TCRN Cancer Challenge of the Year 2013
Guidelines

TCRN Cancer Challenge of the Year Grants Scheme
The TCRN Cancer Challenge of the Year (CCY) is a unique funding opportunity that, in 2013, will provide up to $150,000 to support one to three translational research projects designed to address a new cancer or generic problem related to cancer. The CCY targets research initiatives capable of producing a demonstrable outcome within a 12 month period – creating solutions to today’s priority problems in order to make rapid and appropriate gains in the improvement of cancer patient care and treatment outcomes.

Objectives
The CCY will support research projects designed to inform or initiate direct improvements in cancer patient care, clinical and treatment practices, and/or patient outcomes. The TCRN subscribes to the translational research model of the Cancer Institute NSW and under the CCY Grants Scheme will prioritise funding of T2, T2/T3 or T3 projects, i.e. projects with an emphasis on improving clinical practice across the system and practice-based research.

In order to meet the key grant criteria, CCY 2013 projects must demonstrate:
- focus on an unmet need
- significant potential impact
- multidisciplinary collaboration
- capacity to leverage TCRN core strengths
- capacity to deliver translational outcomes aligned with the goals of TCRN initially within 12 months
- ability to commence by no later than 1 June 2013 and complete within 12 months
- a sustainable pathway beyond the CCY funding timeline
- ability to work with the TCRN’s Translational Team, and
- a design framework employing TCRN’s six-step model.

A key element of the TCRN program is the deployment of a novel six-step model – a translational research engine that involves an annual cycle of problem identification, research question-framing, implementation and outcome assessment. Projects achieving CCY funding will be required to utilise the six-step model through collaboration with TCRN’s Translational Team.

Eligibility Criteria
The 2013 CCY Grants Scheme is open to TCRN Members who are linked to a TCRN Member Group, as listed on the TCRN website (see here).

Funding available
The TCRN will provide seed funding of up to $150,000 to fund CCY projects commencing in 2013. Individual projects budgets should not exceed $100,000. Projects must have formal ethics approval before the funds will be released.

Application process
Applicants should carefully read the application process outlined on page 2 of these Guidelines.

Further information
Further information can be obtained by contacting the TCRN Operations and Projects Team: tcrn@unsw.edu.au with the subject line ‘Cancer Challenge 2013’.
Application Process

The 2013 CCY award process will follow an innovative 3-step formula:

**Step 1: Call for ‘Challenges’** THIS STEP HAS NOW CLOSED

- Following an open call for Cancer Challenges via the interactive CCY website, the TCRN’s Leadership Council has selected priority Challenges that they consider to be best aligned with the goals and objectives of the TCRN.
- Priority Challenges are now highlighted on the CCY website for the consideration of members wishing to participate in Step 2 of the award process.

**Step 2: Call for ‘Solutions’** NOW OPEN. Submission deadline is midnight Sunday 7th April, 2013

- TCRN members interested in applying for funding under the 2013 CCY Grants Scheme MUST COMPLETE STEP 2 OF THE AWARD PROCESS.
- Applicants should select one of the following two options:

  1) Select a priority Cancer Challenge from those listed on the CCY website and prepare and submit a ‘Solution’ using the ‘CCY Solution Template’.

  OR

  2) Identify your own Cancer Challenge and prepare and submit a ‘Solution’ using the ‘CCY Solution Template’.

- The ‘Solution Template’ provides applicants with the opportunity to present a succinct 2-page outline (similar to an Expression of Interest) describing the “how”, “who” and “where” of a project designed to address your identified Cancer Challenge.
- The TCRN is interested in funding projects that look to address a Cancer Challenge in as many of our member hospitals as is practical. Applicants choosing to identify their own Cancer Challenge for submission of a Solution at Step 2 should note that these Challenges must relate back the hospitals and patients in the TCRN’s network. Further information on TCRN Institutions can be found [here](#).
- Applicants submitting Solutions agree that they do so with a view to winning funding to undertake the project in 2013/14 in conjunction with the TCRN.
- Solutions should be submitted via email to TCRNGrants@unsw.edu.au with the subject line: **CCY 2013 Solution by midnight Sunday 7th April, 2013**. Solution Templates should be saved using the naming format **CCY 2013 Solution_PI Surname** e.g. **CCY 2013 Solution_Jones**
- Submitted Solutions will be assessed by an external, independent panel against the key grant criteria:
  - A sustainable pathway with potential to have publishable outcomes (30%)
  - Potential impact (30%)
  - Multidisciplinary approach and collaborative strength (20%)
  - Clinical or scientific quality (20%)

**Step 3: Invitation for Full Proposals** TO BE ANNOUNCED APRIL 2013

- Contributors of the top 5 Solutions, as rated by the external assessment panel, will be invited by the TCRN to submit a full 2013 CCY project proposal (template provided at time of notification).
- Successful applicants will have one month to submit a full project proposal in consultation with the TCRN, to be evaluated by the TCRN Leadership Council.
- Successful 2013 CCY project(s) will be awarded in late May 2013.
THE TCRN TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH SIX-STEP MODEL

Cancer-specific strategies to address TCRN program objectives

The six-step model is a translational research engine that involves an annual cycle of problem identification, research question-framing, implementation and outcome assessment.

The specific steps in each cycle are:

1. Identify translational opportunities; assess potential gain, build on core strengths, exploit immediate gains.
2. Identify the research questions and data requirements.
3. Develop and implement project plans, KPIs and milestones for 12 months. KPIs must reflect processes known to improve patient outcomes, including:
   - pre and post audit of practice
   - analysis of barriers
   - provision of supporting mechanisms to overcome barriers
   - use of opinion leaders
   - enhancement of multidisciplinary teamwork
   - progress with guidelines implementation
   - measurable practice and culture change.
4. Evaluate performance against KPIs using formative evaluation models.
5. Develop strategies for widespread and sustainable implementation.
6. Identify new opportunities for a fresh cycle.