

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the Future Leaders Group (FLG) is to build research capacity, foster collaboration and develop support structures for early and mid-career cancer researchers (EMCRs) for their acceleration into future leadership positions.

BACKGROUND

The Hunter Cancer Research Alliance (HCRA) aims, among others, to integrate basic science and clinical research bi-directionally, to facilitate rapid development and implementation of research discoveries, and to stimulate research on priority questions generated from the clinic. The FLG program is a pivotal HCRA knowledge dissemination platform for educating the next generation of clinicians and researchers towards leadership. The FLG started in July 2017 with funding support from the Priority Research Centre for Cancer Research, Innovation and Translation (PRC-CaRIT). The group continues to evolve with a focus on accelerating high-potential EMCRs into future leadership positions.

These Terms of Reference (ToR) are building on the past ToR created in 2017; this second version of the ToR was discussed by the committee on Wednesday 16 January 2019 and subsequently circulated for further comment and approval. The ToR will be circulated to the FLG group via email in the first quarter of each year

PURPOSE

Develop comprehensive strategy to support career progression of EMCRs via:

- Identification of a cohort of EMCRs;
- Scoping of EMCRs research needs;
- Scoping of EMCRs career development needs;
- Introduction of career development plans;
- Prioritise career development initiatives;
- Identify professional career models beyond the EMCR stage.

Facilitate the implementation of key career development initiatives:

- Development of processes for implementing agreed career development activities;
- Promote opportunities for collaboration, sponsorship and mentoring (local, national, international);
- Identify existing or emerging career development opportunities;
- Succession planning for executive/senior positions.

Participate in HCRA communication and promotion, both internal and external.

REPORTING

The FLG has been developed under the support and guidance of the HCRA Executive Committee. Internal Progress Reports / Operational Reports are provided to HCRA Executive on a quarterly basis.

MEMBERSHIP

COMMITTEE GENDER INCLUSIVE COMMITMENT

The FLG Committee is committed to having balanced and inclusive gender representation (no more than two third's of the Committee will comprise of a single gender) with the aim of 50% of each gender where achievable.

The Chair of FLG Committee will issue all members, the University of Newcastle's 'Gender Inclusive Membership of University Committee's Policy,' which will be re-issued by the Chair each term of the Committee.

The FLG Committee will ensure Committee meetings are held between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm on weekdays, unless impracticable for the majority of committee members. This supports the health and well-being of FHEAM staff and ensuring meeting times will not disadvantage or preclude participation of members with carer responsibilities, part time workers or other commitments outside of core business hours.

Where gender balance is not achievable in the first instance due to members being elected or appointed ex-officio, the committee (where practicable) will explore the following options to achieve gender balance:

- Appointing or co-opting members to achieve gender balance;
- Provide ex-officio members (including the option of a rotating Chair) to be represented by an appropriate nominee who is a member of the minority gender.

The membership of the FLG will include:

- Early or mid-career clinicians or researchers (EMCRs) defined as individuals who are 0-15 years post-PhD award
- Clinicians without PhD but formalised practicing qualification such as college registration – this extends to medical registrars
- EMCRs have to be HCRA members and have a primary affiliation with cancer research (PRC CaRIT) (≥50%)
- Opt-out for self-identified progression beyond EMCR stage.

FLG COMMITTEE

- A core group of 8 EMCRs will be appointed by Expression of Interest (EOI) process as the FLG Committee with diverse membership across gender, career stage, location and HCRA Flagship affiliation.
- The maximum term is 3 years. Those committee members that retire may however be called upon by the committee for assistance if needed.
- Membership will be open to all qualified HCRA members on an annually basis, with up to 33% of members turn-over per annum; new committee members will be endorsed by the existing committee.
- FLG selection will be based on diversity, and commitment to the FLG objectives.
- The Chair will be appointed for one year.
- The deputy Chair from the previous year will become Chair in the following year; this transition process will allow suitable knowledge exchange on strategic and operational matters between old and new Chair.
- The new deputy Chair will be selected among the committee members.
- A committee member cannot be Chair in their first year of membership; a committee member can be Deputy Chair in their first year of membership if endorsed by other committee members.
- The committee may invite other persons to meetings as deemed necessary.
- The HCRA Centre Manager is ex-officio committee member representing HCRA.
- HCRA will provide secretarial support.

COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Primary responsibilities of FLG committee members include:

- Provide input and advice to be collated by the Group Chair on direction, strategy, policy and implementation.
- Attendance at meetings (face to face or phone/video-conference) with at least 50% pa attendance frequency providing the following responsibility is met:
 - If an apology at meeting, provide feedback or comments on agenda matters in timely fashion via email with a date for comment decided upon by the committee – this is to ensure decision making is not delayed.
- Read meeting papers in advance of meetings.
- Participate in and lead small group initiatives.
- Have financial responsibility for orderly and timely budget decisions.



- Budget forecasts to be presented to the HCRA Executive Committee for endorsement within the first quarter of each calendar year with a representative of the FLG committee at the HCRA executive meeting.

COMMITTEE MEETING CONDUCT

- The FLG committee will meet at least quarterly with the potential for supernumerary meetings around key HCRA events such as the yearly symposium.
- A notice of each meeting confirming the date, time, venue and agenda shall be forwarded to each member of the Committee at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. The notice for members will include relevant supporting papers for the agenda items to be discussed.
- Committee Meetings will normally be 1.5 hrs in duration.
- Quorum: At least 50 % of FLG committee members must be present to conduct a meeting. Decision making is in accordance with HCRA Executive Committee procedure.

These ToR represent the ideal processes and procedures to follow. The FLG Committee will endeavour to abide by these ToR at all times. Should there be an occasion where these ToR cannot be followed, the FLG membership will be informed and feedback will be sought on how to proceed. The FLG Committee will review these ToR at the start of each year with the incoming Chair.

