



MEDIA RELEASE  
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## FEMALE HEALTH RESEARCHERS RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ADVANCE CAREERS

Female researchers from across Australia working in women's health research and translation have been provided financial support in a bid to facilitate the career advancement and development of women in early and mid-career stages of their research careers.

The Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA) Women's Health Research, Translation and Impact Network (WHRTN) has provided up to \$15,000 to 36 individuals in the inaugural **AHRA WHRTN Early and Mid-Career Researcher (EMCR) Funded Awards**.

The Network, [funded by the Morrison Government, The Hon Greg Hunt MP and the Medical Research Future Fund](#), is a national collaboration across community, health services and academic institutions set to boost national and international collaboration on women's health, build health workforce capacity, develop leaders in women's health, and advance research and translation to deliver impact and better health for Australian women.

AHRA WHRTN Deputy Chair, Professor Deb Loxton, AHRA Workforce Development Chair, Professor Cate Nagle and AHRA Steering Committee Chair, Professor Helena Teede, say the Awards provide timely and flexible funding for women with flexible and diverse needs to engage, train, and connect with women in women's health research and translation.

"We are delighted with the interest in our inaugural Awards. The pandemic has seen women hit hard on many fronts, juggling the burdens of working from home whilst shouldering the main load of home-schooling and caring responsibilities, alongside greater job uncertainty from casual and part time roles. This has impacted on career progress especially in academia and in early to mid-career stages," said Professor Loxton.

"These Awards provide much needed support to address the challenges many women face all across Australia," said Professor Nagle.

Nearly 300 applications were received.

"The strong response to these Awards is a testament to the identified need to provide more opportunities to women working in women's health research. We have seen firsthand talented emerging and established researchers demonstrating passion, dedication and innovation in their research," said Professor Teede.

"These Awards will provide much needed funding to bolster careers and further advance research that improves the health of ALL women in Australia," said Professor Nagle.

Award recipient Dr Jillian Tay from Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre in Victoria said winning this award would support her research in polycystic ovary syndrome.

"This award will help support my research into the most common, but often neglected and underfunded, hormonal disorder in women of reproductive-age, polycystic ovary syndrome. Winning this award, my first as a post-doctoral research fellow, will significantly boost my confidence and help build the foundation for my early post-doctorate career to enable me to become an independent researcher in the future," said Dr Tay.

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Award recipient and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher, Ms Julieann Coombes from the George Institute for Global Health in New South Wales said this award will provide her the opportunity to mentor other Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women researchers.

“Through the support of the award I will work alongside and be guided by the support of The George Institute’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program and Research Committee for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, in continuing to conduct culturally appropriate and responsive research. Importantly, this award will allow me to partner with Aboriginal community members improving the health and well-being of mothers whose children have sustained a burn injury and have been admitted to hospital,” said Ms Coombes.

Congratulations to all 36 Award recipients who represent women working across the breadth of women’s health research, diverse disciplines and broad geographical spread.

#### **Award recipients (in alphabetical order)**

##### **NSW**

- Dr Katherine Brain, Hunter Integrated Pain Service
- Dr Catherine Chojenta, University of Newcastle
- Ms Julieann Coombes, George Institute for Global Health
- Dr Tessa Copp, The University of Sydney
- Dr Rachel Dodd, The University of Sydney
- Dr Sonali Gnanenthiran, George Institute for Global Health and ANZAC Research Institute, Concord Hospital
- Dr Megan Gow, The University of Sydney, The University of New South Wales and St George Hospital
- Dr Melissa Harris, University of Newcastle
- Dr Alexandra Hawkey, Translational Health Research Institute and Western Sydney University
- Dr Melinda Hutchesson, University of Newcastle
- Dr Beth Mah, HMRI, University of Newcastle and St John of God Social Outreach
- Dr Kate McBride, Western Sydney University
- Dr Juliana Oliveira, Institute for Musculoskeletal Health and The University of Sydney
- Ms Anna Singleton, University of Sydney
- Dr Xia Wang, The George Institute for Global Health
- Dr Janelle Weise, Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry, UNSW Sydney
- Dr Phoebe Williams, The University of Sydney and Sydney Children’s Hospital Network

##### **QLD**

- Dr Heena Akbar, Queensland University of Technology and Woolworths Centre for Childhood Nutrition Research
- Dr Jane Currie, Queensland University of Technology and St Vincent’s Health Network Sydney
- Dr Priya Martin, University of Queensland Rural Clinical School (Toowoomba) and Darling Downs Health (Queensland Health)

##### **SA**

- Dr Prabha Andraweera, Adelaide Medical School
- Dr Jane Chalmers, University of South Australia
- Dr Jessica Grieger, The University of Adelaide
- Dr Erandi Hewawasam, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute

##### **VIC**

- Dr Emily Camm, The Hudson Institute of Medical Research
- Dr Ali Fogarty, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute
- Dr Caroline Gurvich, Monash University, Central Clinical school, Department of Psychiatry
- Dr Anju Joham, Monash University
- Dr Siew Lim, Monash University and Monash Partners
- Dr Jillian Tay, Monash University and Monash Partners
- Dr Clare Whitehead, Dept of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Melbourne at The Royal Women’s Hospital

## WA

- Dr Anne-Marie Eades, Curtin University
- Associate Professor Georgia Halkett, Curtin University
- Ms Kristie Harper, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Curtin University
- Dr Janelle James-McAlpine, James Cook University
- Dr Margaret Jordan, James Cook University

*Photo - Sydney Health Partners to coordinate picture of award recipients due to Melbourne's current restrictions*

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## IMAGE ATTACHED

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### Further information:

#### About AHRA:

The Australian Health Research Alliance is the peak body representing Australia's network of seven Advanced Health Research and Translation Centres (AHRTCs) and three Centres for Innovation in Regional Health (CIRHs) accredited by the National Health and Medical Research Council. AHRA provides one voice for "Better Health Through Research".

The Centres are strongly supported by the Government and working regionally and nationally, funded by Partners, State and Federal government, with strong support through the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

[ahra.org.au](http://ahra.org.au)

Our partners engage across 95% of Australia's academic and research teams, around 80% of its acute health services with increasing primary care and regional reach. Our Alliance includes:

- Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre
- Brisbane Diamantina Health Partners
- Researcher Wappayalawangka, Central Australian Academic Health Science Network
- Health Translation SA
- Maridulu Budyari Gumal
- Melbourne Academic Centre for Health
- NSW Regional Health Partners
- Sydney Health Partners
- Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre
- Western Australian Health Translation Network