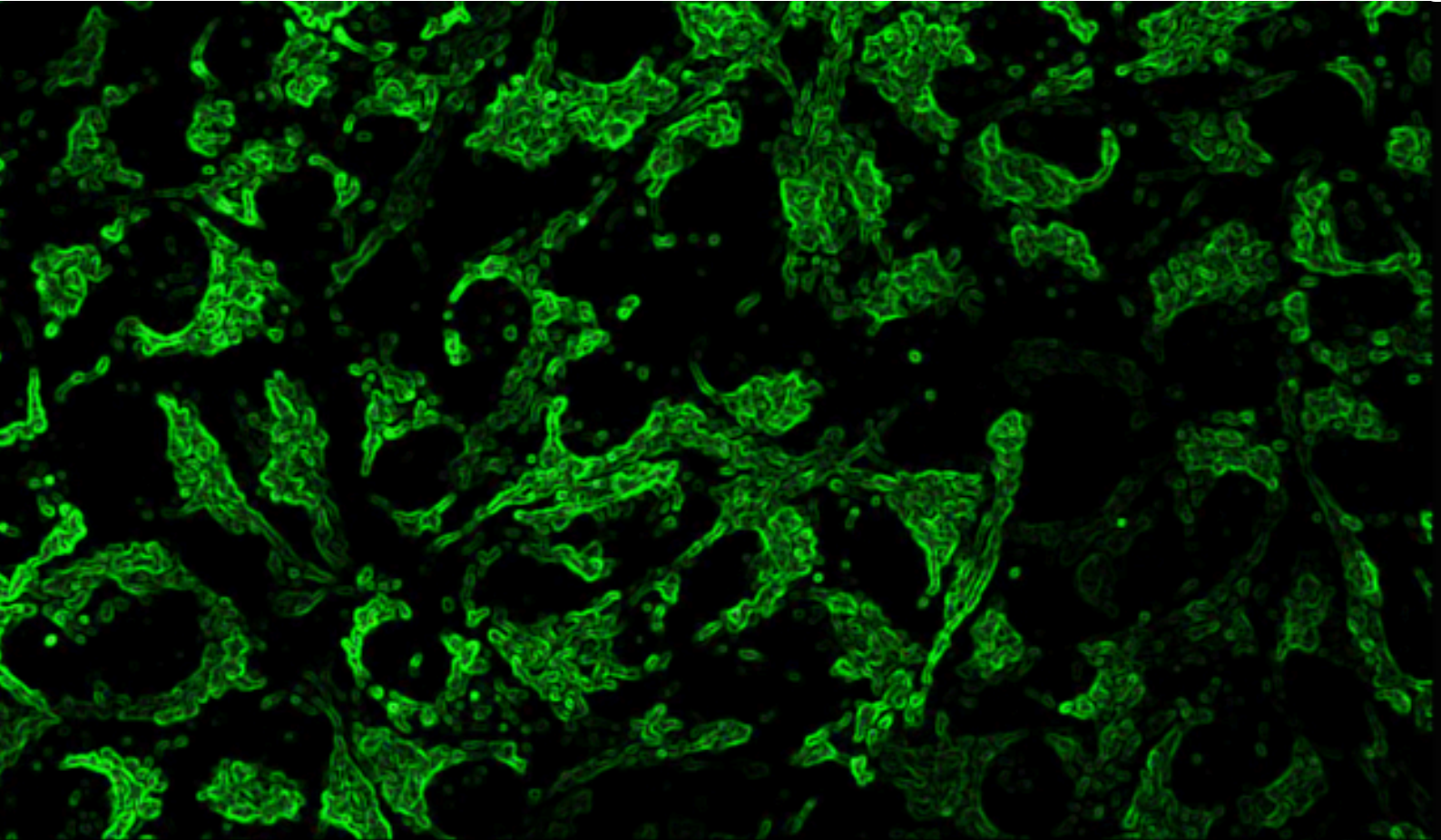




NEWSLETTER

Monash Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences



EMCR grant successes

Spotlight on new EMCRs

Recent & upcoming events

Seminars and grant opportunities

FPPS EMCR NEWSLETTER



A letter from the editors

Welcome to the first issue of the FPPS EMCR Newsletter for 2025!

In this issue, we celebrate recent EMCR accolades in Commonwealth and philanthropic grants (p. 5-6), recap our joint mentoring and collaboration workshop (p. 8), meet Ryan from D4 (p. 9) and draw your attention to upcoming seminars and grant opportunities (p. 13-14).

A new year also heralds change, and the newsletter is entering a period of transition as we are both stepping down to take on new roles. We are currently in the process of appointing co-editors, so rest assured that the newsletter will continue to grace your inboxes.

In the meantime, we hope that this issue is a useful and enjoyable addition to your day!

Best wishes,

**Dorothy Wai and
Syaza Binte Abu Bakar**

*Co-editors in chief,
FPPS EMCR Newsletter*



 @EMCR_MIPS

 MIPS EMCR GROUP

 pharm-emcr-committee@monash.edu

IN THIS ISSUE

02 Chairs' report

04 EMCR Welcome Lunch

05 Recent grant successes

08 Recap of recent EMCR events

09 EMCR spotlight

10 HRM update

13 Funding opportunities

14 Upcoming seminars

FPPS EMCR COMMITTEE COMMITTEE CHAIRS' REPORT

From the Chairs

Welcome to 2025! We are pleased to report that 2024 was a successful year for the FPPS EMCR committee in supporting EMCRs and facilitating connections within the MIPS EMCR community, through a series of professional and social events. These included **2 FASTtrack workshops** and 3 social events. The first FASTtrack workshop was held in July on establishing collaborations for grant applications, and the other in September focusing on crafting an ARC application. Our mid-year **Trivia Night** was held in conjunction with the Parkville Postgraduate Association and was very well-received. As always, our **welcome lunch** and **EOY celebration** provided a friendly and informal space for EMCR networking.

The committee has continued our engagement with the broader EMCR community in the Parkville precinct through our involvement in 3 inter-institute social events (April, July, October) and the **Melbourne Emerging Leaders in Biomedical Research (MELBR) Symposium**, which saw >120 participants across 12 leading research institutes in Melbourne gather at the Florey in September for a day of stimulating keynotes, EMCR presentations and panel discussions. In November, we held a joint **mentoring and collaboration workshop** (delivered by Mind Your Way) with Her Research Matters, Parkville Postgraduate Association, MOSAIC and the Faculty Research Office, and the success of this event has encouraged us to explore additional opportunities for co-hosted events in 2025.

As incoming co-chairs, we stand on the shoulders of giants – namely, the dedicated and hardworking 2024 committee. We are farewelling co-chairs **Shane Hellyer** and **Sam McNeill**, Parents Group coordinators **Liam Koehn** and **Amanda Cross** (also CMUS rep), and newsletter co-editor **Syaza Binte Abu Bakar**. We would like to extend our gratitude to outgoing members, especially Sam and Shane for the energy and organisation they have brought to the committee as co-chairs. Although we have enormous shoes to fill, we are encouraged by the excellent team and structures that they leave behind.

We are also keen to embrace fresh ideas and new faces. Our first event of the year is the welcome lunch (p. 4), which is a fantastic opportunity for you to meet the 2025 committee and connect with fellow EMCRs, as well as share your thoughts on how we can best serve you in the coming year. However, if you have feedback for us at any time, or are eager to pitch in and join the committee, please do reach out at pharm-emcr-committee@monash.edu.

Finally, we are grateful to the Faculty for their ongoing support of the EMCR committee. We look forward to a wonderful 2025 with everyone!



Dorothy Wai



Jeff Luo

Dorothy Wai and Jeff Luo

FPPS EMCR COMMITTEE 2025 COMMITTEE MEMBERS



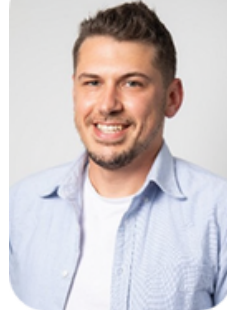
Carlo Giannangelo
Secretary



Sandra Vargas
Treasurer



Gracia Gracia
FASTtrack



Jesse Mobbs
FASTtrack



Enyuan Cao
FASTtrack



Sanjeevini Babu Reddiar
FASTtrack



Kali Godbee
Parents' group



Pouya Deghankelishadi
Social



Parisa Badiee
Social



Aaron Day
Social



Eileen Zhou
PPA rep

JOIN US WANTED: NEWSLETTER CO-EDITORS

We are looking for enthusiastic newsletter co-editors to join the EMCR Committee!

Position overview:

As the Newsletter Co-Editor-in-Chief, you will play a crucial role in shaping the narrative of the EMCR Committee. This is a unique opportunity to showcase your editorial skills, creativity, and passion for our community.

Key responsibilities:

- Curate and create engaging content for our quarterly newsletters.
- Collaborate with committee members to promote and recap EMCR committee events
- Collate and highlight the achievements and contributions of early and mid-career researchers

If you're ready to take on this exciting opportunity, we want to hear from you! Please contact us at pharm-emcr-committee@monash.edu to express your interest in this role.



EMCR Welcome Lunch 2025



**Friday
14 March
12-2 PM**

**Building 4,
Level 5 Large
Meeting Room
(505)**

Join us for networking and lunch with fellow EMCRs, meet the 2025 EMCR Committee, and share your thoughts on how the committee can serve you in the coming year!

REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL



RECENT GRANT SUCCESS

NHMRC IDEAS GRANTS



SHANE HELLYER

Dissecting the genetic diversity and therapeutic potential in targeting trace amine receptor 1 for psychiatric disorders

Associate Professor Karen Gregory (DDB), Dr Pramod Nair (Flinders), Dr Shane Hellyer (DDB), Professor Tarun Bastiampillai (Flinders)

The trace amine associated receptor 1 (TAAR1) is a promising target in neuropsychiatric disorders, but drugs have failed in clinical trials. We have identified a large amount of genetic diversity in TAAR1, with mutations present throughout important ligand binding and signalling domains. This project aims to combine computational modelling, pharmacological testing and characterisation of patient derived brain cells to understand the impact of this diversity on TAAR1 function and responses to drug-like compounds. This will greatly enhance our understanding of the contribution of mutations to changing drug effects at TAAR1, allowing us to rationally design new drugs that can overcome these impacts. We can also better prescribe existing TAAR1 drugs based on patient genetic profiles, leading to a personalised medicine approach for neuropsychiatric therapy.

CARLO GIANNANGELO

Discovery of New Antimalarials with a Novel Mechanism of Action and Irresistible Target

Dr Carlo Giannangelo (D4), Dr Annaliese Dillon (Med Chem), Associate Professor David Shackelford (CDCO), Dr Michael Edstein

This project will develop new antimalarial compounds with a novel mechanism of action to address drug resistance, featuring high potency, rapid action against all blood asexual stages, low toxicity, high oral availability and a novel mechanism of action. Advanced proteomics and pharmacokinetic-pharmacodynamic modeling will be used to elucidate the mechanism of action and optimize the compounds for preclinical development.



Predicting the impact of antimalarial resistance in West African parasites

Dr Hayley Bullen (Burnet), Dr Charles Narh (Deakin), Dr Carlo Giannangelo (D4).

This project examines the impact of Kelch 13 (K13) mutations in West African malaria parasites, as resistance to artemisinin-based therapies continues to spread. Using genotyping, molecular biology, and multi-omics platforms, the study will assess how these mutations affect drug resistance and treatment efficacy. The project will involve adapting clinical isolates, generating transgenic parasites, and analyzing metabolic changes to predict resistance trends. This work will provide critical insights into the evolution of resistance driven by K13 mutations, informing treatment strategies and policy decisions to mitigate the spread of drug-resistant malaria in Africa.

RECENT GRANT SUCCESS AWARD RECIPIENTS



**FIGHT
MND.**
IT TAKES PEOPLE

LIAM KOEHN

I was recently awarded a four-year early-career research fellowship through FightMND. Motor neuron disease (MND) is a group of conditions in which the neurons controlling the muscles that enable movement, speech, swallowing and breathing malfunction and eventually die. With no nerves to activate them, the muscles gradually weaken and waste.

The Fellowship provides \$540k to support my research program, which focuses on reducing neuroinflammation. I will trial different approaches to deliver an experimental drug to the brain, with the aim of reducing MND symptoms and/or progression.

Congratulations also to...

BRIAN CARY

NHMRC Ideas grant

Impact of biased agonism at the GLP-1R in the treatment of obesity and type 2 diabetes

Dr Dana Hutchinson (DDB), Dr Brian Cary (DDB)



JASON CAO

NHMRC Investigator grant (EL1)

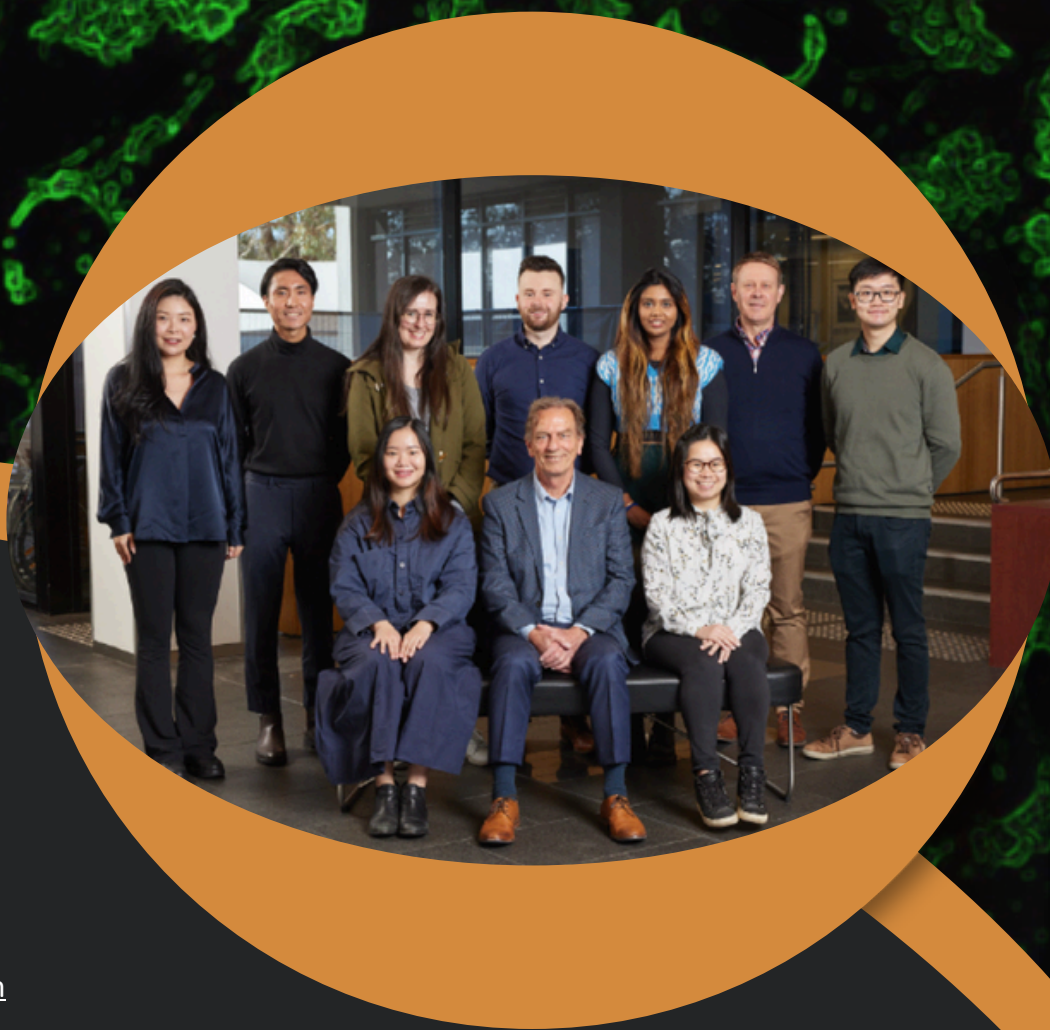
Structural approaches to assist the development of selective antagonists of adrenomedullin receptors

Dr Jianjun (Jason) Cao (DDB)

COVER IMAGE

MRNA CORE

COVER IMAGE FEATURE



mRNA CORE

 [website](#)  [LinkedIn](#)

We are mRNA Core, a collaborative initiative at MIPS to develop the mRNA products of the future. We work with researchers across Australia and beyond to design, manufacture and analyse a diverse array of RNA products, from vaccines to gene therapies and drug delivery capabilities.

What is the image? A tale of two nucleic acids - a collaborator approached us citing poor transfection of their pDNA construct. When we redesigned that same sequence as mRNA, the results were night and day.

Why do we love it? It's a perfect showcase of the efficiency of mRNA, both for protein production and for getting a stalled project back on track!

Do you want to see YOUR image on the newsletter front cover? We do!!

Send it to: pharm-emcr-committee@monash.edu

RECENT EVENTS

MENTORING WORKSHOP

MENTORING & COLLABORATION WORKSHOP

The EMCR committee co-hosted a workshop based on emerging leaders' needs. These were identified in the survey of members from the HRM launch event in early 2024. The half-day workshop was facilitated by Dr Lisa Curtis-Wendlandt from Mind Your Way.

SCHEDULE

1st session

MAPPING

Individuals visualised their current formal and informal mentors and collaborators: senior mentors, peer mentors and junior staff/students.



2nd session

NETWORKING

Attendees were encouraged to think about where gaps might exist in their current mentors and collaborators network and develop strategies to strengthen existing, or establish new, mentors and collaborators.



The workshop was attended by 30 MIPs researchers and HDR students, and was run in conjunction with the faculty research office, HRM, PPA and MOSAIC.

SPOTLIGHT: EMCR FEATURE

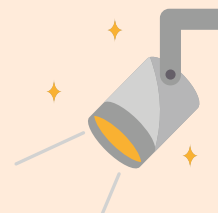



RYAN KEENAN

Research Fellow



I am an early-career Research Fellow in the Drug Delivery, Disposition and Dynamics theme at Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences.



 ryan.keenan@monash.edu

My research involves investigating neurodegenerative disease (such as Alzheimer's disease, motor neurone disease, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson's disease) in mouse models, utilising various genetic and pharmacological interventions. Currently, my research focus is on the role of microglia-mediated neuroinflammation in mouse models of motor neurone disease and Alzheimer's disease. Previously, my research focused on the bidirectional relationship between sleep and neurodegenerative disease in a mouse model of frontotemporal dementia and how this relationship impacted cognitive function and disease progression/pathology.

WHAT IS YOUR RESEARCH AREA?

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO DO IN THE FUTURE?

I hope to contribute to the understanding of neurodegenerative disorders through preclinical research and investigate potential therapeutic interventions/strategies. Hopefully my research will contribute to the development of interventions that can provide positive outcomes for people living with these disorders.

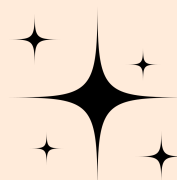
WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I enjoy keeping fit and active by going for runs or to the gym. I also enjoy playing or watching sport and have played Australian rules football for a local club for over 20 years.

READ SOME OF RYAN'S RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Keenan, R.J., *et al.* [Orexin 2 receptor antagonism sex-dependently improves sleep/wakefulness and cognitive performance in tau transgenic mice.](#) British Journal of Pharmacology, 2024.

Keenan, R.J., *et al.* [Differential sleep/wake response and sex differences following acute suvorexant, MK-1064 and zolpidem administration in the rTg4510 mouse model of tauopathy.](#) British Journal of Pharmacology, 2024.



HER RESEARCH MATTERS

MEET YOUR NEW 2025 BOARD



On the 29th of November 2024, we concluded our Annual General Meeting with the exciting election of our new 2025 board. We were pleased to see a great mix of members re-electing for positions, as well as others stepping up to new leadership positions. HRM warmly welcome your new board for 2025:

Co-Chair – [Dr Sanjeevini Babu Reddiar](#) (NEW for 2025)

- Sanju has been an incredibly valuable member of HRM, leading the Networking and Sponsorship Committee in 2024 and coordinating over 10 different HRM events. We look forward to having Sanju as our Co-Chair in 2025.

Co-Chair – [Dr Manuela Jörg](#)

Secretary – [Dr Enyuan Cao](#)

Treasurer – [Dr Amandeep Kaur](#)

Policy & Philanthropy – [Rosemary Manning](#)

Networking & Sponsorship – [Dr Cathy Cao](#) (NEW for 2025)

Diversity & Inclusion – [Dr Elva Zhao](#) (NEW for 2025)

Established Research Leaders – [Dr Chengxue Helena Qin](#)

Emerging Research Leaders – [Dr Dorothy Wai](#) (NEW for 2025)

Education Research Leaders – [Dr Jie Tang](#)

Allies & Sponsors – [Dr Daniel Priebbenow](#)



Dr Sanjeevini Babu Reddiar, Dr Cathy Cao, Dr Elva Zhao, and Dr Dorothy Wai, our board members with new positions in 2025.

We would also like to thank our outgoing board members for their contributions, energy and commitment to HRM:

- [A/Prof. Natalie Trevaskis](#) – Co-Chair (2 years), Secretary (1 year), Networking and Sponsorship + Established Leader Cluster Lead (2 years). Natalie has given outstanding contributions over a number of years to HRM, and we thank her for enabling the success of HRM over these years.
- [Dr Amanda Cross](#) - Emerging leaders representative (1 year)
- [Dr Hương Nguyễn](#) - Faculty Diversity & Inclusion Committee Representative (1 year)

Thank you again for generously supporting us as allies, and we hope to see you at our events and initiatives in 2025!

Best regards, the [#HerResearchMatters](#) Collective.

Would you like to know more or get involved?



pharmacy-HRM@monash.edu



@HRM_MIPS



www.linkedin.com/company/her-research-matters



<https://www.monash.edu/pharm/about/people/hrm>

HER RESEARCH MATTERS

2024 IN REVIEW

HER
RESEARCH
MATTERS

We have had another productive and exciting year, which is a testament to the amazing engagement and enthusiasm of the HRM board, sub-committees, the whole collective and our allies – thank you all for your involvement! During 2024 we have run numerous inspiring events and coordinated reviews of grant and promotion applications to support our members. We have been very pleased to work closely with MOSAIC, the EMCR committee, the Parkville Postgraduate Association, Dose of Pharma and our Faculty Associate Dean Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Betty Exintaris, to organise EDI events and contribute to their mission as allies. We reflect on some of our highlights below.

1 Science Meets Parliament

Early in the year, HRM proudly sponsored Anh TN Nguyen and Monica Langiu to attend Science Meets Parliament at Parliament House (Figure 1), where participants explored the intersection of science and government and discussed the role of research in policymaking.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.

2 HRM Re-Launch

In April, the HRM Re-launch Event reintroduced HRM's mission, clusters and themes through a networking lunch, featuring a keynote address on improving research culture by Prof. Francine Marques (Figure 2). This event celebrated past achievements and encouraged cross-disciplinary collaboration, drawing strong participation from leadership, allies and EMCRs.

3 IDAHOBIT Panel

During Pride Week, HRM, in collaboration with the Parkville Postgraduate Association (PPA) and Dose of Pharma, hosted the IDAHOBIT Panel: No One Left Behind, chaired by science communicator Catriona Robertson-Nguyen (Figure 3). The event spotlighted equality and justice in research for the LGBTQIA+ community and featured a distinguished panel, with discussions later released as a podcast.



Figure 3.

4 Embracing Diversity Panel

In the latter half of the year, HRM continued its focus on inclusivity and professional development. August's Embracing Diversity: Transforming Drug Development and Usage panel addressed sex, gender, genetic and ethnic considerations in medical research and education.

5 ARC Grant Writing Workshop

In September, we held an ARC grant-writing workshop, led by Dr. Narelle Tunstall (Empirical Careers), which provided targeted advice on preparing competitive grant applications.

6 Coffee Catch - Up

We also organised a coffee catch-up in September where members had the opportunity to network and catch up with friends whilst enjoying a hot coffee.



Figure 5.

7 ED&I Week Panel

Diversity and Inclusion Week included a panel on overcoming adversity in STEM, featuring inspiring stories from professionals like Dr. Justin Carrero, Dr. Vanessa Penna, and Brendan Moore, with insights released as a Dose of Pharma podcast (Figure 4).



Figure 4.

8 Mentoring & Collaboration Workshop

In November, we featured a four-hour mentoring workshop, Building Your Collaboration Circle, led by Amanda Cross and Sandra Vargas Torres, which guided participants in strengthening their professional networks (Figure 5). The workshop was attended by 30 MIPs researchers and HDR students, and was run in conjunction with the faculty research office, EMCR committee, PPA and MOSAIC.

9 Annual General Meeting

HRM concluded the year with its Annual General Meeting, celebrating key achievements, electing a new board and setting goals for 2025. We also announced the winners of our inaugural HRM Award for 2024, A/Prof. Natalie Trevaskis and Dr. Simona Carbone (Figure 6).



Figure 6.

HRM would again like to extend our gratitude to our board members, general members, and allies for your continued support and engagement throughout 2024, and we look forward to seeing you again and gaining your feedback at our events and initiatives to come in 2025.



Would you like to know more or get involved?



pharmacy-HRM@monash.edu



@HRM_MIPS



www.linkedin.com/company/her-research-matters



https://www.monash.edu/pharm/about/people/hrm

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING & AWARDS

Date	Funding opportunity	Amount
25/03/25	<u>Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - Grand Challenges - Innovations for Gram-Negative Antibiotic Discovery</u>	Up to \$5m (3 years)
09/04/25 07/05/25	<u>NHMRC Ideas Grants 2025 - minimum data</u> <u>NHMRC Ideas Grants 2025 - full application</u>	Based on budget assessment (1-5 years)
17/04/25	<u>Heart Foundation - Postdoctoral Fellowship</u>	\$151,200 (2 years)
25/06/25 23/07/25	<u>MRFF 2025 Early to Mid-Career Researchers Grant</u> <u>Opportunity:</u> <u>- minimum data</u> <u>- full application</u>	Stream 1: up to \$1m (2 years) Stream 2: \$2-4m (4 years) Stream 3: up to \$1m (3 years)

UPCOMING SEMINARS

MIPS SEMINARS

Date	Presenter	Chair
17/03/2025	Dr David Kang	Prof Chris Porter
11/04/2025	Prof Alessio Ciulli & Dr Chiara Maniaci	Dr Manuela Jorg
07/05/2025	Prof Junle Qu	Dr Bo Peng
21/05/2025	Dr Karla Seaman	Prof Simon Bell
18/06/2025	Meet the Fellows	Assoc Prof Ben Capuano

The seminars will be held at 12 PM in LT 3 on Monash University's Parkville campus, 381 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria. If you wish to be added to the seminar mailing list email sandra.vargas@monash.edu

UPCOMING SEMINARS

CCEMMP SEMINARS

Date	Presenter	Time
08/04/25	Dr Brian Cary	10:00 - 11:00 AM
13/05/25	Prof Juan Du	10:00 - 11:00 AM
20/05/25	***SPECIAL** Mazdak Radjainia (cryoDuck)	4:00 - 5:00 PM
10/06/25	Prof Yifan Cheng	10:00 - 11:00 AM
08/07/25	Assistant Prof Mohammad Kaplan	10:00 - 11:00 AM
15/07/25	***SPECIAL** TBA (Boehringer Ingelheim)	4:00 - 5:00 PM
12/08/25	Prof. Lezanne Ooi	10:00 - 11:00 AM
19/08/25	***SPECIAL** Prof Dimitrios Fotiadis	4:00 - 5:00 PM
09/09/25	Dr Seungil Han (Pfizer)	10:00 - 11:00 AM
14/10/25	Dr. Sarah Piper	10:00 - 11:00 AM
21/10/25	***SPECIAL** Dr. Alexey Rak (Sanofi)	4:00 - 5:00 PM
11/11/25	Assistant Prof Rie Nygaard	10:00 - 11:00 AM
09/12/25	Dr Lisa Eshun-Wilson	TBC

Seminars will be held online at 10:00-11:00 AM AEDT/AEST on the second Tuesday of each month. If you would like to be invited to the seminars, please register for the events at: <https://ccemmp.org/news/ccemmp-seminar-series/>

