end of the meeting, we hope to have clearer agreement on how to identify the early trial domains most worth developing, the outcome framework, the statistical and operational design questions that need rapid work, and the next steps towards a UK–Australia funding strategy for a binational platform.

Above all, today is about building trust and a common purpose: a collaborative, scalable platform capable of answering simple but important questions around labour at term, birth and the first hour of newborn care — questions that matter to women, babies, families, clinicians, services and policymakers.

William Tarnow-Mordi, Sailesh Kumar co-leads: WOMBAT Platform Trial for Safer Birth at Term

Grant aims and outcome deliverables A-J

Theme	Aims	Co-leads / contributors	Grant outcome deliverables
1. Relationship building and stakeholder networks	**Aim 1**. Build relationships and endorsements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pasifika leaders; conduct focus groups on stakeholder views, current trials of half-dose versus full-dose oxytocin, barriers/enablers, and preferred outcome components. **Aim 2.** Seek endorsements by colleges, professional associations and new partners.	Michelle Dickson; Claudia Alarcon Espinoza; Ronda Thompson; Angela Webster; William Tarnow-Mordi; Adrienne Gordon; Sailesh Kumar; Himanshu Popat	**A.** Receive endorsement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, Pasifika leaders, relevant professional colleges and groups representing people with lived experience of intrapartum fetal hypoxia. **B.** Take stakeholders' views and preferred outcomes into account in the national adaptive platform trial.
2. Trial-management website and randomisation platform	**Aim 3.** Develop capacity for randomisation of thousands, optional factorial randomisation and future trial questions. **Aim 4.** Build key trial-management functions for training, site coordination, data management and drug-supply monitoring.	Kristy Robledo; Rachel O'Connell; Angela Webster; William Tarnow-Mordi	**C.** Set up the project website as the public face of the trial and to support staff training, data management, site coordination and monitoring of site drug supplies. **D.** Build a customised platform within the project/trial website for easy randomisation.
3. Core protocol, governance and sample size	**Aim 5.** Develop a core protocol for a national adaptive platform trial and submit for ethics approval. **Aim 6**. Establish a trial governance structure and independent Data and Safety Monitoring Committee.	William Tarnow-Mordi; Michelle Dickson; Sailesh Kumar; Adrienne Gordon; Angela Webster; Kristy Robledo; Ian Marschner; Himanshu Popat	**E.** Develop the core protocol and submit it for ethics approval. **F.** After consultation, decide the primary composite outcome. **G.** Calculate sample sizes in each domain to show a 20% relative risk reduction with 90% power at p=0.01, using RECOVERY-style calculations. **H.** Harmonise data with similar trials. **I.** Set up governance and an IDSMC.
4. Knowledge translation and broad support	**Aim 7.** Develop a KT plan to disseminate the outcomes of this one-year project. **Aim 8**. Implement a long-term KT program for the national adaptive platform trial.	Michelle Dickson; William Tarnow-Mordi; Himanshu Popat; Melinda Cruz	**J.** Develop a Knowledge Translation plan to disseminate the outcomes of this project and implement a long-term Knowledge Translation program for the national adaptive platform trial.

Time	Session and purpose	Grant outcomes	Chairs / speakers / *discussants*
0900-0905	Acknowledgement of Country		Ronda Thompson
0905-0915	Welcome and Incubator Grant overview: 8 aims, 10 grant outcome deliverables A-J	A-J	William Tarnow-Mordi
0915-0940	Endorsements by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Yarning) and Pasifika (Talanoa) focus groups. Views on half-dose vs full-dose oxytocin after induction; barriers and enablers; preferred outcomes.	A,B	Michelle Dickson; Claudia Alarcon Espinoza; Ronda Thompson; Melinda Cruz William Tarnow-Mordi
0940-0945	Endorsements by prioritised groups, colleges, professional associations, new partners.		
0945-1000	Learnings from the PSANZ Lived Experience Advisory Network (LEAN)	A,B	William Tarnow-Mordi; Melinda Cruz
1000-1020	Proposed real-time Delphi surveys of stakeholders on preferred outcomes and trial questions through partners in Australia and the UK.	A,B	Shireen Meher; Rebecca Mercieca Bebber; Marika Franklin
1020-1045	Refreshments		
1045-1100	Setting up the project website and randomisation platform.	C,D	Kristy Robledo; Melinda Cruz;
1100-1130	Rapid scoping review of priority-setting projects for trials of intrapartum and first-hour newborn interventions at or near term: progress report.	E	Kylie Hunter; Emilia Kozuch; Lene Seidler
1130-1200	Exploring UK support for a UK-Australia Platform Trial for Safer Birth at Term.	E,F,G,H	William Tarnow-Mordi; Shireen Meher
1200-1240	Outcomes, sample size and international collaboration: why >20,000 may be needed to evaluate event-free survival in RECOVERY-style comparisons.	E,F,G	John Simes; Ian Marschner
1240-1300	Next steps before the 27 Sept 2026 final report deadline: governance and IDSMC; Knowledge Translation plan; and core master protocol for a national adaptive platform trial initially assessing half-dose vs full-dose oxytocin after induction.	E,I,J	All; Arlen Wilcox; Shireen Meher; Kristy Robledo, Brad de Vries
1300-1400	**Group Photo - Gourmet lunch**		Elegancy Catering

1400-1410	**Afternoon Strategy Workshop** - framing: what decisions do we need today?	**A-J**	**William Tarnow-Mordi; Kate Jarrett**
1410-1505	Breakouts: three focused mixed groups - funding route and UK-Australia strategy; intervention pipeline; outcomes, governance, implementation and stakeholder legitimacy.	**A-J**	All
1505-1525	Prioritise decisions, risks and owners.	**A-J**	Breakout groups / chairs
1525-1530	Synthesis: one-page action plan.	**A-J**	**William Tarnow-Mordi; Kate Jarrett**
1530-1600	Refreshments, informal networking and action-group sign-up.	**A-J**	All

From **1410 to 1500** we'll form 3 breakout groups. Each appoints **a moderator** to keep discussion focused and ensure all voices are heard; and **reporter** to write down/ summarise discussion and report back to the whole meeting **at 1505 on** key decision/s, major risk/s, one major action, named owner/s

Group mix: LE = Lived experience; M = Midwifery; O = Obstetrics; N = Neonatal; T = Trialist; S = Statistician; P = professional staff

Group 1 (10)

Melinda Cruz (LE); Sarah Melov (M); Shireen Meher (O); Dharmintra Pasupathy (O); Adrienne Gordon (N); William Tarnow-Mordi (T); John Simes (T); Rachel O'Connell (S); Alpana Ghadge (P); Evan Ma (P).

Funding route and UK–Australia strategy

Remit Advise on the primary goal and preparatory steps for a bid in 2027 to NIHR, MRFF, NHMRC/ others.

Core question Should a UK–Australia platform application be our primary funding goal?

Discussion prompts

- Why pursue an international platform trial rather than separate national trials?
- What would make a 2027 UK–Australia bid compelling?
- Should we seek an early NIHR update meeting?
- What preparatory work would strengthen — or potentially compromise — eligibility?
- What is the fallback route if the UK–Australia opportunity is delayed or unavailable?

Recommended output: primary funding pathway, key risks, immediate next actions, and named leads

Group 2 (10)

Candace Dower (M); Allison Cummins (M); Brad de Vries (O); Angela Cavallaro (N); Himanshu Popat (N); Anthony Keech (T); Ian Marschner (S); Patrick Wheeler (P); Jing Liu (P) Marika Franklin (P).

Intervention pipeline-feasible early domains and ambitious later ones

Remit Identify the most feasible early intervention domains for development into trial-ready PICO/estimand questions,

Core question Which interventions should be developed first as feasible trial-ready PICO/estimand questions?

Discussion prompts

- Which early domains are most feasible for rapid development?
- Should oxytocin management after established labour remain the first domain?
- Which to develop next: 2nd stage care, retained placenta, perineal trauma, postpartum haemorrhage, first-hour newborn care?
- Which industry-relevant domains could be evaluated within an academically governed platform?
- Which ambitious later domains should be retained but not prioritised immediately?

Recommended output: 3–5 feasible early domains for future PICO/estimand development, later domains to keep in view.

Group 3 (11)

Ronda Thompson (LE); Kate Jarrett (M); Kristy Veldkampf (M); Beata Gidaszewski (M); Jon Hyett (O); Pranav Jani (N); Meg Jardine (T); Arlen Wilcox (T); Kristy Robledo (S); Sarah Finlayson (P); Rebeca Mercieca Bebber (P).

Partnerships, governance, Delphi, endorsement and industry engagement

Remit: How to build legitimacy, leadership, governance and broad endorsement across UK and Australian stakeholders, including professional, community, lived-experience, and industry**.**

Core question: How do we build legitimacy, leadership and broad buy-in?

Discussion prompts

- Which colleges, midwifery networks, consumer organisations and community leaders do we prioritise in Australia?
- How should Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pasifika leadership be embedded?
- How should the Delphi process generate 5–10 trial-ready PICO/estimand questions across Australia and the UK?
- Should industry participate in Delphi processes or be consulted separately?
- What would meaningful lived-experience leadership look like beyond endorsement?

Recommended output: Proposed oversight structure, binational endorsement, Delphi/PICO steps, stakeholder engagement