



Centre of Research Excellence in
Pulmonary Fibrosis

CREATE Researcher Development

CREATE
CRE Advanced
Training
Environment
Program Handbook



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Overview and Aims

The NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis (CRE-PF) was first launched in 2017 and has been funded until the beginning of 2028.

The CRE-PF brings together a multidisciplinary team of internationally recognised expert pulmonary fibrosis clinicians and researchers from across Australia committed to reducing the growing burden of pulmonary diseases in Australia and to training the next generation of researchers.

The Chief Investigators of the CRE-PF are:

- Prof Tamera Corte (Sydney University)
- Prof Anne Holland (Monash University)
- Prof Daniel Chambers (University of Queensland)
- Prof Philip Hansbro (Centenary Institute and University of Technology Sydney)
- Prof Joanne Dickinson (Menzies Institute for Medical Research University of Tasmania)
- Prof Andrew Palmer (University of Tasmania)
- Prof Yuben Moodley (University of WA)
- Prof Joseph Powell, (Garvan Institute of Medical Research and UNSW)
- A/Prof Luke Knibbs, (University of Sydney)
- Prof Natasha Smallwood (Alfred Hospital and Monash University).

The CRE-PF recognises the importance of providing research students and early career researchers with the necessary training and skills to develop as future leaders of pulmonary fibrosis research.

Our vision is to **CREATE** (**CRE** **A**dvanced **T**raining **E**nvironment) the next generation of outstanding investigators capable of developing and translating knowledge from bench-to-bedside, with a focus on the prevention of end-stage fibrotic lung disease and new treatments to improve the health of Australians affected by pulmonary fibrosis.

CREATE provides the foundation upon which emerging pulmonary fibrosis researchers can build their own successful programs of research.

The program provides funding opportunities, professional development initiatives and fosters a connected, supportive research community.



Goals and Benefits

The goals of CREATE are to produce the next generation of outstanding pulmonary fibrosis researchers by:

- attracting and retaining high quality early-mid career researchers to pulmonary fibrosis research and supporting accelerated career progression
- enhancing pulmonary fibrosis basic science and clinical and translational research training and building early-mid career researcher profiles
- enabling and enhancing collaboration of ILD early-mid career researchers inter/nationally.
- The benefits of CREATE include:
 - access to world-class research supervision and training opportunities
 - access to funding opportunities
 - development of a strong professional profile and career trajectory
 - increased confidence and skill as researchers and clinicians
 - increased confidence and skill in mentoring and leadership
 - ongoing professional and personal development support
 - opportunities to attend and present at national and international conferences
 - access to meetings with peers to share ideas and develop skills
 - connection with and support from the Australian pulmonary fibrosis research community.

Who are CREATE Fellows and Affiliates?

CREATE Fellows and Affiliates are passionate about pulmonary fibrosis research and are motivated to develop their research career and enhance their professional development.

To learn more about fellows and affiliates and their research interests, visit the [CREATE Fellow Profiles](#) and [CREATE Alumni profiles](#) on the CRE-PF website.

Guidelines for appointment as a CREATE Fellow

CREATE Fellows are postgraduate research students or postdoctoral researchers at academic Level A and Level B, or equivalent, engaged in research in Australia.

CREATE Fellows will be collaborating with the investigators of the CRE-PF AND conducting research in line with the objectives of the CRE-PF. Postdoctoral Fellows are generally no more than 10 years postdoctoral (adjusted where appropriate for career disruption).

CREATE Affiliates are engaged in pulmonary fibrosis research in line with the objectives of the CRE-PF, collaborating with Australian researchers, but not eligible to be a CREATE Fellow. CREATE Affiliates may participate in the CREATE program *but are not eligible for any CREATE funding opportunities*.



Prospective CREATE Fellows and Affiliates may be put forward by Chief Investigators or Associate Investigators of the CRE-PF, or other leaders in pulmonary fibrosis research. The request should be on the [CREATE application form](#), and sent to the CREATE Program Advisory Committee (PAC Committee) headed by the CREATE Chair, via the CREATE Coordinator (bonnie.laxton-blinkhorn@sydney.edu.au).

Once a CREATE Fellow is accepted, they are eligible to be a member of the program until they are 10 years postdoctoral (relative to opportunity) and conducting research in line with the objectives of the CRE-PF, after which time they will be welcome to continue as part of CREATE as a member of the Alumni. CREATE Affiliates are welcome to remain part of the CREATE Program as long as they meet Affiliate eligibility criteria as described above.

Program structure

The CREATE program is organised and run by Chair Professor Paul Reynolds and CREATE Coordinator Bonnie Laxton-Blinkhorn. The program is overseen by the Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

The program provides early-mid career researchers at postgraduate research student or postdoctoral researcher levels with support for their professional careers and is delivered via:

- professional development initiatives
- funding opportunities
- fostering a connected, supportive research community.

Professional development initiatives

Mentoring

Incoming CREATE Fellows will be offered a mentor within the CREATE Mentoring Program. Mentoring is crucial to develop supportive relationships, provide guidance and for research career development. Mentoring can enhance skills and knowledge, increase self-confidence and ability, help clarify career path and goals and provide research collaboration opportunities.

With the assistance of the CREATE Coordinator, Fellows will be paired with a specific mentor, an expert in his/her field of research (i.e. biomedical, clinical, health services) for a period of 12 months. Accordingly, the program provides level-specific mentorship, which does not conflict with the important role of the research supervisor.

The goal is for mentor-mentee pairs to meet approximately once per quarter– by phone, Zoom, email or in person. The mentor will be a person who will provide independent, objective advice and guidance to enhance the fellows' learning experience. In addition to possibly providing advice relating to the mentee's project, the mentee may wish to discuss



career development plans and will provide a sounding board for any difficulties which might be encountered. There may also be the opportunity for fellows to travel and interact with their mentors at the mentor's lab and workplaces.

Events

CREATE events include networking dinners, residential weekends and local training workshops.

CREATE networking dinners provide fellows with the opportunity to meet, share ideas and showcase their research. They are held in association with the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand Annual Scientific Conference (TSANZ) or the biennial Australasian Rare Lung Disease Short Course (ARLDSC).

Professional development weekends, residential for those from interstate, are planned for November 2025 and 2027.

Local training workshops held in association with conferences or other events are planned for 2025-2027.

Further information in relation to CREATE events is available on the [CRE-PF website](#).

Grant review service

A dedicated and structured CREATE review service is in development to assist CREATE Fellows in the highly competitive grant writing environment. To supplement the support available through home institutions, the review service will involve independent review and constructive feedback from the CRE-PF Research Development Manager on specific aspects of well-developed draft research grant applications.

Leadership shadowing

The CREATE Program will give fellows opportunities to develop leadership skills and shadow established pulmonary fibrosis research leaders in defined roles such as committee chair/membership or research group lead. This will give fellows unique insights and training in managing a successful research program.

Funding opportunities

CREATE Travel Grants

Funding is available for short-term travel (national and international) as well as training opportunities for fellows to develop skills and networks. CREATE Travel Grants are allocated to CREATE Fellows only via a competitive application process. Applicants must provide their reason for the travel and demonstrate how it will enhance their learning outcomes.



Travel grant amounts may vary from based on the number of applications and the availability of funding. Preference for travel grant funding will be given to CREATE Fellows on the basis of financial need; for example, dependence on a PhD scholarship/stipend or a part-time salary.

Please contact Bonnie.Laxton-Blinkhorn@sydney.edu.au or visit the [CREATE pages](#) on the CRE-PF website for further information.

Fellows who receive a CREATE Travel Grant are expected to provide a [report](#) after returning from their travel.

Grants-in-Aid

CREATE Grants-in-Aid to encourage new collaborative investigator-led pulmonary fibrosis research between CREATE Fellows are available annually. These grants support new links amongst CREATE Fellows to develop experience in building collaborations, sharing pulmonary fibrosis resources and simultaneously growing early-mid career researcher track records.

CREATE Hope Fellowships

CREATE Hope Research Fellowships are an initiative of the CRE-PF, supported by Lung Foundation Australia's Hope Research Fund. Two CREATE Hope Research Fellowships in Pulmonary Fibrosis are offered annually to support scientific research into pulmonary fibrosis in Australia. CREATE Hope Research Fellowships are available for research contributing to a CRE-PF workplan and addressing CRE-PF priorities.

Applicants must be eligible to become CREATE Fellows. Information about these fellowships will be circulated to CREATE Fellows as application rounds open.

Conference prizes

CREATE Prizes, such as awards for best abstract, are offered specifically for CREATE Fellows at major events such as TSANZ and ARLDSC.

Fostering a connected and research community

Virtual Research Meetings

Virtual research meetings are held monthly throughout the year and are available to a wide audience from Australia and New Zealand interested in pulmonary fibrosis research.

Virtual meetings are chaired by Prof Paul Reynolds and presented by CREATE Fellows, introduced by their supervisors. During these meetings CREATE Fellows discuss their pulmonary fibrosis research work.



Communication

CREATE communication occurs via email and the CREATE WhatsApp group. Fellows can also follow us on our social channels:

- facebook.com/crepulmonaryfibrosis
- linkedin.com/centre-of-research-excellence-in-pulmonary-fibrosis/

Fellows, as well as Alumni, Affiliates and Mentors are encouraged to use WhatsApp or email to generate informal discussions or seek advice.

CREATE WhatsApp Group

All CREATE Program participants are invited to join the CREATE WhatsApp Group when they become part of CREATE program. This informal forum provides a platform for participants to connect, ask questions, share information and celebrate wins, it is also how the CRE-PF keeps everyone updated on events and opportunities.

Joining the WhatsApp Group

Once approved by the PAC CREATE Fellows and Affiliates are sent an invitation to join the WhatsApp group to the mobile phone number provided in the application form. On receipt of the invitation, tap Join to be added.

There is no obligation to join, and participants are requested to adhere to a simple code of conduct when posting:

- Always keep to the purpose of the group, don't share irrelevant messages about other topics.
- Don't spam the group.
- Be mindful of the time of day that you post work-related content.

People who post inappropriate content will be removed from the group.

Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

The Program Advisory Committee (PAC) oversees the CREATE Program and meets at least quarterly. Current PAC members are:

- Chair - Professor Paul Reynolds
- CREATE Fellow representatives – Dr Alan Teoh (clinical), and Dr Ingrid Cox (health economics)
- CRE-PF Chief Investigator – Professor Tamera Corte
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Lauren Troy
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Nicole Goh
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Cecilia Prêe
- CREATE Coordinator – Bonnie Laxton-Blinkhorn
- CRE-PF Program Manager – Dr Alison Hey-Cunningham



The role of the PAC is to:

- Ensure the objectives of the CREATE Program are met. This includes development and implementation of a variety of tools and approaches to enhance the learning of CREATE Fellows, including seminars, professional development workshops, videoconferences, public fora and symposia.
- Promote the CRE-PF's strategic plan. This includes partnering with other organisations within the academic and clinical environment, community, as well as promotion of the CRE-PF and its goals.
- Review applications for CREATE Fellows and Affiliates.
- Assess CREATE grant applications.
- Monitor and review the CREATE budget.
- Leverage additional funding to support the objectives of the CREATE Program.
- Feedback on the CREATE program will be sought at least once annually. CREATE stakeholders will be asked to respond to a short, confidential online survey. We will use this information to evaluate the progress of the program and inform revisions.

Contact us

Visit the [CREATE pages](#) of the CRE-PF website to learn more about the program. If you have any questions, contact the CREATE Coordinator, Bonnie.Laxton-Blinkhorn@sydney.edu.au.