KICKSTART GRANTS PROGRAM
2016 GUIDELINES

The Kickstart Grants Program is a partnership between the Balnaves Foundation (http://www.balnavesfoundation.com) and the Sydney Medical School designed to support promising Medical School early career researchers. Funding is for the calendar year 2016, and applications must be submitted to the Office of Research and Research Training for consideration by a sub-committee of the School’s Research and Research Training Committee. The sub-committee will make its recommendations to the Dean.

PURPOSE OF THESE GRANTS
These grants, of up to $25,000 for one year, are intended to be investments in people and pilot projects that are likely to lead to external funding returns for the Sydney Medical School and the University of Sydney. They are directed explicitly at early career researchers (ECRs) and new staff of the Sydney Medical School. These grants are not available to established researchers, and money awarded under this scheme cannot be held in conjunction with ANY other scheme except for training fellowships (e.g. NHMRC Career Development Awards, C J Martin Fellowships).

TIMETABLE
Applications close: 1 September 2015

DEFINITIONS
Early Career Researcher: To be considered an early career researcher under this scheme the applicant must have been awarded her/his PhD in 2008 or later, and hold a Level A or B academic appointment with the Sydney Medical School at the closing date for applications.

New staff: To be considered new staff under this scheme the applicant must hold a Level A, B or C academic appointment and have been employed by the Sydney Medical School for 2 years or less at the closing date for applications. The conditions (listed below) which make a candidate ineligible also apply to new staff.

ELIGIBILITY
- Applicants who do not satisfy the definition of ECR above may present their case as to why they should be considered an ECR within their application. This should be covered in the Track Record section of the application under the heading “Career interruptions”. Circumstances establishing ECR status beyond the primary definition could include career interruptions due to non-research employment, parental leave, misadventure or carer responsibilities.

- Candidates must hold a PhD or equivalent and would normally be expected to have permanent resident status in Australia

- Applicants must be either:
  1. members of the academic staff of the Sydney Medical School, and on the payroll of the University of Sydney or;
  2. have been formally appointed with an academic title (including clinical and conjoint appointments) to the Sydney Medical School in accordance with the “Honorary Titles” policy.

Note: General staff, casuals, adjuncts and honorary research affiliates may not apply. Current Sydney Medical School title holders salaried by independent medical research institutes with a current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place can apply.

- Applicants must demonstrate evidence of ongoing affiliation with the Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney, by providing a list of publications and other research productivity (e.g. grants and student supervision) for the last five calendar years (or the longest time applicable). Applicants must also agree to have their forthcoming research productivity correctly affiliated to the Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney and administered by the University of Sydney to be eligible to apply for this scheme. Affiliation must be with the Sydney Medical School or the University of Sydney.
These grants will not be awarded to researchers who are Chief Investigators A (CIAs) on any Category 1 grant which has funding in the year of application, other than training fellowships (e.g. NHMRC Career Development Awards, C J Martin Fellowships)

- Applicants who have been a CIA on a Category 1 grant in the past (excluding training awards such as NHMRC Career Development Awards and C J Martin Fellowships) will be ineligible

- Applicants who have previously received funding under this scheme or any other internal grant scheme managed by the Sydney Medical School or the Medical Foundation (excluding equipment grants) will be ineligible

- The applicant’s organisational unit (e.g. Clinical School, Discipline or Institute) must demonstrate their commitment to the ECR or new staff member by contributing at least an additional 20% of the amount requested from this scheme. In-kind contributions, such as a contribution to the salary of the applicant or provision of laboratory space or consumables, are not considered sufficient to meet this requirement.

**APPLICANTS WILL BE INELIGIBLE IF:**

- They have ever been a CIA on a Category 1 grant (excluding training awards such as NHMRC Career Development Awards and C J Martin Fellowships)

- The amount requested includes the applicant's salary or part thereof

- They have previously received funding from any Sydney Medical School or Medical Foundation scheme

- They have received, or are receiving, bridging funds or start-up funds from the DVCR. If a successful applicant receives DVCR funding during the period of the grant they must notify the Office of Research and Research Training.

- The applicant is a PhD student

- The application is judged to be a request for top-up funding for an existing project

- The application does not follow the requirements stated on the application form

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Applicants may make only one application to this scheme in each round

- This scheme is a single-applicant scheme

- This scheme is not available to purchase equipment or cover conference travel expenses

- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have a salary for the duration of 2016. If they do not have a continuing appointment, a statement from their Head of School/Institute should be included in their application.

- To be considered for this scheme an applicant’s project must be a new, independent project and not part of an existing research program. The applicant must explain in their application how this project will contribute to building their track record and how it will enhance their likely success in external funding rounds in the future. Stand-alone one year projects will not be considered. Applicants should also indicate which funding agency will be applied to when the pilot project is completed.

- The application must include a budget that covers the entire cost of the project. The application form should show the dollar value of the School/Discipline/Institute’s contribution and the amount requested from the scheme as two separate amounts which add up to the total value of the project as listed in the budget.
- The applicant’s salary cannot make up any part of the budget request. No part of the applicant’s salary will be covered by this scheme.

- Career interruptions will be taken into account in assessing ECR status, but researchers in this category must make a case as to why their application should be considered relative to opportunity.

- The assessment of applications and the decisions of the sub-committee will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
Applications must include:

1. Completed application form
2. PhD award letter
3. Research plan: an outline of no more than 3 pages describing the proposed pilot project including the following points:
   - Project title
   - Aims and significance
   - Research plan, methods & techniques
   - Budget outline (covering the entire cost of the project)
   - Indication of which funding agency will be applied to when the pilot project is completed
4. Track record: maximum 1 page, relative to opportunity, including the impact of the applicant’s work. Career interruptions (if applicable) approx. 100 words.
5. Publications list: last 5 years, include citation rates and impact factors
6. Letter of support from the Head of School/Discipline/Institute disclosing other funding (source and amount) available to support the proposed project and confirming continuation of appointment (if applicable)
7. A statement of no more than 1 page outlining how the project will enhance the applicant’s ability to apply for external grants in the future that will lead to major funding returns

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The following criteria will be taken into account by the assessment committee when they are considering the applications relative to other applications in the same round.

1. Excellence of the Chief Investigator as demonstrated by Track Record relative to opportunity. This will take into account:
   - Career awards
   - Quality of publications
   - Presentations at conferences
2. Funding potential: Do the applicant and the project have a high likelihood of securing competitive external funding in the next 24 months?
3. Quality of the project. This will take into account:
   - Significance
   - Feasibility
4. Environment: Can the project be successfully completed in the area where the applicant plans to do the work?

FURTHER INFORMATION
Ms Genaya Misso
Office of Research & Research Training
Ph.: 02 9114 0802
Email: medicine.profiles@sydney.edu.au