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# OCTOBER 2007 RESEARCH DIVISION NEWSLETTER

## GRANTS

The University was recently awarded almost **\$30 million** in Australian Government funding:

- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC): \$14 million
- ARC Discovery Projects: \$10.3 million
- ARC Linkage Projects: \$2 million
- ARC Linkage, Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF): \$750,000

A further \$3.5 million was awarded for NHMRC Project Grants and \$11.8 million for a NHMRC Program to our researchers who are collaborating with other universities.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to all researchers involved in successful applications.

## WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

### Cancer Council NSW Seminar

Thurs 8 November  
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm  
John Lambert Lounge, Callaghan

This seminar is designed to assist researchers in applying for a project grant from the Cancer Council NSW. This seminar will help participants understand the grant review process, including consumer review, how it works and how it affects them.

For further information contact [Elianne Renaud](#) on x15944. To register your interest or find out more contact the Cancer Council NSW by phone on 9334 1993 or email [grants@nswcc.org.au](mailto:grants@nswcc.org.au).

### NHMRC Workshop

Tues 22 November  
10.00 am – 2.00 pm  
Venue TBA

This workshop is designed for early career researchers or first time applicants who are considering a submission to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for funding in 2009. This workshop will give participants the opportunity to hear from key people within the process, including researchers who have previously been involved in NHMRC panels.

For further information contact [Elianne Renaud](#) on x15944.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Future issues of this newsletter will be available from the University website. There will be a link from Uni News and the newsletter will also be available from Research Services' webpage <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/news/researchnewsletter.html>. If you would like to continue to receive the Research Division Newsletter by automatic email, please email [Rebecca.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Rebecca.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au).

## HUMAN ETHICS

The Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has updated its policy on *Telephone Interviewing*. There is a link to this through its [Policy and Guidelines page at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/human/pol.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/human/pol.html). A revised policy on *Interview Recording and Transcribing* will be posted to that site shortly.

The new application forms for gaining ethics approval have been running since February 2007 and experience has identified some minor revisions that are needed to clarify questions and ensure the HREC is getting the information it requires. It is essential that the relevant form is downloaded from the Human Research Ethics website at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/human/applications.html> each time you are making an application to ensure you use the latest version of the form. Please do not use a copy that you or someone else has downloaded previously.

## ANIMAL ETHICS

The Animal Care and Ethics Committee has recently simplified the system regarding the number of animals approved for a project. Because of the legislative requirements for restriction of an Animal Research Authority to a maximum of 12 months, and the necessity for submission of an annual progress report, the current system involves a 12 month approval period for a project. Approval for animals was based upon a corresponding 12 month period. To simplify the tracking of the number and types of animals approved, and remove the necessity for a Variation Application if the use of animals is brought forward, the total number of animals outlined in an Initial Application is now approved for the whole project. Approved animals can be used at any time during the 3-year period from the time of approval of the Initial Application to the expiry of approval of the 2nd Renewal Application, provided that approval is renewed on an annual basis. Details of approved animals are outlined in the Animal Research Authority issued by the University for an approved project. A Variation Application is required for any amendments to approved animals.

## ANIMAL SERVICES UNIT

Demolition of the Royal Newcastle Hospital, adjacent to the David Maddison Building, has commenced. This demolition will produce some dust, noise, vibration and periods of power outage. Contingency plans are being prepared to set out proposed actions to be followed if the demolition works or subsequent redevelopment of the site cause unacceptable stress to the animals housed within the David Maddison Building animal facility. Researchers housing animals within this animal facility are asked to liaise with Animal Services Staff if they note any problems with their animals, or any unexpected variability in their research results.

## DATA MANAGEMENT

### RMS Update

The Human Ethics and Animal Ethics modules of the new Research Management System are almost configured. We have yet to build several communication templates and thoroughly test the system and business processes from every angle. At completion of this first phase of development both Human Ethics and Animal Ethics administration staff will have the capacity to manage ethical clearances completely online. In phase two we will open the system too all research staff to provide a fully electronic process for the creation and management of ethics applications.

### PES

The Publication Entry System (PES) is undergoing a review of internal business processes. The review is intended to streamline the PES process and reduce data entry errors. Pending the completion of this review please forward any verification material and texts for 2007 publications to Debbie Booth on ext 18627 or email [publications@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:publications@newcastle.edu.au). PES is expected to be open in December for the collection of 2007 publications.

## OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

### IT UPDATE

The University successfully went live with Nustar 8.9 on 2 October, and no significant issues have been identified in OGS. We would like to congratulate the Nustar team, staff from Tripoint and all those involved with the successful implementation of the upgrade. We would especially like to thank Jonathan Peters, Justin Lane, Brad Langford and Hai Bui whose patience and assistance was critical in helping us to reach this milestone and is gratefully acknowledged. During October and November, OGS staff will be involved in testing for On-line Direct Admissions and our new IT enhancements, development and implementation of which was delayed mainly due to the need to assign technical staff working on OGS' enhancements to the core upgrade project. Enhancements are still expected to be progressively implemented during October/November which, regrettably, looks likely to coincide with the scholarship round.

Whilst there is further work and testing still to be done, it is expected that Student Self Service will be available for research candidates for the first time in mid to late November. This will allow candidates to log in and accept offers of admission and scholarship online, to enrol and re-enrol, submit an electronic 'scholarship only' application and intent to submit. Candidates will also be able to view the details of their enrolment, such as research topic, supervision, program, end RTS date, scholarship details etc. Further information on this will be provided to candidates later in the year.

Rolling enrolments (admission at any time of year) will also be implemented from 2008.

### ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be despatched later this month. The due date for the return of student and supervisor sections is 23 November, with the joint section due on 30 November. Further information will be provided to research students and supervisors at the time of despatch.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

The closing date for international scholarship applications has now passed. The closing date for domestic applications is 31 October. Due to the tight turnaround times, the cooperation of all involved in the assessment and prompt return of the applications to OGS is much appreciated.

## RESEARCH QUALITY FRAMEWORK

### Newcastle/Macquarie RQF Trial

The joint trial is now complete and participants' scores and assessor comments were distributed by e-mail on 11 September. Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellors and Heads of Schools also received details of the scores and comments for their respective Faculties/Schools.

Generally, the feedback received from researchers has been positive. Many researchers have reported that the assessor comments are very useful and constructive, and while some researchers have been disappointed with the results, in many cases they acknowledge that the result reflects the standard of the portfolio, rather than the research. The opportunity to revise and improve the presentation of portfolios and to consider feedback on the choice of "Top 4" outputs is one of the major benefits of participation in the trial.

### RQF Groupings

Following the receipt of the trial results, and consultation with the Faculties, a listing of the provisional membership of the RQF groupings has been circulated within the Faculties for comment and feedback. The list of groupings has been revised in the light of feedback from Schools and Faculties, and can be seen on the updated RQF website <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/researchperformance/rqf/rqf-overview.html>

### Next Steps

Now that researchers have been allocated to RQF groupings, at least tentatively, the next step is to begin to develop context and impact statements for each grouping. The IRUA workshop and the subsequent wider assessment of drafts will be a useful tool in this process. The timeline for the RQF requires submission of portfolios at the end of April 2008, but during the early months of 2008 researchers' time will be heavily committed to preparation of grant applications and preparation for the new academic year. It is therefore essential that work should begin immediately on these vital parts of the evidence portfolio, so that every grouping has substantially complete drafts by the Christmas break. This will allow time for review and refinement of the documents, and for work on the technical aspects of encoding them for submission to DEST.

## STATISTICS CORNER – SEPTEMBER 2007

Human Ethics	Sept	2007	Animal Ethics	During Sept	2007	Grants	Sept	2007	Graduate Studies	Total
Human Ethics Total Initial Applications Processed	23	233	Animal Ethics Initial Applications managed	8	86	External grant applications processed	18	386	RHD completions as @ 4 October 07	130
Expedited	23	208							Masters	33
Full Review	0	25							PhD	97
Human Ethics Project Variation Applications	13	120	Animal Ethics Renewal Applications managed	1	37	External grant awards processed	31	206		
Human Ethics Approval Renewal Applications	3	8	Animal Ethics Variation Applications managed	13	159	Value of external grant awards processed	\$14.1M	\$37.5M		
Human Ethics Registration of HNEH approvals	15	79	Facilities/ procedures/Animals/Records inspected	9	101					

[www.newcastle.edu.au/research](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research)

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