

Australasian Cell Death Society Mentorship Program Brief 2026

Dear ACDS members,

The ACDS committee is thrilled to launch the **2026 Mentorship Program** for early- to mid-career researchers (EMCRs). Following the success of the 2025 pilot, this program will continue to support the professional development of emerging researchers within the Australasian cell death community by pairing EMCRs with established leaders in the field. This program aims to foster meaningful, one-to-one mentorship relationships that provide tailored career guidance, strategic insight, and support for long-term progression.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2026 ACDS mentorship program includes:

- **One-to-one mentorship**
 - Each Mentee will be paired with an experienced ACDS Mentor.
 - Mentees are expected to meet with their Mentor at least twice during 2026 (in person or virtually).
 - Additional meetings are encouraged to maximise the value of the mentoring relationship.
 - Optional discussion prompts will be provided to support initial conversations.
- **Professional Development (PD) Workshops:**
 - Mentees will have access to a series of ACDS “Rapid Fire” Professional Development workshops, delivered by selected Mentors.
 - Topics may include publishing with impact, strategic career planning for EMCRs, managing career setbacks, taking ownership of projects and ideas.

MENTORS

We are extremely grateful to the following inspirational leaders in the Australasian cell death community who have generously agreed to support our junior researchers:

- A/Prof Kate Lawlor, Hudson (apoptosis, pyroptosis, necroptosis, inflammation)
- Prof Peter Czabotar, WEHI (BCL-2 proteins, apoptosis, necroptosis, structural biology)
- Prof Sharad Kumar, Uni SA (autophagy, caspases, extracellular vesicles)
- Prof Seth Masters, Hudson (auto-inflammatory disease, inflammasomes, NLRP3)
- Prof Andrew Murphy, Baker (ferroptosis, inflammation, haematopoiesis)
- Prof James Murphy, WEHI (MLKL, necroptosis, pseudokinases)
- Dr Kim Newton, Genentech (RIPK1/3, necroptosis, inflammatory disease)
- Prof Ivan Poon, La Trobe University (apoptotic bodies, cell clearance, efferocytosis)
- Dr Jaclyn Pearson, St Andrews (microbiology, *E.coli*, infection and immunity)
- Prof Tri Phan, Garvan (Intravital microscopy, macrophages, apoptosis, B cells)
- Prof Andreas Strasser, WEHI (Apoptosis, blood cancers, p53, drug development)
- A/Prof Doug Fairlie, ONJCRI (Autophagy, cancer cell death, BH3 mimetics)
- Dr Marcel Doerflinger, WEHI (Infection, cell signalling, apoptosis)
- Prof Kate Schonder (Pyroptosis, inflammasomes, drug development)
- Dr Maria Tanzer, WEHI (Infection, phagocytosis, proteomics)
- Dr Najoua Lalauoi, Peter Mac (RIPK1/3, Innate immunity, therapeutic strategies)
- Prof Si Ming, John Curtin ANU (Innate immunity, infectious agents, cancer cell biology)
- A/Prof Kate Lawlor, Hudson (Apoptosis, pyroptosis, necroptosis, inflammation)*newly added

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ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an early- or mid-career researcher (up to 8 years post-PhD), including current PhD students.
- Be a registered member of the Australasian Cell Death Society.
- Demonstrate a genuine commitment to career development and active participation in the field.

Selection will be based on alignment with program objectives, career stage, and mentor availability.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the 2025 ACDS Mentorship Program, complete the application form on page 3 of this brief and submit the application to general@australasiancelldeathsociety.com by **Friday February 27th, 5pm AEDT**.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at general@australasiancelldeathsociety.com.

Regards,
Pooranee Morgan
Mentorship Program Coordinator
On behalf of the ACDS committee
<https://australasiancelldeathsociety.com/>



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Application for 2026 ACDS Mentorship program

INSTRUCTION TO APPLICANTS

This form is to be completed when applying as a **Mentee** for the 2026 ACDS mentorship program. On completion of the application, save as **SURNAME_2026MP_Application**, and email the application to general@australasiancelldeathsociety.com by **Friday February 27th, 5pm AEDT** for consideration. Successful applicants will be required to complete brief feedback surveys during and after the program to support ongoing evaluation and improvement of the ACDS Mentorship Program.

APPLICANT DETAILS

Name	
Email address	
Institute, Department	
Career Stage	<input type="checkbox"/> PhD candidate, Year PhD commenced: <input type="checkbox"/> Postdoctoral Researcher, Year PhD awarded:
Scientific Interests <i>Enter up to 3 keywords</i>	
Intended career trajectory	<input type="checkbox"/> Group Leader, Basic Research <input type="checkbox"/> Group Leader, Translation/Clinical Research <input type="checkbox"/> Postdoctoral Researcher <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:
Preferred Gender of Mentor	<input type="checkbox"/> No preference <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
Preferred Mentors: <i>Please list up to three mentors from the provided mentor list, in order of preference.</i>	1. 2. 3.

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While we will aim to accommodate preferences where possible, final matching will depend on mentor availability and alignment of expertise.

Personal statement

We acknowledge that the best mentorship relationships stem from authentic connections between likeminded people. Therefore, please tell us, in a few sentences, a bit about yourself, current research experience, your professional goals for the next 2-5 years, as well as what you hope to gain from participating in this program. Include any circumstances that should be taken into consideration when assessing your application. (max 250 words)

Commitment Statement

By submitting this application, I confirm that I am willing to:

- engage constructively with my assigned Mentor
- attend a minimum of **two mentor meetings** during 2026
- participate in program activities (i.e. rapid professional workshops and feedback surveys)

Yes