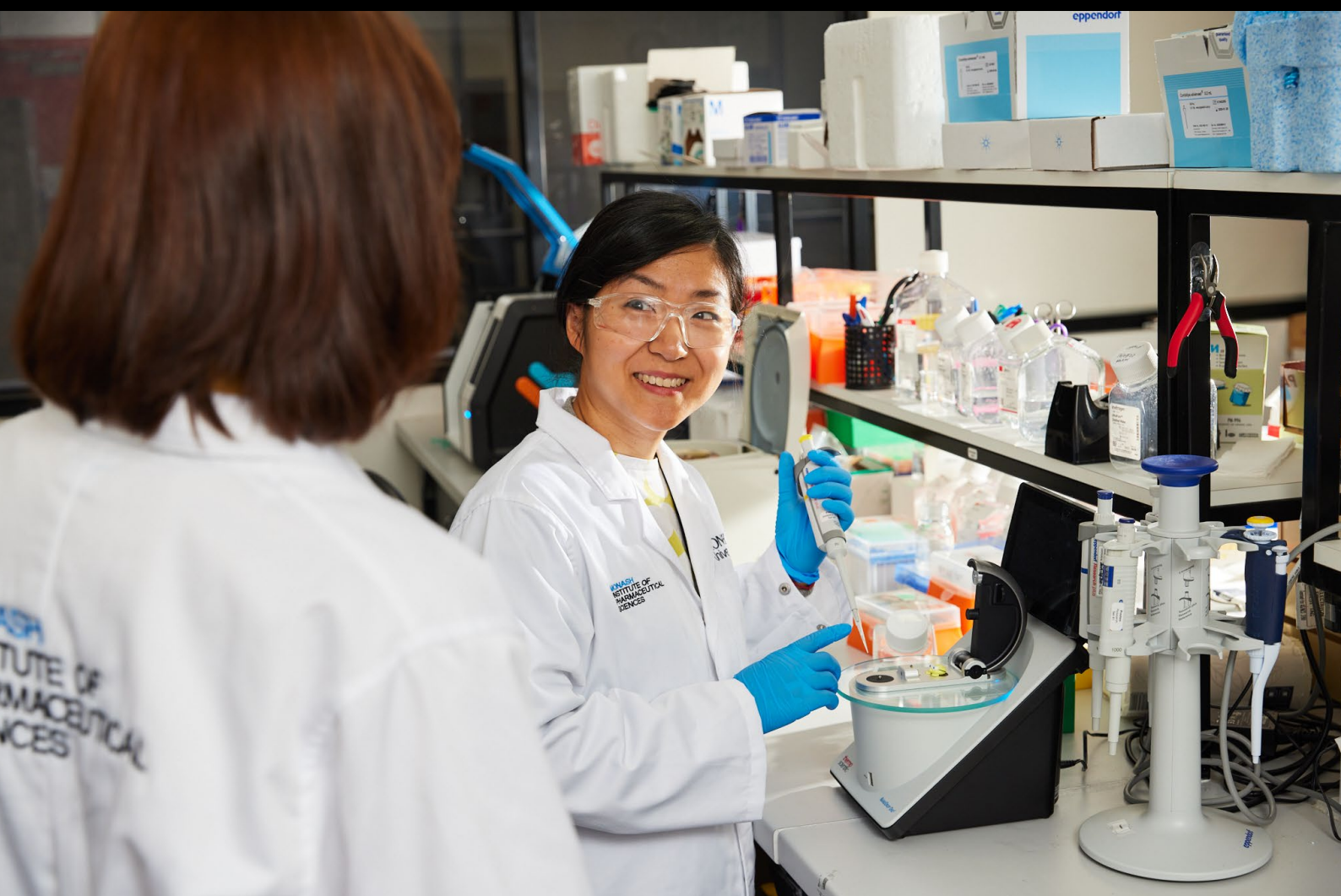


EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESEARCH LEADERS

Join us to support the Early Career Researcher Excellence
Program at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences





As a globally recognised leader in pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences, we empower early career researchers to drive innovations that improve health and wellbeing

OUR CHALLENGE AND VISION

Empowering the next generation of research leaders in drug discovery, design, delivery, and use

Despite humanity's remarkable strides in healthcare in recent years, many diseases and conditions remain inadequately treated, continuing to cause widespread suffering and loss of life worldwide.

Conditions such as cancer, depression, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, malaria, and tuberculosis rank among the most pervasive health challenges of our time. Meanwhile, emerging diseases like COVID-19 continue to surface, introducing new and complex threats to global health.

These unmet medical needs drive researchers every day to seek new medicines and improved treatments to enhance the lives of patients within Australia and across the globe.

An absolutely critical part of this work are our early career researchers (ECRs) – under ten years post-PhD. They refresh their discipline with new ideas and drive innovation. They're an essential pipeline of research talent who become the research leaders of the future.

Yet this pipeline is under threat. Many of our promising early career researchers experience difficulties at this particularly challenging stage of their careers, such as:

- the difficulty of securing research grants (with around a 10% success rate, nationally)
- limited and insecure funding opportunities fail to offer financial stability – a barrier that's particularly pronounced for researchers who already experience other financial challenges
- reliance on short-term contracts, often requiring repeated relocation and resulting in significant career and life disruption
- being at a life stage where parental and/or carers leave is often needed.

It's vital that we support ECRs at this critical time. With targeted support at just the right moment, we

can help them to keep the wind in their sails, maintain their momentum, and navigate the challenges of this tricky career stage.

Ultimately, this leads to a more robust scientific and research culture, with more discoveries, more medical breakthroughs, and greater benefits for the national and global community.

Early career researchers at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Building and mentoring the next generation of research leaders is central to our mission at the **Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences**. As part of a globally **top-ranked pharmacy faculty**, our early career researchers are positioned to make meaningful contributions to human health.

At the Institute, our vision is to strengthen the pipeline of future talent by supporting as many early-career researchers as possible. With targeted funding at this critical stage, we can magnify the impact of each investment and accelerate their success.

By helping our ECRs to overcome the barriers at this critical point, we can empower the next generation of research leaders in drug discovery, design, delivery, and use.



Professor Christopher Porter
*Director, Monash Institute of
Pharmaceutical Sciences*

OUR SOLUTION

Providing the targeted support emerging researchers need to thrive

To support early career researchers at this critical stage of their development, we're launching the **Early Career Researcher Excellence Program** – an initiative providing flexible funding and tailored development opportunities that help promising researchers build momentum, overcome barriers, and excel.

Participants would have the flexibility to use these funds in the way that will best suit their career needs. For example, they can use this funding to:

- build a team by recruiting research assistants and PhD students
- obtain the instrumentation and equipment needed to set up a lab
- participate in mentoring and professional development programs in research, grant

writing, securing philanthropy, and presenting to different audiences

- receive support to overcome a career disruption.

As well as funding, they'd be given a range of opportunities to help them thrive, such as partaking in peer-support events and activities together as a cohort, collaborating and learning from each other. And they'd be mentored by senior leaders in their fields across the university.

This game-changing program will create a nexus of energy and inspiration, driving innovation and collaboration. And it will ultimately help in addressing the community's ongoing need for innovation in the sphere of drug discovery and research – supporting a wide range of future leaders at the Institute.



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OUR FUTURE RESEARCH LEADERS

Just some of the promising early career researchers shaping the future of medicines and health

The Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences brings together leading researchers across its core research themes – **Drug Discovery Biology**; **Medicinal Chemistry**; **Drug Candidate Optimisation**; **Drug Delivery, Disposition, and Dynamics**; and **Medicine Use and Safety**. The following early-career researchers exemplify the strength, innovation, and future leadership emerging in these areas – and they truly demonstrate the power of supporting our brightest future leaders to drive the next generation of change and innovation.



Dr Amanda Cross, Centre for Medicine Use and Safety
– A recognised leader in medicine safety

Dr Cross's research interests primarily relate to medicine safety and quality use of medicines in older people, particularly those at risk of developing dementia or who are currently living with dementia. She co-leads national research programs to educate health professionals to improve medicine use in aged care.

Dr Stanley Xie, Drug Delivery, Disposition, and Dynamics
– A leading innovator in antimicrobial drug discovery

Dr Xie's research expertise is the discovery and development of novel antimalarial inhibitors. A result of the malaria inhibition mechanism he has discovered is that it is extremely difficult for pathogens to evolve resistance. This research can lead to the future development of therapeutic agents to combat antimicrobial resistance.



Dr Arisbel Batista Gondin, Drug Discovery Biology
– A rising leader in therapeutic innovation

Dr Gondin's research program incorporates molecular and cellular pharmacology, structural biology, and nanotechnology to advance understanding of proteins that are critical for human health and to drive the discovery of new therapies. Her research has been recognised with ARC and NHMRC Fellowships, as well as the 2024 Vice-Chancellor's Early Career Researcher of the Year (STEM) award.



Dr Amandeep Kaur, Medicinal Chemistry
– An emerging leader in molecular imaging

Dr Kaur's research focuses on developing fluorescent sensors that reveal intricate details of biochemical interactions that were previously unattainable. With a focus on sensing platforms for amyloid microenvironments, her research develops tools for nanoscale imaging of protein aggregates in neurodegeneration, specifically early detection for Alzheimer's disease.



PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Driving health outcomes and community impact



Professor Christopher Porter will lead and oversee the Early Career Researcher Excellence Program at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

As Director of the Institute, and the inventor of over 15 patent families, Professor Porter knows a thing or two about pursuing enterprising avenues to optimise research outcomes. By stepping outside of academia to leverage industry knowledge and expertise, he has both supported the development of trailblazing innovations at the Institute, and advanced his own efforts to find solutions to problems surrounding the absorption of poorly water soluble, highly lipophilic drugs.

With decades of experience at the coalface of drug discovery, design, deliver, and use, Professor Porter is ideally suited to act as a champion for the Institute's early career researchers.

Professor Arthur Christopoulos is Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the home of the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences. As Dean, he provides strategic leadership for the Early Career Researcher Excellence Program. As a Pharmacist, Professor of Analytical Pharmacology and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, he's a leader whose research bridges academia and industry, championing collaborative translational programs tackling neurological/neuropsychiatric disorders, cardiovascular disease, obesity and diabetes through application of pharmacology, medicinal chemistry, structural and computational biology, and preclinical disease models.

As Dean he builds a supportive faculty culture with mentorship, access to diverse expertise, grant-writing help, and industry links that fast-track translation. Within the Faculty, early career researchers benefit from structured training, shared facilities, and opportunities to lead projects.

Professor Christopoulos has numerous international accolades recognising his leadership in the field and boosting global visibility, making the Faculty an ideal place for emerging scientists to grow and succeed.



WHY SUPPORT THE INSTITUTE?

A proven ecosystem for research success

The Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences is an ideal environment for nurturing the next generation of ECRs in drug discovery, design, delivery, and use. We offer structured mentorship, interdisciplinary and international collaboration, and strong translational links that accelerate ECRs toward independence and making a real difference in people's lives.

We're number one in Australia, and for the last decade we've consistently ranked in the top four institutions in the world for pharmacy and pharmacology (QS World University Rankings) – including achieving the highly competitive global #1 spot in 2022.

STRONG RESEARCH CULTURE

The Institute fosters a proactive culture for ECRs through dedicated committees and programs that organise training, networking, and career development activities. Structured mentorship, ECR representation, and tailored workshops help researchers build grant-writing, leadership, and communication skills while connecting them to senior investigators and peers.

TRAINING AND MENTORING

The Institute hosts forums, symposia, and young-investigator events that give ECRs frequent opportunities to present work, get feedback, and expand their professional networks. Our regular scientific meetings and events create platforms for collaboration and public engagement, accelerating visibility within academia and industry.

FUNDING SUCCESS AND TRANSLATION PATHWAYS

Our researchers consistently secure competitive early-career grants and institutional support, reflecting an environment that helps applicants craft competitive proposals and translate discoveries toward clinical or commercial impact. Strong institutional grant support and translation pathways

increase the likelihood that early career projects will scale into independent programs and attract industry partnerships.

FACILITIES AND COLLABORATION

The Institute sits within a large university ecosystem that encourages cross-theme collaboration across medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, drug delivery, and translational science. Access to **state-of-the-art labs, core facilities, and multidisciplinary teams** enables our ECRs to pursue ambitious, technically sophisticated projects and to learn complementary skills from adjacent disciplines.

We're housed at the Monash University Parkville campus, the university's most research-intensive campus. Close to Melbourne's CBD and **part of Australia's top health and biomedical precinct**, our neighbours and collaborative partners include major hospitals, the University of Melbourne, WEHI, the Florey, the Doherty Institute, and CSL Limited.

On top of these local partnerships, our research and industrial partners are also deeply international – including being part of **PharmAlliance**. This is a strategic partnership between three global leaders: Eshelman School of Pharmacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, United States; School of Pharmacy at University College London, United Kingdom; and our own Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Through PharmAlliance and our many other international collaborators, **our ECRs are connected to a global scientific network.**

THE NEXT GENERATION

Overall, we're a dynamic, innovative, and ambitious centre of research and learning, with the right people, leadership, networks, and expertise to train the drug research leaders of the future.

OUR EXPERTISE

Enhanced human health outcomes and new areas of focus

The Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences is the largest academic group of pharmaceutical scientists in Australia and one of the largest in the world. It has a focus in translational drug discovery as well as the safe and effective use of medicines in the community – at home, hospitals, or healthcare facilities such as aged care.

Under Professor Porter's leadership, the Institute prioritises real-world impact on human health, measured beyond publications and grants. Our activities are strategically aligned with three core Therapeutic Program Areas: **Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health**; **Global Health**; and **Neuroscience and Mental Health**.

Along with maintaining our proven excellence in these three core therapeutic areas, we've identified three areas of focus that constitute new or enhanced areas of activity that we consider critical for future success:

TRANSLATING AND COMMERCIALISING OUR RESEARCH

We know that undertaking world-leading research is not enough. To truly have real-world impact and improve health outcomes our research must move out of the laboratories and research centres.

The Institute has established itself as a leader in translational drug discovery and development, generating spin-outs and start-ups, numerous invention disclosures and patents, and progressing more than 40 drug candidates into clinical trials.

Beyond the commercialisation activities, we contribute to national and international clinical practice and health guidelines, and are collaborating with the World Health Organization to remove

substandard medicines from the market in low- and middle-income countries.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE HEALTH

Climate change is a health crisis. Zoonotic outbreaks such as COVID-19, cardiovascular and mental health problems, and the spread of tropical diseases harm millions. The health industry is both part of the problem, via our carbon footprint, and part of the solution. We're committed to:

- increasing sustainability of our research activities through My Green Lab certification, to mitigate our impact on global warming
- boosting our focus on research outcomes that provide solutions to climate change driven health problems, i.e. health system adaptation to better withstand the impacts of climate change
- building communities of practice / interest groups that connect to broader climate activities across the Monash community

HARNESSING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DATA SCIENCE

The rapid development and integration of artificial intelligence and data science across various sectors represents a transformative force with profound implications for scientific research.

While the full potential of this AI revolution remains to be fully understood, we're strategically integrating AI and data science methodologies into our research activities to enhance efficiency, accelerate discovery, and ultimately improve patient outcomes.

THE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY

How you can help to change lives

To truly change the story for our promising future leaders and give them a chance at achieving success, we must provide essential continuity and support early in their career journey.

We have the leadership, the expertise, and the world-class environment needed to deliver such a program of support. But we can't do it alone.

We rely on the support of bold, like-minded philanthropists, who share our vision for making transformational change.

By giving to the Early Career Researcher Excellence Program, you can catalyse the careers of numerous talented researchers to become tomorrow's leaders in drug discovery and medicines research.

Further, such a gift offers something incredibly valuable to a research career: flexibility of funding. Government and industry funding is often highly restrictive. By giving philanthropically, you allow us to tailor the support to the research needs of each participant, to best drive their innovative vision.

Your generous contribution would be offering a lifeline at a critical juncture in awardees' working lives. And, in turn, investing further in the future pipeline of drug researchers to drive the breakthroughs our community needs – fostering good health across the lifespan, including healthy ageing.

We welcome further conversations to discuss how you could partner with us to support young researchers – our future leaders – and together make a real difference to people impacted by the many health conditions that we've yet to adequately address.



Professor Arthur Christopoulos
*Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy and
Pharmaceutical Sciences*



“Philanthropic support was instrumental in helping me to establish my research career. It gave me the time, funding, and career security I needed to build a research foundation in drug receptor signalling. From here my research program and my team has flourished. I am contributing to the global scientific understanding of metabolic processes in cells as well as drug developments to treat dementia and breast cancer. I am able to repay the donor's generosity by identifying, training and supporting the next generation of research leaders.”

**– Associate Professor Michelle Halls,
Drug Discovery Biology Deputy Theme Leader**



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