

President's Report

In this year's Federal Budget the Government announced their continued commitment to legislate a revised version of the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF). The ASMR welcomes this long-term investment strategy for health and medical research. Pending approval by the Senate, the MRFF will result in an additional investment into health and medical research of \$10M this year and is projected to grow to \$55M/2016–17, \$130M/2017–18 and \$224M/2018–19. However, the sector faces a challenging year ahead, with investment into NHMRC remaining static (since 2011) and a delay in legislating the MRFF (> 1 year since its first announcement in 2014). In real terms this represents a decline in investment into NHMRC and has placed never before seen pressure on health and medical researchers in Australia. ASMR has voiced its concerns as well as recommendations for the MRFF Bill in a submission to a Senate led Inquiry and ASMR has voiced its concerns as well as recommendations for the MRFF Bill in a submission to a senate led inquiry and I provided evidence in person to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee hearing on the 4th of August.

Our key recommendations for the MRFF Bill included:

1. MRFF investment must be independently peer-reviewed by NHMRC; and
2. Strategies and priorities for the MRFF be established under the umbrella of the NHMRC research committee to avoid duplication and maximise the 'add on value' of the MRFF to the current NHMRC medical research endowment investment.

Given the government has advised that the MRFF is to fund different but complementary research to that currently funded by NHMRC, it is ASMR's view that success of the MRFF relies heavily on a strong foundation of investment into the NHMRC. Static investment into NHMRC means grant success rates will continue to decline at an alarming rate (predicted to be <10% this year), with our highly skilled workforce being decimated now. ASMR's immediate goal is to continue advocating to government to protect the investment which has returned so much to the economy and to the health of all Australians. We are continuing our pre-budget



Dr Phoebe Philips, ASMR President

request of an immediate injection of \$300M into the NHMRC to arrest the inevitable losses which will occur over the next three years and ensure the community is well positioned to take advantage of the benefits accruing from the MRFF. Our request continues to be evidence based and importantly pegs health and medical research investment as a proportion of the total health expenditure. After all health and medical research is a fundamental pillar for the whole of health!

I had a highly rewarding time visiting all states in Australia during ASMR Medical Research Week® (MRW®). Despite the fiscal challenges and pressure that the sector currently faces — it was inspirational to see our sector unite and be so enthusiastic about their research. It was a privilege to travel our country with this year's ASMR Medallist, Professor Ashok Saluja, who is an example of the benefits of long-term sustained support for research. *'30 years of continuous NIH funding has resulted in Ashok taking a novel anti-cancer drug (Minnelide) into the clinic for patients with pancreatic cancer — with the phase -1 clinical trial showing very encouraging results'*. Ashok did an outstanding job of advocating on our behalf to state and federal ministers on all sides of politics. We really put our medallist through a marathon of events and travel during ASMR Medical Research Week® and I thank

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Ashok for his time and commitment throughout!

Congratulations to all members of the ASMR state committees and Directors for all of your hard work in putting together an outstanding national program of events. Your dedication and volunteer time is very much appreciated by ASMR and also by your colleagues, peers and importantly key government decision makers. I personally thank each and everyone one of you for your valuable contribution! A special thanks to ASMR Directors Rebecca Patrick (ASMR MRW®convenor) and Daniel Johnstone (Media) for their hard work. On behalf of all ASMR representatives, I want to thank our executive office Cath West and Priscilla Diment for working around the clock to ensure that ASMR MRW® was a success. On a personal note, I am indebted to ASMR's senior executive officer Cath

West for all of her support this year to date — thank you so much!! Cath your passion and commitment to improving health outcomes for all Australian's through your involvement with all ASMR activities is inspirational!

ASMR's National Scientific Conference is just around the corner, with an exciting line up of both national and international speakers. Special thanks to ASMR Directors Luke Hesson and Joanne Bowen for all of their hard work to date. I look forward to seeing you there.

In the second half of this year, it is important that the sector maintain its advocacy with Government. I will keep you informed of ASMR's position and advocacy campaign throughout the rest of the year.

Dr Phoebe Philips,
ASMR President



Alan Trounson

A Californian Bird's Eye View of Australian Research

California

I was given the opportunity of leading the Californian Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM; the \$3 billion bond funding initiative established by Robert Klein to drive stem cell research and translation) in 2007. As President of CIRM under Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and then Jerry Brown, and reporting to a board of 29 appointees in public, this was a very different experience to the one I had with the Australian National Stem Cell Centre. Some of these differences were embedded in the design of CIRM, where peer review of grant applications could only be done by scientists from outside California — removing every shred of conflict of interest from the evaluation of submitted grants. The peer review included the voice of patient advocates who could make recommendations but not score the projects. I took these recommendations of the best-scored projects to the board seven times a year and asked them to make the final decision of what should be funded.

A Productive Research Environment

This very public process provided maximum transparency to decisions to support research. I spent a lot of time among the scientists in academia, medical research institutions, and biotechnology companies seeking their inputs into the most important areas of discovery. For translation, I persuaded academics and clinicians to collaborate with companies to maximize progress towards registered clinical trials. I appointed very experienced scientists with regulatory, clinical, academic and industry backgrounds to help manage "Disease Team" translational projects to progress efficiently using milestones and go-/no-go decisions

with annual independent expert review. This was an extraordinarily efficient and successful process. I linked scientists from around the world with Californian scientists using funding sources of states, countries and foundations — including the State of Victoria and NHMRC. In these projects, the sun never set. The outcome was an incredible productivity in stem cell research with >28% of papers in the impact factor journals >10. Academics embraced translation because grants were \$5–20 million over 4 years and scientists were willing to collaborate to be part of the groundswell of success. There were many clinical trials testing out first in human safety, efficacy and proof of concept by the time I concluded my Presidency in mid-2014.

Australia

My experience of Australian research in fitting back here is one of depressed optimism with more and more scientists applying for a shrinking quantum of research dollars each year. I think most scientists spent the majority of their time between November and March writing NHMRC or ARC grants that have a low chance of success (I hear a 10% funding line commonly). The buzz has gone out of the labs for many young people, who are potentially the creative next generation of Australian scientists. I was told you can't obtain funding from industry because there are so few companies, and the ones that are here have small market caps. I think the absence of a Minister for Science in the Federal Government is a tragedy indicative of the failure to understand the importance and benefit of science and technology to Australia. More importantly, this indicates that we have failed to get across the economic and personal benefits to Australians of a technology rich environment.

A Strategy for the Future

We need to change and change quickly this malaise in developing technology or be left behind in the global movements that are occurring around us. China is growing rapidly as an influential community looking for friends and partners in medicine and biotechnology. The US continues to lead by investment in opportunity. Robert Klein now speaks of the \$100 billion bond funding investment and wants us all to join him in a global march for generating new treatments for a myriad of medical problems. Genomics research is disentangling our susceptibility to disease and variants of heterogeneity within human diseases with massive investments by the US and by individuals like Craig Venter. Japan has embraced human induced pluripotent stem cells as a new way to understand disease and develop drug and cell therapies, and many of us are calling for global collaborations across all these platforms. Australians are engaging, but are hampered by lack of substantial and long-term visionary funding. This isn't likely to come from politicians with 3–4 year election priorities. We absolutely need a Future Fund underwritten by government (bonds) that will enable us to be one of the elite science nations. I continue to argue that we are not riding on the sheep's back nor on mining resources. We are good at science and

engineering and should be growing a strong public and private technology base for expanding the energy, biotech and pharmaceutical industries.

Time to Change

I am an optimistic person, and have started up an immune cell therapy company. In some ways this is to show the perhaps less optimistic people that I have met since I returned, that good ideas can be converted into a strong platform of research. I do think we need to have elected politicians with a science vision, and we need to convince the community to help us do it. There are many ways to be creative, including in finance — Robert Klein taught me that. Reinvigorating medical research is a real priority for us to get back on track as a global leading nation. Looking out for opportunities is critical. Soft options aren't going to be sustainable and minor alterations to NHMRC funding won't do it. Our engine of discovery needs to be converted into community benefits and all this can be accomplished with the right strategy. ASMR is a great place to begin this process.

**Alan Trounson,
Distinguished Scientist,
Hudson Institute for Medical Research**

Career Development

— A diverse journey to success

I struggled during my early twenties to define a career path that I felt would be professionally and personally satisfying. I was not amongst the lucky few that had a deep passion or calling for a particular career path. I was ambitious and wanted to do well, like many of my peers, I felt that I should enter a field that was secure, well remunerated and provided me the opportunity to grow and develop my skills and abilities. After undertaking an applied science degree at Newcastle University I returned home to central western NSW where, not surprisingly, science related jobs were scarce. My first fulltime occupation involved training and assisting long-term unemployed people throughout country New South Wales. Initially I found this position very demanding, as I had little life experience to draw from and no counselling experience of any kind. Life in remote rural Australia can be very difficult and isolating with few employment opportunities. It was here that I first developed my communication and interpersonal skills in the real world and learnt an incredibly valuable lesson. Integrity, honesty and the ability to be genuine are absolutely critical to communicating and building effective relationships. As a 21-year-old college graduate, I learnt the hard way, that giving ingenuous and impracticable advice to a fifty-year-old out of work farm labourer who is desperate to support his four

children is not a good idea for several reasons including your well-being! People have the innate ability to sense the truth; this is no greater than in our field, where we constantly hone our skills judging fellow scientists. I consider integrity, values and the ability to build effective relationships as the most essential skill set to career progression. After three years in the country I longed for a change, and also the ability to buy a BBQ chicken without having to phone the local takeaway before 10am to secure one of the four cooked that day!

After moving to Brisbane, I started work as a nutritionist at the Wesley Private Hospital. It was here that I had my first regular contact with people suffering from aggressive cancers and witnessed firsthand the progression and treatment of their terrible diseases. These experiences



Dr Bryan Day

Notice of the Annual General Meeting of The Australian Society for Medical Research

All members are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Society to be held on the 16th of November 2015 at The Stamford Plaza Hotel,

Adelaide, commencing at 12:30pm and concluding at 1:45pm

**Dr Daniel Johnstone
Honorary Secretary, ASMR**

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be held at our
national
scientific
conference.**

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www.asmr-nsc.org.au**

had a profound effect on me and motivated me to undertake a PhD in medical science and indeed still motivate me to this day. It was here that I learnt a second valuable career lesson. Finding what personally motivates you is essential to provide the internal drive you need to succeed. A career in science in Australia has probably never been as tough as it is right now. To succeed you need to be highly competitive, this takes prolonged commitment and the ability to overcome significant obstacles, strong motivation helps you to keep pushing through the hard times.

A close friend of mine remarked that if you give someone four hours to mow the lawn it will take four hours, if you give them two, it takes two. Every research dollar is valuable and becoming increasingly scarce. To succeed you must make the most of your time and resources, this means having very well defined short and long term goals and sticking to deadlines. Having sat as a member on two NHMRC grant review panels, I have learnt one important lesson — research output matters. Outstanding grants follow a typical format; they ask and then propose to answer an important question in a logical well planned format by an individual or team that has a proven track record of “getting the job done”. This may sound overly simple, but ideas are the easy part, it’s the ability to bring those ideas to fruition and staying on project that matters the most. Individuals with the ability to think clearly and prioritise their tasks to ensure that they can achieve their goals will more often than not be the most successful in any given field.

Warren Buffett commented that he could never understand why fortune 500 companies felt the strong need to move successful senior executives from position to position to diversify their skills. If you work as a senior executive in one of Buffett’s chocolate factories he will never move you to work in his railway company. In Buffett’s mind, if you know chocolate, then you stay in chocolate! The message here is simple, work out what you are good at and stick to it. Staying in your field has significant advantages, particularly in a country such as Australia that has a small research community. This is certainly not the only strategy for

success, but rather one that has worked well for me. I stayed in my chosen field of neuro-oncology, which I commenced during my PhD, and built a network of likeminded scientists, clinicians and neurosurgeons. This enabled me to develop a brain cancer bank and from this primary cultures and animal models which allowed me to answer my research questions more faithfully. This was critical as it increased the quality of my work and enabled me to publish in higher impact journals. Ultimately, helping to build my reputation and increase my ability to attract competitive research funding.

Lastly, finding a good mentor can make all the difference. I was incredibly fortunate to have Professor Andrew Boyd as a mentor to watch over my ‘formative’ years and provide support and evaluation. I greatly value his advice and he is still actively involved in my research, I certainly could not have got to where I am today without his support.

I am constantly awed at the level of energy and commitment that scientists bring to their research; we are blessed with an abundance of passion in our field which makes coming to work every day a joy. I am excited to be a part of the ASMR and feel privileged to serve as a board member; in my short time I have already met so many incredibly dedicated people. This gives me renewed hope that the Australian research community will survive these turbulent times and emerge stronger than ever. I wish you all the best with your science careers, success is the culmination of all the small steps we take each day, a great journey that never ends. I will leave you with a quote from Albert Einstein and I hope to see you, as we say in the country, “around the traps”!

“Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people.”

– Albert Einstein

**Dr Bryan W Day,
ASMR Director,
Professional Development Portfolio**

ASMR Research Awards

ASMR offers two Research Awards annually. These awards support a postgraduate student member of the ASMR nearing completion of their studies or a recently graduated (3 years maximum) postdoctoral member to undertake a short period of research in a laboratory outside of Australia (\$5,000) or in a distal laboratory within Australia (\$2,000). The award specifically excludes support for conference attendance and travel for an extended period of postdoctoral studies. Applicants for these

awards must have been members of the ASMR for at least 12 months immediately preceding the year in which the Award application is to be considered.

Application Deadline September 30, 2015.

Application forms from

<http://www.asmr.org.au/Researchfund.html>

**Dr Daniel Johnstone
Honorary Secretary, ASMR**

The Ultimate Intellectual Challenge

When asked why I chose a scientific career, the answer was reflexive: science is the ultimate intellectual challenge. At the naïve age of 18, this was a big statement, loaded with optimism and hubris. In reality, it was the choice between a medical career focused on patient care as service provider, or the exciting world of new scientific discoveries on the global stage. Innovative research as a means of improving health was foremost in my mind then, and remains so now. Thirty years on, I would still make the same decision since I truly believe science is the future for medical progress. However, the political and cultural landscape has changed substantially. Today, our society seeks instant gratification and politicians are no exception. Delivery of high standard patient care and spiraling health service costs are imminent problems and have taken priority. There is a new rhetoric, “world class”, “punching above our weight”. The media demand sensational sound bytes fuelling unrealistic expectations. At the coalface, we know that research takes time, commitment and substantially more investment than has occurred in recent times. Our national psyche has to realize that technological innovation, including medical research, is critical for us to maintain economic security, social consciousness and humanitarian responsibility.

As a student, I was completely awed by nature’s extraordinary power of a single gene mutation, so called antennapedia, being capable of generating flies with legs growing out of where antennae should have been. From these studies, entire families of genes were discovered, capable of directing the formation of body parts and cell differentiation in worms, drosophila, mice and of course, humans. This basic scientific research, exploration and rigorous testing of ideas, was the foundation upon which we could build studies looking for medical cures. Today however, due to funding shortages, increasing short term economic imperatives and reliance on rapid payback from discoveries, “translation” has become the overpowering master and driver of biomedical research. Whilst scientists must never lose sight of the bedside, we must equally acknowledge the necessity of rigorous bench work to reach that endpoint. Hurried attempts at translation without adequate fundamental principles frequently leads to incomplete therapeutic responses, dead ends and costly failures.

Given the past decades of unprecedented economic growth in Australia, the current situation is incomprehensible, especially given the indisputable financial, social and health returns from investments

into biomedical research, and indeed, the strong endorsement of such investments by many Australians. However, we are at the edge of a precipice: our global competitiveness is falling, in no small part due to decades of relatively diminishing support for research and innovation. This issue is integrated with an urgent need to boost scholastic performance in science and mathematics. Our universities are being hobbled by high level political indecision. Our brightest students now choose a medical career over science for lifestyle, security and income reasons. The biotechnology sector has been neglected when it should be providing young scientists with opportunities to apply their skills towards economic growth once our minerals have been exploited. Meanwhile, American and European counterparts continue to set the pace, and in a blink, our Asian neighbours have overtaken us in many areas. There is an urgent and critical need for us to rebuild and regain our scientific leadership. Failing to recognize impact factors, notwithstanding their flaws, devalues quality and international competitiveness: Olympic competition requires a different mindset to district carnivals. Whilst recovery will take many years, we must begin by providing recognition, prestige and aspirational career structures for biomedical scientists. This must include adequate resources for experiments and a resetting of goals to understand “world class”, free of rhetoric. Only then, will we be able to move forwards. Whilst we have pockets of research excellence, overall, we are not “punching above our weight” in biomedical science when we consider our wealthy economy, high standards of living and sociopolitical stability. Confining research vision and strategy to nebulous and ineffectual policies will guarantee a steep and painful fall off the precipice and a hangover from which we may never recover.

**Professor Ruth Ganss,
Laboratory Head,
Vascular Biology and Stromal Targeting,
Scientific Head,
Cancer and Cell Biology Division,
The Harry Perkins Institute of
Medical Research,
NHMRC Senior Research Fellow**



Professor Ruth Ganss

“medical research is critical for us to maintain economic security, social consciousness and humanitarian responsibility”

“rigorous bench work is a necessity to reach the endpoint of translation”



Dr Mardie Townsend

Cross-Disciplinary Research

— an Opportunity for Early- to Mid-Career Researchers

Research funders have typically preferred so-called 'hard science'— quantitative, clinically-focused research — rather than the 'softer' end of the research spectrum, incorporating health promotion, illness prevention and qualitative understandings of the underpinnings of health and wellbeing. Both ends of the spectrum have important contributions to make. Clinical research has the potential to uncover new and better approaches to treatment of illness and injury, while the application of social science approaches offers the opportunity to understand the behavioural and social underpinnings of health issues. Taken together, the two approaches have the potential to contribute to reduced incidence of ill health and more effective treatment of health problems.

The influence of environmental degradation on human health has been known for many years, having been articulated more than 50 years ago by Rachel Carson in *'Silent Spring'*. Medical research into issues such as the impacts of air pollution on respiratory disease, and the link between asbestos exposure and mesothelioma, serve as a couple of the many examples of research that has crossed the environment-health boundary. More recently, research has shown that environmental deprivation — the separation of humans from the natural environment — also has detrimental impacts on human health. Yet the exploration of this issue — crucial in the face of issues such as climate change — requires not just the crossing of the environment-health divide, or the bridging of the quantitative/qualitative research methods gap, but also the transcendence of the three-way split between environmental science, health/medical science and social science.

The Health, Nature and Sustainability Research Group in Deakin University's School of Health and Social Development adopts such an approach. For example, the *'Feel Blue, Touch Green'* project used both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the benefits of hands-on engagement in ecosystem

restoration for people experiencing depression and anxiety. Other research has focused on a variety of settings such as schools, hospitals, community health services, local communities, so-called 'wilderness' areas, and Aboriginal communities. This work encompassed a wide range of population groups such as children, older people, people experiencing mental illness, people with a disability and those who act as environmental volunteers. To cover such a comprehensive scope the work required partnerships with the health care, education, disability and environmental management sectors, and used a wide range of research methods including systematic reviews of evidence, qualitative face-to-face interviews, on-line surveys, application of verified scales and indices, focus groups, participant observation, and case studies. The results from this work provided strong evidence that the use of civic environmentalism had positive effects on health, wellbeing and social connectedness for individuals and the wider population.

Cross-disciplinary research, such as the examples above, has huge potential for human health and wellbeing overall. But this poses additional problems for early- and mid-career public health researchers, requiring them to work across an even greater range of disciplinary boundaries, can take them beyond the scope of their specific area of interest or expertise. To succeed in this highly demanding field, three critical elements of success are needed. First, early- to mid-career researchers must build relationships which facilitate crossing of the disciplinary divides. By building relationships with other researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in each of the disciplinary areas, early- to mid-career researchers may find unexpected allies — people who may be open to, but never have thought of, multi-disciplinary approaches to problems. Second, early- to mid-career researchers should consider starting with small-scale funding, such as internal grant opportunities. By doing this, researchers can grow their track record whilst still managing the competing demands on their time. Finally, and perhaps the most important, is passion — the willingness to keep pursuing the issues, engaging with potential research partners and seeking funding (however small) for cutting edge inter-/multi-disciplinary research NO MATTER WHAT! Albert Einstein once said: "To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science."

Call for Nominations to the Board of Directors of The Australian Society for Medical Research

This year there are vacancies for the election of four (4) Directors who will have a term of two years (Nov 2015 to Nov 2017). Closing date for nominations is Friday 4th September 2015. The Nomination form with eligibility information is available for download from <http://www.asmr.org.au/breakingnews.html>.

Dr Daniel Johnstone, Honorary Secretary, ASMR

Dr Mardie Townsend

The PhD Journey: Not For the Faint-Hearted

As a child, I was always fascinated by science and mysteries. I knew I wanted to have a career in science. For a short while, the plan was to become a forensic scientist. However, a series of opportunities and inspirational encounters I had in school and in my undergraduate studies, led me on a pathway towards medical research. After the completion of my Bachelor of Biomedicine degree at the University of Melbourne, I entered into the Honours Program. Having a very fulfilling and enjoyable honours year at the Pregnancy Research Centre in The Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, I decided to continue working on my honours project for a PhD under the wonderful supervision of Dr Rosemary Keogh, Dr Padma Murthi, Dr Bill Kalionis and Professor Shaun Brennecke. My research project is focused on examining the roles of maternal susceptibility genes in the development of pre-eclampsia, a hypertensive disorder of pregnancy.

The PhD journey has so far proved to be a very eventful part of my life, with its many ups and downs. I believe there are three key "ingredients" in "cooking up" a PhD: perseverance, initiative, and remembering to have fun.

Perseverance is required to make it through the difficult and disappointing moments that frequently occur. For example, during the days when an experiment fails spectacularly even when you have spent weeks preparing for it, or the times when a manuscript receives a straight rejection from a journal. However, from these experiences, I learnt to troubleshoot experiments and revise the manuscript (with lots of help from my supervisors) resulting in clear results and a vastly improved manuscript that gets accepted. That boundless joy of accomplishment is definitely worth the effort of not giving up, and challenging yourself further.

Taking initiative and getting out of your comfort zone brings you places and allows you to meet people. Through serving on the ASMR Victorian State Committee, I have met so many individuals, each with their own interesting story to tell, attended various events, and expanded my networks beyond my lab and specialised field. The highlight of my ASMR service was the year I chaired the Victorian Student Research Symposium Subcommittee. This gave me a huge satisfaction (and lots of stress) in organising such a major

event, with other talented students and an increased appreciation for conference organisers as I now know how much hard work goes on behind the scenes. I have also sought to find as many opportunities as possible to present my work, whether through attending student conferences or participating in science communication competitions such as the 3 Minute Thesis Competition. I am, by nature, a very shy person, and I am actually terrified of public speaking. The numerous oral and poster presentations given have not only improved my communication skills, but have also lessened my speaking fears.

Remembering to have fun is also an important part of the entire PhD journey. Although there may be gloomy days in the lab, the best days include the joking and singing karaoke with other lab mates during experiment incubations, pipette tip target practice, lunchtime newspaper quizzes with the department, making new friends from around the world, and so much more. These are probably the memories that I will keep from my PhD in many years to come.

The sweet icing on the cake of my PhD journey so far (before I eventually complete the PhD anyway), is being awarded the ASMR Domestic Research Award in 2013. This award provided me with the opportunity to spend two months working with a world leader in pre-eclampsia genetics, Professor Eric Moses and his excellent team at the Centre for Genetic Origins of Health and Disease, The University of Western Australia in Perth. The aim of our collaboration was to identify novel biological pathways of the pre-eclampsia susceptibility genes using a bioinformatics approach.

My time in Perth was highly worthwhile and productive, and culminated in the work being presented as an oral at an international meeting in New Orleans, USA (for which I received a young investigator award), as well as a recent first-author publication in PLOS ONE. I am very grateful to the ASMR for this award, which has opened doors and enhanced my research experience. Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the never-failing support of my family, who have never stopped believing me all these years. I am on my way to becoming a fully-fledged scientist!

Hannah Yong



Hannah Yong

“three key ingredients in cooking up a PhD: perseverance, initiative and remembering to have fun”

ASMR Online Mentoring Program

This Program offers ASMR Members who are Early Career Researchers or 5–12 years post-doc, an opportunity to be matched with a Career

Development Mentor.

Further details from:

<http://www.asmr.org.au/Mentor.html>

ASMR MRW® 2015

— A National Celebration of H&MR

ASMR's premier public outreach event, highlighting the significance of H&MR to the community and inspiring the young minds of our future workforce with the ASMR Medalist Tour, Gala Dinners, Scientific Meetings, Careers, Schools and Cinema events, Dinner with a Scientist, Trivia

and Networking evenings. It couldn't happen without our hardworking state committees and I extend our warmest thanks and congratulations to them.

Dr Rebecca Patrick, ASMR Director, ASMR MRW® Convenor



2015 ASMR Medallist, Professor Ashok Saluja, internationally renowned for his work on pancreatitis and pancreatic cancer, shared his personal journey as a career researcher and his views on the importance of sustained investment in H&MR at dinners across the country and at the National Press Club.



President Dr Phoebe Philips (right) accompanied ASMR Medallist, Professor Ashok Saluja around the country during MRW®, helping to promote H&MR and engage with distinguished guests, including Pru Goward NSW Minister for medical research (far left) and His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC.

High School Careers Day (NSW)

"Thank you so much for organising this day. As a Career's Advisor it was one of the most informative professional learning days I have attended. The feedback from my students was extremely positive and they came away feeling very inspired. Also, please thank all the presenters they were fantastic".

— Deb Rixon,
Head Teacher
Career's Advisor,
Northern Beaches
Secondary College,
Manly



South Australian ASMR MRW® Award Finalists. Our state scientific meetings attracted record attendances.



State committees members are the backbone of the week. Our thanks and congratulations to all!



Sell out 'Dinner with a Scientist' events occurred across the country, bringing together the public with leading scientists in a relaxed, fun environment.



"Science in the cinema" proved popular. Popcorn, movies, health and medical research were a winning formula.



Vibrant poster sessions were a highlight of all the scientific meetings. Here Victorian scientists discuss their latest results. Congratulations to all who received awards.

Major National Supporter of ASMR MRW® 2015



Australian Government
National Health and Medical Research Council

Major National Sponsor of ASMR MRW® 2015

The ASMR Medical Research Week® is supported by funding from the **Australian Government Department of Health**

www.asmr-nsc.org.au



EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION DEADLINE

14th August 2015

ORAL ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

14th August 2015

POSTER ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

18th September 2015

54th National Scientific Conference
15–18th November 2015, Stamford Plaza, Adelaide

Bugs, Bowels & Beyond

Innovations in Digestive Health and Disease Research

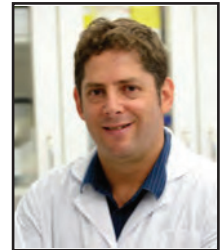
Our exciting program brings together leading international and Australian scientists, clinicians and health professionals with a wide-ranging focus on diseases affecting the digestive tract.

FIRKIN ORATION

Professor Eran Elinav

Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel

Our exciting program brings together leading international and Australian scientists, clinicians and health professionals with a wide-ranging focus on diseases affecting the digestive tract.



EDWARDS ORATION

Professor Nicholas Talley

University of Newcastle

Professor Talley is an icon of Australian research with over 1,000 publications. His team investigates the molecular basis and treatment of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and gastritis.



HIGHLIGHTED THEMES

- Gastrointestinal Microbiome*
- Gastrointestinal Cancer*
- Pancreatic and Liver Diseases*
- Gut Motility and Endocrinology*
- Inflammation and Immunity*
- Neurogastroenterology*
- Food and Nutrition*

Oral presentation opportunities for Early Career Researchers

INVITED SPEAKERS



Professor **Mark Morrison**
Gut Microbiome



Dr **Ilse Rooman**
Pancreatic Cancer



Associate Professor **Phil Sutton**
Mucosal Immunity



Dr **Trevor Lockett**
Food and Nutrition



Associate Professor **Vicki Whitehall**
Colon Cancer



Associate Professor **Damien Keating**
Gut Motility



Associate Professor **Amanda Page**
Neurogastroenterology

ASMR Directors 2015

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— President

Dr Sarah Meachem

— President-elect

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