

TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up Awards 2017: Round 1 Guidelines

BACKGROUND

The Translational Cancer Research Network (TCRN) is a member-based network formed to create an innovative and supportive environment for the translation of cancer research findings into improvements in patient care and outcomes. Members participate actively across a range of activities in the field of translational cancer research.

The TCRN supports our members by providing the enabling foundation, coordination and resources required to empower them to formulate and implement research-led advances in cancer research, treatment and care. Our vision is to create a culture that empowers our members to formulate and implement research-led improvements in patient care.

The TCRN comprises the founding institutions of the University of New South Wales (UNSW), comprehensive cancer centres at Prince of Wales and St George and Sutherland hospitals, cancer services at the Royal Hospital for Women, the Border Medical Oncology Research Unit (a regional cancer service in the Border/East Hume region of NSW and Victoria), and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

INTRODUCTION

The TCRN will provide three year Scholarship Top-up Awards to support a small number of Clinical PhD students undertaking doctoral projects aligned to one of the TCRN flagship programs Refer to **Appendix 1**. In Semester 1, 2017 a doctoral student who has received a competitive scholarship through: 1) UNSW and who are enrolled in a UNSW Faculty of Medicine School with a strong alignment to the TCRN e.g. Prince of Wales Clinical School OR 2) UTS and who are enrolled within any school in the Faculties of Science, Health, Graduate Health or the Business School, is eligible to apply (*see eligibility criteria for more details*).

The TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up awards are designed to support outstanding nursing, allied health or medical graduates to enhance their translational cancer research capabilities and whose research interests are strongly aligned to the flagship programs of the TCRN. The successful applicant will have access to a strong foundation of research support services, including opportunities for professional development and the mentoring and expertise of experienced translational cancer researchers. Recipients of TCRN Clinical PhD Top-up awards are expected to participate in TCRN-led activities and events and to contribute to the TCRN when opportunities arise.

Available awards

A. 3-year top-up (up to \$20,000 per year stipend + \$2,500 research support per year for two years)

- Awards of up to \$20,000 per annum will be paid for the duration of the PhD program (max of 3 years), subject to satisfactory progress.
- Funding amounts may vary depending on the individual funding rules for the peer-reviewed competitive scholarships (e.g. UNSW APA recipients may not receive more than 75% of their base rate award).
- Awards for 3-year top-up recipients also include a further \$7,500 for conference travel and other relevant expenses over the candidature (provided in annual instalments).

- Awards are competitive and merit-based and the research project must be aligned to TCRN flagship programs, including demonstrating the translational application of the research as well as an awareness of the importance of consumer engagement.

FUNDING ROUNDS IN 2017

In 2017, the TCRN will provide three rounds of PhD Scholarship Top-up Awards. The deadline for the Round 1 is listed below. Late applications will not be considered.

Round	Applications open	Applications close
Round 1	22 November 2016	6 January 2017, 5pm

ELIGIBILITY

Students will be eligible for consideration for a TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up award in 2017 if they:

1. Have a medical, health, nursing or allied health qualification.
2. Have applied for and won a competitively awarded scholarship that either commences. e.g. the Australian Postgraduate Award (APA), University Postgraduate Award (UPA), UTS Doctoral Scholarship (UTSD) or NHMRC scholarship for domestic applicants or the International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS), UTS President's Scholarship (UTSP), University International Postgraduate Award (UIPA) for international applicants. Applicants from a Nursing or Allied Health background with other scholarship funding may present a case as to why they should be considered for the top-up.
3. Have a principal (primary) or joint principal (joint primary) supervisor who is on the current TCRN Membership list and is affiliated with one of the flagships as listed on the TCRN website (see here).
4. Are undertaking a full-time PhD degree either in the Faculty of Science, Faculty of Health, Graduate School of Health or the Business School at UTS or a UNSW Medicine School whose primary supervisor is a member of the TCRN. Students must be commencing full-time study during the 2017 UTS or UNSW academic year.
5. Have a research interest strongly aligned to the flagships of the TCRN (Refer to appendix 1) for details of TCRN flagships. Applicants must secure a letter of support from a flagship leader prior to applying which outlines how this project will support the work of the flagship and the overall goals of the TCRN. The application should demonstrate the translational relevance of this research to improvements in cancer patient care and clinical outcomes.
6. Important: students with a supervisor who is a member of alternative [Translational Cancer Research Centres](#) are **Not Eligible** to apply.
7. Have a letter of support from the primary supervisor which also confirms that there are sufficient resources to support the project.
8. Submit a completed TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up Award 2017 application form with appropriate supporting documents.

CONDITIONS OF THE AWARD

1. Applications received after the closing date will be regarded as late and will not be considered.
2. The eligibility criteria must be met.
3. PhD Students receiving the TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up Award will be expected to actively participate in the TCRN PhD Skills & Development Program throughout their TCRN Scholarship, including but not limited to:

- i. Attending and actively participating in an annual full-day TCRN PhD Skills & Development workshop. The workshops will provide specific skills and knowledge related to translational research and research communication.
 - ii. Presenting at an approved Postgraduate Research Seminar at least once per year during their candidature and supporting fellow PhD Top-up recipients by attending any regular seminar sessions throughout the year.
 - iii. Contributing when requested to the TCRN newsletter or website with articles, and generally participating in the TCRN and attending TCRN events where possible.
 - iv. Attending events hosted by the UTS or UNSW Graduate Research Schools (GRS).
 - v. Attending a minimum of **4** Cancer Grand Rounds per year, a monthly multidisciplinary forum coordinated by the Prince of Wales Hospital Cancer Services (UNSW recipients only). UTS-based students are required to attend a minimum of **3** Cancer Grand Rounds per year.
 - vi. Submitting a TCRN Annual Progress Report for each calendar year by January of the following year.
4. Successful applicants must maintain full-time enrolment at your organisation and satisfactorily complete an annual progress review.
 5. Successful applicants must correctly acknowledge the TCRN's support in any documentation related to this scholarship in accordance with the TCRN Funding Acknowledgement Guidelines and TCRN Guidelines for Logo Use, and promote the TCRN's translational cancer research activities amongst other students.
 6. Successful applicants will be required to sign a Letter of Acceptance and agree to these conditions in writing.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Applicants must contact the [TCRN](#) to indicate intent to apply and which flagship their project aligns with. The TCRN will contact flagship leaders.
2. Complete the TCRN Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up Award 2017 application form in conjunction with these guidelines.
3. Prepare additional supporting documents:
 - a. A letter from your Faculty or GRS confirming receipt of a competitively awarded scholarship (e.g. APA or equivalent)
 - b. *Curriculum vitae* including details of key academic marks awarded from previous degrees
 - c. Certified copies or originals of academic transcripts and qualifications (clearly legible)
 - d. Letter of support from the Primary or Principal supervisor which also confirms that there are sufficient resources to complete the research project in accordance with your organisation's WHS standards.
 - e. Letter of support from relevant flagship leader which confirms that the research project aligns with the flagship and goals of the TCRN (contact the TCRN prior to making contact with flagship leader)
4. Submit the completed application form (as a WORD DOCUMENT) with all other supporting documents as a SINGLE PDF, via email to tcnrgiants@unsw.edu.au with subject line *Clinical PhD Scholarship Top-up*.

*The deadline for receipt of applications is **6 January 2017**.*

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained by contacting the TCRN Operations and Projects Team: tcrngrants@unsw.edu.au.

Appendix 1:

TCRN Flagship	Focus of flagship	Flagship Leader
Heredity Cancer	Communication tools Web based referral portal Web based video conferencing	Dr Kathy Tucker
Continuum of Care Program	GP Engagement and models of shared care Referral pathways Survivorship Patient learning portals	Professor Mark Harris
HSA Biobank and Bioinformatics	Data Linkage Bioinformatics Molecular genomics Molecular Tumour Board	A/Prof Rob Lindeman
Clinical Improvements into Practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating haematological malignancies and cancer related thrombosis Enhancing quality of care in Surgical Oncology Broadening the activities of Multidisciplinary care groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A/Prof John Pimanda Professor Phil Crowe A/Prof Winston Liauw

Table 1: TCRN flagships