President’s Report

Annual Scientific Meeting

For those of you who missed it, this year’s annual scientific meeting at the Gold Coast was our best meeting yet. There were a record number of delegates (924) across the three Societies and this attracted a record trade display. We anticipate a very healthy financial return on the meeting. The program committee organized an outstanding meeting, with something for everyone. Delegate feedback showed an unheard of 98% level of satisfaction with program content and organization, which is considerably higher than any previous meeting and much higher than our sister Societies. Both of the plenary lecturers, Jeremy Thompson and Josef Penninger, provided outstanding presentations that were exceptionally well received by our delegates. Once again the SRB booth within the trade display area was the most popular, and most raucous. The only aspect of the program that raised some concern was the organization of the poster session. I have been in discussion with ASN to ensure that the logistics of this are of a much higher standard for all future meetings. We will also ensure balance in the program to help further strengthen the poster session making it an integral part of the meeting and including many of the strongest presentations.

An exciting new outcome of the meeting is the preparation of a published report of its scientific highlights, focusing on the symposia sessions. This is to be published soon in Reproduction, Fertility and Development. This paper is the initiative of our highly enthusiastic ECR group. It is authored solely by this group and ably coordinated by John Schjenken and Lisa Akison. I thank RFD Editor-in-Chief Graeme Martin for his enthusiastic adoption of this proposal and I hope the initiative is of great credit to our ECRs, RFD and the Society.
President’s Report continued

A highlight of the meeting of course is always the selection of the award winners. These are detailed elsewhere in the report. Here I’d like particularly to acknowledge the three awardees of our career stage recognition of excellence. These are Jessica Dunleavy, Pradeep Tanwar and Wendy Ingman as our new, emerging and established investigator awardees, respectively. It is inspiring, and a little humbling, to see the breadth and quality of work being performed by our members at every stage of career across the whole field of reproductive biology.

Future Meetings
Our next scientific meeting will be 27th-30th August, 2017 at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre (http://esa-srb.org.au). I encourage you all to start thinking now about how you can generate suitable data for presentation at the meeting. For our younger members it’s important not to underestimate the value of consistently presenting your best work at our annual meeting. Many of the people who make judgements in relation to Fellowships and Grant applications best get to know you and your work by the quality of your contributions to the meeting, and to the Society more generally. The Council will be making every effort to provide assistance to those in most need, so that they can attend the meeting. It is incumbent upon students and ECRs, and their supervisors, to take best advantage of the several forms of generous assistance which the Society offers to its members.

The World Congress of Reproductive Biology (WCRB, http://www.wcrb2017.jp/) is another important meeting which will be held next year. This meeting is co-sponsored by the SRB and a range of our sister societies including SSR, SRF, Chinese Society of Reproductive Biology (CSRB), Korean Society of Animal Reproduction (KSAR) and will be hosted by the Society for Reproduction and Development (SRD). The meeting will be held on the 27th-29th September, 2017 at the Okinawa Convention Centre, Japan. I am very pleased to announce that Professor Moira O’Bryan will present the SRB plenary lecture at the meeting. There will also be a range of SRB symposia speakers, yet to be announced. The Society will provide a number of travel grants-in-aid to assist outstanding ECR/MCRs to attend the meeting and present their work. Abstract submissions close on March 24, 2017 and I encourage all to consider attending this important meeting.
President’s Report continued

Future of the Founders lecture
At the annual general meeting a proposal to establish a SRB Medal to be awarded to the presenter of the Founders Oration was discussed. There was consideration whether this proposed Medal should be open each year or open one year and restricted to members of the Society in the next. Since the views expressed at the AGM only represents a small portion of membership, I would welcome feedback from the members at large on this question. Please feel free to contact me directly via email or phone with your views, these will be seriously taken into account by Council as it formulates a final position.

Research Workforce matters
The Society provided a $5000 contribution towards a major analysis of the Australian health and medical research workforce undertaken for ASMR by Deloitte’s Consulting. This is the second such report and shows that for each $1 invested an economic return of $3.20 was realised. This represents a $23.4 billion return to the national economy. The information contained in the report is a powerful tool in the many lobbying efforts in support of the federal medical research budget. The report is now complete and was launched at Parliament House on the 7th November, 2016. Details of the report have been circulated to members and I urge you all to review its contents and use it to make the case for strong funding for medical research.

With this year’s round of grant and fellowship outcomes the inadequacy of the current funding model is further illustrated. The health of Australia’s capacity for innovation and discovery is dependent upon the training and, most importantly, retention of our best and brightest researchers. Success rates in the low teens mean that we are losing many of our best and brightest from research. Current government policy settings are directed towards encouraging industry to take up the slack in the nation’s research efforts. This is commendable but will take a generation of steady policy to take meaningful effect. In the meantime irreparable damage is occurring. A central tenet of free-market capitalism is that it can only be successfully applied where governments intervene to address market failure. The current and ongoing loss of highly skilled investigators from our national innovation and discovery effort represents a clear market failure and a generational waste of our national investment.
President’s Report continued

MRFF
One mechanism for addressing the current challenges facing health research is the shortly to be activated Medical Research Future Fund. This fund will disperse $800 million over the next 4 years and around $1 billion annually when fully mature. A submission to the consultative process for this fund was made with the assistance of a number of the SRB Fellows. The full submission can be found in this newsletter and on the Society’s website. This consultation round was aimed to establish the funding strategies and priorities for the Fund. The gist of our submission was that the critical importance of fundamental research to good health outcomes must not be underestimated. I would urge you all to take any opportunity that presents itself to further proselytize the strategic goals and priorities proposed.

Chris O’Neill

Keep an eye out for the SRB ECR conference highlights review, coming soon to Reproduction, Fertility and Development


Accepted in Reproduction, Fertility and Development. October 2016
Employment and Postgraduate Opportunities

Please see SRB website for full details:


The University of Newcastle
The Discipline of Biology at the University of Newcastle is currently seeking a female Level E appointment. The Discipline has three research strengths and one of these is Reproductive Science. Interested members of SRB should contact the Head of Discipline, Dr Shaun Roman (shaun.roman@newcastle.edu.au).

The University of Cambridge - Centre for Trophoblast Research
The Centre for Trophoblast Research aims to promote the study of placental biology, with special reference to the trophoblast.

Graduate Studentship
The centre is offering up to 2 PhD studentships to commence in October 2017.

http://www.trophoblast.cam.ac.uk/opportunities/projects

Next Generation Fellowship
The Centre is offering up to 2 Next Generation Fellowships to commence in October 2017 with the aim of promoting the prospects of high-calibre individuals pursuing innovative research that falls within the remit of the Centre.

http://www.trophoblast.cam.ac.uk/opportunities/fellowships

Applications are to be received by Friday 2nd December, 2016. Interviews will be held late-January, 2017.

Master in Science in Reproductive Science and Medicine (MS-RSM) program – Northwestern University
We are thrilled to share the exciting news that Northwestern University has established a Master in Science in Reproductive Science and Medicine (MS-RSM) program! This fall, we launched the MS-RSM program at Northwestern, and we have a fantastic inaugural class that is sure to contribute to the strong pipeline of our field!!

Treasurer’s Report

**Accounts for the Financial Year 2015-16**
Current equity as of July 31 was $396,265.93, up considerably from the same time last year ($365,782.45).

**2016 Conference Student/ECR Travel Support**
I’m very pleased to announce that these have all been paid in what has to be a record! A big thank you to Lisa Akison and Fiona Brownfoot for rallying the ECRs and students.

**2016-17 fee structure**
At the AGM the following fee structure was approved by the membership (unchanged from 2015-16)

- New Regular SRB Membership - $150
- Renewal of Regular SRB Membership - $130
- Regular 3 Year SRB Membership - $350
- New Student SRB Membership - $60
- Renewal of Student Membership - $45
- Student 2 Year Membership - $80
- Student 3 Year Membership - $120
- Professional Membership - $120
- Renewal of Professional Membership - $105
- Professional Member 3 Year Membership - $310
- Age-retired Membership - $40
- Age-retired 3 Year Membership - $65
- Overseas Membership (excludes New Zealand) - $60

**Renewal of SRB subscriptions**
Applications for new memberships and renewal of existing memberships for 2017 are now available online. Why not take advantage of the discounted rates for multi-year renewals!

Cheers
Jeremy Smith
SRB Treasurer
2016 SRB Annual Scientific meeting
I am sure you will all agree that this year’s SRB annual scientific meeting in the Gold Coast was another great success, with an exciting scientific program. Hopefully everyone took full advantage to catch up on some impressive science and to network with colleagues. The council would especially like to thank the POC chairs (Kirsty Walters and Brett Nixon) and LOC chair (Lisa Akison) and their committees for organising this outstanding meeting. The council also would like to thank our Secretariat, ASN, for their outstanding efforts throughout the year. Special thanks to Mike Pickford for his support organising the annual scientific meeting, as well as Jim Fawcett, Bree Knights, Brad Ogden and Nitesh Patel for all that they do at the conference and for the Society throughout the year.

This year no new SRB fellow or life member applications were received, although please do start thinking about potential applicants for next year. Currently, we are inviting SRB members to submit nominations for the 2017 Founder’s and President’s Lecturers. Nominations for either speaker are due on the 28th November 2016. More information can be found within this newsletter on the SRB website or by contacting Shaun Roman shaun.roman@newcastle.edu.au or myself. We would like to encourage you to please put in a nomination, as there are many great speakers out there who would be fantastic additions to the 2017 program.

Before nominating someone, please check that they are willing to be nominated and are available to travel to Perth for the conference.

In your nomination, please include:
(1) a short letter outlining the reasons for your nomination and confirming that the nominee is available, and
(2) an abbreviated CV (maximum 1 page) from the nominee (to be sent electronically to the Secretary with the nomination).

If you have any questions regarding either the President’s or Founder’s Lecturer nomination please contact Shaun Roman shaun.roman@newcastle.edu.au

After receiving your nomination, a confirmation email will be sent out. If you do not receive a confirmation email within two working days, please contact the Society Secretary societyreproductivebiology@gmail.com or Shaun Roman shaun.roman@newcastle.edu.au
Secretary’s Report, continued

SRB Council 2016/17
Firstly, I would like to thank (I think) Kirsty Pringle for encouraging me to take on the Secretary role, which over the last three years Kirsty did an amazing job of on behalf of the society, in addition to her work during her previous term on Council! We will miss you! I would like to echo Kirsty’s sentiments and thank our outgoing council members: Kirsty Pringle, Patrick Western and Catherine Itman; outgoing co-opted members: Melanie McDowell, Karla Hutt and Joanna James, as well as the outgoing student and ECR reps: Fiona Brownfoot and John Schjenken. Thanks for all your dedication and support of SRB. On our recently formatted webpage, you will see a number of these people, as well as myself, are back for a subsequent term of office to join some new recruits on council! The council for the 2016/2017 term are detailed later in this newsletter.

Upcoming conferences
A reminder that in the next few weeks (13th to 15th November) there is the Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) 55th national conference ‘Next generation healthcare: merging biology and technology’. This conference is being held in the Gold Coast and invited speakers include SRB life member Alan Trounson and others, in some excellent sessions, including ones on stem cell therapies and disease detection. Further details can be found at http://www.asmr-nsc.org.au/. In addition to this conference, in the last few months we have circulated a number of emails to promote upcoming conferences, with links to these also appearing on the SRB website. Hopefully these have been of interest. If you would like to promote any upcoming conferences and events, both international and national, that you believe the SRB membership would be interested in, then please contact me on societyreproductivebiology@gmail.com

Thanks everyone and I look forward to working with you over the next three years!

Mark Green
SRB Secretary
Nominations are open for the 2017 SRB Founder’s and President’s lectures

The SRB Council are inviting SRB members to submit separate nominations for the 2017 Founder’s Lecturer and the 2017 President’s Lecturer.

The **Founder’s Lecturer** is the Society’s major plenary speaker at the Annual Scientific Meeting. Nominations are open for a leading *international* researcher recognised for their major contributions towards advancing our understanding of any aspect of reproductive biology.

2016 SRB Founder’s Lecturer – Prof Jeremy Thompson

The **President’s Lecturer** is also a keynote plenary lecturer. Nominations are open for a leading researcher *from Australia or New Zealand* recognised for their major contributions towards advancing our understanding of any aspect of reproductive biology.

2016 SRB President’s Lecturer – Prof Josef Penninger

Please send nominations for either plenary speaker to the Secretary, Mark Green at societyreproductivebiology@gmail.com by Monday November 28th 2016.
SRB-RFD Publication of the Year Award

The 2016 award was presented to Dr Sarah Meacham, for a 2015 RFD paper authored by Jenna T. Haverfield, Peter G. Stanton, Kate L. Loveland, Heba Zahid, Peter K. Nicholls, Justine S. Olcorn, Yogeshwar Makanji, Catherine M. Itman, Evan R. Simpson and Sarah J. Meachem and titled, *Suppression of Sertoli cell tumour development during the first wave of spermatogenesis in inhibin a-deficient mice. Reproduction Fertility and Development* doi: 10.1071/RD15239'.

*Reproduction, Fertility and Development* is the official journal of the Society for Reproductive Biology. Published eight times a year, it features high-quality research on all scientific aspects of reproduction and development, including reproductive technologies.

The journal now has an impact factor of 2.135 (5 year IF: 2.370). Authors submitting their work to *Reproduction, Fertility and Development* can expect a first decision on their manuscript within an average of 49 days. Manuscripts are published Online Early within an average of 40 days of acceptance, and are indexed in PubMed and MEDLINE immediately on publication.

There are no page charges to publish in the journal, and colour is free online and in PDFs. The journal promotes Green Open Access: authors may deposit the pre-publication version of their accepted manuscript without embargo in a personal or institutional repository. Gold Open Access is also available to all authors on payment of an article processing charge. To submit your own high-quality research to *Reproduction, Fertility and Development*, follow the Instructions to Authors at www.publish.csiro.au/journals/rfd.
ESA/SRB Joint meeting 2017

The Annual Scientific Meetings of the Endocrine Society of Australia and the Society for Reproductive Biology will be held at the Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre from 27-30 August 2017.

With the combined societies, we anticipate in excess of 700 delegates representing a variety of specialties including endocrinology, cell and molecular biology, reproductive biology, gynaecology, pharmacology and rheumatology.

Trade partners will have a much increased exposure including, on Wednesday, the Australian Diabetes Society (ADS) and the Australian Diabetes Educators Association (ADEA) meetings that will attract in excess of 1,500 delegates.

The programme organising committee is represented by members from both societies and will present the latest and most exciting data from these respective fields with a range of international and national leading speakers.

We look forward to seeing you in Perth.

Warrick Inder *(ESA President)*
Chris O’Neill *(SRB President)*
Hi SRB ECR members,

What an amazing year we’ve had! Thanks for participating in the workshop and social events at this year’s annual meeting on the Gold Coast. This year the ECR workshop was a combined event with the ECRs from ESA and ANZBMS and focused on grant writing and career development. We had fantastic presentations from researchers who have had success with NHMRC, both fellowships and project grants, and they gave us their “5 Top Tips and 5 Things to Avoid” when applying for funding. These were compiled into a master list that was circulated to all ECRs. If you missed out on this, please let us know so we can get you a copy. This was followed by a panel session where we had free discussion on a number of issues surrounding the grant review process.

Also at the ECR workshop, we had informative presentations from Belinda Henry on the NHMRC grant review process, Michael Cowley on pharmaceutical funding and Renea Taylor on that always tricky “Work-Life Balance”.

The “Meeting of the Minds” networking event was also held this year and was quite well attended. As per the last few years, the highlight for this event was the Science Meets Publican final, with finalists chosen from ECRs who Tweeted their research. The finalists had to pitch their research in 60 secs and, although they all did a wonderful job, Nicole Camlin was chosen to represent SRB at Science Meets Parliament in Canberra in 2017. This is an exciting annual event where you get to learn more about science communication, political advocacy, and science policy. Nicole will also get the opportunity to meet with a federal MP or Senator at Parliament House – a great networking opportunity for Nicole and an awesome addition to her CV! Congratulations Nicole!! Look out for details on how you can be a part of this event next year.

Another exciting new initiative that arose from this year’s conference was the opportunity for the ECRs to write a review of the SRB Symposia presented at the Gold Coast. We have had fantastic support from Chris O’Neill (SRB President) and Graeme Martin (Editor-in-Chief, Reproduction Fertility and Development) and we assembled an incredibly collegiate group of ECRs to write the review. Graeme had insisted on a tight deadline for submission if the review was to be a timely overview of the conference, and we managed to submit just 5 weeks after the conference concluded which was an incredible achievement. The manuscript has been reviewed, requiring just minor revisions before re-submission, so we look forward to this being published very soon. Please support your fellow ECRs and look out for it and cite it as much as you can! The details for this manuscript are:

Early Career Researcher News, continued

We are planning to try and do something similar again for next year’s conference in Perth. If you are thinking of going and would like to be involved, please let us know.

As a follow up from the conference, if you did miss getting the master list from the workshop panel session, this means you must not be registered as an SRB ECR member! We now have an ECR register which we are trying to keep as up-to-date as possible. Please let us know if you think you should be included (i.e. within 8 years post-PhD, taking into consideration career interruptions).

So, that brings us to planning for next year’s conference in Perth! Given that it’s going to be a bit more expensive for us all to travel over there next year, don’t forget to apply for the SRB ECR registration subsidy of $200. Here’s a hot tip that many of you don’t seem to realise – if you apply, you are guaranteed to get one! There were 22 given out for this year’s conference on the Gold Coast.

We are just starting to think about planning the ECR workshop and other events for 2017 in Perth so we’d like to hear from you as to what you would like us to provide. If you have any ideas, please shoot us an email. In the next month or so, we will send out a survey so you can choose what would be most helpful to you and your career. Given the success of last year’s joint ECR session, we are planning to combine with ESA and ANZBMS once again.

John Schjenken has finished up his tenure as ECR rep. We would like to take this opportunity to thank him for the awesome job he’s done over the last 2 years. He has brought enthusiasm, hard work and great ideas to the role. We welcome our new ECR rep, Dr Michael Bertoldo (School of Women’s and Children’s Health, The University of New South Wales). If you have any ECR issues you would like to discuss or something you would like promoted on the SRB Facebook page, please don’t hesitate to contact us (l.akison@uq.edu.au; michael.bertoldo@unsw.edu.au).

Best wishes,
Lisa Akison and Michael Bertoldo
SRB ECR Representatives, 2016
Dr Hannah Brown (The University of Adelaide) and Dr Sam Buckberry (University of Western Australia)

Drs Brown and Buckberry have shared mutual research interests for a number of years, and have been successfully funded together on a number of projects. Together, Drs Brown and Buckberry are experts in the fields of molecular biology, preimplantation embryo biology, transcription and bioinformatics, and have published prolifically in the last two years in the Reproductive Biology field. Recently, Dr Buckberry was recruited to the team of Prof Ryan Lister, at University of Western Australia. Prof Lister pioneered ground-breaking new genomics techniques for comprehensive epigenome and transcriptome analysis at the Salk Institute, USA and now leads a laboratory focused upon the investigation and manipulation of epigenetic mechanisms, where Prof Lister’s team are at the forefront of Epigenetic and Bioinformatic Research in Australia.

Hannah travelled and spent a week in the Lister Lab, where she discussed and learned about new analyses for projects that they have ongoing. They also discussed new collaborator opportunities, including a new embryo sequencing project which has already initiated. During the visit, Hannah gave a seminar in the Seminar Series at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical research, and met with a number of researchers to discuss her research. In addition, although her junior, Dr Buckberry is mentoring Dr Brown in developing her programming and bioinformatic skills. Finally, Hannah and Sam laid plans for the submission of a new collaboratory project, which they will prepare a grant for in early 2017.

The ECR Travel Award is of extraordinary benefit to ECRs located across Australia and we are very grateful for the opportunity to have received the award!
Hi SRB Student Members!

We hope you all had a fantastic time at this year’s ESA-SRB-ANZBMS conference! The research presented during the poster and oral sessions highlighted the importance of reproductive science in Australia. Congratulations to the students who were nominated and those that were recipients of awards at the conference! It was great to see such passionate young researchers sharing their work with their peers.

At this year’s student meeting we held technical talks where students presented a novel and interesting technique that they have used in their research. Thank you to Allen Feng, Lexie Prokopuk and Chad Moore for sharing with us your research techniques! We had some great talks - from CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing to immunofluorescence and super-resolution imaging, and electron microscopy.

With another conference over, so too ends Fiona Brownfoot’s term as SRB student representative. On behalf of the society and student members, we’d like to thank Fiona for all of her hard work and enthusiasm! Good luck with your future endeavours, Fiona! We are sure you will remain an active member and presence within the SRB.

Congratulations to Sarah Delforce, our new SRB student rep! We are looking forward to working together and hearing what is important to our SRB student members.

Please let us know if there are any aspects of this year’s conference that you would like us to hold again next year. We would like to know what you want to see at next year’s conference and what we can bring to you at the student meeting. We are looking forward to hearing your great ideas! Don’t hesitate to get in touch with us:

Harriet: harriet.fitzgerald@hudson.org.au
Sarah: Sarah.Delforce@uon.edu.au

Best wishes,
Sarah and Harriet
Student Representatives.
Save the date for these conferences

The Joint Annual Scientific Meetings of the Endocrine Society of Australia and the Society for Reproductive Biology
Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre
27 – 30 August 2017

SAVE THE DATE
2017 Annual Meeting
Golden Anniversary
Celebrating 50 years!
July 13-16, 2017
Marriott Wardman Park

55th National Scientific Conference
NEXT GENERATION HEALTHCARE: MERGING BIOLOGY & TECHNOLOGY
13 - 15 Nov 2016
Bond University, Gold Coast

Ovary and follicles
Control of meiosis
Implantation
Reproductive endocrinology
Reproductive technology
Sperm cells and development

International Congress of Andrology
6 - 9 May 2017
Copenhagen, Denmark
Australian Medical Research and Innovation Five Year Strategy – MRFF submission

A National Reproductive Health Strategy for Maximising the General Health of the Australian Population.

Submitted by: College of Fellows, Society for Reproductive Biology
Contact information: Professor Chris O’Neill. President, Society of Reproductive Biology. chris.oneill@sydney.edu.au +61 2 99264870

The Society of Reproductive Biology (SRB) is one of Australia’s oldest and most successful research Societies. Its members have a remarkable history of success in providing practical benefits from their innovative research. Examples include the development by our members of virtually all the modern forms of assisted reproductive technology, major advances in contraceptive medicine, and the development of stem cell science leading to the burgeoning field of Regenerative medicine. As well as these profound contributions to health, the research performed by our members is widely extended to: ensure our farmers are the world leaders in reproductive efficiency, herd quality and genetic improvement; contribute to developing the necessary technology for combating the scourge of invasive vertebrate species; and to help our conservationists with tools for species preservation.

The practical success of our members attests to the benefits from ensuring that a rigorous approach to understanding biological principles that underlie health and disease is in place to guide translation and clinical interventions. We are of the view that this can be best and most economically achieved when research support is provided on the basis of rigorous and entirely independent peer review for research excellence. Experience shows that attempts to “pick winners” on any other basis has a poor record of outcomes and is often counterproductive. The NHMRC has over many decades developed rigorous and equitable approaches to assessing, administering and supervising medical research funding and it is SRB’s view that this structure should be used for supervising expenditure by the MRFF.
The Problem
While not wishing to specifically address issues of disease burden, we make the general and obvious point that the overwhelming risk to the nation’s health and economic strength is the ever-growing burden of chronic diseases. As Reproductive biologists we consider it important to emphasise the extraordinary discoveries of the last decade (many of which have been made by our members) that demonstrate that the reproductive health of parents is the major contributor to the whole-of-life disease risks for their children, and even their grandchildren. Thus, an individual may become predisposed to the serious chronic diseases of adulthood as a consequence of the conditions of her/his conception and during development while in the uterus. This includes major impacts on the incidence and severity of obesity; metabolic diseases, including diabetes; cardiovascular disease; mental health and cancer. We argue that current health and medical structures inadequately recognise this risk and do not provide mechanisms to prevent or mitigate the outcomes.

This gap in the system arises from:

i. an under-appreciation by health policy makers of the major contribution that reproductive health plays in determining whole-of-life health outcomes;

ii. an incomplete mechanistic understanding of the causative pathways involved; and

iii. the intellectual unpreparedness of the health professions to deal with non-communicable disease processes that fall outside of the conventionally understood range of causalities.

Pouring increasing resources into the hospital and health systems will have only incremental impact on outcomes until there is an adequate understanding of causality at a biological level. This new understanding will allow for the rational development of prevention, mitigation and treatment options.
Consequences

The outcome of this gap is

a. a large and growing burden of chronic diseases within the community;
b. poor treatment options and outcomes for this disease burden because of the unrecognised fundamental causes;
c. the prospect that the burden will continue to grow as the conditions are propagated across generations; and
d. an expensive and less efficient health system due to misallocation of resources.

The history of science and technology shows that useful innovation is born of the rational application of new knowledge to important unmet needs. The current crisis in the burden of chronic diseases stems not from inadequate efforts to treat it but from an inadequate knowledge base of its fundamental causes. The increasing demand on our best and brightest to plug the holes in the health system created by chronic diseases wastes our human, emotional, economic and intellectual resources. Unleashing these lost resources will create a more efficient and productive society, and reduce the stocks of human suffering within our community.

Strategy

The community’s frustration at the inexorably rising tide of chronic diseases and its resistance to conventional medical approaches are clear signs that new knowledge and new approaches are required. Sustainable progress can only be achieved in an environment of patient, stable and secure long-term investment in research of the underlying mechanisms. This in turn will inform the most prudent and cost-effective strategies for prevention, mitigation and treatment. We propose that there is an urgent requirement for a National Strategy for Reproductive Health, the benefits of which will be felt across each individual’s lifespan, and across future generations.
Australian Medical Research and Innovation Five Year Strategy – MRFF submission, continued

For too long the measure of success for reproductive health has simply been the birth of a reasonably healthy baby. This standard must be reset so that every couple wishing to do so can conceive a healthy baby that has the maximum chance of a productive life free from constant or recurring pain or anguish. To achieve this, the underlying molecular and cellular basis of how the conditions of one’s conception and development can lead to a non-communicable chronic disease burden must be identified and understood. This new understanding will provide new pathways for preventing and treating the range of most serious chronic diseases.

This strategy will focus on the investigation of:

1. The normal and pathological processes of gamete and embryo formation and development, with particular emphasis on the still rising tide of infertility and limitations to the success of assisted reproductive technologies;
2. The basis for severe maternal diseases, such as polycystic ovary syndrome and preeclampsia, and their impacts on fertility and fetal health, and improved options for fertility preservation in diseases such as cancer;
3. The impacts of the range of environmental conditions, including maternal and paternal disease, on gamete, embryo and fetal well-being;
4. The molecular basis for the cellular memory encoded within the gamete, embryo and fetus of the conditions of conception and development that so powerfully impacts on the homeostatic settings that govern health outcomes for life; and
5. Redesign of medical and health curricula to provide adequate intellectual training for considering the treatment of non-communicable chronic diseases.

The success of this strategy will require the commitment of many expert teams. These teams will have different shapes, sizes and composition; there is no magic formula to research success other than excellence. The increasingly common calls for the focus to be primarily on teams dedicated to specific translational outcomes are misguided. Such teams will have a place but are only one component of the complex recipe for success. Success will come from coordinating the activities and goals of the already many excellent teams present within Australia. We are looking for synergies from these interactions with the recognition of the benefits that arise from sharing diverse sources of wisdom to solve complex problems.
Priorities

The key to achieving these strategic aims is to bring the best minds to the problem. We propose a three-tiered set of priorities to achieve this.

1. The creation of a National Reproductive Health Consortium. This would bring together the leading research groups, clinical investigators and practitioners, service providers and key commercial and philanthropic partners. The consortium would have independent governing and advisory boards and would identify leadership and participants for research nodes that contribute to each of the 5 strategic goals identified above. The consortium would receive establishment and ongoing support for its structural requirements from the MRFF.

2. The Consortium would have a role in identifying critical weaknesses in the research base required to meet the strategic goals and make recommendation to MRFF for support of these. Support would be provided by a quantum of earmarked funds being allocated to NHMRC funding platforms for competitive application. For instance, to ensure that adequate research project funding is directed to these strategic aims, the current NHMRC project grant scheme would have a specific quantum of new funds allocated from the MRFF for use for to fund highly recommended projects within the scope of the strategic aims. Allocation of MRFF funds for these projects would use similar mechanisms as the joint assessment of cancer grants by the NHMRC and Cancer Council.

3. If the Consortium recognises that there is a clear gap in expertise in certain aspects of the strategic goals then these could be closed by attracting the best researchers to these questions by the creation of specific Fellowships of 5 years duration (renewable). Fellowships would be appointed in a transparent and competitive manner by specific MRFF allocations through the NHMRC Fellowship program. In allocating Fellowships it will be recognised that research in seemingly disparate areas can and will inform the strategic goals of reproductive health. Thus, it would be a mistake for funding to be overly goal or outcomes focussed. The preference should be towards research that is most likely to produce profoundly significant new knowledge. This approach can be taken with confidence that such new knowledge will provide the best investment towards innovation and practical outcomes.
Australian Medical Research and Innovation Five Year Strategy – MRFF submission, continued

It is essential that grant funding reflect the true cost of research. The current salary support packages associated with many grant schemes do not meet the minimum award salaries and conditions under which chief investigators are compelled to employ staff. Currently, our country’s most talented and successful researchers are being actively penalised for their success, in that they must spend precious time and effort finding top-up funding to allow them to meet the statutory requirements for employing staff. The reality is that there are simply not adequate alternative sources of funds to meet these needs, meaning that the small proportion of excellent projects that do get funding under current systems struggle to meet their objectives and full potential. These are circumstances that would never operate in a successful business. The current model of under-funding successful grants reduces the efficiency of the Nation’s research spend.

Outcomes
This strategy will take a generation to fully mature. The current time lines of 5-year Strategies and 2-year priorities will not foster buy-in by the highest quality researchers. Short-term commitment is most likely to attract opportunists lacking the required long-term commitment to see these complex issues through to their end. A stable long-term commitment to this strategy will result in the necessary cohesive and co-ordinated approach to the problem.

A consistent and patient approach to this task will lead to a marked reduction in the new incidence of chronic disease due to rational preventative interventions, much improved medicines and treatment strategies for those who slip through the preventive net, a resulting marked reduction in the strain on our health care systems, and improved efficiency of our nation due to reduced losses in individual productivity.
Did you miss Making Babies 2016??
Check out the online recordings:


Using genomics to elucidate developmental cell lineage
Australian Patient Education

Embryonic stem cells A tale of mice and humans as well as pigs
Australian Patient Education

Exploring the many Stem Cell identities in the Stemformatics
Australian Patient Education

Uterine stem cell isolation and functions Caroline Gargett
Australian Patient Education

Drugs, germline epigenetics and offspring health should we be
Australian Patient Education

Big Ideas in Pluripotency and Reprogramming Panel Discussion
Australian Patient Education

 Speakers and chairs from the day
In memoriam, Emeritus Prof David Armstrong

SRB Life member since 2005

August 1st, 2016

Peacefully at St. Joseph’s Hospice on Monday, August 1st, 2016, with family by his side, Dr. David Thomas Armstrong of London and formerly of Adelaide, Australia, in his 87th year. Husband of the late Catherine Downey-Armstrong (2012). Loving Dad of David (Wendy) Armstrong of Stouffville, Susan (Warren) Lindsay of London, and Meredith (Jeff) Biehn also of London. Dear step-father of Georgina, Fiona (Roel), and Sophie, all of Australia. Loving brother of Hugh Armstrong of Calgary, Donald (Pam) Armstrong of Kinburn, and the late Mary (Bill) Carss of Arnprior. Proud ‘Papa’ and Grandpa to Tori (Ben) Bartosik, Melissa, Chris (Bianca) and Rob Armstrong, Megan (Luke) Mann, Scott and Ryan Lindsay, Leanna and Olivia Biehn, and Molly Haitjema. Great-grandpa to Zosia and Gabriela Bartosik. Missed also by his dear friend and first wife, Carolyn Armstrong. David was a world-renowned research scientist in reproductive physiology. He inspired and mentored many at Western University, London, and The University of Adelaide in Australia.
Congratulations to the Award Winners 2016

SRB again offered an extensive range of premier awards at the 2016 conference. Interest in these awards and the outstanding sessions associated with each award was very strong and reflects the dynamic and high quality nature of the work done by members of the SRB and ANZPRA. The SRB would like to congratulate all of the SRB and ANZPRA members who took part in these sessions and all of the applicants who submitted abstracts. These awards showcase the excellent quality of research performed by SRB members provide high profile opportunities for our researchers to share their outstanding work with colleagues and the broader delegate group.

2016 The Robinson Research Institute Award for Excellence in Reproductive Biology Research

This prestigious award from the SRB is presented to an established researcher and in the past has been won by some of our most outstanding leaders in reproductive biology.

The 2016 Robinson Award was presented to Associate Professor Wendy Ingman for Adelaide for her major contributions in breast cancer, mammary gland development and mastitis, with major publications in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, Development, and Endocrinology. Ass Prof Ingman’s work encompasses basic science and clinical/commercial interests, with her discoveries in breast cancer under commercial development. In addition, her discoveries have led to patents with regard to a new mastitis treatment, a major issue in the cessation of breast feeding for women and also a significant problem in the dairy industry.

Congratulations to all of the SRB and ANZPRA award contestants, finalists and winners for another outstanding awards session at the 2016 SRB-ESA conference.
Congratulations to the Award Winners 2016, continued

2016 Newcastle Reproduction Emerging Research Leader Award

The Newcastle award is presented to an emerging leader in the field of reproductive biology. This year the award was very hotly contested, with all finalists presenting outstanding work and providing a highlight session at the SRB Conference. It is no surprise that the judging panel found this award extremely challenging, with a difficult final decision to be made. The SRB would like to congratulate Dr Kirsty Pringle, Dr Hannah Brown, Dr Pradeep Tanwar and Dr Natalie Hannan, who were short-listed for the Newcastle award.

The award was presented to Dr Pradeep Tanwar for his excellent work in Reproductive Tract Organogenesis and Oncogenesis.

2016 Student, Early Career and Mid-Career Research Awards:

Students and early post-doctoral researchers really are the heart of laboratory based research and produce much of the excellent research, of which organisations are so proud. Judging by the talks presented in the David Healy, Oozoa and ANZPRA award sessions, as well as the posters shown in the Hudson Centre for Reproductive Biology Poster Awards, this year’s SRB conference was no exception. These sessions attracted large audiences and provided some of the highlights in SRB research for 2016. The SRB would like to congratulate the following award winners and all of the excellent researchers who presented in these sessions.

SRB David Healy New Investigator Award

Jessica Dunleavy, a PhD student in Professor Moira O'Bryan's laboratory at Monash University. As part of this award Jessica will travel to Edinburgh to represent the SRB at the 2017 SRF Annual Meeting, which is now known as Fertility 2017, to be held in January 2017.
Congratulations to the Award Winners 2016, continued

The Oozoa Student Award
Lexie Prokopuk, a PhD student in Dr Patrick Western’s laboratory in the Centre for Genetic Diseases at the Hudson Institute in Melbourne.

Centre for Reproductive Health Hudson Institute of Medical Research 'Award for Excellence' for best Early Career Research poster
Dr Amy Winship, a post-doctoral scientist, Centre for Reproductive Health at the Hudson Institute in Melbourne.

Centre for Reproductive Health Hudson Institute of Medical Research 'Award for Excellence' for best Mid-Career Research poster
Dr Kate Redgrove, a post-doctoral scientist at Newcastle University.

ANZPRA New Investigator Award
Jacinta Kalisch-Smith, a PhD Student at the School of Biomedical Science, University of Queensland.
Many thanks to outgoing SRB council members

Dr Kirsty Pringle
Secretary

Dr Catherine Ittman
Fellows and Life Member Secretary

Dr Patrick Western
Awards/Sponsorship

Dr Karla Hutt
Website Secretary

Dr Joanna Janes
RHD Editor Liaison

Dr Mel McDowall
Publicity Secretary

Dr Mark Green
Membership Secretary

Dr Fiona Brownfoot
Student Rep
SRB reunites old friends… and establishes new friendships!
Winners were grinners at the SRB Booth
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Chris O’Neill</td>
<td>President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Mark Green</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Jeremy Smith</td>
<td>Treasurer (Sponsorship)</td>
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<td>Dr Josephine Bowles</td>
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<td>POC Co-Chair</td>
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<td>ECR Rep</td>
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<td>A/Prof Jeremy Thompson</td>
<td>Public Officer</td>
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## SRB Council 2016/17

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Chris O’Neill</td>
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<td>Jeremy Smith</td>
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**SOCIETY FOR REPRODUCTIVE BIOLOGY Inc**

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Don’t know where to start? Add these people…