Translational Cancer Research Network

10 February 2014
Introducing the Cancer Challenge of the Year 2014

Bridging the gap
The TCRN – quick recap

Translational Cancer Research Network (TCRN)

- One of seven translational cancer research centres (TCRCs) funded by Cancer Institute NSW.
- Funded for 5 years, ending June 2016
- TCRN Director, Prof Robyn Ward
- Program Manager, Lena Caruso
- Broad Program aims ie improve patient outcomes
The Network founding institutions:

- The University of New South Wales
- University of Technology, Sydney
- Border Medical Oncology Research Unit - regional
- Prince of Wales Hospital
- St George Hospital / The Sutherland Hospital
- Calvary Hospital
- The Royal Hospital for Women
  - together SESLHD

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Eligibility

• CI and majority of project team must be listed as TCRN member and in a member group on the TCRN website as at 28 February 2014

• The project must be undertaken in one or more of the TCRN’s founding institutions / hospitals
What do you think is the greatest unmet need in translational cancer research?

Cancer Challenge of the Year 2014 (CCY14)

• A unique funding opportunity providing up to $100,000 to support 1 or 2 translational research projects

• Aims to address an urgent and unmet need in cancer patient care or treatment.

• Focuses on creating solutions to make rapid and appropriate gains in the improvement of cancer patient care and treatment outcomes.

• Targets research initiatives capable of producing a demonstrable outcome within a 12-15 month period.

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Expression of Interest

- Applicants invited to submit 2-page “Expression of Interest” (EOI)
- EOI = “Solution”
- Assessed by an external panel
- Intended to reduce workload for applicants
- The EOI “sets the scene” for CCY applications
Expression of Interest...

Your solution

• Describe your Solution (provide a brief background to the Challenge and outline the “how”, the “who” and the “where”)

• What is the **unmet need** that your project will address

• Describe the **impact** of your project on cancer care and/or clinical outcomes if it is successful

• How will your project **continue along a sustainable pathway** following the CCY funding timeline?
Expression of Interest...

Your Project Team

• Describe the **multidisciplinary expertise** of your project team
• Majority must be TCRN members
The 2014 grant application process:

EOI assessed on:

a) Publishable and sustainable outcomes (30%)
b) A significant potential impact (30%)
c) Multidisciplinary collaboration and involvement (20%)
d) Scientific quality (20%)

3- 5 Applicants with the highest score will invited to submit a full application (approx. 10 pages)
The 2014 grant application process:

**Full application:**

- Have 1 month to submit
- Full application is reviewed by TCRN Leadership Council and offers then made
- Discussion between CI and TCRN Program Manager re contract, resources, timeline and deliverables
- Contract is signed, project and funding commences by **July 2014**
CCY: Objectives

• **T1** translational projects will be considered
• Preference given to **T2** or **T3** translational research projects
• CCY projects will lead to:
  – Improvements in clinical practice (T2)
    Or
  – New practice-based research (T3)
Translational pipeline...

[Basic Research]
- Preclinical studies
- Animal research
- Basic health services research
- Epidemiology

[Bedside]
- Human Clinical Research
  - Controlled observational studies
  - Phase 3 clinical trials & health services studies

[Policy & Practice]
- Clinical Practice Across the System
  - Delivery of recommended care to the right patient at the right time
  - Identification of new clinical questions and gaps in care

[Translation to Humans]
- T1: Case studies
  - Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials

[Translation to Patients, Policy & Practice]
- T2: Guideline development
  - Meta-analyses
  - Systematic reviews

[Translation to Policy & Practice]
- T3: Dissemination research
  - Implementation research

[Practice-Based Research]
- Phase 3 & 4 trials
- Observational studies
- Survey research


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Project design: The 6-step model framework

Steps 1 – 3:
1. Identify translational opportunity
2. Identify research questions & data requirements
3. Develop & implement project plan: include KPIs known to improve patient outcomes...
Steps 4 - 6:
4. Evaluate performance against KPIs
5. Develop strategies for widespread & sustainable implementation
6. Identify new opportunities for a fresh cycle
Full application assessment criteria

• TCRN Leadership Council assessment based on:
  
  – Budget (max of $100,000)
  – Opinion of the project’s “unmet need”
  – Alignment with the TCRN objectives
  – Overall quality of the project
Timeline

- Information session
- Half day workshop (not compulsory) **10 March**
  - **RSVP by Wed Feb 19** (title & 250 word summary)
- Expression of Interest (EOI) - **10 April**
- Invited full application (top 3 only)
  - Invitations sent early May
  - Full applications due late May
- Successful projects announced in mid June
- Projects to commence in July

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Half day Mentoring Workshop: 10 March

Lowy Cancer Research Centre, UNSW 9am – 1pm

• Places are limited - attendees need to apply
• Applications due 19th February
• Title plus 250 words project summary required:
  – Rationale for project
  – Question(s) being addressed
  – Methods
  – Expected outcomes
  – (Template on TCRN website)
• Aim is to help craft the EOI and Application

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Mentoring workshop – Format:

• Introduction
• 10 min project summary presentation per group
• Breakaway for group sessions with mentors
  – Each mentor to spend 15 min with each group
  – Mentors chosen to encompass range of skill sets
• 5 min presentation per group summarising changes to be made to their application after mentor advice
Consumer review

• The TCRN strongly supports the meaningful involvement of consumers at all stages of cancer research
• The TCRN has established a Consumer Advisory Committee
  – Research support service to TCRN members
  – To aid researchers with consumer components of research applications & to promote consumer involvement in research
• For the first time consumer review will form part of the CCY assessment
• 1-2 CAC members will be asked to act as mentors during the workshop
Grant Writing Tips...

- Read the guidelines
- Make sure you are eligible to apply
- Don’t go over-budget
- Answer the questions in the application
- Submit on time
How does the CCY differ compared to other grants?

The TCRN stays involved

• CCY is a **flagship project** for the TCRN
• Grant offers are made based on project milestones
• Obligations are high for CCY grant recipients
  – Logo use / acknowledgement
  – Quarterly reporting plus updates for TCRN website
• Ongoing support from the TCRN is available to make life easier
Successful proposals will demonstrate:

- Can commence in July 2014
- Can complete in 12 months
- HREC approval received (or commenced)
- Capacity for continuation of implementation beyond CCY14 funding
- Leveraging of TCRN core strengths
- Delivery of clear translational outcomes leading to improved patient care
Summary of process

• Applications for Mentoring workshop due 19 February; not compulsory)
• Mentoring Workshop 10 March
• Expressions of Interest due April 10
• Invited full applications
  – Invitations sent in early May
  – Full applications due in late May
A successful CCY14 project...

Will be able to demonstrate the following:

• Capacity to deliver clear translational outcomes that will lead to improvement in patient care
• A sustainable pathway of implementation beyond the CCY funding timeline
• Leveraging of TCRN core strengths and collaboration with the TCRN Network
Contact us:

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Project design: The 6-step model framework

The six-step model: taking science to practice, step-by-step

- **Step 1:** Identify clinical problem and translational opportunity
- **Step 2:** Identify research questions and data requirements
- **Step 3:** Develop and implement project plan, KPIs, milestones
- **Step 4:** Evaluate against KPIs
- **Step 5:** Strategy for widespread and sustainable implementation
- **Step 6:** Identify new opportunities

KPIs reflect processes known to improve patient outcomes:
- Pre and post audit of practice
- Analysis of barriers
- Provide mechanisms to overcome barriers
- Use of opinion leaders
- Enhancement of multidisciplinary teams
- Progress with guidelines and implementation
- Measurable practice and culture change

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2012 Cancer Challenge:

*Spaced Education: a tool to translate pain assessment and management evidence into practice*

Principal Investigator: Jane Phillips, Sacred Heart Hospice
2013 Cancer Challenge:

Screening for Lynch Syndrome (hereditary bowel cancer) using antibodies alone

Project Lead: Prof Nicholas Hawkins, School of Medical Sciences, UNSW

• A team of pathologists and a unique cohort of patient samples will test the question
• Can antibodies to mutated BRAF help in rapidly identifying high-likelihood cases of Lynch syndrome in routine pathology testing?
2013 Cancer Challenge:

*Family Matters! Dissemination of genetic information about breast and ovarian cancer genes within families to prevent cancers*

Project Lead: Dr Kathy Tucker, Hereditary Cancer Clinic, Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick, NSW

- A communication tool for families living with cancer-causing gene mutations
- The Family Matters tool will guide patients to develop a tailored action plan for family notification, in consultation with a genetic counsellor or general practitioner, with the aim of increasing the number of family notifications and those presenting for genetic testing