

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2023



FROM THE ACvA LEADERSHIP

As a geographically distributed team representing a national organisation, we eagerly anticipate events that allow us to come together in person. In September, we went to Canberra, lucky enough to have two events which did exactly this. The ACvA Strategy Day was an informative and productive day, bringing together our diverse membership and stakeholders. Leads from various ACvA initiatives provided comprehensive updates. Government, industry and patient organisations were also present and discussed their interests and crossover opportunities. Questions and comments were invited during all sessions. You can find a detailed communique regarding the day [HERE](#).

The following day, we had the privilege of co-hosting the MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase with the Department of Health and Aged Care. This event offered a captivating glimpse into the wide-ranging research and innovation taking place in the cardiovascular and stroke fields. You'll find more details about the speakers and their projects in the newsletter below.

The calendar spots for November and December are already filling up no doubt with the usual end-of-year events, so please mark **23rd November for the ACvA online AGM**. A link and details will be landing in your inbox soon.

We've extended the deadline for our **2023 Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards** nominations, so you still have time to get your nominations in.

Nominations now close COB Monday 30th October 2023.

ACvA ACTIVITIES

ACvA Annual General Meeting

Please mark Wednesday 23rd November 1-2pm AEDT in your diaries for the ACvA 2023 Annual General Meeting. All current members are invited to attend and vote at this online event.

Details about Board Directors and links for voting and attending the online meeting will be in your Inbox soon.



ACvA Strategy Day 2023

The ACvA Strategy Day was held on September 12th in Canberra. It was a fantastic experience that brought our diverse membership and stakeholders together.

We were lucky to have ACvA leaders provides us with in-depth updates about their initiatives. Professor Chris Reid shared insights from the Clinical Trials Flagship, emphasising that the flagship has been a vehicle for effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Professor Julie Redfern, Co-Director of the Implementation & Policy flagship, highlighted the need for more interaction between Flagships and Clinical



Themes and suggested potential strategies for improvement. Professor Jim Sharman discussed the success of the Hypertension Taskforce and highlighted the importance of leadership in driving collaborative efforts. Dr Niamh Chapman and Anna Calkin presented a summary and future plans from the 2023 EMCR Summit.

We also had guests from government, industry and patient organisations who shared their thoughts and insights, sparking engaging conversations about how we can work together to achieve common goals. It was exciting to see the opportunities that lie at the intersection of our worlds.

The floor was open for questions and comments throughout the day which led to candid discussions and a true sharing of ideas. For a more comprehensive overview of the day, including key insights and remarks, you can read the detailed Communique [HERE](#).

Extended Deadline - ACvA Awards 2023

Within our vibrant cardiovascular & stroke research community, there are remarkable individuals and teams who truly deserve recognition. Now is the time to highlight the exceptional achievements of your peers, your team, or yourself by nominating for the ACvA Excellence in Cardiovascular Research Awards.

We offer three distinct awards, each designed to celebrate the diverse talents present in our community:

- **Game Changer Award**
- **Mentor Award**
- **Translation Award**



We've extended the deadline. You now have until COB Monday 30th October to get your nominations in. You'll find terms and conditions, FAQs, and nomination forms [HERE](#).

MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase

The MRFF Cardiovascular Health Mission Showcase, co-hosted by ACvA and the Department of Aged Care and Health, held in Canberra, featured the world-class research and diversity of projects being undertaken and supported by the Mission. The event celebrated the success of the Mission and brought together leading cardiovascular health researchers, consumers and people with lived experience, industry representatives, and clinicians from across the country. The presentations highlighted the pivotal role research plays in combating cardiovascular disease and stroke.

In Session One, we heard about some of the extraordinary research efforts taking place including:

Dr Heidi Janssen & Simone Owen - *Yarning up after stroke*

A/Professor Nathan Palpant - *ASIC1a inhibitors as therapeutics for ischemic heart disease*

Professor Peter Miekle - *Application of Machine Learning to the Development of a Metabolic Risk Score for Cardiovascular Disease*

A/Professor Rachel Conyers - Cardio-oncology Registry and Biobank
Professor Geoff Strange – Congenital Heart Alliance of Australia & New Zealand (CHAANZ)
Dr Kylie Gwynne & Felicity Chapman – Early AF Screening for Indigenous People (EASI Study)
Professor Diane Fatkin – Investigating Mechanisms of Alcohol-Induced Heart Disease

Session Two, chaired by Professor Gemma Figtree, included panel discussions with Professor Julie Redfern, Professor Vincent Thijs, Dr Chengxue Helena Qin, Professor Peter Miekle and A/Professor Nathan Palpant and aimed to explore opportunities to leverage and maximise impact of the Cardiovascular Health Mission.

It was a huge day that would not have happened without the effort and organisation of the ACVA and Health and Medical Research Office Operations teams. Thank you to Dr Phillip Gould for his opening address and Dr Masha Somi for chairing the meeting. Finally, thank you to all the CVD & stroke researchers who presented, attended, questioned and discussed! Your commitment and dedication are turning insights into impact.



World Heart Federation Emerging Leaders Programme

The 2023 World Heart Federation Emerging Leaders Programme was held for the first time in Sydney last week. Hosted by The University of Sydney, the program, led by ACVA's Implementation and Policy Flagship Co-Director Professor Julie Redfern in collaboration with the World Heart Federation, gathered 25 participants from 19 countries for intensive, five-day training sessions from 15-20th October. These sessions centred on the intersection of digital health and cardiovascular diseases.

Notable partners included the National Heart Foundation of Australia, the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance, SOLVECHD NHMRC Synergy Grant, the Cardiovascular Initiative and Charles Perkins Centre of the University of Sydney.

The program's primary goal is to foster a new generation of experts in the field of cardiovascular health, dedicated to tackling this pressing global health issue.

Our CEO, Kerry Doyle PSM OAM spoke at the World Heart Federation Emerging Leaders Open Forum on leadership and collaboration on Wednesday 10th October. The 2023 programme was a resounding success, furthering the mission to combat cardiovascular disease worldwide.



Implementation & Policy Flagship in HLC

Last year, together with the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) and the National Heart Foundation of Australia (NHFA) we brought the cardiovascular and stroke community together for a

national discussion and to propose a national CVD Implementation and Policy agenda and action plan. This included prevention and screening, acute care and secondary prevention.

IMPLEMENTATION & POLICY PRIORITIES		
PRIMARY PREVENTION & SCREENING	ACUTE CARE & TREATMENT	SECONDARY PREVENTION & REHABILITATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Australians know and understand their absolute cardiovascular risk • Double current blood pressure control rates to 70% • More Australians with Atrial Fibrillation (AF) are identified • Establish a national CVD and Stroke data surveillance platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate sex and gender gaps in acute care • All Australians should be treated to current and best practice guidelines • Australians living in all postcodes have access to acute stroke care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the implementation of effective digital solutions for cardiac and stroke rehabilitation • Provide diversified and customised approaches to cardiac and stroke rehabilitation

'Cardiovascular Disease Implementation & Policy Priorities for Australia: Recommendations from an Australian Stakeholder Roundtable', the results of that discussion, have just been released in Heart, Lung & Circulation. The paper explores the actions for the 9 goals established from this collaborative national Roundtable.

Thanks to the authors for their contributions and the Roundtable participants whose ideas and discussions created these priorities. You can read the complete paper [HERE](#).

New members and the upcoming Precision Medicine Flagship Symposium

The Precision Medicine Flagship would like to welcome three new members;

Dr Jimmy Breen, Dr James McNamara (EMCR representative) and Dr Amy Hanna (EMCR representative).

The Flagship currently lacks an industry representative and members are encouraged to put suggestions forward.

The Precision Medicine Flagship Symposium is being held on the 8th December at the Innovation and Education Hub, Baker Institute in Melbourne. Registrations for this hybrid event are free and **NOW OPEN**.

The day is divided into three sessions:

- Capabilities and opportunities
- Industry engagement
- Current progress in Precision Medicine

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](#).



The MRFF CV Health Mission Showcase held on 13th September had good representation from the Precision Medicine Flagship including Professor Jamie Vandenberg, A/Professor Nathan Palpant, Professor Diane Fatkin and Professor Peter Meikle. There was strong interest from Drs Phillip Gould and Masha Somi on the progress achieved by fund. The group noted that there is an opportunity to capitalise the government interest and engagement and proposed the organisation of a Friends of Parliament event. It was discussed that there is often a challenge for the sector to engage with pharma and be competitive globally. It is important to identify Australian strengths in Precision Medicine – this is an important task for the Flagship, Scientific Advisory Committee and ACVA Strategic Initiatives.

SECTOR ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

SAHMRI Showcase

The SAHMRI Heart and Vascular Health Group, in collaboration with the Heart Foundation, invite you to attend 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 **Professor John Cleland** and **Professor Christopher Semsarian**.

Registration is free. However, tickets are limited. Register [HERE](#).



WACRA Updates



The **WACRA Heart to Vessels Research Showcase**, a full day symposium was held on August 29 showcasing WA's research. Professor Jonathon Golledge of James Cook University was the plenary speaker. Sponsorship by Heart Foundation was gratefully acknowledged and David Lloyd CEO Heart Foundation attended.

Newly elected WACRA board members Associate Professor Hayley Christian, Mr Ayden Glover (Consumer Advocate) and Dr Lauren Giudicatti were welcomed at the AGM on August 29.

The WACRA Grant Peer Review Program continued through 2023 – open to all members. Notably 100% of the ECU fellowship and grant applicants who participated were successful with near miss funding from WA DOH or fellowships. Congratulations!

The inaugural **WACRA Awards night** will be held on November 23 at UniClub, UWA to celebrate outstanding researchers.

SOLVE-CHD Project Showcase

The SOLVE-CHD Synergy Grants are entering their third year. This event is an opportunity to showcase the progress of SOLVE-CHD Synergy Grant projects and achievements accomplished by fellow #SOLVERs and collaborators.

The online Showcase will feature more than 20 projects from this amazing multidisciplinary team.

Wednesday, 8 November 2023, 1:30pm - 3pm (AEDST)

[REGISTER HERE](#)



2023 QCVRN & Heart Foundation Research Showcase



The 2023 QCVRN Research Showcase hosted in collaboration with the National Heart Foundation, was held in Brisbane on 10th October. With over 70 participants, the showcase highlighted emerging cardiovascular research in Queensland and was a great opportunity for networking and

collaboration.

The program featured presentations by Keynote speaker and ACvA President Prof Gemma Figtree AM and Heart Foundation CEO David Lloyd as well Prof Genevieve Healy, Prof David McGiffin, A/Prof Fraser Russel, A/Prof Nathan Palpant and Dr. Emma Thomas.

The event also recognized excellence in cardiovascular research, with awards presented by QCVRN co-chair Dr. Meegan Walker and David Lloyd. Congratulations to the 2023 QCVRN PhD Top Up Scholarship

Winners- Ms. Ureni Halahakone, Mr. Krist Feka, and Mr. Victor Vasquez-Matsuda as well as awards for EMCRs Dr. Clara Jiang (UQ), Mr. Jinxuan Cai (Griffith University), Mr. Alexander Yu (UQ), and Ms. Mihye Jeon for outstanding presentations.

Rising Stars Masterclass & Final 2023 Seminar



The **2023 Rising Stars Seminar** Series showcases NSWCVRN EMCRs who are building a career and late-stage PhD students. The final seminar of the year is on **10th November** at The George Institute for Global Health on **advances in multidisciplinary cardiovascular care**. You'll hear from Laura Yeates, Kaylee Slater, Dr Mitchell Sarkies, Dr Carmen Zhang, Renping Liu, Dr Louise Thornton, Dr Seakcheng Lim. You can find more details and register [HERE](#).

On **Thursday 16th November** Dr Nicola Straiton will facilitate a dynamic and **interactive Masterclass on insights into the value of consumer involvement in research**. Learn how to budget for involvement activities and develop effective strategies for connecting with consumers to help shape research. The Masterclass will include a panel session facilitated by Carrie Hayter, Consumer Engagement Manager, Health Consumers NSW, where a panel of cardiovascular researchers and consumers will share their insights and experiences of collaborative research.

Please note, as this is an interactive workshop, participation is face-to-face only..

Registration is free and catering will be provided. You can [REGISTER HERE](#).

Melbourne Immunometabolism Showcase

The **5th symposium of the Melbourne Immunometabolism Group** will be held at the Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute on **November 15th from 1-5pm**. There's a fantastic line up of speakers discussing various aspects of the links between immunology and metabolism. This event is free. [REGISTER HERE](#).



Speakers include:

- Professor Mariapia Degli-Esposti (Monash University)
- Professor Axel Kallies (Peter Doherty Institute)
- Dr Ebony Monson (La Trobe University)
- Dr Lucile Rankin (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute)
- Professor Dmitri Sviridov (Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute)
- Professor Iliia Voskoboinik (Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre)

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



MTAA Medtech Conference / Sydney / 30 -31 October

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



Research Associate / Postdoctoral Research Associate – Applied Statistics

Charles Perkins Centre & Kolling Institute / Sydney / 29 October

Combine your expertise in big data to support the discovery and development of novel biomarkers of cardiovascular disease.

Heart Support National Program Co-ordinator

Heart Support Australia / work-from-home or Canberra / 30 October

Heart Support Australia is rapidly expanding their locations across the country and to meet the growing demand they are employing a program coordinator to commence on a part-time basis with the opportunity to grow into a more permanent full-time role. Researchers or PhD students are encouraged to apply also as this role can complement these types of people especially if they have experience in working with cardiac disease populations.

The closing date has been extended to COB Monday 30 October.

Professorial Research Fellow

Menzies Institute for Medical research / Hobart / 12 November

This role will see you play a key role in the ongoing development and sustainability of the newly established Cardiovascular Research Flagship. You will lead collaborations, engagement, and planning activities to advance the work of the Flagship.

Senior Research Fellow

Menzies Institute for Medical research / Hobart / 12 November

This role will see you contributing to the development and sustainability of the Cardiovascular Research Flagship through involvement in collaborations with researchers, clinicians and the community to reduce risk and improve outcomes of cardiovascular disease.

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.

Shaping Australia Awards

Universities Australia / Australia / 20 November

The *Shaping Australia Awards* will recognise excellence across teaching, research and community service, celebrating the contribution universities and individuals make to Australia and Australians. Individuals and teams from Australian universities are invited to submit entries in four categories.

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 1** (Targeted Call for Research): improve early detection and targeted treatment for the most common cancers to reduce the burden of disease. Research proposals in this Stream must focus on one of the following Topics:
 - **Topic A:** developing patient-friendly, non-invasive approaches to cancer screening and management
 - **Topic B:** exploring methodologies for longitudinal cancer management using genomics and functional genomics.
- **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.

2023 International Clinical Trial Collaborations Grant Opportunity

NHMRC / Australia / 6 December 2023 (min. data)

Applications to this grant opportunity must propose a clinical trial in Australia in collaboration with international counterparts. The clinical trial should not have commenced recruitment at the Australian trial site/s.

WA Future Health Research & Innovation Advisory Council Submission

WA FHRI / Western Australia / 8 January 2024

The Future Health Research and Innovation (FHRI) Fund's Advisory Council is engaging with the WA health and medical research and innovation sector to understand issues, challenges and opportunities of significance. Health and medical researchers, innovators, consumers or community groups are invited to submit an abstract or summary that addresses an issue, challenge or opportunity of significance for the Sector. Selected submissions will have the opportunity to present their topic to the Advisory Council.