

2015 Research Scholar Award GUIDELINES_Round 3

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Sydney Vital is a Translational Cancer Research Centre based in Northern Sydney and funded by the Cancer Institute NSW (CINSW). It has been established to develop and translate new cancer research discoveries into improved patient outcomes. It is a functional aggregation of collaborating facilities in basic, clinical and population based research. A primary function of the centre is to build a sustainable translation research platform which can foster collaborations among researchers and clinicians. The specific goals are:

1. Facilitate the generation of practice improving research and its more rapid adoption for improved patient outcomes.
2. Facilitate evidence into practice research.
3. Facilitate the more efficient and effective incorporation of research, clinical training, education and service delivery within a formal governance structure that supports networks and enhanced collaboration between centres of research excellence and centres of clinical excellence which may include regional settings.
4. Build capacity in research and improve competitive advantage in securing other funds.

Sydney Vital members come from a number of institutions and hospitals including, the University of Sydney, Macquarie University, University of Technology, Sydney, the Kolling Institute of Medical Research, Royal North Shore Hospital, Northern Sydney LHD, the Mater Hospital, and others. We support our members by providing the enabling resources required to empower members to formulate and implement research-led advances in cancer diagnosis, treatment and care.

Sydney Vital invites applications for Research Scholar Awards the value of \$15,000 to support research projects of 12 months duration and closely aligned with the aims and objectives of SydneyVital. Projects must focus on translational cancer research including pre-clinical, clinical or implementation research.

The funding must be used to support the applicant's research project. The specific purpose of the funding is to be decided at the discretion of the applicant and their supervisor(s). Suitable uses of funds include, but are not limited to, consumables, purchase of a computer or other equipment, specialised software, statistical or other assistance, travel to a meeting to present the results of their project.

Key dates for round 3:

Call for applications	1-Sep-15
Closing date	1-Oct-15
Announcement of outcomes	1-Nov-15

Key dates for round 4:

Call for applications	1-Apr-16
Closing date	1-May-16
Announcement of outcomes	1-June-16

APPLICATION GUIDELINES**Eligibility criteria**

1. The applicant's principal supervisor must be a member of **Sydney Vital**, and **Sydney Vital** must be this supervisor's primary affiliation (as opposed to another Translational Cancer Research Centre or Unit).

To become a member or to renew your membership, follow the link below:

<http://www.sydneyvital.org.au/membership/registration/>

2. The applicant must be a research student or an active researcher and must meet either one of the following eligibility criteria:
 - a. Currently enrolled in a postgraduate research degree (PhD or Masters). If enrolled in a PhD preference will be given to 2nd and 3rd year PhD students. Students entering the 4th year of their PhD are eligible to apply, but will only be awarded funding for one semester.
 - b. A clinician researcher with a minimum of MBBS qualification and currently engaged in research activities and supervised by a senior researcher
3. Previous recipients of a **Sydney Vital** Research Scholar Award may re-apply for funding in this round; however, in addition to the application you will need to submit a one-page report outlining the progress which has been achieved since your original award.

Applicants must complete all sections of the application form and supply necessary approvals and signatures.

Conditions of the Award

- Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.
- All eligibility criteria must be met.
- Awardees receiving a **Sydney Vital** Scholar Award will be expected to actively participate in the **Sydney Vital** Skills & Development Program throughout their **Sydney Vital** Scholarship, including but not limited to:
 - i. Presenting at the Sydney Vital Collaborative Research Symposiums twice yearly.
 - ii. Attending and actively participating in an annual full-day **Sydney Vital** Skills & Development workshops or similar which will focus on translational research and research communication.
 - iii. Presenting at an approved Postgraduate Research Seminar at least once per year during their candidature and supporting fellow Research Scholar recipients by attending regular seminar sessions throughout the year.
 - iv. Keeping Sydney Vital informed of any outputs from the project (publications, presentations, media items etc.) and contributing when requested to the **Sydney Vital** newsletter or website with articles, and attending **Sydney Vital** events where possible.
 - v. Submitting an Annual Progress Report to **Sydney Vital** for each calendar year.

Successful applicants must also:

- maintain enrolment in a post-graduate degree (Masters or PhD) at their university or on-going active participation in a research project for clinician researchers,
- acknowledge **Sydney Vital**'s support in any documentation related to this scholarship in accordance with **Sydney Vital** Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines and **Sydney Vital** Guidelines for Logo Use, as well as promote **Sydney Vital**'s translational cancer research activities amongst other students, and
- sign a Letter of Acceptance and agree to these conditions in writing.

Assessment Process and Criteria

Sydney Vital will convene an independent, multidisciplinary panel (4-6 members) to assess the applications. After checking for conflicts of interest, each panel member will score each application according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Description	Score
Scientific Quality	Included a clear rationale, aims and objectives, appropriate experimental design and methods to answer aims, and feasibility	40%
Significance and Innovation	Highlights potential outputs in terms of creating new knowledge; current and future translational impacts	20%
Track record relative to opportunity	Evidence of an outstanding academic record according to opportunity.	30%
Consistency of the proposed research project with Sydney Vital's primary aims	Addresses the aims of fostering translational cancer research which leads to improved survival and quality of life for cancer patients, either in the short or longer term, as well as adding value to clinical and laboratory based research activities	10%

The scores will be combined and the highest scoring applications will be funded.

Notification of Outcome

- Each applicant will receive a letter advising them of the outcome of their application and listing their combined assessment score.
- Specific written feedback will not be provided to individual applicants. (this is in line with processes adopted by the NHMRC and CINSW)
- Sydney Vital will provide general feedback for the round to all applicants without identifying the applicant or the assessors. This general feedback will also include suggestions for improvement of future applications.

Application Form

The application should be in Times New Roman 12-pt font with 2 cm margins. Please use the following headings for your application.

SECTION A: ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

- A.1 Application Title (provide a short descriptive title of no more than 200 characters)
- A.2 Administering Institution (name of institution and department where this Scholar Award will be held)
- A.3 Scholar Details
- i. Name
 - ii. Contact information
 - iii. Eligibility category: (choose one)
 - Currently enrolled in a postgraduate research degree (PhD or Masters).

OR

- A clinician researcher with a minimum of MBBS qualification and currently engaged in research activities and supervised by a senior researcher but NOT currently enrolled in a postgraduate research degree
- iv. Qualifications (including institutions and dates of award)
 - v. State the year you commenced your PhD and your anticipated submission date. If date of commencement is a date in the near future, please state this date.
 - vi. Source of any currently held Scholarship(s) (including start and end dates). If you are awaiting notification of a scholarship, please list scholarships that you have applied for.

SECTION B: REQUESTED BUDGET

- B.1 Please provide a comprehensive breakdown of your budget including all laboratory supplies and any travel costs being sought (use table format)
- B.2 Budget detail and justification (ensure you justify all components of the above budget – no more than 4,500 characters)

SECTION C: TRACK RECORD (assessed relative to opportunity).

- C.1 Career Achievements and Awards (for example, patents, prizes, distinctions, honours, awards and other professional activities. Other relevant experience and commitments should also be mentioned. No more than 1,500 characters).
- C.2 Detail any aspects of your career or opportunities that are relevant to assessment that have not been detailed elsewhere in this application (for example, interruptions to career or any other circumstances that may have impacted on your career progression. No more than 1,500 characters).
- C.3 Outputs
- i. Publications – please list all peer reviewed publications under the headings of original manuscripts, book chapters, letters to the editor, other (please specify)
 - ii. Patents
 - iii. Funding – all funding attracted (names of all investigators, title of application, years funded, total amount of funding)
 - iv. Conferences – list of all conference abstracts
 - v. Presentations – list of all invited presentations

SECTION D: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

- D.1 Proposal Title (as per A.1)
- D.2 Summary of proposal: In no more than 750 characters (approx. 100 words) of plain language, summarise aims, significance and expected outcomes.
- D.3 Project Description (up to 5 pages, including figures and references). Please include the following sections:
- Background and Rationale: *Provide background information to support reasons for undertaking the proposed study and support this with a literature review and pilot data if possible*
 - Aims: *provide clear achievable aims for your project*
 - Research Plan and Feasibility: *Detail the design and methods justifying their use for your particular study; provide information about project feasibility keeping the 12 month time frame in mind*
 - Significance and Innovation: *Highlight any potential novel aspects of your research, its significance and any future translational impacts*
 - Alignment with Sydney Vital's Aims and Objectives: *Describe how your proposed study aligns with or addresses these objectives*
 - References:
 - Proposed Outputs: Describe your planned outputs from the proposed project e.g. publications, presentations, new methods protocols or guidelines

SECTION E: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Please include a description of the research facilities and academic activities within the department you will undertake / are already undertaking, your postgraduate studies. This should include the names and qualifications of your supervisors (up to one page).

SECTION F: SUPERVISOR REPORT

- F.1 Supervisor details: Provide the name, title, address and contact information of your supervisors and contact information for two referees.
- F.2 Supervisor report: The primary supervisor for each applicant is required to prepare a separate report which should include comment on the scholar's ability to undertake research, suitability for research training and how the research proposal fits in with the overall research direction of the department/institution. In addition, comment should be made about the facilities and environment provided by the department/institution and the experience of the supervisor in supervision of research students (up to 2 pages).

Submission Guidelines

Applications must be submitted by e-mail as a pdf attachment to SydneyVital.admin@sydney.edu.au. Please use the following naming convention:

Last Name_ First Name_ SYDNEYVITAL_ Scholar15_Round3

Last Name_ First Name_ SYDNEYVITAL_ Supervisor_ Scholar15_Round3

SYDNEY VITAL Centre Manager, Suzie Nguyen, can be contacted on 9926 4726 or at SydneyVital.admin@sydney.edu.au to assist with any queries.

Applications received after 1 October 2015 will not be accepted.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your supervisor submits their report directly to Sydney Vital at SydneyVital.admin@sydney.edu.au by the due date of **Thursday 1st October 2015.**