



Centre of Research Excellence in
Pulmonary Fibrosis

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 now been funded to continue 2023-2027. 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) and A/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 Advanced Training Environment)** 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 (scholarships, fellowships, prizes, travel and collaboration grants) and professional development initiatives (mentoring, symposia, presentation opportunities, on-line training), 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; and
- 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 Australia pulmonary fibrosis research community.

Who are our CREATE Fellows and Affiliates?

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

For more details on our Fellows and their research interests, see the CREATE Fellow Profiles at <https://www.cre-pf.org.au/create-fellows>, and the profiles of CREATE Alumni <https://www.cre-pf.org.au/create-alumni>.

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 ten 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 Training Program Coordinator (katherine.christian@sydney.edu.au).

Once a CREATE Fellow is accepted, they are eligible to be a member of the Program until they have reached ten years postdoctoral (relative to opportunity), 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 Dr Kate Christian, CREATE Training Program Co-ordinator. The program is overseen by the Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

The program provides trainees at postgraduate research student or postdoctoral researcher levels with support for their professional careers and is delivered via:

- I. Professional development initiatives
- II. Funding opportunities
- III. Fostering a connected, supportive research community.

Professional Development Initiatives

Mentoring

Incoming CREATE Fellows will be offered a mentor within the CREATE Mentoring Program for up to twelve months. 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 Training Program 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 twelve months. Accordingly, the program provides level-specific mentorship, which does not conflict with the important mentorship role of the research supervisor.

The mentor-mentee will meet formally at least once per year (for example at TSANZ or ARLDC) as well as throughout the year – by phone, Zoom or email. 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 symposia, residential weekends and local training workshops.

The CREATE Symposia provide Fellows with the opportunity to meet, share ideas and showcase their work. The symposia are held in association with the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand Annual Scientific Conference (TSANZ) or the biennial Australasian Rare Lung Disease Conference (ARLDC).

Professional development weekends, residential for those from interstate, are planned for November every second year, in 2023, 2025 and 2027.

Local training workshops held in association with conferences or other events are planned for 2024-2027.

Further information in relation to CREATE events is available via the CRE-PF website <https://www.cre-pf.org.au/events>.

Grant Review Service

A dedicated and structured CREATE review service is planned and will assist CREATE Fellows in the highly competitive grant writing environment. Building on the collegiate support established in CREATE, the review service will utilise independent, trans-disciplinary input from the multi-skilled investigators and volunteer early-mid career researcher peers to provide constructive feedback.

Shadowing Program

The CREATE Program will give Fellows opportunities to shadow established pulmonary fibrosis researchers in defined roles such as committee chair/membership or research group lead, in a rolling system. This will give Fellows unique insights and training in managing a successful research program.

Funding Opportunities

Travel Scholarships

Funding is available for short-term travel (national and international) as well as training opportunities for PhDs and PDFs to develop skills and networks. The CREATE travel support 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.

Scholarship amounts will vary from time-to-time 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 Kate Christian for further information or refer to the CREATE website <http://www.cre-pf.org.au/create-resources> for the travel grant application form.

Fellows who receive a travel grant are expected to provide a [travel grant report](#) after the travel.

Collaboration Grants

CREATE Collaboration grants-in-aid are available from time to time. The purpose of CREATE Collaboration Grants-in-Aid is to assist new collaborative investigator-led Pulmonary Fibrosis research. Collaboration grants will support new links amongst CREATE Fellows to develop experience in building collaborations, share pulmonary fibrosis resources and simultaneously grow the multiple track records.

CREATE HOPE Fellowships

Career development of future researchers is a core focus of CREATE. The overall goal of career development is to identify and train investigators who will be future leaders in fibrotic lung disease research.

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 (PF) will be offered annually to support scientific research into pulmonary fibrosis in Australia. CREATE Hope Research Fellowships will be available for research contributing to a CRE workplan and addressing CRE 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

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

Fostering a Connected, Supportive Research Community

Virtual Research Meetings

Virtual research meetings are held approximately 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. The Fellows discuss their latest PF research work.

Communication

CREATE communication occurs via email, the CREATE WhatsApp group, and Twitter @crepulmfibrosis as well as at seminars. Fellows, as well as Alumni, Affiliates and Mentors are encouraged to use WhatsApp or email to generate informal discussions or seek advice.

Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

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

- Chair - Professor Paul Reynolds
- CREATE Fellow representatives – Dr Alan Teoh (clinical), and Dr Ingrid Cox (health economics)
- Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis chief investigator –Professor Tamera Corte
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Lauren Troy
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Nicole Goh
- CREATE Mentor – A/ Professor Cecilia Prêle
- CREATE Training Coordinator – Dr Kate Christian
- Project Manager, Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis– Dr Alison Hey-Cunningham

The aim 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, video-conferences, 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 travel 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 members will be asked to respond to a short, confidential online survey. This information will be used to evaluate the progress of the program as well as inform revisions to the program.

Contact us

If you have any questions, please contact the CREATE Training Program Coordinator, Dr Kate Christian on katherine.christian@sydney.edu.au or visit the CRE-PF website (<https://www.cre-pf.org.au/>).