

Sydney Vital Postgraduate Scholarships 2015– Round 2

General Feedback to Applicants

There were some queries about the assessment process. The current process is as follows:

- An independent multidisciplinary assessment committee was convened, consisting of 3 basic science researchers and 3 clinical or implementation researchers from Sydney Vital's partner institutions. The assessors were mostly mid-career researchers. Assessors were asked about any conflicts of interest and did not assess an application where a conflict existed.
- All assessors independently scored the applications and provided their scores to Sydney Vital.
- The scores were combined and applicants were ranked according to the final combined score.
- These were provided to the assessment committee and all committee members agreed with the final choice of successful applicants.

NB. Sydney Vital's processes are regularly reviewed and improved. The process for the next round will be included in the Scholarship Application Guidelines

Key points of feedback from 2015 Round 2:

1. The applications were of a high standard with a small margin separating funded and unfunded applications.
2. Only 2 applications directly addressed the alignment of their research with Sydney Vital's aims and objectives.
3. Some applications described large studies where the feasibility within a 12 month time frame was questioned.
4. Track records relative to opportunity were generally very good but some applicants could improve.
5. The significance and innovation section was completed quite well by some; others could improve this.

Points to remember for future applicants

1. Ensure that you know the aims and objectives of Sydney Vital and write your application with these in mind.
2. When completing the significance and innovation section ensure you highlight the following:
 - a. what is new about your research
 - b. what impact your results are likely to have in your field of research and on future research
 - c. how could your results be applied in the future to influence cancer treatment, diagnosis or cancer care
3. Focus your application on the research you will complete under the scholarship while providing a wider context. Avoid copying and pasting from existing funded grants (NHMRC, ARC, etc.) Applicants need to be clear regarding the outputs that will be generated by this specific scholarship, they should be measurable and able to be reported against in the future.
4. Ensure you mention all publications and presentations. Build your track record by taking opportunities to present and publish your work as you move through your research career.
5. Avoid using jargon – remember the assessment committee is multidisciplinary.

Please note:

- Sydney Vital will be uploading some grant writing resources to its website soon – feel free to make use of these
- **Sydney Vital is continually improving processes. We will be reviewing the application forms and instructions for applicants before the call for the next round of scholarship applications.**
- **Please look out for future funding opportunities offered by Sydney Vital <http://www.sydneyvital.org.au/> and become a member of Sydney Vital for routine updates.**