Early Career Researchers Program 2016

Target Audience

The 2016 program for Public Health and Health Services 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 Kirsten Howard  
Duration: 1.00 - 5.00pm  
Date: 11 May 2016  
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 prospering 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 – 5.00pm  
Date: 18 May 2016  
Venue: Board Room, 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
- What grants are available to biomedical researchers, including grants from small granting bodies?
- Dealing with rejection and rebuttals
- Tips for success, what happens to your grants

### Session 3 – How to get your message across in grants

**Presenter:** Lisa Curtis-Wendlandt  
**Duration:** 1.00 – 5.00pm  
**Date:** 25 May 2016  
**Venue:** Board Room, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

Nailing grants, papers, prizes and awards: Write your way to success

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; the will be swayed by how you tell the story. 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 irresistible!

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.

### Session 4 - Writing and communicating about your research in plain English

**Presenter:** Mark Ragg and Melissa Sweet  
**Duration:** 1.00 – 5.00pm  
**Date:** 1 June 2016  
**Venue:** Board Room, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

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.

Session 5 – Time management and priorities

**Presenter:** Amanda Phillips  
**Duration:** 1.00 – 5.00pm  
**Date:** 8 June 2016  
**Venue:** Board Room, 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?  
• Your computer – and email  
• The People Factor!  
• Planning Tools – including considering work/life balance  
• Action plan  
• Review & Conclusion

Session 6 – Personalities Working Together

**Presenter:** Eleanor Shakiba  
**Duration:** 1.00 – 5.00pm  
**Date:** 15 June 2016  
**Venue:** Board Room, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research

Find out what makes your team tick. Understanding individual personality preferences will help everyone make the most of your team’s strengths. Discover why communication problems happen and what to do about them. Work out how to get the best from each team member. Decide how to become a really strong team and create an action plan that will help you charge towards team success!
You’ll come out of this session with powerful tools for boosting your influence. We’ll bring theory to life and tell you how to succeed. A range of practical tips will be presented to you. You’ll talk through examples and enjoy practical exercises. At the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand how personality preference impact on work styles
- Find out more about your own personality preferences
- See how personality preferences impact on team dynamics

Topics covered

- What is personality type?
- What type are you?
- Personality preferences in action
- Listening for preference cues

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**Part 2 – Next Stage - Mentoring**

**Date:** 8 June 2016  
**Venue:** Board Room, Level 5, Woolcock Institute of Medical Research  
**Duration:** 5.00 pm – 5.30 pm