**Challenges faced by early-career researchers in the sciences in Australia and the consequent effect of those challenges on their careers**

This survey is part of a PhD project for Kate Christian, who is a research student at Federation University Australia.

It is well known that, against the background of insufficient funding and consequent lack of job security, the research environment can be difficult for early-career researchers (ECRs) in STEMM in Australia. There are very real concerns about loss of these ECRs from science, or from Australia.

Against this background of limited funding, this project aims to fill the gaps in understanding of these difficulties and examine, by querying factors known or suspected to be contributors to job satisfaction, the satisfaction – or dissatisfaction - of ECRs in the sciences in Australia, and their relationship to intention to leave the scientific environment.

This survey aims to capture all people in STEMM disciplines in Australian universities and independent research institutes. People who are in Government organisations and not for profits, or in industry, have been excluded, simply to keep a boundary around the size of the project.

The results of this project will add to our understanding of factors that shape the ECR experience and contribute to the job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of ECRs. It will identify the main challenges faced by ECRs in the science environment *as perceived by those ECRs* and will identify factors which contribute to intention to leave. It is expected that interpretation of the data collected in this survey, and in interviews of ECRs, will lead to provision of some recommendations for better supporting these ECRs so that they are encouraged to remain working in scientific research in Australia.

Kate Christian has been working in research management, mostly in medical research, for almost 30 years. She is currently Research Program Manager for Cure Cancer which funds cancer research projects for ECRs and is CREATE Training Program Coordinator for the Centre of Research Excellence in Pulmonary Fibrosis, again looking after ECRs. She is author of a recently published book, “Keys to Running Successful Research Projects: All the Things They Never Teach You” about research management, targeted at ECRs.