

# NEWSLETTER

## MAY 2021



## FROM THE ACVA LEADERSHIP

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### National Sorry Day

Today marks 23 years since the first National Sorry Day, a day to acknowledge the strength of Stolen Generations Survivors and reflect on how we can all play a part in reconciliation.

The first National Sorry Day was held in 1998 as a result of the Bringing Them Home report being tabled in parliament, following an inquiry into government policy which saw Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children forcibly removed from their homes.

ACvA's President, Professor Gemma Figtree acknowledged the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and offered the ACvA's condolences to those who lived through or has been affected by the Stolen Generations.

Professor Figtree also acknowledged the significant impact of cardiovascular disease on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and reaffirmed the ACvA's commitment to working to help reduce the life expectancy gap.

### Strategy Day

Earlier in the month, ACvA held a Strategy Day session with our leadership and key stakeholder groups. It was the first time in a while that any of us have travelled interstate and it was a great opportunity for everyone to meet face to face.

The core objectives for the Strategy session were to:

- Assess ACvA's progress against milestones agreed in Strategy Day 2020
- Hear from key members and stakeholder groups their perspectives and priorities for ACvA
- Consider the ACvA's vision, priorities and future directions

The meeting was well received with lots of reflection and positivity on how far ACvA has come since its inception, and suggestions for the future. The Board have taken all comments and suggestions, into its deliberations and will circulate a Board Communique to all members shortly.

The ACvA would like to thank all attendees to the meeting (both in-person and virtually) and extend a special thanks to our Board Director, Dr Chloe Flutter and the Boston Consulting Group for kindly providing the meeting rooms (with views!) and catering during the day.



## SPOTLIGHT ON CV CHAMPIONS PROGRAM

The ACvA CV Champions Program involves a 12-month program designed to equip our EMCRs with the right tools to effectively engage with members of the community. Facilitated by Dr Hannah Brown, the Champions attend a monthly online workshop where they learn about storytelling, audience, social media, pitching, and consumer engagement, amongst others. The program currently has 41 Champions and is approximately halfway through its course. We have reached out to the Champions to see what their thoughts are of the program so far:



*Carissa Bonner*

**What do you like about CV Champions program?**

Chance to connect with other EMCRs working in cardiovascular research.

**How has the program helped you in your science communication skills?**

Hannah's tips on telling a compelling story have changed how I describe my research for different audiences.

**What is the one biggest thing you've learnt from the program?**

How to create a better social media video! A work in progress.



*Natalie Fini*

**What do you like about CV Champions program?**

Hannah is amazing, and so approachable. I also love hearing about the cool science that other people are doing.

**How has the program helped you in your science communication skills?**

I am no longer afraid to simplify things. Learning lots about presentation skills in terms of presence & what you say & story-telling, but also presentation in terms of visuals (slides & posters).

**What is the one biggest thing you've learnt from the program?**

Simplicity is key... distil your message & get it across clearly



*Helen Williams*

**What do you like about CV Champions program?**

So many things! The community feel and getting to know a bit about other researchers is one thing I really like. The delivery over zoom is very effective, making it easy to attend sessions without having to travel. Hannah is brilliant and does a great job taking us through material and exercises to improve our skills. The resources she has shared with us are amazing!

**How has the program helped you in your science communication skills?**

I think some of the homework Hannah sets pushes us. It can feel a bit uncomfortable to communicate science outside of conferences and scientific papers. But through little exercises like writing tweet introductions about others, introducing ourselves to the group and revisiting our fail-tastic posters and application videos \*cringe\* we get to use what we learn to make little improvements across the board. Being part of the program means I keep what we have learned in mind when I am writing, editing, tweeting or even just seeing how others present their work, so I feel there is actual improvement associated with the program.

**What is the one biggest thing you've learnt from the program?**

That we're doing posters and talks all wrong! But it's ok because now we know how to work on that. Another important one is that it's a skillset, not a talent, so you have to keep working to get better rather than just assume you don't have what it takes.



*Anna Singleton*

**What do you like about CV Champions program?**

I love networking with such a broad range of CV researchers from basic to applied science. Everyone is so passionate about their work, excited to share their experiences and it helps us practice communicating our research to a broad audience. We've been paired up a few times as 'homework', and the one-on-one sessions are so valuable in terms of learning what others are working on but also just building friendships.

**How has the program helped you in your science communication skills?**

The program supports us to find our 'story' that will capture our audience and build the conversation ('it's a two-way street!' - Hannah). It also highlighted how to make PowerPoints more engaging (and less distracting!) for your audience to showcase your story.

**What is the one biggest thing you've learnt from the program?**

Death by PowerPoint is real, but we can bring it back to life using a few simple strategies (Watch Hannah's suggestion:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>) AND there's a science to public speaking

([https://www.ted.com/talks/david\\_jp\\_phillips\\_the\\_110\\_techniques\\_of\\_communication\\_and\\_public\\_speaking](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_jp_phillips_the_110_techniques_of_communication_and_public_speaking))



*Kwok Leung Ong*

### **What do you like about CV Champions program?**

I think the program is great. In fact, it provides us with an opportunity to network with other cardiovascular disease researchers and shares our opinion and experience on science communication. It also provides us with a platform to improve our science communication skills. The currently monthly meeting is good for the workload. This program also makes me aware of good talks in TED about communications, and people good at science communication in social media.

### **How has the program helped you in your science communication skills?**

Through this program, I have learnt some skills or methods to improve my science communication skills, such as storytelling, PowerPoint presentation, etc. I think I need to spend more time practising the skills that I learn in my work and daily life. This program also helps us how to approach and target the audience effectively.

### **What is the one biggest thing you've learnt from the program?**

For me, the biggest things I have learnt is about storytelling, e.g. how to tell a story to a particular audience, how to set the scene and introduce things or "characters" step by step, then the conflicts for rising tensions, and finally the main message of the story, that can be connected to the audience.

## **ACVA – HEART FOUNDATION CARDIOVASCULAR AWARDS**

In partnership with the National Heart Foundation of Australia, we are pleased to announce the launch of three new award categories that celebrate and recognise excellence in cardiovascular research. The proposed awards will be national in scale and cover the spectrum of CV research.

The three new award categories are:

- **Gamechanger award** - recognises innovations and ideas that have challenged the norm and in turn, transformed our way to doing or thinking things for the better.
- **Translation award** - demonstrates the significant process of turning observations from the laboratory and clinic into interventions that have improved the health of individuals and the public.
- **Mentor award** – recognises the individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary leadership throughout their careers by going the extra mile and providing guidance and support to our emerging researchers.

The key objectives of these awards are:

- Raising the profile of research in cardiovascular disease beyond the immediate reach of the NHFA and the ACvA.
- Recognising excellence and impact irrespective of the field of CVD studied, researcher affiliations with a particular society/organisation or career stage.

- Providing positive engagements with governments and key stakeholders, including industry, philanthropy and the wider community.

Applications open **late June 2021**. Further details and nomination forms will be available on our website shortly. Please put your thinking caps on, so we can truly celebrate our amazing research community.

## EOI: CARDIOVASCULAR MEDTECH NETWORK DIRECTORY

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We are issuing an Expression of Interest, as part of our engagement with industry, to contribute to the creation of a Cardiovascular Medtech Network Directory. This resource, available to researchers and industry, will provide an accessible database of the capability around the country, initially focussing on early phase device trials, pre-clinical and training capabilities. It will assist in connecting the various parts of the CV device ecosystem and the promotion of our strengths both nationally and globally.

The project is being facilitated by the ACvA, with funding support from MTPConnect.

If you wish to be involved, please fill in our short survey [here](#). If you have any further questions, please contact [Anthony.Murray@Ozheart.org](mailto:Anthony.Murray@Ozheart.org)

Please feel free to circulate this to your networks.

### TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership with the ACvA is now due. To renew your membership, please login to your [Member portal](#) and follow the prompts. If you experience any issues with your renewal process, please contact Meng Hsu ([meng.hsu@ozheart.org](mailto:meng.hsu@ozheart.org)) for assistance.



It is only \$50 for an individual membership and we look forward to having you on the team.

## EMERGING LEADERS COMMITTEE (ELC) ACTIVITIES

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### Recruitment of new ELC members

The ELC is calling for new members to join their Committee as some members have reached the end of their term and are stepping down. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply by completing the short Google form [here](#) and uploading their CV. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow researchers and support the EMCR community.

The opportunity will close **31 May 2021**.

## Women in CV Research Spotlight

To celebrate the achievements of female researchers in the cardiovascular community, the ELC will be launching the Women in CV Research Spotlight this month. Rotating on the monthly basis, we will put a 'spotlight' on a female researcher and feature them through the ACvA website and our social media channels.

To be involved in this initiative, simply complete the google form [here](#).

## ACVA ACTIVITIES

### ACvA, QCVRN and Queensland Health Masterclass Webinars

The ACvA, QCVRN and Queensland Health are partnering to bring a series of expert masterclass webinars on CV device clinical trials. The webinars will be held over lunch on Zoom and require prior registration. Please find details of the first two webinars are outlined below:



Queensland Health, ACvA and QCVRN present expert masterclass webinar on:

# Ethics in clinical trials

*Covering ethics of clinical/device trials, when to initiate a trial, clinical variation, innovation and research, and ethical implications*

**SIGN UP [HERE!](#)**

**28 MAY 2021**  
12-1pm on Zoom

PRESENTED BY:  
**Professor Julian Savulescu**  
BMedSci MB BS MA PhD FAHMS  
Uehiro Chair in Practical Ethics  
Director, Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics  
Co-Director, Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities  
University of Oxford

AND **Dr Naomi Holbeach**, Melbourne Law School

**When:** 12:00-1:00pm AEST, Friday 28 May  
**Where:** Please sign up [here](#).  
**Cost:** Free



Queensland Health, ACvA and QCVRN present expert masterclass webinar on:

# TGA in clinical trials

Clinical trials are subject to various regulatory safety controls. This webinar will cover the process of Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for clinical trials in Australia

**25 JUNE**  
12-1pm on Zoom  
**[Sign up here!](#)**

PRESENTED BY:  
**Dr. Xin-Lin Goh**  
*(Director, Device Applications Section, Australian Government Department of Health)*

Dr. Goh is currently the Director of the Devices Applications Section at the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) within the Department of Health. She has prior experience in administering intellectual property rights (patents) for medical devices at IP Australia, as well as managing reforms and program delivery at the Australian National University. She has a special interest in medical innovation and enabling health outcomes. She holds a Masters in Biomedical Engineering from the University of New South Wales and a PhD in Neuroscience from the Australian National University.

**When:** 12:00-1:00pm AEST, Friday 25 June  
**Where:** Please sign up [here](#).  
**Cost:** Free

## Consumer engagement webinar

**Consumer Engagement for the Basic Scientist**

Friday 30 April 2021  
12:30 – 1:30 pm AEST

Register your interest [HERE](#)

Chaired by Rebecca Davies AO

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|--|---|--|---|
| <br><b>Sue Bowden</b><br>The consumer perspective:<br>Why research is important | <br><b>Lee Hunt</b><br>The consumer perspective:<br>Tips for grant success | <br><b>Prof Jamie Vandenberg</b><br>The basic scientist:<br>Benefits and challenges | <br><b>Rebecca Davies</b><br>Strategic importance,<br>considerations and tools |
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As part of the ACvA webinar series, we hosted a webinar on 'Consumer Engagement for the Basic Scientist' at the end of last month. We heard perspectives from consumers and researchers on the importance of consumer engagement, benefits, challenges and considerations for involving consumers in research co-design. The webinar attracted over 70 attendees.

To view a video recording of the webinar, please send a request to [acva@ozheart.org](mailto:acva@ozheart.org).

### Heart Week Panel discussion recording

For Heart Week 2021 in Australia, the focus was on women's heart health. An expert panel, with ACvA President Prof. Gemma Figtree and Dr. Niamh Chapman from the Emerging Leaders Committee discussed the current evidence on women's heart health and future directions to address knowledge gaps. The discussion ranged from risk factor prevalence to pathophysiology and management with a balanced research and clinical input. There were over 100 attendees on Zoom and also those watching on the Facebook livestream.

To view the panel discussion visit: <https://youtu.be/vm4H3txDAG0>

## NETWORK AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

### Expression of Interest: Phenomics Translation Initiative (PTI)

Co-funded by the MRFF and National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) through Phenomics Australia, this Initiative supports the production and phenotyping of preclinical models and their use for the development of new therapies. This support is intended to complement other funding sources, and applicants should outline the resources they have to move the project forward towards an outcome.

For more information, please visit the [Phenomics Australia website](#). **Submissions close 16 June 2021.**

## NRHA 8<sup>th</sup> Rural and Remote Scientific Symposium – Abstracts Open

The 8th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium, '*Connecting research, practise & communities*' is being held in Canberra 6 - 7 October 2021 and the call for abstracts is now open. The Symposium will focus on rural and remote health research that informs strategic health policy, and health service challenges in rural and remote Australia into the future.

Presentations are now being sought from emerging and active researchers.

For abstract guidelines and details about the various presentation types visit the Symposium website [here](#).

The call for abstracts closes on **13 June 2021**.

## CORONARY ARTERY CALCIUM SCORING POSITION STATEMENT

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The Heart Foundation has recently published the [position statement](#) on coronary artery calcium scoring for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease in Australia in the Medical Journal of Australia. The position statement can be found on their [website](#) with an accompanying clinical factsheet and plain language summary.

For further information, please contact their Clinical Evidence team at: [clinicalevidence@heartfoundation.org.au](mailto:clinicalevidence@heartfoundation.org.au)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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### SOLVE-CHD PhD Scholarship

Join SOLVE-CHD to work with leading CVD researchers in a supportive, creative and multidisciplinary community with a stipend up to \$32,000 p.a. for a full scholarship or a supplementary scholarship for a stipend up to \$10,000 p.a for the recipients of a primary scholarship in Cardiac rehabilitation and secondary prevention research (up to 3 years). For SOLVE-CHD PhD Scholarship opportunities at Deakin University and University of Western Australia, please email [solve-chd.info@sydney.edu.au](mailto:solve-chd.info@sydney.edu.au)

For more information, please see:

- [Full Scholarship](#)
- [Top up/Supplementary Scholarship](#)

### NHMRC postgraduate scholarships

The NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarships scheme funds successful applicants to attain a research based postgraduate degree (Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or a Research Masters Degree). It aims to support these outstanding health and medical graduates early in their career so they can be trained to conduct research that is internationally competitive and develop a capacity for original independent research within Australia.

The intended outcome of the Postgraduate Scholarships scheme is increased research capacity within Australia.

Applications close **09 June 2021**.

For more information, please see:

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/funding/find-funding/postgraduate-scholarships>

### **Australian Rotary Health PhD scholarships**

Australian Rotary Health will provide stipend and incidental support for a postgraduate student who is undertaking full-time research in the area of Heart Muscle Research.

Applicants must be enrolled in an Australian University, an Australian citizen, Australian Permanent Resident, or New Zealand citizen, and not be under bond to any foreign government in order to be eligible. Evidence of citizenship (citizenship certificate, birth certificate, and passport) or residential status must accompany this application.

Applications close **11 June 2021**.

For more information, please see:

<https://australianrotaryhealth.org.au/research/current-research-opportunities/general-health-phd-scholarship-opportunities/>

### **Heart Foundation Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award**

This award provides funding for research groups and/or individuals conducting research in the cardiovascular health sphere. Projects are expected to produce tangible outcomes with the potential of creating high-impact change in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cardiovascular health research community.

Applications close **11 June 2021**.

For more information, please see:

<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Research/Research-funding-available>

### **REDI Fellowship Program**

MTPConnect operates the \$32 million Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry (REDI) program supported by the MRFF. The four-year initiative is delivering system-wide improvements to skills development and training programs for the medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceutical (MTP) sector workforce. The REDI Fellowship Program can provide up to \$250,000 per Fellow, per annum, for up to 40 industry Fellowships giving Australian, international and/or multinational MTP companies the financial support to bring Australian academics, clinicians and MTP professionals in-house for up to twelve months to work on priority medical research projects.

Applications close **01 July 2021**.

For more information, please see:

[https://www.mtpconnect.org.au/Category?Action=View&Category\\_id=293](https://www.mtpconnect.org.au/Category?Action=View&Category_id=293)

### **Heart Foundation PhD scholarships**

This Scholarship provides funding to support successful applicants to attain a research based postgraduate degree (Doctor of Philosophy or Research Masters degree). It will support outstanding graduates early in their careers so they can be trained to conduct cardiovascular health and medical research that is internationally competitive. The research may lead to the translation into practice. If so, the PhD proposals should clearly cite the evidence that is to be implemented from guidelines and /or published systematic reviewers.

Demonstration of translation and implementation methodologies and stakeholder and/or consumer engagement and co-design are also strongly encouraged in the PhD proposal.

Applications close **09 July 2021**.

For more information, please see:

<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Research/Research-funding-available>