

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2022



FROM THE ACvA LEADERSHIP

We hope this newsletter finds you warm and dry. July and August have passed in a whirlwind of workshops, webinars, funding announcements and a national meeting of health leaders. We look forward to updating you on the actions and outcomes of these important events and how you can be involved.

Earlier in the month submissions opened for our annual [Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards](#). It's such an honour for us to celebrate your achievements and dedication to CV research. You're very special people, doing incredibly important work, so please read on below and nominate yourself, your team, a peer or a mentor.

Let's continue the celebrations with three cheers for ACvA's President Gemma Figtree who secured [\\$1million philanthropic funding for her collaboration with Sydney University's Digital Sciences Initiative](#) and Board Director Alta Schutte who won the prestigious [2022 Harriet Dunstan Award from the American Heart Association for her work on hypertension](#). Congratulations also to all members and member organisations who received grants in recent application rounds.

We're also incredibly proud of the recent discovery science advocacy piece in [Heart, Lung and Circulation](#) under the leadership of Board Directors Professor Christina Bursill and Professor Jamie Vandenberg. Along with the formation of our new Disease Mechanisms Flagship, this is part of our strategy for wider recognition and support of discovery scientists and their research. You'll find more details below.

ACvA ACTIVITIES

2022 ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Awards

2022
ACVA EXCELLENCE IN
CARDIOVASCULAR RESEARCH
AWARDS



The [2022 ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards](#) are now open!

These awards are a chance for us to acknowledge and honour the achievements of the CV research community. They are inclusive of the cardiovascular and stroke research spectrum and encompass all career stages. These are your awards, so nominate yourself, your team, a colleague or mentor.

The Game Changer Award is for a research scientist or team of researchers who have made outstanding innovative/transformational work in the field of cardiovascular disease **over the past 24 months**.

The Mentor Award recognises the individuals who have made significant and sustained contributions to the career development of emerging leaders and to the profession through outstanding mentoring.

The Translation Award is for a research scientist or a team of researchers who have transformed a research idea or observation from the lab bench to interventions that improve the health of individuals and the community.

For more information about eligibility, FAQs and to apply go [HERE](#).

Applications close on Monday 5th September at 5pm (AEST).

Cardiovascular Health Leadership Research Forum

We held our second national Cardiovascular Health Leadership Research Forum (CV HLRF) last week on 18 August 2020. This exciting initiative brings together health leaders from all states, territories and the Commonwealth Government to meet with data, clinical and research experts. It aims to create a shared understanding of the most pressing health issues where coordinated efforts will have the greatest impact and where governments are prioritising implementation.

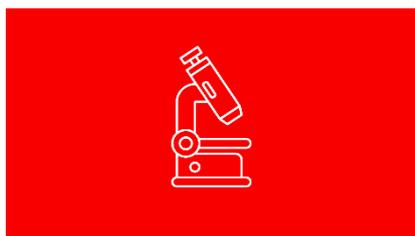
Last week's HLRF, which was chaired by Professor Keith McNeil, Queensland Health and facilitated by the ACvA, considered existing evidence and reports, including the recent Joint Policy & Implementation Roundtable (CSANZ, NHFA and ACvA), the Heart and Stroke Action Plan, the 2020 Women and Heart Disease and Secondary Prevention Reports and the Sudden Cardiac Death Summit to:

- agree initial priorities for implementation & translation into the health system
- share information on development of clinical quality indicators and opportunities to further inform and measure the impact of research and implementation priorities.

Emerging priorities for ongoing work include primary care, gender disparities in health outcomes, RHD and the need for new prevention/diagnostic and treatment paradigms where traditional approaches are not making the desired impact.

Next steps will include the formation of working groups to take agreed areas forward. We'd like to thank our Government, Heart and Stroke Foundation leaders, End UCD, the Safety and Quality Commission, the AIHW and, in particular Ian Hutchinson – a consumer with lived experience of heart disease, who shared his story and reminded us why a collaborative effort is needed. Thanks to all of you for the generous and active participation and your willingness to work collaboratively to shift the dial on CVD and Stroke.

Discovery Science Publication



We're big advocates for discovery science and the foundational role it has to play in driving the research pipeline. We established our Disease Mechanisms Flagship because you, our members, told us you wanted to see greater support and advocacy for discovery scientists and their research in the CV sector.

So, we're thrilled to share the publication of Board Directors Professor Christina Bursill and Professor Jamie Vandenberg's article *Don't turn off the tap! The importance of discovery science to the Australian cardiovascular sector and improving clinical outcomes into the future* in Heart, Lung and Circulation.

The paper highlights how important fundamental discovery science is to the cardiovascular translational pipeline and to achieving great leaps in improving health outcomes. Six case studies outline the discovery science which has led to novel therapies and improved CVD treatment and management.

This paper is also an important call to recognise the critical role which funding plays and the necessity of supporting the early stages of the research pipeline in the quest to discover the unknown in cardiovascular disease.

The paper is available [HERE](#) for all readers until **September 29th**.

CSANZ 2022



ACvA Operations Team with Sally McNeil, NSW CVRN

There were plenty of good vibes on the Gold Coast for the annual CSANZ conference. It's been two years since this was an in-person event and we loved seeing everyone in real life! This also marked the first year for the operations team to have a stall in the exhibition hall.

It's always a highlight to talk to members and collaborators face-to-face and it was great to answer questions, meet new members, see familiar faces and hear about sector updates.

With over 2000 people and 3 days of events and sessions, we had a chance to engage with industry, peak bodies and of course, clinicians. We look forward to doing it all again next year in Adelaide!

Emerging Leaders Committee



ACvA Mentor Morning Tea

Join us for a virtual morning tea to hear more about our mentoring program

When: Monday 10 October @10am

Where: Zoom - register via the QR code



Interested in becoming a mentor?

The ACvA Emerging Leaders Committee is looking for mentors who could provide guidance, support and advice to successful applicants of the CV Champions Program.

Through a 12-month Mentoring Program, you will share your knowledge, experience and perspective with an independent mentee to foster their personal and professional development. If you would like to learn more about the program and register to be a mentor, please join us for a virtual Mentor Morning Tea on Monday, 10 October at 10am.

Scan the QR code above or register [HERE](#).



Cardiovascular Champions Program

Applications for the Cardiovascular Champions Program recently closed, with a large number of high-quality submissions. We look forward to welcoming a new cohort of ACvA CV Champions in the coming week when applicants will find out about their acceptance into the program!

Mentoring Program

The results are in from a recent evaluation of our inaugural ACvA ELC mentoring program. The program paired over 35 mentors and mentees across the cardiovascular sector.

Mentees reported gaining insights into leadership, skills for grant success, improving track record, improving work/life balance and learning about other cardiovascular sectors they were not familiar with, whilst mentors gained insights into their leadership approach, other areas of cardiovascular research they were not previously familiar with and interpersonal /communication skills.

It was great to hear such positive feedback from both mentees, *"I think it is really great to have access to such highly regarded individuals in the CV space as mentors. It is really valuable to get the cross-sectional mentorship and guidance"* as well as mentors, *"I was well matched with the mentee. I felt that I had useful experience and skills to share with the mentee. I could see progress in terms of the areas the mentee wanted to work on over the time we have been meeting."*

Mentoring our CV Champions

For 2022, the mentoring program will be integrated into the CV champions program. All champions will be matched with mentors based on their specific short and long-term goals. Mentees will receive guidance and support on topics such as leadership, strategic planning, networking and collaboration, over a 12-month period.

ACvA Clinical Themes Initiative Workshops



Our Clinical Themes' Initiative had a busy and productive July and August. **A Stroke 'mini' workshop** was held 25th August with key Stroke research leaders to further develop the straw man proposal from our first workshop around atrial fibrillation (AF) and embolic stroke of undetermined source (ESUS) and Stroke recovery. The aims of this recent workshop were to hone proposals and identify the project leads in preparation for a larger workshop planned for late September to develop the detailed plan and pitch.

The next steps for the **Hypertension Clinical theme** are to work towards establishing a national

hypertension taskforce to improve blood pressure control in Australia to at least 70% in line with the recent **call to action publication in MJA** led by Board Director Professor Alta Schutte.

To support the ACvA Hypertension Clinical Theme we have established an **International Hypertension Advisory Group** to provide expert guidance on strategy, implementation and policy approaches and to leverage international know-how from proven initiatives. Group members include Emeritus Professor Norm Campbell (University of Calgary); Professor Pedro Ordunez (Pan American Health Organization); Professor Janet Wright (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention); Professor Andrew Moran (Global Hypertension Control - Resolve to Save Lives); Professor Paul Muntner (University of Alabama at Birmingham); Professor

Sheldon Tobe (University of Toronto); Professor Michael Rakotz (American Medical Association).

Work has also commenced on planning for the first **Arrhythmia and Heart Failure workshops** including several initial meetings with key opinion leaders to identify topics for discussion the future workshops, with CAD the next theme to mobilise.

Webinars



We hope you had a chance to attend the most recent webinar in our industry insight series. ***Industry perspectives for collaborating with academia*** was a fascinating session with Dr Rebecca McQualter from Novartis and Professor Kerry-Anne Rye discussing the strengths of collaboration and its ability to accelerate innovation in areas of unmet need.

We're also excited to announce **Grant Review a co-hosted webinar with QCVRN**. It will be held on Tuesday 20th September 2022 from 12.30 – 2pm. The webinar will provide expert advice from speakers who have been involved in grant review panels for major national funding schemes. Keep an eye out for the detailed program and registration information.



Extended – Scientific Advisory Committee EOIs

There's still time to put in an Expression of Interest for our Scientific Advisory Committee.

We are looking for Scientific Advisory Committee members with strong research and leadership track records, who have a commitment to the vision and goals of the ACvA and actively support diversity, equity and inclusion. The SAC will advise the Board on the development of programs and initiatives to achieve the overall vision of providing research solutions to the greatest health challenges in CVD.

You'll find further information on the Terms of Reference and EOI [HERE](#).

ACvA Q&A Sessions for Member Organisations

Do you think that you and your organisational members understand how to get the most out of their ACvA membership?

If you're not sure, you can get in touch and arrange a virtual Q&A session so staff can hear about current ACvA projects and initiatives and ask how they might align with their research and how involvement could intersect and enhance their research career.

Institutional membership offers access to networks, support and advocacy for all career stages. Whether it's participation in targeted professional development programs or letters of support, higher degree students, EMCRs and senior researchers can all find out how ACvA can keep them connected within the CV research space.

Email kerry.doyle@ozheart.org to arrange a time.

NETWORK AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

NSW Cardiovascular Research Network



The **NSW CVRN Rising Stars Seminar Series** is held on the first Monday of each month. Each session features two EMCR speakers and an EMCR facilitator.

The next seminar will be held on **9 September**: *Atherosclerosis & patient care*, featuring Dr Nicola Giannotti and Dr Qiang Tu from University of Sydney. Register [here](#) to join online.

SAVE the DATE - OHMR-CVRN Collaborative Grants Workshop, Wednesday 21 September 2022, 9.30 am to 3.30 pm AEST. OHMR Office, 1 Reserve Rd St Leonards or online.

The **CARDIOVASCULAR COLLABORATIVE GRANTS** is a new grant scheme in the NSW Health Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program. The scheme will open in late August. NSW Cardiovascular Research Network (CVRN) with the NSW Office of Health and Medical Research (OHMR) are facilitating a workshop to support researchers intending to apply for this new grant scheme in this first round.

The Workshop is aimed at increasing the strength and competitiveness of applications and also to provide an opportunity to build your collaborative team. The program includes:

- **Presentation sessions:** targeting key components of the Collaborative Grant application, delivered by experienced researchers and administrators
- **Q and A Panel:** with a panel of experienced Lead CIs of nationally competitive Collaborative Grant Schemes
- **Speed Dating event** – EMRCs will have the opportunity to pitch their skills to CIAs intending to submit an application in this scheme

Registration will open coinciding with the opening of this scheme, in late August. A full program will be available then.

Queensland Cardiovascular Research Network



Queensland Cardiovascular Research Network

The inaugural **QCVRN Gala Awards and Showcase** event was held mid-July and was a great opportunity to bring together so many from the community in the same room.



It started in a way that celebrated the collaborative nature of QCVRN, and its members with keynote addresses from Prof Keith McNeil (Queensland Health) and David Lloyd (National Heart Foundation).

The showcase presentations, from ACvA's Executive Director Kerry Doyle, Prof John Fraser, Prof James Hudson, Dr Louise See Hoe, and Andrew Goodman further demonstrated the strength and variety of Queensland cardiovascular research.



The winners of the inaugural QCVRN PhD Top Up Scholarship Award were also announced on the night. The review committee had a difficult time selecting the three awardees from amongst the 19 very strong applications which represented and showcased the breadth of research discipline across clinical, biomedical and Public Health in Queensland.

The **2022 QCVRN PhD Top Up Scholarship awardees** are:

- **Gabriele Fior** (University of Queensland)
- **Dalia Mizikovsky** (University of Queensland)
- **Sumudhu Avanthi Hewage** (Queensland University of Technology)

Heart Research Australia



Heart Research Australia will be calling for applications in September for the **2023 Grant Funding Round**.

They offer project grants which will provide seed funding to researchers based on Campus at Royal North Shore Hospital to assist in development of new research concepts. Each grant will provide \$40k per annum for up to 2 years.

They also have scholarships which provide a stipend of \$25k per annum for up to 2 years for applicants currently undertaking or proposing to undertake a postgraduate degree on the Royal North Shore Hospital campus. Up to \$5k will be available annually for research consumables.

Email mira@heartresearch.com.au to be receive further information as it's released.

BPOZKids

BPOzKids is establishing a new **Paediatric Blood Pressure Monitoring Working Group** whose purpose is to promote accurate, well-tolerated, well-implemented and well-utilized paediatric blood pressure monitoring. If you are an Australian researcher, clinician or other professional with expertise/experience in paediatric blood pressure monitoring, find out more and register your interest [HERE](#). Final deadline - **8th September, 2022**.

As members, you are the ACvA, so please let us know if you have any cardiovascular research news, events, jobs or training which you'd like to share. Email nina.cullen@ozheart.org



UPCOMING EVENTS & TRAINING



Sydney University is holding a multidisciplinary meeting highlighting current research in novel heart valve technologies. **The Heart Valve Replacements: Past, Present and Future Directions** workshop is on 27 September. For the full program and registration link visit [HERE](#).

NSW Health Commercialisation Training Program / Sydney / various courses from August - October

Heart Failure Seoul Conference 2022 / Korea / September 15 -17

MTAA MedTEch22 Annual Conference / Sydney / 6 -7 October

AAHMS 2022 – Future Health and Transformative Technologies / Melbourne / 13- 14 October

AusBiotech 2022 / Perth / 24 – 28 October

Medical Device Partnering Program (MDPP) / Adelaide / ongoing

Australian Clinical Trials Alliance Annual Scientific Meeting / Adelaide / 7 November

GRANTS & OPPORTUNITIES

TGA Statutory Advisory Committee members



Therapeutic Goods Administration / Australia / 4 September

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is seeking applications from experts in medicine, science, and consumer perspectives and issues, to fill upcoming vacancies across seven statutory advisory committees. Successful applicants will contribute significantly towards the TGA's regulatory functions by providing independent expert advice on matters across a broad

spectrum of issues relating to medicines, medical devices, vaccines, and other products and substances.

Clinical Translation & Commercialisation Medtech Program – Round 2

MTP Connect / Australia / 9 September – 7 October

The Clinical Translation and Commercialisation Medtech (CTCM) program, delivered by MTPConnect, is offered under the 2020 Early Stage Translation and Commercialisation Support Grant of the Medical Research Future Fund's Medical Research Commercialisation Initiative.

The \$19.75 million CTCM program is opening its second and final funding round in September, calling for applications from Australian small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) developing home-grown medical devices.

The 45 and Up Study Award (Round Two Applications)

The Heart Foundation / Australia / Open 29 August – 7 October

The 45 and Up Study Award will provide early and mid-career researchers the opportunity to gain valuable experience working with a comprehensive data set to generate insightful research outputs and evidence in the area of cardiovascular disease which may lead to larger more rigorous studies in the future.

The Heart Foundation and the Sax Institute's 45 and Up Study have partnered to offer access to 45 and Up study data for five short-term projects (up to 12 months) with up to two single user annual licenses per project.

MRFF – Cardiovascular Health Mission – 2022 Cardiovascular Health Grant Opportunity

MRFF / Australia / 7 September

The objective of this grant opportunity is to provide grants of financial assistance to support Australian medical research and medical innovation projects that:

- **Stream 1** (Targeted Call for Research): improve the understanding of cardiovascular disease risk, including biological mechanisms.
- **Stream 2** (Targeted Call for Research): conduct preclinical development and validation of novel molecular targets and novel device approaches for cardiovascular disease and/or stroke.
- **Stream 3** (Accelerator): conduct a large-scale project focused on discovery and testing of new, broadly applicable (multiple disease groups) interventions for cardiovascular disease and/or stroke (e.g. anti-inflammatory targets).

National Critical Research Infrastructure Grant Opportunity

MRFF / Australia / 7 September

The 2022 National Critical Research Infrastructure grant is part of the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) and the National Critical Research Infrastructure Initiative. This 3-stream program will fund organisations to undertake innovative project solutions to complex health problems

in areas of unmet need to improve Australian's quality of life and the health system sustainability.

AusBiotech 2022 Innovation Industry Excellence Awards

AusBiotech & Johnson & Johnson / Australia / 16 September

These awards recognise the highest achievers in the Australian life sciences. From researchers who successfully translate their discoveries to clinical practice, to companies who pioneer the developments of new treatments and reliable diagnostics, these prestigious Awards recognise the leading lights of Australia's world-class biotechnology, medical technology and healthcare sectors.

NSW Health Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program - Cardiovascular Collaborative Grants

NSW Health/ NSW / Open July – 30 September

NSW's Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program funds high quality cardiovascular research in NSW in order to drive scientific discoveries, support the development of novel and innovative therapies, and improve health outcomes for patients with cardiovascular disease.

Cardiovascular Collaborative Grants will open in July 2022. This is a new two-year development grant of up to \$1 million over two years. Collaborative grants are targeted at NSW-led collaborations involving multiple institutions and support success with national funding opportunities.

2022 International Clinical Trial Collaborations Grant Opportunity

MRFF / Australia / 22 February 2023

Applications to this Grant Opportunity must propose a single clinical trial in Australia in collaboration with international counterparts.

Humboldt Research Fellowships for Postdoctoral Researchers

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation / Germany / 31 December 2022

This fellowship is for highly qualified scientists and scholars who are embarking on their academic careers and who completed their doctorates less than four years ago to spend extended periods of research in Germany. Scientists and scholars from all disciplines and countries may apply and applications can be submitted at any time.

Hans Fischer Fellowship - Institute for Advanced Study

Technische Universität München / Germany / ongoing

Outstanding early-career (doctorate completed within the past 12 years) international scientists who intend to explore innovative, high-risk topics in their scientific research areas together with a TUM Research Group are eligible for a TUM-IAS Hans Fischer Fellowship. The nominee and planned TUM-IAS Host should submit a joint proposal.

Hans Fischer Senior Fellowship - Institute for Advanced Study

Technische Universität München / Germany / ongoing

Outstanding international scientists who intend to explore innovative, high-risk topics in their scientific research areas together with a TUM Research Group are eligible for a TUM-IAS Hans Fischer Senior Fellowship. The nominee and the planned TUM-IAS Host should submit a joint proposal.