



MEDIA RELEASE: Embargoed 6am Wednesday May 4, 2022

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL EATING DISORDER CENTRE IGNITES RESEARCH PROGRAM WITH NEW FUND TO UNEARTH INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO EATING DISORDERS

KEY POINTS:

- New IgnitED Fund to develop innovative ideas that haven't been previously tested in the eating disorders field
- Approximately 1 million Australians are living with an eating disorder; eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness.
- IgnitED Ideas will be developed in a co-design process with researchers and lived experience experts
- IgnitED is open to all Australian residents and is jointly funded by the Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre and the NSW Government
- People with lived experience expertise and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply

The Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre has launched a fund to unearth bright ideas in the community that have the potential to solve the problem of eating disorders.

Eating disorders are serious, complex mental illnesses with significant physical and mental health impacts, high mortality rates and low rates of detection.

The [IgnitED Fund](#) will offer up to \$25,000 grants to Australian residents with innovative ideas who want to work in a co-design process with researchers and lived experience experts to bring their idea to life and build new relationships and skills, and to translate research to good practice.

Centre Director, Associate Professor [Sarah Maguire](#) says the fund aims to support the generation of innovative ideas and facilitate the creation of novel teams – between researchers, people with lived experience, practitioners and others who are relevant to the proposed project.

“We need to think differently to find better ways to treat the 1 million Australians living with an eating disorder and to prevent their development in the first place,” said Associate Professor Maguire of the University of Sydney.



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“This is an exciting opportunity to develop bold solutions that haven’t been previously tested in the eating disorders field and tap the diversity and wisdom in our communities”

“We hope that the IgnitED Fund will be the starting point for new and important scientific work, that drives better treatments, better supports and better outcomes for people living with an eating disorder, their families and carers.”

NSW Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor says eating disorder research is a priority for the NSW Government.

"The NSW Government is committed to driving innovation in the eating disorders field. I recently had the pleasure of announcing a new \$13 million state-wide residential eating disorders treatment centre to be built in Newcastle, the first publicly funded service of its kind in NSW. These vital changes to clinical delivery must be complemented by research breakthroughs in innovation, that's why the NSW Government is sponsoring the IgnitED Fund."

Centre Lived Experience Co-Production Co-Lead Shannon Calvert says the fund ensures that people with lived and living experience are at the core of scientific work.

“The IgnitED Fund is about bringing people together who have diverse strengths and perspectives to support and enable much-needed breakthroughs that help prevent illness and that help people get better”.

Centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Lead Leilani Darwin says one of the grants is for First Nations Australians, who we believe experience high rates of eating disorders, disordered eating and food insecurity issues.

“The IgnitED Fund facilitates Indigenous innovation and for the first time we are uniquely positioned to elevate the need to better understand this and to build the evidence and best practice for our communities.”

The new Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre is led by InsideOut Institute at the University of Sydney and is supported by [funding from the Australian Government under the National Leadership in Mental Health program](#).

Lead partner in the national Centre, Professor Patrick McGorry from Orygen says eating disorders represent a huge, growing yet overlooked public health issue.

“The nature of these illnesses is poorly understood, treatment has not advanced for decades, and the evidence base is weak. This means that a fundamental rethink – a mini-moonshot – is required. Discovery and innovation are key processes in which we must invest.”

Centre Chairperson Robyn Kruk AO says the Centre has been established to enable Australia’s best researchers to collaborate with practitioners and with lived experience experts to transform how eating disorders are diagnosed and treated.

“The Centre will coordinate a national approach to eating disorder research that focuses on driving innovation, with the goal of improving outcomes for people living with an eating disorder and supporting their loved ones.”

Applications for the IgnitED Fund open today: eatingdisordersresearch.org.au/ignited

For media inquiries please contact InsideOut Institute: Claire Aird 0424 850 449
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For Minister Taylor, please contact Rory Cunningham 0457 674 099

Declaration: The Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the National Leadership in Mental Health program. The Ignited Fund is jointly sponsored by the Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre and NSW Government.

We encourage reporting about lived experience of an eating disorder, but please be mindful in how it is portrayed. Be careful **not** to:

- Mention specific weights, measurements, weight loss, quantities.
- Detail specific behaviours
- Post images of people with extreme body weights or before/after pictures
- Glamourise eating disorders.
- Use the terms sufferer, patient, anorexic, or bulimic to describe someone with an eating disorder, instead use “person with an eating disorder.”

More information about reporting and portrayal of eating disorders here: [NEDC Mindframe Reporting Guidelines \(pdf, 2MB\)](#)

About InsideOut Institute

The InsideOut Institute for Eating Disorders is a collaboration between the Sydney Local Health District and the University of Sydney and is the lead agency for the Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Centre. InsideOut Institute aims to ensure every Australian living with an eating disorder has access to the best possible care by rethinking eating disorders from the ‘inside out.’ Visit insideoutinstitute.org.au

Support available:

If you are experiencing distress and need support, you can contact:

The Butterfly National Helpline 1800 ED HOPE (1800 33 4673)

Life Line 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36.

Suicide Callback Service: 1300 659 467

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800

Headspace: 1800 650 890

ReachOut: au.reachout.com