

# Advisory Council Quarterly Report

May 2025



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# Deputy Director Update

The IAM has had an exciting 2025, launching our first-ever strategic plan, website, and dedicated statistical support for the RPA Division of Medicine (DoM). We've welcomed new team members, including Ms. Indiana Foerster as our Administration Coordinator, and filled key roles like Immunology Research Manager, Research Fellow, and Endocrinology Director of Clinical Trials.

We've transformed the Advanced Trainee Research Program into the IAM Research Masterclass series, held every two weeks, and introduced "Confidence Interval," a fun 15-minute networking session with refreshments. The IAM Research and Innovation Forum has been rebranded as IAM Accelerate, featuring "Research Pearls of Wisdom" and guest speakers.

In collaboration with RPA Immunology and Allergy, we launched the inaugural Dr. Rob Loblay Research Award, offering \$1,000 for the best research abstract. Dr. Jacob Cao and Dr. Thomas Payne have joined as our first IAM Statistical Research Leads, providing workshops and consultations on research analysis methods.

We are grateful for the continued support of our Research Leads, Clinical Sponsors, BPT Training Program, and Executive. We welcome Professor Paul Haber as the new SLHD Director of Research and look forward to advancing our research capabilities under his leadership.

Thank you to the IAM Advisory Council for your expertise and guidance in helping us achieve our strategic objectives.

Yours sincerely,  
Mariana Sena Board  
Deputy Director, IAM



# IAM Development

## Newsletter

The IAM has transitioned to a new virtual format for its seasonal newsletter, enhancing mobile access and viewing capabilities. Every three months, the newsletter highlights high-impact national and international presentations, new academic titles within the Division of Medicine, and celebrates new research positions. It also promotes IAM and SLHD research events and advertises recruitment opportunities in RPA clinical trials.

## Strategic Plan 2024-29 and Website Launch

On Friday, 2 April 2025, we proudly launched our inaugural IAM Strategic Plan 2024-29 and our brand-new website. The strategic plan encompasses three key portfolios: Professional Development and Education, Organisational Capacity for Research, and Strategic Research and Collaboration. Additionally, a fourth portfolio focuses on the IAM’s development and the resources required for its growth as an organisation.

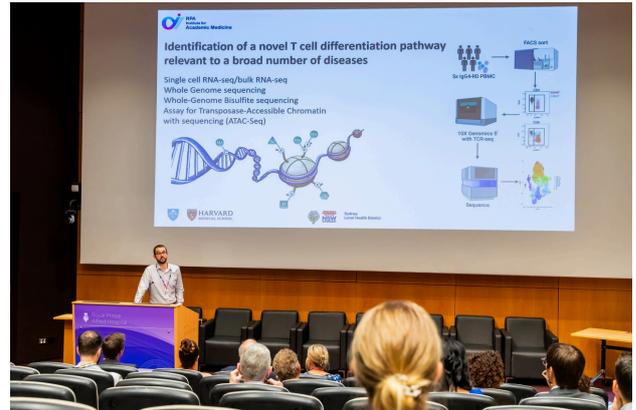
**Figure One: IAM Portfolios**



# Strategic Plan 2024-29 and Website Launch



IAM Co-Director A/Prof Lauren Troy



Immunology Research Fellow, Dr Thomas Guy



IAM Deputy Director, Mariana Sena Board



Endocrinology Director of Clinical Trials, A/Prof Nick Fuller



IAM Co-Director A/Prof Stephen Adelstein



IAM Endocrinology Research Lead,  
Professor Jencia Wong



Immunology Research Fellow  
Dr Thomas Guy

# Professional Development and Research Education

## Revamped Research Masterclass Series Kicks Off 2025

The IAM has rolled out its revamped Research Masterclass format for 2025, now held every two weeks. This engaging program covers essential research topics like extracting information from research papers, developing successful research projects, and academic writing for publication.

Based on feedback from 2024 attendees, we've added some exciting new subjects:

- Research Impact through Health Economic Analysis
- The Unexpected Joy of Turning Your Idea into Innovation: Masters or PhD?
- The Difference Between Mentorship, Management, and Supervision

Each masterclass kicks off with a 15-minute "Confidence Interval" session, featuring nibbles and networking to foster a community of connection, incidental discovery, and partnership within the RPA Division of Medicine.

For the full program, visit our website.

<https://slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/rpa-iam/what-we-offer#what's-on>



Head of the RPA Division of Medicine  
Professor Kate Wyburn

RPA BPTs 2025

# Research at First Sight 2024

The IAM wrapped up 2024 with a bang, hosting the second annual Research at First Sight (R@FS) competition, which took over from My Research Rules in 2023. Six talented nominees were chosen based on their abstracts, judged on originality, presentation skills, patient outcomes, and data analysis.

R@FS shines a spotlight on early career researchers at the Advanced Trainee or PhD/MPhil level. The esteemed judging panel included **Professor Kate Wyburn**, Head of the RPA Division of Medicine, **Professor Kate White**, USYD Professor of Cancer Nursing, and **Associate Professor Roger Garcia**, IAM Clinical Sponsor.

The top honor went to PhD candidate **Dr. Emma Gray** from RPA Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, for her captivating presentation on ‘Hypercapnia is not excluded by normoxia in neuromuscular disease patients: implications for oximetry.’

IAM research competition returns in 2025 on Friday, October 31, during Grand Rounds. Applications open on Friday, September 26, with a \$1,000 research prize up for grabs. Invitations will be circulated closer to the date.



Dr Matt Parker, Head of RPA Rheumatology and IAM Research Lead  
Presenting at Research @ First Sight 2024

# Research at First Sight 2024 Competition Highlights



# Research at First Sight 2024 Competition Highlights



2024 Applicants for IAM Research @ First Sight



Dr Emma Gray, Winner, 2024 Research @ First Sight

# Dr Rob Loblay Research Award

The IAM has partnered with RPA Clinical Immunology and Allergy to establish the Dr. Rob Loblay Research Award. Dr. Loblay, who dedicated over 40 years to the Department of Clinical Immunology and Allergy, made significant contributions to the understanding of allergic diseases and food intolerance.

This award aims to expand research capacity, encourage academic career pathways, and honor Dr. Loblay's legacy within RPA's renowned research culture.

Starting in 2025, a recipient will be awarded \$1,000 to attend a national meeting and present research conducted at RPA. Open to all disciplines, including allied health and nursing, this award reflects Dr. Loblay's support for involving all clinical staff in research.

Entries close on Sunday, May 11, 2025, with the winner to be showcased at a future Advisory Council meeting.



**RPA Clinical Immunology and Allergy**  
Professor Warwick Britton, A/Prof Frederick Lee,  
A/Prof Roger Garsia and A/Prof Stephen Adelstein  
with the late Dr Rob Loblay



Research Award in honour of the late  
Dr Rob Loblay

# Organisational Capacity for Research

## Inaugural Statistical Research Leads

In March 2025, the IAM proudly welcomed its first-ever Statistical Research Leads: **Dr. Thomas Payne**, an RPA Resident Medical Officer (RMO), and **Dr. Jacob Cao**, the RPA Cardiology Adult Congenital Heart Disease Fellow.

Dr. Payne, who is completing his PhD at the University of Sydney, specializes in Bayesian multi-level modelling and meta-analysis of randomized control trials. Dr. Cao's expertise includes basic science, cohort studies, reviews, and meta-analysis, with a passion for improving statistical literacy through hands-on and interactive methods.

Both are dedicated to inspiring clinical researchers and providing practical statistical knowledge for tackling complex questions. They will be conducting two exciting statistical workshops, showcasing real-world research and live data analysis. For any statistical-related inquiries, you can reach them via the IAM website: [IAM Website](#).



Dr Thomas Payne  
IAM Statistical Research Lead



Dr Jacob Cao  
IAM Statistical Research Lead

# First 2025 IAM Accelerate Session

The first Accelerate session of 2025 kicked off on Wednesday evening, May 12. The event began with the "Confidence Interval" networking session at 5 PM, followed by IAM Research Lead and Head of RPA Cardiology, **Professor David Celermajer AO**, sharing his "Research Pearls of Wisdom." Professor Celermajer delighted attendees with the unexpected joys of his research journey and offered valuable advice for early to mid-career researchers.

Next up, USYD's Professor of Wound Care and Skin Integrity, **Professor Michelle Barakat-Johnson**, led the "Connections" segment. She discussed the exciting new Tissue Repair Institute she is spearheading with SLHD, alongside **Dr. Joanneke Maitz**, Group Lead of the Burns and Reconstructive Surgery Research Group.

The next session will be held on Wednesday, 14 May, featuring new SLHD Director of Research, **Professor Paul Haber**, and **IMH's NHMRC Investigator Level Two, Dr. Marina Pinheiro**. It will be hosted by IAM Research Lead and IMH's Director of Clinical Trials, **Professor Peter Youssef**.



Accelerate guest speakers Professor Barakat-John and Dr Maitz  
*IAM Connections*

# First 2025 IAM Accelerate Session



(L-R) IAM Research Leads Dr Alex Stoyanov and Dr Peter Bradhurst  
IAM Clinical Sponsor A/Prof Roger Garsia



IAM Clinical Sponsor and Head of RPA Cardiology  
Professor David Celermajer AO

# First 2025 IAM Accelerate Session



IAM and DoM Advanced Trainees



Professor Celermajer sharing his Research Pearls of Wisdom



# ACCELERATE

hosted by Professor Peter Youssef



Wednesday 14 May 2025  
5.15pm - 6.30pm



**Innovation Hub**  
Level Seven, Gloucester House

## Featuring

- ▶ **Professor Paul Haber**  
SLHD Director of Research  
*Research Pearls of Wisdom*
- ▶ **Dr Marina De Barros Pinheiro**  
Senior Research Fellow, NHMRC  
Institute for Musculoskeletal Health  
*Connections*

Nibbles and Refreshments provided



 [slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/rpa-iam](https://slhd.health.nsw.gov.au/rpa-iam)

 [SLHD-RPAIAM@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SLHD-RPAIAM@health.nsw.gov.au)

 [rpa-institute-for-academic-medicine](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rpa-institute-for-academic-medicine)

# Support for Grant Application Success

In 2025, the IAM has helped enhance the grant capability of the RPA Division of Medicine. We collaborated closely with Research Leads and Clinical Sponsors to submit applications for various Medical Research Future Fund grants. The IAM is well-positioned to assist with the executive process for letters of support and entry requirements in the business government portal.

As our staffing base and resources grow, the IAM is eager to assist more Division members with the often-cumbersome grant application process.



Head of the RPA Division of Medicine Professor Kate Wyburn and IAM Co-Director, A/Prof Lauren Troy



IAM Co-Director and Head of RPA Clinical Immunology and Allergy, A/Prof Stephen Adelstein

# Strategic Engagement and Collaboration

## Visit to Microsoft HQ

The IAM is collaborating with the CRGH and RPA Departments of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine to support the rollout of the **National Lung Cancer Screening Program** in July 2025. Together, they have established the Sydney Interventional Pulmonology and Innovation Centre (SIPIIC).

As part of SIPIIC's mission, animation videos are being developed for cone beam CT-guided bronchoscopy. Recognising the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of the populations affected by the screening program, Microsoft has been engaged to help craft innovative and patient-centred content.

In March, IAM and SIPIIC Co-Director, A/Prof Lauren Troy, and IAM Deputy Director, Mariana Sena Board, visited the Microsoft Innovations Hub to discuss these exciting plans for enhancing the consumer experience.

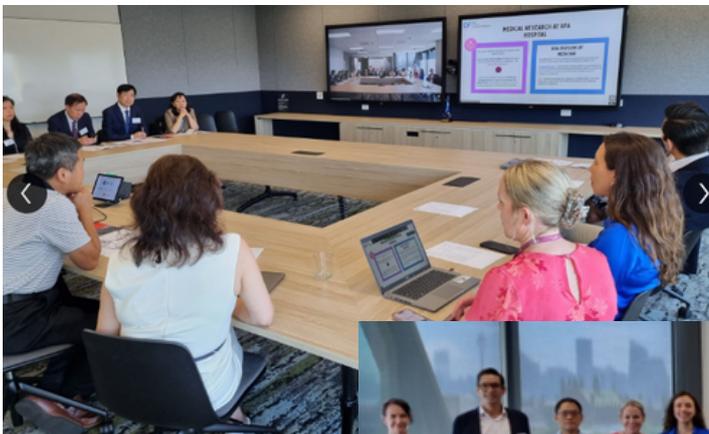


(L-R) Luz Darouiche and Jenny Coles, SIPIIC Research Nurses  
A/Prof Lauren Troy, SIPIIC Co-Director  
Dr David Heath, SIPIIC Fellow 2025  
A/Prof Tajalli Saghaie, SIPIIC Co-Director  
Mariana Sena Board, IAM Deputy Director

# Hospital of Zhengzhou

## University delegation

In January 2025, the Institute for Academic Medicine (IAM) joined **Professor Stephen Twigg**, IAM Clinical Sponsor and Head of the **Central Clinical School at USYD**, in welcoming a delegation from the Hospital of Zhengzhou University. Alongside the RPA Institute of Academic Surgery, we presented and explored future possibilities for medical and research collaboration.



IAM Deputy Director, Mariana Sena Board, Head of the Central Clinical School Professor Stephen Twigg and IAM Co-Director, A/Prof Lauren Troy at the USYD Delegation



# University of Technology Sydney

The IAM is excited to announce the engagement of **Dr. Amy Freeman-Sanderson**, Director of Speech Pathology at the University of Technology, Sydney. Dr. Freeman-Sanderson, a recent recipient of the prestigious **NHMRC EL Fellowship**, brings her extensive expertise in mixed-method and co-designed clinical research.

She is also a key member of the **INSIGHT** Women's Health initiative at UTS, focusing on research for vulnerable populations. We are honored to have Dr. Freeman-Sanderson lead our September Research Masterclass on Mentorship, and we look forward to the invaluable insights she will share.

# RPA BPT Welcome Night

The IAM proudly joined Executive Sponsors, **Professor Paul Torzillo** and **Professor Michael Hensley**, at the 2025 Welcome Night for Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Basic Physician Trainees (BPTs). We showcased RPA's vibrant research culture, highlighted opportunities within the Division of Medicine, and introduced the exciting IAM research competitions and awards coming up in 2025.



IAM Co-Directors, A/Prof Lauren Troy and A/Prof Stephen Adelstein,



2025 RPA Basic Physician Trainees



Dr Eddy Tabet  
RPA Endocrinology



2025 RPA Basic Physician Trainees



IAM Deputy Director, Mariana Sena Board



IAM Executive Sponsor, Professor Paul Torzillo

# Workforce Expansion: Strengthening the IAM Network and Team

## Research Positions, RPA Division of Medicine

The IAM enhances RPA's organisational capacity for research by supporting and undertaking the creation, approval, grading, recruitment, and onboarding of new research positions within the Division of Medicine. These diverse roles strengthen our capabilities in streamlined clinical trials financial management, industry engagement, submissions for Centres of Research Excellence (CRE), protocol development, ethics applications, high-impact journal publications, and teaching IAM masterclasses.

In late 2024 and early 2025, the IAM recruited four affiliate research positions for the RPA Division of Medicine. Additionally, two more positions are currently in the onboarding process, set to commence in late May 2025. These positions include:

### Active

#### Immunology Diagnostic Research Scholarship

The SLHD Research Scholar in Diagnostic Immunology is a two-year pilot dedicated to fostering diagnostic innovation. The scholar works across the RPA and CRGH Departments of Clinical Immunology and Allergy. Candidates were required to have commenced or completed a higher degree and obtained their AT qualifications with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and Pathologists for Australia.

This scholarship emphasizes higher degrees to create a pool of immunologists capable of supervising future PhD students. It also aims to strengthen the candidate's relationship with the University of Sydney, increase their publication output, and provide advice to the IAM and SLHD Immunology on suitable research support structures to enhance research productivity.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Peter Bradhurst has been selected as the successful applicant.



Dr Peter Bradhurst  
Research Scholar,  
SLHD Diagnostic Immunology



## Immunology Research Manager



The IAM is also piloting a two-year Research Manager role across the CRGH and RPA Departments of Immunology and Allergy. These departments focus on developing novel tests for diagnosing immune-mediated disorders, including autoimmune conditions, immunodeficiencies, and allergies.

This role aims to position these sites as premier locations for immunology research in NSW, enhance the performance and cohesion of the SLHD Immunology Research Unit, and boost trainee participation in translational research and evidence-based practice.

Dr Alex Richardson, the successful candidate, has been pivotal in submitting the Centre for Research Excellence (CRE) application, managing clinical specimen collection, biobanking, financial management, and increasing trainee involvement in research and evidence-based practice.



Dr Alex Richardson  
SLHD Immunology Research Manager



## Head - Sydney Translation Immunology & Allergy Research Program , SLHD

### Immunology Research Fellow - SLHD

Dr. Thomas Guy joined SLHD in early 2025 to spearhead the translational immunology and allergy program and serve as the inaugural research fellow at both RPA and CRGH sites. His role focuses on enhancing collaboration between these sites, promoting multidisciplinary care for inflammatory disorders, and improving SLHD's capacity to manage patient loads in RPA clinics.

In 2023, Dr. Guy was honoured with the Future Fulbright Fellowship and is a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School. He has played a key role in SLHD's partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital's Ragon Institute, advancing projects in cellular and molecular pathogenesis.

Dr. Guy is a regular speaker at IAM events, contributing to the future research culture at RPA, which IAM aims to nurture. ✨



Dr Thomas Guy  
SLHD Immunology Research Fellow  
Head, STIARP, SLHD



## Endocrinology Director of Clinical Trials

The RPA Department of Endocrinology sought IAM's assistance to ensure sustained leadership and management in clinical trials, aiming to boost research, innovative healthcare delivery, and key partnerships.

To address this, the Director of Clinical Trials role was created. This senior leader is responsible for the strategic development, operationalization, and implementation of clinical trial initiatives.

The goal is to increase trial activity, translation, and grant success for Endocrinology, supported by a team of dietitians, exercise physiologists, and nursing staff.

Dr. Nicholas Fuller has now assumed this crucial role.



A/Prof Nick Fuller  
Director of Clinical Trials  
RPA Endocrinology

## In Progress

### RPA Respiratory Clinical Trials Business Manager

The IAM has partnered with the RPA Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine to establish the inaugural Business Manager for clinical trials. This role supports a diverse research program that includes interstitial lung disease, pulmonary hypertension, cystic fibrosis, tuberculosis, lung cancer, bronchiectasis, and asthma.

Effective trial management requires robust business and administrative processes to ensure budgets are adhered to, invoices are issued and paid by industry sponsors, and patients receive timely reimbursements.

The Business Manager will oversee all trial administration aspects, including managing the financial database through CTMS, rectifying account codes, tracking payments, updating standard operating procedures for trial finances, and addressing sponsor payment delays.

Interviews were conducted on April 9, 2025, with an anticipated start date in early May 2025.

# Jane Bleasel RPA Rheumatology Research Scholarships x 2

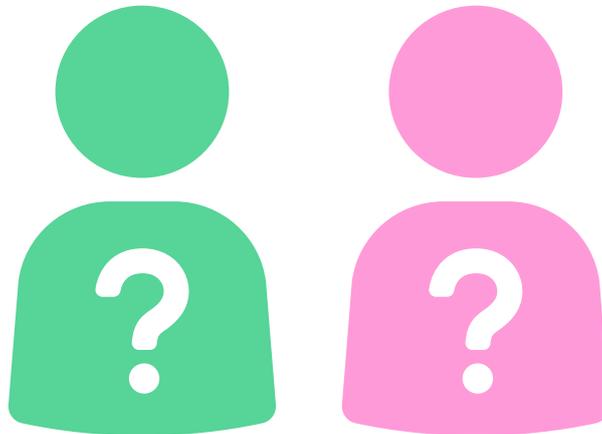
Following the success of the SLHD Immunology Research Scholarships, the IAM collaborated with the RPA Department of Rheumatology to establish two research scholarships.

Named in honour of Professor Jane Bleasel, the RPA Rheumatology Jane Bleasel Research Scholarships support the department's clinical trials and non-clinical research in inflammatory arthropathies, idiopathic inflammatory myopathies, connective tissue diseases, osteoarthritis, back pain, affordable healthcare, staff wellbeing, and medical education.

Despite the department's research success, advanced trainees often struggle to continue their research without a vacant or fractional consultant position. Sydney's high cost of living further complicates their ability to pursue higher degrees before becoming established medical consultants.

As a result, RPA risks losing a talented pool of research-focused young physicians who could drive and sustain its research culture, which urgently needs succession planning. To invest in future leaders, the IAM and the department established two scholarships: one for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and one for a Master's degree.

Advertisement closed on the 22 of April, with interviews planned for early May.



# Expanding Our IAM Family: Welcoming New Talent

## IAM and DoM Administration Coordinator

The IAM is delighted to welcome Ms. Indiana Foerster as our inaugural Administration Coordinator. This role, heavily advocated for by the IAM, supports our numerous events, research masterclasses, and committee management. Shared between the IAM and the RPA Division of Medicine, Ms. Foerster also assists with monthly Division meetings and Friday Grand Rounds.

Since her arrival, Indiana has significantly enhanced our capacity to engage new stakeholders, acquire additional research leads, support research recruitment, manage our social media presence, explore strategic partnerships and assist the SLHD Clinical Research Centre with data for annual reports.

Currently, the shared coordinator role is 0.6 FTE with plans to request an increase to 1.0 FTE.



# What's Next

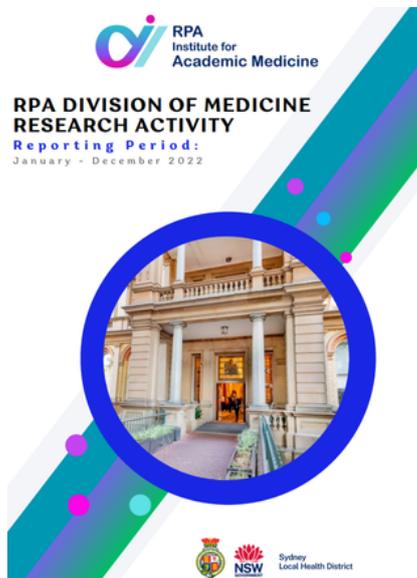
## Revamping the SLHD Research Institute Forum

The IAM will work with Professor Paul Haber the new SLHD Director of Research, alongside the other SLHD research institutes to deliver cohesive solutions for broader issues. This will be considered for the existing SLHD Research Institutes forum which encourages the exchange of ideas, funding models, and programs, including the optimisation of educational platforms.

## RPA Division of Medicine 2024

### Research Activity Report

The IAM is working closely with the SLHD Clinical Research Centre to put the finishing touches on the 2024 research activities for the 17 departments in the RPA Division of Medicine. This exciting project will capture everything from annual publication output and completed higher degrees to grant successes, research team sizes, and the number of supervisors. A comprehensive report that will be presented to the Advisory Council mid-year.



# Research I Am 2025

Get ready for something new and exciting in 2025! The IAM is teaming up with SLHD Communications to bring you "Research I Am" – a series of pithy, engaging videos for our website and social media.

Two dynamic RPA doctors in training will take the spotlight, rapidly interviewing a diverse group of Division members – from consultants and fellows to trainees, nurses, and allied health professionals.

"Research I Am" will dive into the fascinating world of research at RPA, showcasing the incredible work being done in a fun, short, and catchy format. It's all about celebrating and promoting the vibrant research culture at IAM and RPA. Keep an eye out for EOIs to be part of this exciting project. The final videos will be unveiled at a future Advisory Council meeting.

