Early Career Researchers Program 2017

Target Audience

The 2017 program for Biomedical and Clinical Researchers aims to give participants support in career planning, networking and the development of research capacities. The program is for researchers who are 1 - 10 years postdoctoral. It consists of 6 half-day sessions and a structured mentor program.

Session 1 - Career planning

**Presenter**: Prof Nicholas Hunt  
**Duration**: 1.00 - 5.00 pm  
**Date**: 26 April 2017  
**Venue**: Lecture Theatre 2, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

Research careers may sometimes appear chaotic and out of our control, but there are strategies for maximising the chances of progressing and doing what researchers love. This module will review what is required by different career choices (eg. the demands of being a research team leader) and look in depth at the strategies that support those choices.

This session will:

- Provide an opportunity to think about future career directions, evaluate what is possible and to what level of involvement participants are willing to commit.
- Clarify how your achievements will be judged by grant reviewers, Appointment and Promotion Committees, peers, other scientists
- Review all aspects of “Track record” and identify areas that need developing.
- Explain how to begin formulating a research career plan.

Session 2 - Optimising grant success

**Presenter**: Professor Carol Armour  
**Duration**: 1.00 – 5.00 pm  
**Date**: 3 May 2017  
**Venue**: Lecture Theatre 2, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

A major grant application is like an examination where you must score 100% - but then still might not pass. Why are some people so often successful in their grant applications? Are they better scientists (perhaps they are), or just better at communicating their ideas to a highly critical scientific audience? Are there some simple skills that can be learnt to maximise our chance of success in grant applications?

Topics will include:

- The grant process
Many researchers find it difficult to describe their work clearly and succinctly. Fair enough - it's complex work. Yet it is vital to be able to do so. At some stage you will have to communicate with non-specialists about your work, either in writing or face-to-face. You may want to raise money for your research. You may want to write or talk to a charitable foundation, or to a promotions committee, or talk to members of a support group. Your employers might expect you to blog or tweet about your work, or engage with the community on Facebook. Or you may want to talk to the media to publicise your work.

By the end of the workshop we hope you will be able to:

- describe your work in plain English
- describe the reasons you are doing this research
- place this research in its social and scientific context
- understand the benefits of talking about your work to a wider audience
- understand how to talk about your work in a way that engages a wider audience
- understand how to engage with social media and mainstream media

You will be given an opportunity to write a draft biography for a website/publicity in your own time and receive feedback.

So you have a brilliant idea for your next research grant or award application, and you need everyone to “get” its value and significance? Then you must build the strongest possible connection between your text and its readers. In fact, persuasive packaging is far more influential in selling ideas than many admit. Your colleagues and assessors will not only judge your project by the quality of your ideas; they will be swayed by how you
Once you have settled on a (presumably brilliant) topic for your next submission, you will want state-of-the-art communication tools to make it simply irresistibl

This workshop is dedicated to the “how” of successful reader engagement, and translates interpersonal rapport-building techniques into the realm of competitive academic writing. A hands-on introduction to persuasive language use, it lets participants workshop a sample of their own work “live” and interactively.

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**Introduction to Mentoring**

**Date:** 17 May 2017  
**Venue:** Board Room, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research  
**Duration:** 5.00 pm – 5.30 pm

You will have been matched with an appropriate and personal Mentor for you. This short session highlights how to get the most out of the next 6 months with your senior Mentor and the do’s and don’ts of the relationship. It will enable you to get started on your mentoring arrangements before the presentation series has concluded. You will be given a handbook - “A guide to effective mentoring relationships” - which will cover the topics of:

- What is mentoring?  
- The three stages of mentoring relationships  
- Making it work  
- Evaluating and concluding the mentoring relationship

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**Session 5 – Time management and priorities**

**Presenter:** Amanda Phillips  
**Duration:** 1.00 – 5.00 pm  
**Date:** 24 May 2017  
**Venue:** Lecture Theatre 2, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

Being successful within the contemporary University and Institute research environment requires the ability to plan and juggle multiple people and projects (research and otherwise), and to really stay focused on priorities as demands change around you. This program will give you practical tools and strategies to support the multiple demands on your time.

- Introductions and Expectations  
- Being an ECR in the University/Institute environment – what’s currently working and what’s changed?  
- Time management truths – all about your habits and time wasters!  
- Priority – knowing what is really important  
- Prioritising your responses – what does it take to manage multiple demands?
Understanding personality preferences can help you become a more influential communicator and fully capitalise on your strengths. In this session, you will explore your own personality preferences and understand how these can impact on your career success. After completing the Myers Briggs type indicator tool, you will discuss ways to communicate across personality type differences. We will also discuss techniques for boosting your influence. You will learn to:

- Understand four key dimensions of personality and how these impact on your work style
- Detect behavioural cues which help you understand the preferences of others
- Deal with communication problems which are typically attributed to "personality differences"

Topics covered

- What is personality type?
- What type are you?
- Personality preferences in action
- Using personality theory to improve communication