

## **2020 Early Career Researcher Accelerator Grants**

### **Overview of the Sydney West Translational Cancer Research Centre**

The Sydney West Translational Cancer Research Centre (SWTCRC) was established in 2011 with grant funding from the Cancer Institute NSW, and brings together over 500 expert cancer professionals in western Sydney to work together to accelerate the fight against cancer. The SWTCRC devotes itself to removing barriers, and to mentor, support and escalate the skills and achievements of our workforce so they can provide ever greater benefits to our local community. The overarching theme of the SWTCRC is to develop the potential of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) as a translational unit.

The strategy of the SWTCRC aims to:

1. Provide activities and support that promote connections between talented people so they can unite in a common purpose.
2. Identify important new areas of research which have the potential to improve patient outcomes.
3. Develop new funding partnerships which not only increase resources for our people, but make our projects sustainable into the future.
4. Work closely with other like organisations around NSW to identify new findings, share ideas, and team up for mutual gain.

This combination of activities brings together our many clinical and research experts, and our trainees, uniting them around common goals, and provides them resources to do what they do best. By getting the best we can from our human and technical resources, we will maximise our impact on reducing the burden cancer causes to our community.

### **ECR Accelerator Grants**

The ECR Accelerator Grants are intended to provide funding to develop and support researchers and clinician researchers who have no more than a total of five year's post-doctoral experience at the time of application, and who can demonstrate an emerging track record of research output, ability and potential as a future cancer research leader. The Accelerator Grant will support full-time or fractional salary. Appointments on this funding cannot go beyond June 30, 2021. Applications from PhD qualified researchers and PhD qualified clinician-researchers are welcomed. Salary funding will be awarded under one of two categories:

**Category 1** researcher, where up to 1.0 FTE can be supported for applicants who do not have salary support from other sources or

**Category 2** clinician researcher, where 0.4 - 0.6 FTE is dedicated to research. Confirmation that clinical work is funded by another employer must be provided. Funding allocation for Category 2 clinician researchers will be based on dedicated research time.

Where appropriate, applications can include a budget request for project costs to a maximum of \$20K. A detailed budget for should be included in the application. Infrastructure access costs and travel are excluded from project cost requests. These can be funded by applications to other SWTCRC schemes.

## Information for Applicants

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Accelerator grants can support salary for a variety of research activities including but not limited to;

- Extension or completion of current research projects
- Small pilot projects to gather preliminary data to support future grant applications. For such applications the project must be ready to commence immediately or already be in progress but lacking salary support
- Manuscript preparation or grant writing support

We encourage interested researchers to get in touch with the SWTCRC Manager to discuss potential applications prior to submission. This scheme is broadly designed to support activities which are difficult to fund from other sources and to build research capacity in SWTCRC early career researchers.

### Specifications

- Successful applicants will be appointed to positions at the University of Sydney Academic Level A or to positions at the Westmead Institute for Medical Research at a level commensurate with qualifications and experience.
- The research must be based at one of the SWTCRC sites. If support for manuscript or grant preparation is sought, the research should have been or will be carried out at a SWTCRC site. The applicant should be first author or CIA.
- Successful candidates will be required to provide a final report and other information as requested to enable the SWTCRC to fulfil its reporting requirements.
- The Cancer Institute NSW and the SWTCRC must be acknowledged in scientific publications and presentations resulting from work carried out with SWTCRC financial support.
- Programs may have the following components;
  1. A specific laboratory-based research project that has realistic deliverables in the available timeframe.
  2. A clearly articulated plan to use salary support for writing manuscripts or grant applications to further the researcher's career. Applications must specifically address grant schemes they will be writing applications for or manuscripts they will submit while being supported by the Accelerator Grant.
  3. Involvement in the SWTCRC. Grant recipients will be expected on request to:
    - a. participate in education and training activities of the SWTCRC
    - b. become a member of an appropriate sub-committee of the SWTCRC
    - c. participate in other SWTCRC activities as requested by the Executive.

### Eligibility

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility criteria in order to be considered for the SWTCRC Accelerator Grant.

- Citizenship
  - a. Australian citizen *or*
  - b. Holder of Australian Permanent Resident Status *or*
  - c. New Zealand citizen holding a Special Category Visa
- Qualification
  - a. Applicants must hold a PhD or have been accepted for the award of PhD in a cancer related field. PhD candidates who have submitted their PhD for examination are eligible to apply but any awarded grant cannot commence until the applicant's thesis is confirmed as accepted. The latest date for commencement of is January 1, 2021.

## Information for Applicants

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- b. Candidates applying as a clinician researcher must be a registered medical practitioner with specialist training in an oncology related field (Fellowship of relevant college, or eligible for Fellowship within 12 months), and hold a fractional clinical appointment at a SWTCRC site.

**Note: Grants will not be awarded to enrolled postgraduate degree students, including but not limited to part-time PhD or MSc candidates.**

- Location of Research
  - a. Applicants must be Australian-based and affiliated with one of the SWTCRC sites.
- Ethics
  - a. Laboratory-based projects will ideally have all required ethics and governance approvals in place prior to application. Please include a copy of approvals with your submission.
  - b. If ethics or governance approvals have not been finalised at the time of application, please indicate and provide evidence for the stage of this process. Grants cannot commence until ethics is finalised. The latest commencement date is 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.
- Sydney West Translational Cancer Research Centre Membership and Support
  - a. Applicants must have been a member of the SWTCRC for six months at the time of application.
  - b. Applicants may not hold or be applying for funding from another Cancer Institute NSW Translational Cancer Research Centre.
  - c. Applicants must demonstrate how they have or will actively engage as a member of the SWTCRC.

### Selection criteria

A Selection Review Panel will take the following criteria into account when evaluating the applications:

- Suitability and experience of the applicant.
- Research achievements of the applicant relative to opportunity.
- Scientific quality of research with clearly articulated pathway to a larger project or
- Likelihood that the proposed use of funding will lead to success in grant applications or publication success.
- Demonstrated commitment to research.
- Alignment with the goals and objectives of the SWTCRC.

### How to apply

Applications will close at 5pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July.

Applications should include:

- SWTCRC ECR Accelerator Grant application form.
- Curriculum vitae.
- Copies of requested documents (qualifications, evidence of citizenship, ethics approvals).

Eligible and complete applications received by the closing date will be reviewed and ranked by a selection panel which includes the SWTCRC Director and other representatives from SWTCRC Executive and/or external reviewers as appropriate. The application process may include meeting with the selection panel.

Applications should be submitted by email to

[bronwyn.robertson@sydney.edu.au](mailto:bronwyn.robertson@sydney.edu.au)

with the subject heading "ECR Accelerator Grant Application"