



## Media Release

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# **Cancer Council NSW awards almost \$9 million of funding to innovative cancer research**

*Winning grants will be revealed at 2019 Research Awards*

**Sydney, 14 March 2019** – Cancer Council NSW has awarded almost \$9 million of new funding to 13 ground-breaking cancer research projects. The chosen world-class research teams are leading the charge towards a cancer free future by investigating new ways to diagnose and treat the disease.

The 2019 grants will be announced and awarded tonight at Cancer Council NSW's annual Research Awards, held at Westpac's Barangaroo Towers in Sydney.

"We are extremely proud to announce another round of extraordinary projects in 2019. We are confident these projects will provide incredible value to cancer patients and continue to push our progress towards a cancer free future," said Dr Jane Hobson, Research Grants Manager at Cancer Council NSW.

Funds have been awarded to projects deemed through peer review to be of the highest scientific merit; and through consumer review to be of the most value to the community supporting Cancer Council.

The majority of the 13 projects – awarded to the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, University of Wollongong, University of Newcastle, Melanoma Institute Australia, Centenary Institute of Cancer Medicine and Cell Biology, The Westmead Institute for Medical Research, University of NSW, Macquarie University, Children's Cancer Institute Australia for Medical Research and The University of Sydney – are three-year Project Grants.

Additionally, one of two available Translational Program Grants, a \$7.5 million joint funding from NSW Government and NSW Cancer Council, will be awarded on the night. Led by Professor David Gottlieb, the project will receive \$3.75 million to develop methods for making cutting edge CAR T-cell immunotherapy simpler and more affordable for leukaemia and lymphoma patients.

The other 12 projects focus on innovating the diagnoses and treatment of a range of cancer types. They include: enhancing radiotherapy targeting, examining the impact of gut bacteria on lung cancer treatment, developing methods for predicting patient response to immunotherapies, and many more.

"The broad range of projects that we fund – across many types of cancers and stages of the cancer journey – shows Cancer Council NSW's commitment to work across every area of every cancer," Dr Hobson said.

"Projects like these wouldn't be possible without our supporters – as an organisation that is over 90% community funded, these grants have been made possible by the community's generosity," Dr Hobson concluded.

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#### **Media Interviews**

- Dr Jane Hobson, Research Grants Manager at Cancer Council NSW
- Grant recipients on request

#### **About Cancer Council NSW's Research Awards**

Cancer Council NSW is proud to be one of the largest non-government funders of cancer research in Australia. The community plays a vital role in supporting our work. Involving community members in research ensures the research we fund is relevant to our community and meets their needs. That's why Cancer Council NSW awards funding on the basis of both scientific merit and value to the community we represent.

Cancer Council NSW's annual Cancer Research Awards will be held at 6pm on Thursday, 14 March at Westpac's Barangaroo Tower in Sydney. At the Awards, we recognise the researchers who were successful in the latest round of funding grant applications with an award to signify the start of their research.

The event is also an important opportunity to celebrate the research achievements of Cancer Council NSW over the last year, and to thank staff and donors for their ongoing support of cancer research.

#### **Cancer Council NSW 2019 Translational Program Grant recipient:**

- Professor David Gottlieb, The University of Sydney: *Leading accessibility of a revolutionary immunotherapy in NSW*

#### **Cancer Council NSW 2019 Project Grant recipients:**

- Professor Christopher Ormandy, Garvan Institute of Medical Research - The Kinghorn Cancer Centre: *Overcoming endocrine resistance in breast cancer*
- Dr Debbie Watson, University of Wollongong: *Preventing a major complication of blood cancer treatment – graft-versus-host disease*
- Professor Hubert Hondermarck, University of Newcastle: *Finding a better way of identifying aggressive prostate cancers*
- Dr James Wilmott, Melanoma Institute Australia: *Developing a simple test to ensure advanced melanoma patients get the right drug for their disease*
- Dr Justin Wong, Centenary Institute of Cancer Medicine and Cell Biology: *Understanding the mechanisms that cause acute myeloid leukaemia*
- Dr Kenneth Micklethwaite, The Westmead Institute for Medical Research, The University of Sydney: *Creating a new class of immune cells capable of recognising and attacking acute myeloid leukaemia*



- Associate Professor Maija Kohonen-Corish, University of NSW: *Exploring new treatment targets for bowel cancer*
- Professor Mark Baker, Macquarie University: *The Susan and John Freeman Cancer Research Grant: Developing a new blood-based screening test for bowel cancer*
- Professor Paul Keall, University of Sydney: *Adapting radiotherapy for safer and more effective tumour control*
- Professor Philip Hansbro, University of Newcastle: *Could our gut bacteria play a role in lung cancer?*
- Associate Professor Tao Liu, Children's Cancer Institute Australia for Medical Research: *Investigating a new targeted treatment for neuroblastoma*
- Dr Thomas Cox, Garvan Institute of Medical Research: *Developing a dual treatment approach for pancreatic cancer*