



A scholarship can change a life forever

Meet Sarah Nur, A proud Indonesian-Australian of Sasak descent. Her journey from a fishing village living in backpackers digs, to pursuing three maths and science degrees is a testament to the power of self-determination. This is how a girl from Lombok made her way to UniSA. [more...](#)

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Revolutionising workplaces in the Asia-Pacific

Dr Caroline Burns is a trusted adviser and mentor for many colleagues and clients around the world. Caroline and her Workplace Revolution team have partnered with major corporate clients to support thriving businesses by optimising physical space to support their unique requirements and objectives. [more...](#)

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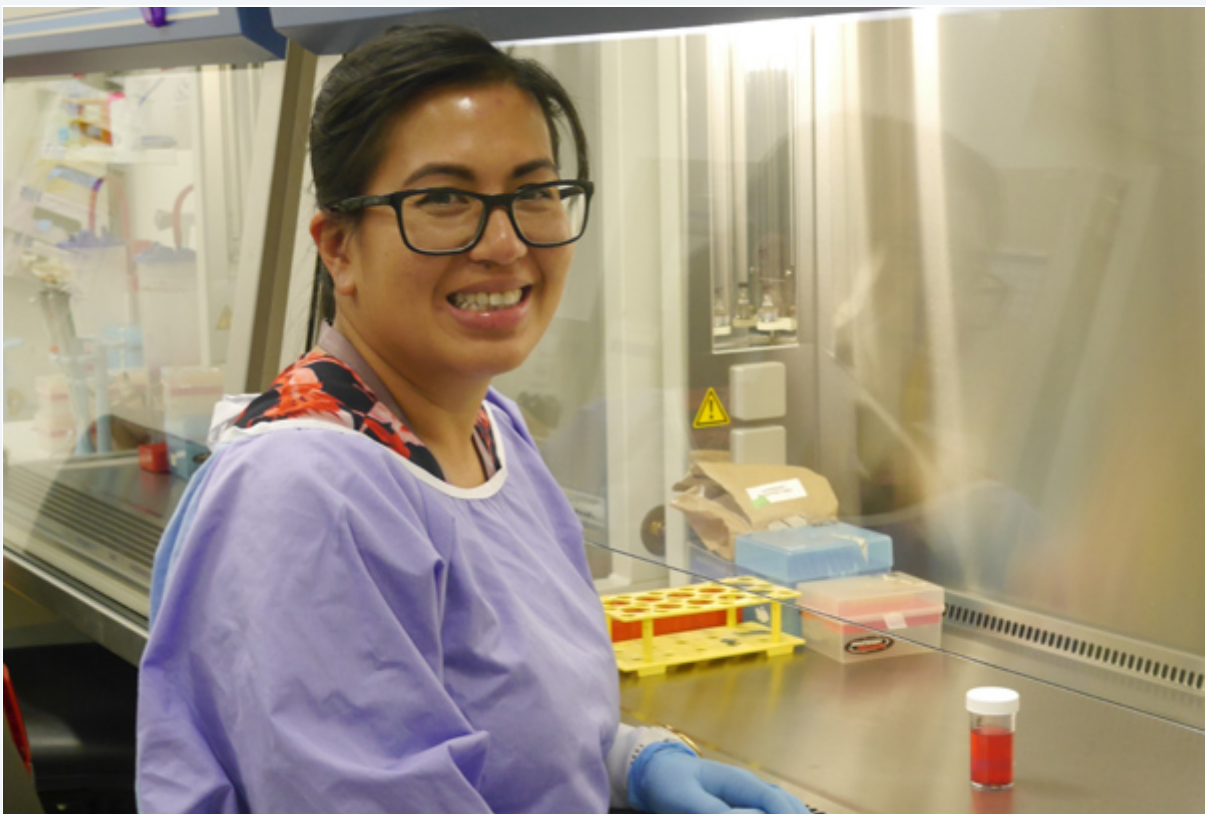


Gin with an environmentally-minded conscience

With help from UniSA's ICC Venture Catalyst program, Lindon Lark and his business partner, Geordan Elliss, have established a premium, bespoke gin company – Blend Etiquette – on the back of their Snake Oil Tonics, all while completing their Studies at UniSA. [more...](#)

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Vital funding for the deadliest cancers

A Research Associate at the Centre for Cancer Biology at the University of South Australia has been honoured with the 2019 Chris Adams UniSA Research Grant to support the Molecular Signalling Laboratory's vital research into brain cancer. [more...](#)

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The Evolution of Social Enterprise

Former Premier of South Australia, the Hon Jay Weatherill, is a newly appointed Industry Professor with the UniSA Business School and here explains the major global shift taking place within business: traditional organisations embracing the ethos of social enterprises. [more...](#)

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Alumni Events

12 DEC

UniSA Alumni Networking Evening - Shanghai
 Get together with UniSA alumni to celebrate the end of 2019, 6:30pm – 8:30pm, at the Intercontinental Shanghai Pudong. Please RSVP to [Sara Jackson](#) to confirm your attendance.

Exhibitions

18 OCT-06 DEC

Fiona Tan: Ascent
 The Samstag Museum of Art brings a concise selection of works by Fiona Tan to Adelaide for OzAsia Festival. Centering upon the Australian premiere of the 2016 work Ascent, this is the first significant presentation of the artist's work in our country in ten years.

25 NOV-20 DEC

Activism Now
 How has activism evolved and changed since women won the right to vote in the 1890s? What are the methods, the motivations, the outcomes? Activism Now explores contemporary activism through the stories of six self-identified women activists between the ages of 18 and 26.

30 NOV-24 MAY

MOD. Seven Siblings from the Future
 Meet the siblings and help to shape the future of Eucalara through the choices that you make. SEVEN SIBLINGS FROM THE FUTURE asks what sort of future we want for South Australia. We consider the way that our personal values shape our decisions. How do these choices affect our community?



>> Image gallery: UniSA alumni events

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A scholarship changes a life forever



Sarah Nur

Bachelor of Quantitative Finance

Bachelor of Applied Science (Honours) (Industrial & Applied Mathematics)

Welcome to the Summer of 2014. That's Sarah Nur in the pink dress at the opening of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's new head office. At the time she was just twenty-five and was selected to speak alongside its Chairman, Managing Director, and (then) prime Minister, Tony Abbott.

Sarah is a proud Indonesian-Australian of Sasak descent. Her journey from a fishing village living in backpackers digs, to pursuing three maths and science degrees, rubbing shoulders with Australia's biggest business titans, is a testament to the power of self-determination and generosity.

Raised on the tiny picturesque island of Lombok in Indonesia amongst roaming chickens, sandy beaches, and the stunning backdrop of bright green rice fields and towering mountains, Sarah Nur could have never predicted where she'd eventually end up.

Now working as a Data Scientist in one of Australia's biggest retail banks – she's come a long way from West Nusa Tenggara.

The village Sarah and her siblings grew up in was basically an unsealed road with maybe 100 houses, separated by alleyways just wide enough for motorbikes to pass. Horse-pulled carts rambled alongside small covered pick-up trucks or 'bemos' loaded with vegetables for market, and fast food chains were non-existent.

While a happy existence, the opportunities an international education can bring were a world away.

After Sarah's parents' marriage breakdown, her mother who had always dreamed her children might receive an education in Australia, moved the family to Adelaide.

The cultural transition to a new country wasn't smooth sailing for Sarah though, and as a teenager trying to fit in, it was even more complicated.

"Coming to terms with a vastly different way of life in Australia was a big adjustment for a fourteen-year-old. On my very first day of school I came home and asked my Mum how to say, "I hate school" in English," says Sarah.

"Far from the high-achiever I had been all my life, I now grappled with subjects where I had to translate English back to Indonesian in my head to understand it."

For Sarah, only mathematics with its common universal language, felt familiar and it became her favourite subject.

"I have always had rather thick skin and gradually my natural resilience came to the fore. When I was teased for the way I spoke I would turn it around into a joke and make people laugh. I learnt not to take things personally. If I didn't easily fit, I would make my own way."



Sarah and her family on the beach near their home at Senggigi, Indonesia

However, Sarah's final year of school was devastating. Her father passed away suddenly and in dealing with his death, she didn't have the energy or inclination to think about anything long term.

That was until she stumbled upon an advertisement on the back of a Year 12 exam preparation book for the UniSA SA Water Hyattia Scholarship.

"It changed my life," says Sarah. "Until then, I wasn't aware that you could study mathematics degrees at university."

"I succeeded in achieving the requisite ATAR in my Year 12 results and was extremely honoured and privileged to be awarded the Scholarship over three years, commencing at UniSA in 2008."

The scholarship set her life on a completely different trajectory.

"It was more than just the money; what drove me was the knowledge that others believed in me and my potential to be successful as a woman in a traditionally non-female field."

"I think there's a lot to be said for sheer optimism and positivity in all situations and the belief that you can do anything if you're given the opportunity."



Sarah (4th from left) at the local school in Lombok

At UniSA Sarah thrived and her impressive academic achievements and the scholarship opened unimaginable doors for her.

"In my final year I was fortunate to participate in a Financial Mathematics semester exchange to the University of Twente in the Netherlands which was an amazing experience," she says.

"After returning I decided to enrol in a Bachelor of Applied Science (Honours) (Industrial and Applied Mathematics) which I completed in 2012 and I was selected into the graduate program at Bendigo and Adelaide Bank soon afterwards."

Still at the Bank today, Sarah was offered a role as a Financial Analyst after the graduate program and a year later successfully progressed to Product Analytics Manager.

She's since seen great success in her career. In the summer of 2014, Sarah was even selected to speak on behalf of staff at the opening of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's new head office.

In 2017, still enthralled by the world of data and analytics, Sarah commenced a Master's degree in Data Science at UniSA and was later offered a Data Scientist position within the Customer Analytics and Insight team – a role she has been in for two years.



"I am very proud of working for a bank which has a strong regional presence and locally governed branches. Our Community Enterprise Foundation directs charitable funds into hundreds of causes, with profit going back to local communities," she says.

"This is important to me because I recognise that the generosity of others was transformative in my own journey. Generosity can make a huge impact."

"It can be the jump start that someone needs to pursue their passions and transform their world."

"My achievements are not just my own. They can be attributed to the sacrifices my mother made and the vision and support of donors. Looking back to the girl I was playing on that Indonesian beach, I am aware that I owe so much to the kindness of others."

UniSA is also proud of its commitment to social equity and academic excellence as number one in the state for the success of economically disadvantaged students and number three worldwide for reducing inequality (2019 THE University Impact Rankings).

Nearly 30 per cent of commencing students to the University come from an economically disadvantaged background and UniSA is the leading university in South Australia for first generation students in their families (2020 Good Universities Guide).

This is largely thanks to the generosity of scholarship donors impacting countless deserving individuals – helping write their success stories.

For disadvantaged individuals with worthy dreams and aspirations, a scholarship can be the one thing they need to change their life forever.

Our donors are helping write success stories

Behind every gift received is a person whose life is made better because of the belief and dedication of others.

Talk to us about how you or your company can support students like Sarah by visiting unisa.edu.au/supportscholarships, calling +61 8 8302 7375, or emailing giving@unisa.edu.au.

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Revolutionising workplaces in the Asia-Pacific



Caroline Burns
Founder & Managing Director, Workplace Revolution
Bachelor of Business (Property)

A self-described "serial entrepreneur and technology nerd", Dr Caroline Burns has dedicated her professional life to providing corporate clients with bespoke advice in envisioning future business and workforce scenarios in the digital age across the Asia-Pacific region.

Workplace Revolution – a consultancy service intelligently transforming workplaces – is Caroline's third business established in her fast-paced, consultancy career as a highly sought-after leader in the workplace and workforce profession.

She and her team identify and optimise opportunities for the transformation of "work + place" for competitive advantages in a company's often cutthroat and saturated field.

Most of the world's population (58%) spend one-third or 90,000 hours of their adult life at work (World Health Organisation), contributing greatly not only to an individual's wellbeing, but societies at large and their effectiveness.

"We believe workplace matters and that an intelligently created workplace is a powerful business tool for supporting employee engagement, productivity and effectiveness," Caroline says.

"It connects people to the purpose and values of the organisation, supports culture, and can be a powerful statement of identity."

"All our clients in one way or another are grappling with the inherent tensions between aspiration versus operational capability, employee effectiveness versus experience, consistency and scalability versus customisation and personalisation, present functionality versus future flexibility, and increasingly, control of versus access to resources."

"In essence, organisations are challenged to ensure they extract maximum value (in their terms) from their limited workplace resources."

And that's where Caroline and Workplace Revolution come in.



Caroline at one of her many speaking and mentoring engagements

Caroline originally decided to pursue a career in property development and real estate – earning a Bachelor of Business (Property) from UniSA – as it combined her love of design and architecture with her mathematics capabilities and knack for business.

After securing a fulltime job before her final exams as a Facility Planner at Woods Bagot, Caroline thrived on the variety, independence and trust that came with consulting for clients across the eastern seaboard which would set her up in good stead for her future professional career.

However, as an innate traveller and explorer, Caroline had her sights firmly set on Asia (even her final year thesis analysed the investment trends of Asian direct investment in Australia), so after a few attempts to relocate didn't materialise, she seized opportunities to firstly to do projects in Asia, then permanently relocated to Singapore to establish and grow the Geyer workplace design and strategy business in Asia.

She hasn't left since, finding the fast-paced, competitive and innovate mindset of Asia the perfect environment for Workplace Revolution.

"I love Asia because it's incredibly diverse and a magnet for interesting, intelligent people from all over the world," Caroline says. "Everything here happens two to three times as fast compared to Australia, and often on tighter budgets, so it forces you to approach client service and business operations differently."



Caroline in Tajikistan exploring The Silk Road and spice routes.

"It also suits my professional values and style as its very relationship and reputation driven – more so than Australia. If you invest in relationships and build trust you will have a solid foundation for long-term success."

Caroline and her company as a result have carved out a brilliantly successful niche in the Asian market transforming and modernising a myriad of companies from Asian family-owned agglomerations to Fortune 500 organisations.

Continually seeking out opportunities to explore different aspects of "work + place" in the evolving digital economy, Caroline says the competitiveness of Singapore and Hong Kong being global hubs is constantly inspiring.

"You are always challenged to innovate and take calculated risks which I love – it's never boring here!"

"I believe Asia will be a leader in the innovations that will profoundly influence the way we work and create communities. I am passionate about exploring how these changes may affect the environments in which we will work, live and play as well.

"I certainly never anticipated early in my career that this would be my 'calling', but I love the variety and independence, the opportunity to build longterm relationships within the profession, and the ongoing learning and accumulation of knowledge that is essential for any reputable consultant."

The future of the workplace

Dr Caroline Burns is widely recognised as an independently-minded leader in the workplace and real estate profession and has written and presented extensively on a wide range of business topics.

As one of the foremost trusted experts and advisers in work + place transformation and organisational design, her extensive experience is sought-after by clients and colleagues worldwide.

Below we've asked her some questions and advice about workplace effectiveness and the future of work.

1. Could you take us through some workplace trends and changes you have seen in your career and what you believe we will be seeing in the near future?

Great workplaces are tuned into the unique mix of roles and types of people in an organisation and approach the environment holistically. Ensuring employees are engaged and know what to expect and that managers understand how to lead by example, investing in technology training and reinforcing office etiquettes (especially for open team areas) are essential ingredients for success.

I started my career in a private office in a prestige building in Adelaide, and now I work from anywhere and everywhere that work takes me around the world. By some measures I have therefore 'lost' a lot in twenty-five years, but to my thinking I have gained enormously. I don't have a dedicated office, I get to wear jeans not just on Fridays, I travel light and am constantly in touch with everyone I need to be connected with – and I find inspiration everywhere that nourishes our teams' innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.

This is why I am loving this period of time on the brink of the digital age and see enormous opportunity to reimagine the typical 'day at the office' with our Clients and colleagues. It took most of my career to go from a private office, desktop PC and a suit, to jeans, a smart phone, and a favourite work café in every city.

Successful organisations in the new economy will use digital capabilities to improve processes, engage people and drive innovation. They will make it easier for people to get work done and focus on what matters by overhauling work practices, policies, systems, and processes, and by driving a culture of trust and empowerment.

I am hopeful these business trends will bring more of a focus on how workplaces perform, not just how well they photograph!

I advise our Clients to be inspired but not blinded by other organisations' 'instagrammable' workplaces and current 'design trends'. Be smart and dig into why the space works for them (and what doesn't work) – are there parallels to your organisation or too many differences? Organisations and people are unique, dynamic, complex and reactive – your new workplace needs to be the same.



2. What do you think of the flexibility of the modern workplace, including trends like the rise of working remotely, open plan offices, and swapping formal spaces for hot desks and co-working spaces?

I've written and presented extensively on these topics (see my website or LinkedIn), so it's hard to keep this short. I'll just leave you with two quotes from recent articles that summarise my perspective.

"These are examples of the trend towards the 'on-demand' workplace or 'workplace as a service' in response to the increasing need for flexibility, scalability, customisation and collaboration. This 'trend' is continuing to evolve in different directions in response to changing organisational and worker needs and preferences, and to different real estate/business contexts in different regions of the world.

There have been many articles recently (credible and not so credible) describing the negative effects of 'open plan offices' on productivity and experience in the workplace. But this is the wrong debate. Setting aside the fact that 'open office' is a very broad term that encompasses a hugely diverse range of workplace designs, like many things in life when done excessively it can be bad for you, but used in moderation in the right context for the right purpose, 'open plan' has a place in the workplace toolkit.

We should resist the temptation to get caught up in the 'open plan is the enemy' debate, instead of reviewing the facts available and applying these rationally to advance the quality of decisions about work environments. How we combine and apply the settings in the workplace toolkit can have a negative – even if unintended – influence on team effectiveness, so it is incumbent on advisers and influencers to avoid 'groupthink' and apply evidence from other workplaces thoughtfully.

Open plan environments may indeed be the enemy of workplace effectiveness and employee experience in many situations, but let's ensure we don't make critical workplace decisions based on 'take news'.

Conversely, coworking spaces challenge people to unlearn their old thinking around work, individualism and control. In this way, the coworking movement can help shift our relationship with work to be one that is more purposeful, collaborative, holistic, and self-directed.

This is the attitude people and organisations will need if they are going to successfully navigate the new economy. Human resources and corporate real estate leaders need to be part of the future of work discussion within their organisations, encouraging multi-disciplinary approaches to enabling great people to do great work. Increasingly, this work will be distributed across space and time, drawing on physical and digital resources, and access to people, inside and outside the control of the organisation.

3. What role do you think Artificial Intelligence will play (or is already playing...) in the future of our workplaces and professional life?

Change and technological innovation is not new in business. What is different about the period we are in now, compared to the dawn of the internet age at the start of my career, is that the rate and complexity of change, and the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) environment in which it is occurring means that the stakes are higher for everyone.

AI is still at the level of automation, robotics and machine-learning within fairly narrowly defined fields, experts suggest it will be a while before we have 'general AI' which could make a lot more jobs redundant.

So, for at least the next decade I believe knowledge workers will increasingly work with AI rather than be displaced by it, enabling us to focus on creative, collaborative, coaching and learning capabilities. For example, there is increasing investment in virtual assistants (such as Alexa for Business) and augmented reality in the workplace.

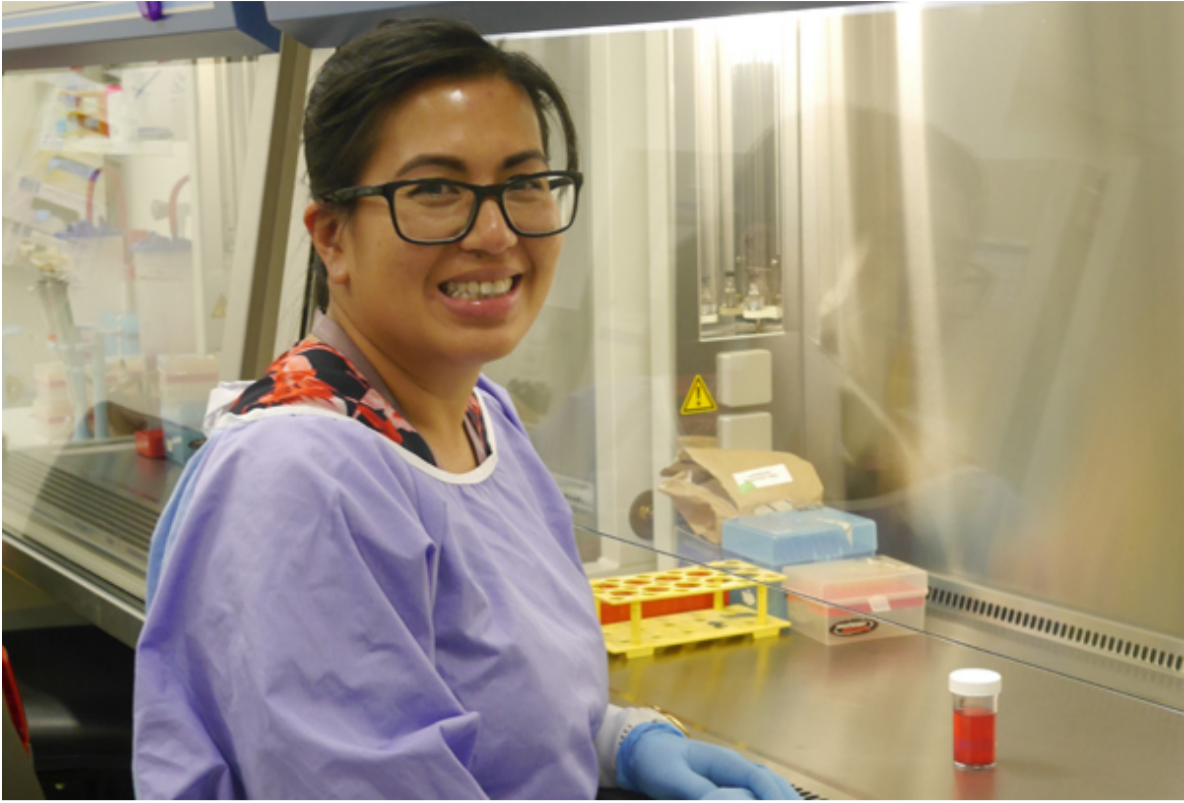
This means the places we work need to support these activities more effectively, especially constant, on the job learning and capability development. The internet of things and development of 'smart buildings' and 'smart cities' will also give rise to workplaces that are more intuitive, responsive, and hopefully healthier.

4. What are you most important insights you have discovered through your work that make a happy, successful business and workplace?

Trust and its opposite side, accountability.

It's the foundation of everything good that follows.

Vital funding for the deadliest and most unforgiving cancers



Dr Melinda Tea has been awarded the 2019 Chris Adams UniSA Research Grant to undertake overseas training into the highly-specialised and advanced use of the Bruker Micro-CT system instrumental in understanding the particular fatal brain cancer glioblastoma (GBM).

Dr Tea from the Centre for Cancer Biology (CCB) at University of South Australia (UniSA) is making strides towards both establishing a living glioblastoma biobank as a powerful resource to enhance glioblastoma research locally and nationally and using this resource to develop novel therapeutic strategies to combat glioblastoma.

The Molecular Signalling Laboratory recently established an advanced preclinical model of GBM through support from the Neurosurgical Research Foundation (NRF) and their burgeoning partnerships to combat one of the most powerful and unforgiving cancers

GBM is the most commonly diagnosed malignant brain tumour in adults, affecting approximately 1000 Australian adults annually. With very few treatment options available, it is a highly fatal cancer with a median survival of less than 15 months and less than five per cent survival after five years.

The survival rates for brain cancer have barely changed over the last 30 years, therefore there is a desperate need to identify new and improved targeted therapies against GBM, so Dr Tea and the Molecular Signalling Lab have set their sights on learning more about this devastating disease.



Dr Melinda Tea, Cherrie and Marty Adams, NRF Executive Officer, Ginta Orchard and NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research, Professor Stuart Pitson at the Grant Recipient Afternoon Tea

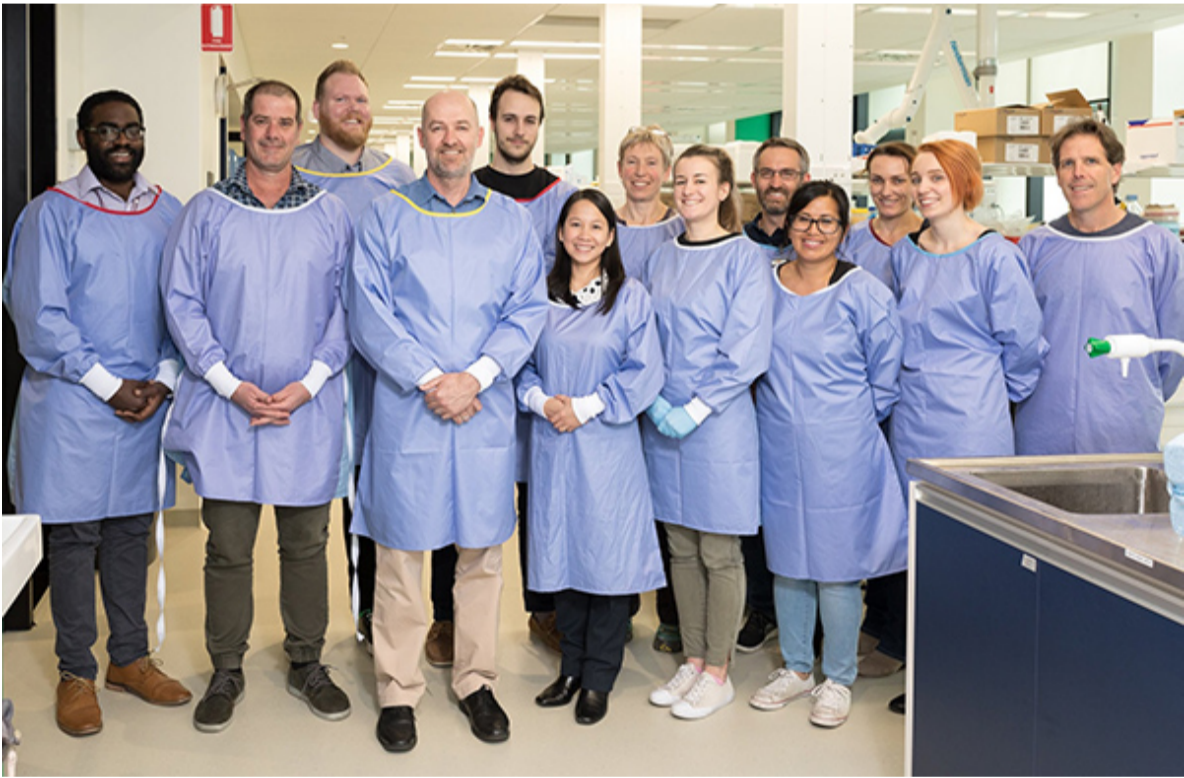
Ultimately, this intensive training course provides the Molecular Signalling Lab with a better understanding of how GBM tumours respond to new and improved therapies, and in the long term may lead to desperately needed improved outcomes for these patients.

NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research and Head of the Molecular Signalling Lab at CCB, Professor Stuart Pitson, is in full support of Dr Melinda Tea and says the grant funding is going to a worthy project in investing in micro-CT education.

"In 2017 Dr Tea moved within the CCB to my laboratory where she has since been instrumental in driving our research into the fatal glioblastoma brain cancer," he says.

"Micro-CT is a non-invasive, 3-dimensional imaging technique, that provides specialised information above that of the tools currently used and allows for the volume of the tumour to be determined at various stages of disease progression can be determined.

"This is particularly important, as an increase in tumour volume causes an increase in the pressure inside the skull and is associated with an increase in neurological symptoms, resulting in rapid cognitive and functional decline and eventual death.



Dr Melinda Tea (fourth from the right) with her Molecular Signalling Laboratory colleagues.

"The training Dr Tea will undertake in the advanced use of the Bruker Micro-CT system is vital to our brain tumour research and is key to her research efforts and her development of advanced pre-clinical models of GBM that we are establishing to drive glioblastoma research locally and nationally."

The annual \$5,000 grant has been made possible thanks to the memorial Chris Adams UniSA Research Grant that pays homage to Chris Adams' indomitable spirit to help others facing a brain cancer diagnosis.

Chris Adams lost his battle with the rare grade-three anaplastic astrocytoma brain tumour in November 2015, in the midst of his UniSA business degree.

Taken far too early by a disease that has devastating effects on the lives of patients and their loved ones, Chris' family is now dedicated to honouring his memory and spirit by supporting vital research to find a cure with the Chris Adams UniSA Research Grant.

Chris's family and friends established the 'Strong Enough To Live' campaign raising \$125,000 to support the grant which will be awarded each year to an early-career researcher working in a field of high-quality brain tumour research.

"We would like to congratulate Dr Melinda Tea on being this year's recipient of the Chris Adams Research Grant," say Cherrie and Marty, Chris' parents.

"How fortunate we are that we have gifted and dedicated researchers like Dr Tea who are working tirelessly to find a way to improve the odds of survival for people like Chris and the thousands of other brain cancer sufferers that do not deserve to die.

"We hope that the fundraising initiated by Chris and continued in his name will assist researchers to find a cure for this insidious disease."



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