

The Australian Society for Medical Research Professional Development Day in Sydney will be held on the 18th of August 2008.

In 2008, we are delighted to announce that the Professional Development Program will be run in five States, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia (see below for program). Invitations have also been extended to scientists working in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory offering fare assistance to ensure that this is a truly national program.

The general format for the day is below. Following a brief introduction by the Moderator Dr Moira Clay, the sessions will run as follows:

Session 1 in Sydney is entitled “How to setup, run and maintain a successful research group”.

The first speaker for this session Professor Levon Khachigian (University of New South Wales) will present using power point from the perspective of somebody leading a large research group a non technical 15 minute talk on the suggested topics outlined in the draft program below. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussions.

The second speaker for this session (to be confirmed) will focus on the human resources issues involved in managing a group of researchers and students. This will again be a 15 minute slide based presentation followed by 15 minutes of questions.

The last 30 minutes of session 1 will be a group discussion led by Dr. Moira Clay in which both speakers will also participate.

Session 2 in Sydney is entitled “I have great ideas; how do I fund them?”.

The first speaker for this session Professor Phil Robinson (Senior Principal Research Fellow (NHMRC), Professor in Medicine, University of Sydney) will present using power point regarding her experiences in securing funding from the NHMRC. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussions.

The second speaker for this session Professor Michelle Haber (Children’s Cancer Institute Australia) will present similarly regarding experiences in securing funding from sources other than the NHMRC or ARC.

Following these two presentations (each of which will have 10 minutes question time) there will be a 40 minute panel discussion regarding obtaining funding led by Dr Moira Clay with both session speakers.

Session 3 in Sydney is entitled “Work/Life balance”

The first speaker for this session Professor Fabienne Mackay (Garvan Institute of Medical Research) will present a non technical 15 minute talk where he will share personal experiences/insights/perspectives on juggling your career with the rest of your life as per the suggested topics outlined in the draft program below. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussions.

The remaining hour of this session will be a workshop led by Sophie Symeou a human resources professional with extensive experience in work/life balance who we are very happy to announce will be presenting at all of our workshop days around the country.

Session 4 in Sydney is entitled “Masterclass in professional skills”

The first speaker for this session Professor Philip J. Hogg (Director, UNSW Cancer Research Centre, University of New South Wales) will present using power point from the perspective of somebody who has had to develop a large repertoire of professional skills throughout their career.

Following this presentation Dr Moira Clay will lead a hypothetical discussion regarding a Mock journal or grant submission. Possibly one example of an exemplary process followed by an example of what not to do as a submitting author or applicant. This will be followed by a group discussion Q and A session moderated by Moira.

Between 5 and 6 pm there will be drinks provided for a meet and mingle session which we encourage all speakers and panel members to participate in if possible.

Draft Program

0900 Introduction and outline of the day’s activities

0910 Session 1 - How to setup, run and maintain a successful research group.

Topics to be addressed include: how to attract and select good staff and students and how to keep them; how to put a well structured effective team together; Asking staff or students to leave; how to be a leader and a manager – Differences between leaders and managers – why you need to be both; mentoring and being mentored; how to be a good negotiator; conflict resolution; how to setup great collaborations; budgeting; time management and project management.

1040 Morning Tea

1100 Session 2 - I have great ideas; how do I fund them?

This session is aimed at providing: An overview of funding opportunities available in Australia including NHMRC and ARC; updates in changes to the NHMRC funding process focussing on what the reviewers are looking for; International schemes applicable in Australia; Commercialisation / seed funding / venture capital; Philanthropic funding; tips and tricks for getting grants and fellowships

1230 Lunch

1335 Session 3 - Work / Life Balance

This session will discuss strategies for keeping everybody happy - you, your family, your friends, your staff and your students; female or male perspectives, HR perspective; tips for negotiating with your employer for more flexibility.

1510 Afternoon tea

1540 Session 4 - Master class in professional skills

This session will provide information regarding: how to get published in the top journals; how to be a good reviewer of grants and the importance of awards, invitations, professional associations.

Summary and Close

1700 -1800 "Meet-and-Mingle" Networking Session