

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2023



FROM THE ACvA LEADERSHIP

It's been a fantastic two months for in-person events where we've, discussed career sustainability for early to mid-career researchers at the National EMCR Summit, celebrated cardiovascular and stroke research at CSANZ 23 and heard firsthand about innovation and alignment from our stakeholders at the Monash Heart Workshop. There's more on all of these in the newsletter.

You'll also see that the MRFF Showcase is coming up in Canberra. There is still time to [register your attendance](#). Also mark your calendars for December 8, the ACvA Precision Medicine Flagship Symposium in Melbourne. Read on for registration links to both events.

Today nominations for the ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards open. There are three Awards: Game Changer, Mentor and Translation. You'll find more details about the Awards and the nomination process in the newsletter below. Nominations close Friday 27th October.

ACvA ACTIVITIES

ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards now OPEN

Nominations for the 2023 ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards are now open! The work that you and your peers do is outstanding, and we want to celebrate the achievements and culture of the Australian cardiovascular and stroke sector.

The three awards allow for researchers at all stages of their career to apply and encompass the entire research spectrum. Let's get loud and acknowledge the innovations and discoveries in cardiovascular and stroke research.



ACvA Game Changer Award

This award is for a research scientist or a team of researchers whose discovery or idea in the field of cardiovascular disease and stroke **over the past 24 months** has the potential to significantly influence current thoughts and practices within the field.

Early-mid career researchers (15 years < post-PhD) are strongly encouraged to apply.

ACvA Mentor Award

This 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. This award is based on the experiences and success of the nominee's mentees, not the mentor's personal career achievements. For the purpose of this award, mentoring is defined as the process of guiding, supporting and promoting the training and career development of others. Self-nominations are NOT accepted.

ACvA Translation Award

This 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.

A clear journey from concept to implementation or along the translational pathway needs to be demonstrated for this award.

If you have any questions, you can read our FAQs [HERE](#).

Nominate yourself, a team or a colleague [HERE](#).

Nominations close Friday 27th October.

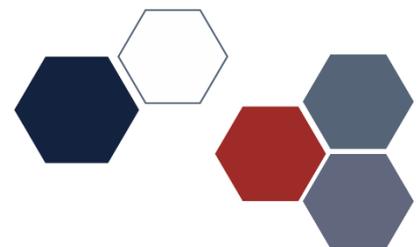
MRFF Showcase

Join us **Wednesday 13 September 2023 in Canberra** for the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase 2023.

Mark your calendars for the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase 2023! A special day hosted by the Department of Health and Aged Care, Health & Medical Research Office, and supported by the ACvA.

This event is all about honouring outstanding research under the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission And discussing how we can collaborate, leverage and partner to achieve the ambitious goals of the **Mission and deliver the Road Map and Implementation Plan**. Come and connect with leading researchers, consumers, industry experts, clinicians, and those with personal experiences – all united by a passion for cardiovascular health.

Medical Research Future Fund
**Cardiovascular Health Mission
Showcase**



**13 September 2023
9am - 5pm**

**National Portrait Gallery
King Edward Terrace, Parkes ACT**

Supported
by 

You can read the full program [HERE](#).

There are still a few tickets available, so [REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE HERE](#).

EMCR Summit 2023

You may have seen we were in Adelaide recently for the National EMCR Summit ahead of the CSANZ 2023. The Summit was a joint initiative of the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance, CSANZ and the National Heart Foundation. It was great to have medical research institutes, peak bodies and cardiovascular research networks all in the room and ready to discuss career sustainability in the CVD & stroke sector.

The day was an interactive blend of panel discussions and breakout sessions.

Opening messages on collaboration, strategy and the big picture were delivered by our CEO Kerry Doyle OAM PSM, CSANZ President Professor Stephen Nicholls and the Heart Foundations' Strategic Research Portfolio Lead, Dr Anna Calkin.

The first session discussed career success and workplace sustainability, with a key focus on metrics and how to measure them. We'd like to thank panel members Professor Andrew Murphy, Dr Katharine Brown, Professor Chris Sobey and Dr Anna Calkin for sharing their experiences and insights.

In our second session, Cardiovascular Research Networks and scientific society representatives discussed the current support available for EMCR career advancement, and how we can work together as a sector to support EMCRs. Thanks to our panel members Dr Lauren Blekkenhorst WACRA Advocate, Dr Jessica Orchard NSWCVRN, Dr Louise See Hoe ISHR and QCVRN, Dr Adrian Elliott SACVRN, Dr Rikeish R Muralitharan Hypertension Australia and Professor Stephen Nicholls Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand.



There are many people to acknowledge in the putting together of this event. Firstly, we thank our co-sponsors CSANZ and the NHFA and the generous hosting by the University of South Australia. We also thank our facilitator ACvA Deputy President, Professor Jamie Vandenberg and organising committee (Dr Niamh Chapman, Dr Lauren Blekkenhorst, Dr Anna Calkin, Dr Katrina Colafella, Professor Sally Inglis, Dr Celine Santiago, Dr Emma Thomas)

It was thrilling to see so many of you in person and hear directly about what is working or needs improvement in this space. The day's discussions and findings will be collated and written up and there are plans for an online debrief to take place later in the year, so watch this space.

Clinical Themes Update

ACvA Atrial Fibrillation Workshop

It was great to be in Melbourne recently for the Atrial Fibrillation workshop facilitated by Professors Prash Sanders and Jon Kalman. The workshop brought together leading experts from across the country to discuss the unmet needs in atrial fibrillation (AF), and how we could collaboratively address the predicted doubling of AF prevalence by 2034 in Australia.

The workshop highlighted several key considerations for the way forward:

- **Managing Risk Factors:** Prioritising risk factor management for both primary and secondary AF prevention.
- **Policy Innovations:** Advocating for significant policy changes aimed at alleviating the burden of AF.
- **Mechanistic Insights:** Striving for a better understanding of the fundamental mechanisms underpinning the onset and progression of atrial cardiomyopathy.
- **Consumer Engagement:** Actively involving consumers in co-design efforts to ensure more patient-centric solutions.



With these insights in mind, the next steps involve translating these discussions into actionable and fundable strategies.

Hypertension Taskforce

Welcoming New Working Groups: A Step Forward for Blood Pressure Management

In a significant stride towards improved cardiovascular health, the Hypertension Taskforce introduces its new working groups. Launched in late 2022 as a collaborative initiative between Hypertension Australia and the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance, the National Hypertension Taskforce is on a mission to double high blood pressure control rates in Australia from 32% to 70% by 2030.



This dynamic taskforce encompasses a diverse membership spanning peak bodies, professional societies, clinicians, researchers, and consumers with lived experiences. Five key priority areas have been identified, each pivotal in the journey to better blood pressure (BP) control for all Australians. The Taskforce has identified five key priority areas crucial for this mission. To address these priorities, working groups have been established. Here's a glimpse of these groups:

1. **Developing BP Management Tools:** Co-Leads: Professor Michael Stowasser, Professor Charlotte Hespe
This group focuses on crafting user-friendly, up-to-date BP management tools for healthcare providers.
2. **Patient Activation and Engagement:** Co-Leads: Professor Liz Halcomb, Dr Niamh Chapman
Engaging patients in their health is vital, working towards activating patients to improve their well-being.
3. **Raising Awareness:** Co-Leads: Dr Lisa Murphy, Dr Quynh Nhu Dinh
Increasing awareness about BP's significance is essential. This group is dedicated to raising and maintaining awareness at all levels.
4. **Systems and Data-Based BP Management:** Co-Leads: Professor James Sharman, Dr Nelson Wang
This group focuses on establishing processes to ensure integration of BP data across the health sector to support monitoring and informing clinical practice for optimal care.
5. **Improved Detection and Screening:** Co-Leads: A/Professor Jun Yang, Dr Martin Schultz
This group will be dedicated to identifying individuals at risk using a combination of community-based screening initiatives and opportunistic screening strategies.

We are excited to introduce these working groups and their accomplished **members**. Together, they are forging a path towards healthier BP management and better cardiovascular health for all Australians.

Flagship News ACvA Precision Medicine Flagship Symposium

Our **Precision Medicine Flagship** will be holding a Symposium in Melbourne on 8 December.

Join keynote speakers Professor Gemma Figtree and Professor Stephen Nicholls for this one-day symposium to highlight cardiovascular and stroke precision medicine research and innovation, identify emerging opportunities and challenges in the field and explore the future of implementing precision medicine into clinical practice.

The call for abstracts is currently open. Selected abstracts will be notified to present a talk/poster at the symposium. Prizes will be awarded to EMCRs with the best talk and poster.

Abstract deadline: **10 November 2023**

You can find the guidelines and abstract template [HERE](#).

You can find all the details and [REGISTER FOR THE SYMPOSIUM HERE](#).



CSANZ '23

If you were in Adelaide for CSANZ 23, we hope you had a chance to come and say hi at our booth where we also hosted cardiovascular consumer not-for-profit organisations Heart Support Australia and hearts4heart. It's always such a pleasure to connect in-person with our members and key stakeholders.

Our CEO Kerry Doyle PSM OAM presented at the Cardiovascular Nursing Symposium *Cardiovascular nursing through collaborative partnerships*. It was great to share our clinical themes, implementation and government engagement platforms with a cardiac nursing and allied health audience who were also encouraged to tell us about their priority areas and what engagement should look like.

She also had a chance to attend the ASCVD Patient organisation alliance dinner discussing the unmet needs in cholesterol diagnosis and management in Australia, from a patient-centric perspective.

To conclude what was already a great few days, our President Professor Gemma Figtree was awarded the **2023 R T Hall Prize**. The RT Hall Prize is the most prestigious research award of CSANZ and recognises the achievements of senior and established investigators. We're incredibly proud of her work and this incredible achievement.

Thank you to Pich Chhay & Dr Linda Worrall-Carter for some of the above photos.



Monash University Workshop



MONASH
University

On 20 July, our President Gemma Figtree, CEO Kerry Doyle PSM OAM and Director of Strategic Initiatives, Catherine Shang were in Melbourne for a workshop/roadshow with Monash University. It was a great turnout with researchers from across all of Monash's campuses. Introduced by Professor Stephen Nicholls,

they heard about the projects and priorities from discovery science through to Big Data and Implementation and Policy. There were also discussions about building engagement in Victoria and the development of a Victorian Cardiovascular Research Network.

Ventri Clinical input for the Industry Growth Program Consultation



The initial Ventri Clinical database was established in 2021 to highlight the multiple research activities being undertaken in cardiovascular medical technology (medtech) research across Australia. It's facilitated by the ACvA and supported by MTPConnect, the Charles Perkins Centre at Sydney University and the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute.

The Ventri Clinical Network now aims to attract innovators, expertise, and funding towards cardiovascular medtech research, amplify research activities across boundaries, and align efforts with National and State programs and priorities.

The [Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#) recently asked for comments and recommendations as part of the Industry Growth Program consultation. Based on Ventri Clinical and its experience with numerous State and Federal funding models, ACvA made a submission with five key recommendations which you can read [HERE](#).

VentriClinical was also proud to participate in CSANZ 2023. Stationed at the ACvA booth, there were enriching interactions with medtech professionals and leading clinicians. The display highlighted how the VentriClinical network can connect, coordinate and champion early-phase cardiovascular device initiatives across Australia.

Thank you to everyone who engaged and explored our commitment to medtech innovation. For any inquiries or further information on VentriClinical, please visit the [website](#) or contact pich.chhay@ozheart.org.

SECTOR ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

South Australian Showcase

Mark your calendars. The SAHMRI Heart and Vascular Health Group, in collaboration with the Heart Foundation, invite you to the 2023 SA Cardiovascular Research Showcase: *Connecting Hearts, Inspiring Minds* – celebrating the rejuvenated South Australian Cardiovascular Research Network on **Friday 17 November at SAHMRI in Adelaide**.



This event will highlight the work of SA cardiovascular researchers from diverse disciplines and career levels. It will also offer the opportunity to network with leading experts from around the world, exchange ideas, foster collaborations and even build teams! The event will also feature Professors John Cleland and Christopher Semsarian.

Registrations are now open [HERE](#).

NSW CVRN Rising Stars Seminar head to Wollongong



The bi-monthly Rising Stars Seminar Series showcases EMCRs who are building a career and late-stage PhD students. The line-up of speakers and topics represents the depth and breadth of CVD research in NSW across member organisations.

The next seminar will be **Friday September 8, 3pm at the University of Wollongong**.

Join online or in-person to hear presentations from Prof Caleb Ferguson, Dr Sabine Allida, Fahad Shaikh, Dr Osvaldo Contreras, Dr Joyce Chiu, and Dr Michael Macartney.

You'll find more information and registrations [HERE](#).

Take part in the #EndGenderBias survey

The National Women's Health Advisory Council is calling on women, girls and people assigned female at birth to share their experiences in the #EndGenderBias survey. They're looking for expertise and feedback from patients, healthcare professionals, health providers, researchers and other stakeholders.

The survey will be used to inform the work of the National Women's Health Advisory Council which provides advice and recommendations to Government to improve the health of women and girls, including monitoring the implementation of the National Women's Health Strategy 2020–2030.

The survey is open until mid-October and we encourage you to do the survey and share with your networks [HERE](#).



ESC 2023 Highlights through an Australian Lens

ACvA President Professor Gemma Figtree, President-elect Professor Jason Kovacic and Board Director A/Professor André La Gerche join *the limbic LIVE* and an expert panel on **Thursday 14 September** as they present the key highlights from the ESC 2023 Annual Meeting and discuss the impacts for practice in Australia.

You can register for this online event [HERE](#).



Exercise and Cardiac Rehabilitation Position Paper



Leading experts from Australia, New Zealand and Europe in the fields of exercise, physical activity and cardiac rehabilitation have come together to create the first position paper of its kind for the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ).

This significant paper entitled '*A clinical guide for assessment and prescription of exercise and physical activity in cardiac rehabilitation. A CSANZ position statement*', was published in the Heart, Lung and Circulation journal. The paper is intended as a contemporary resource for cardiac rehabilitation providers in Australia and New Zealand, offering them valuable guidance in designing safe and effective exercise and physical activity programs for cardiac patients.

The paper was presented by one of the lead co-authors, Heart Support Australia CEO Dr Christian Verdicchio at the CSANZ Annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide during the Multidisciplinary Rapid Fire Clinical Guidelines Update.

You can read the complete guide [HERE](#).

Heart Foundation Guideline Launch



On Thursday 20 July, ACvA went to Parliament House Canberra for the launch, by Health and Aged Care Minister Mark Butler, of the country's new **Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Guideline and accompanying CVD Risk Calculator** – a 'tool kit' that sets improved clinical standards for the prevention of cardiovascular disease before it takes hold. The new Guideline and calculator were developed by the National Heart Foundation of Australia on behalf of the Australian Chronic

Disease Prevention Alliance (ACDPA), represented in this project by Diabetes Australia, Kidney Health Australia, and the National Stroke Foundation.

One of the highlights of the new Guideline is the new Australian CVD Risk Calculator, calibrated specifically for the Australian population.

Research Scientist Opportunity

An evaluation of the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission is being undertaken and opens up a unique 6-month position for a Research Scientist. The role will be primarily to support the mid-term review of the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Cardiovascular (CV) Health Mission.

As an organisation with access to people who understand the CV Mission and research sector, ACvA is assisting with the promotion and application process for this position.



You can find the full position description and application guidelines [HERE](#).

Application Deadline: **COB Wednesday 20 September 2023**

Researcher in residence - Cardiovascular Opportunity

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) are sought for clinicians to be embedded in the ACI and OHMR teams at 1 Reserve Road, St Leonards, fulltime for up to 1 month; with subsequent three months of one day per week in the areas of:

1. defining minimum data sets for acute coronary syndrome (ACS) and creating dashboards for monitoring
2. defining minimum data sets for chronic heart failure (CHF) and creating dashboards for monitoring

Small support grants available ~\$5000.

Applications are open now.

You can find the application form [HERE](#).



Cardiovascular Ultrasound in Health & Exercise Workshop & Masterclass



University of the
Sunshine Coast
Australia



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

This intensive 3-day course is aimed at anyone wishing to develop vascular ultrasound skills. The practical skills gained will provide a foundation for participants to use duplex ultrasound in teaching and research in the biological, exercise and health sciences.

Followed by the UniSC Hosted Research Masterclass "Cardiovascular Health, Exercise & Ageing" A series of state-of-the-art talks delivered by leading experts in Cardiovascular and Exercise Physiology.

You'll find the complete program and registration details [HERE](#).

MTAA Value of MedTech Report

The Medical Technology Association of Australia recently released its Value of MedTech Report a major study that quantifies the difference the MedTech industry makes to the lives of Australian patients, the healthcare system and economy.



Medical Technology
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

You can download the complete report [HERE](#).

Higher Education Research Commercialisation Intellectual Property Framework

The Australian Department of Education has created the Higher Education research Commercialisation Intellectual Property Framework to support commercialisation connections between universities and businesses and make it easier for industry and universities to work together by providing information, guidance, and templates to help parties reach agreements.

You can find the Framework and its related documents [HERE](#).

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

Tag us in your posts so we can help spread the word:

@OzCvA (Twitter)

@Australian Cardiovascular Alliance (LinkedIn)



UPCOMING EVENTS & TRAINING



MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase / Canberra / 13 September

MedTech Conference / Sydney / 30-31 Oct

Australian Clinical Registry ASM / 19 -20 October /Melbourne

AusBiotech 23' / Brisbane / 1-3 November

World Congress on Rheumatic Heart Disease / Abu Dhabi / 2-4 November

International Clinical Trials Symposium 2023 / Melbourne / November 27 – 29

Sydney Cardiovascular Symposium / Sydney / 30 November – 1 December

ACvA Precision Medicine Flagship Symposium / Melbourne / 8 December

Medical Device Partnering Program (MDPP) / Adelaide / ongoing

GRANTS & OPPORTUNITIES



Cardiovascular Senior and Early-Mid Career Researcher Grants 2023

NSW Health / NSW / 8 September

Supporting high-quality cardiovascular researchers to increase national and international competitiveness of NSW cardiovascular research.

EU Collaborative Research Grant Scheme 2023

NHMRC / Australia / 13 September

The NHMRC-EU Collaborative Research Grant Scheme supports Australian participation in international collaborative research under Horizon Europe. Horizon Europe facilitates collaboration and strengthens research impact and innovation while tackling global challenges.

Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRC-P) Grants

Department of Science & Industry / Australia / 14 September

Cooperative Research Centres Projects (CRC-P) Grants provide funding for short-term research collaborations. Find out how to apply for a CRC-P Grant to develop a new technology, product or service.

MedTech Industry Awards

MTAA / Australia / 15 September

The MedTech Industry Awards are highly regarded within the medical technology sector and open to both members and non-members who have made a significant contribution to the industry.

CSANZ Travelling Fellowship to the American Heart Association (AHA) Scientific Session 2023

CSANZ / Australia & New Zealand / 18 September

The Fellowships are intended to provide an opportunity for investigators in the early stage of their research career to present at a major international conference. The AHA Scientific Sessions will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in November.

CUREator+

Brandon Biocatalyst / Australia / 6 October

CUREator+ is a national program focused on accelerating the research translation and commercialisation of preclinical and clinical early-stage Australian medical research and medical innovations with commercial potential.

EU Collaborative Research Grant Scheme 2024

NHMRC / Australia & EU / 16 October

The NHMRC-European Union (EU) Collaborative Research Grant Scheme supports Australian participation in international collaborative research under Horizon Europe. Horizon Europe facilitates collaboration and strengthens research impact and innovation while tackling global challenges.

Industry Laureate Fellowships

Australian Research Council / Australia / 17 October

The Industry Laureate Fellowships scheme creates a pathway to support academic researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, with the aim of increased two-way mobility and skill-building in research collaboration, translation and commercialisation.

2023 Cardiovascular Health Grant Opportunity

NHMRC / Australia / 15 November

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

2023 Genomics Health Futures Grant Opportunity

NHMRC / Australia / 29 November

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

- **Stream 2 (Targeted Call for Research):** through a competitively selected national consortium, apply advanced analytics (e.g. artificial intelligence) to enhance the diagnostic utility of genomics.

Partnerships Project 2023

NHMRC / Australia / 29 November

Partnership Projects will support collaborations, within the Australian context, that translate research evidence into health policy and health practice, to improve health services and processes.