

# Grant Funding

The Foundation has a specific objective to promote high quality research and foster new researchers. To achieve this WIRF provides three types of grant funding and scholarships.

## STARTER GRANT FUNDING

Starter grants are predominately for new investigators embarking on their research career. Grants are for a maximum of \$20,000 and awarded for a period of two years.

Two starter grants were awarded in 2016:

### Research Title

"Fetal intramuscular steroids for diabetic women at risk of preterm birth"

### Researcher

Dr S W White

### Grant Amount

\$ 9,535

### Overview of Research

This study will assess the ability of intramuscular corticosteroids given by a single ultrasound guided fetal injection to reduce the need for breathing assistance in preterm newborns of diabetic mothers, and whether this approach can avoid the potentially serious complications currently seen in diabetic mothers from the conventional treatment of two maternal steroid injections. The study will also assess the safety of such an approach. If successful, this pilot study will inform the development of a larger study.

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### Research Title

"Volume targeting during high frequency oscillatory ventilation to enhance lung protective ventilation"

### Researcher

Dr JW Davis

### Grant Amount

\$ 20,000

### Overview of Research

Preterm infants are at risk of life long respiratory morbidity due to the injurious effects of mechanical ventilation. High frequency oscillation ventilation (HFOV) differs from conventional ventilation by delivering hundreds of small volume breaths per minute. New ventilators can now target specific tidal volumes in HFOV potentially limiting inadvertent and potentially injurious overstretching of the fragile lung tissue, this strategy remains relatively untested. Our aim is to compare the physiological consequences of tidal volume targeting in HFOV and conventional ventilation versus standard HFOV.

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## SCIENTIFIC GRANTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

### Chairperson

Prof Brendan Waddell

Deputy Dean, Faculty of Science  
The University of Western Australia

### Committee

Prof Jeffrey Keelan

Head, Women and Infants Health  
Research Laboratories  
The University of Western Australia  
King Edward Memorial Hospital

Assoc/Prof Daniela Ulgiati

School of Pathology and  
Laboratory Medicine  
The University of Western Australia

Assoc/Prof Katherine Sanders

Bachelor of Philosophy (Hons),  
Academic Coordinator  
School of Anatomy, Physiology and  
Human Biology  
The University of Western Australia

Dr Donna Geddes

Senior Research Fellow  
School of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
The University of Western Australia

## PhD TOP UP SCHOLARSHIPS

WIRF PhD Scholarships are a component of a wider strategy designed to nurture and develop promising researchers. Applicants must meet the requirements for candidature for the Doctor of Philosophy by The University of Western Australia, School of Post graduate Studies. The maximum funding is \$21,324 (matched by UWA) per year for three years with a possible extension of six months.

### Thesis Title

"Normalising circadian rhythms to improve preterm infants outcomes"

### Researcher

Miss N Sorensen,  
The University of Western Australia,  
Department of Anatomy, Physiology  
and Human Biology

### Grant Amount

\$21,324 over three years plus a one-off  
\$3,000 allowance for economy travel

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### Thesis Title

"Pregnancy-related medical services utilisation and perinatal outcomes in Western Australia (WA) with a focus on recent migrants"

### Researcher

Dr M Mozooni,  
The University of Western Australia,  
School of Women's and Infants' Health

### Grant Amount

\$6,108 for one year plus a one-off  
\$3,000 allowance for economy travel

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## CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

Capacity Building Grants provide flexible support to allow investigators to develop their own capacity and attain a level of productivity that will help attract nationally competitive grant funding. Grants are a maximum of \$35,000 per year for three years and are subject to yearly reviews.

### Research Title

"Prevention of infection-driven preterm birth through development of a universal diagnostic test to identify high-risk pregnancies"

### Researchers

Dr Matt Payne  
Prof John Newnham  
Prof Jeff Keelan

### Grant Amount

\$ 35,000 (for three years starting 2014)

### Overview of Research

Utilising vaginal microbial markers of PTB, this study will culminate in the design of an accurate and reliable diagnostic test that, once optimised and tested in preliminary trials, will be readily implemented into clinical obstetrics. The test will fill a major void that currently exists in this field. Years of research has shown us that infection plays a role in at least 40% of PTBs. The diagnostic test outlined in this proposal will identify women at a high risk of PTB and will constitute a key part of subsequent randomised controlled trials utilising pharmacological means to prevent PTB.

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