

Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee 2023-2026



John E.J Rasko AO, GTTAC Chair

BSc (Med), MBBS (Hons), PhD, MAICD, FFSc(RCPA), FRCPA, FRACP, FAAHMS

Professor John Rasko is an Australian pioneer in the application of adult stem cells and genetic therapy. Since 1999 he has directed the Department of Cell & Molecular Therapies at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the Gene and Stem Cell Therapy Program at the Centenary Institute, University of Sydney.

He is a clinical haematologist, pathologist and scientist with an international reputation in gene and stem cell therapy, experimental haematology and molecular biology. In over 200 publications he has contributed to the understanding of stem cells and blood cell development, gene therapy technologies, cancer causation and treatment, human genetic diseases and molecular biology.

He serves on Hospital, state and national bodies including Chair of GTTAC (OGTR) and past Chair of the TGA Advisory Committee on Biologicals. He co-founded and was past-President of the Australasian Gene & Cell Therapy Society and has served as President, President-Elect, and Vice President of ISCT.



Graham Bonnett

Dr Graham Bonnett has been a research scientist with CSIRO since 1993. Prior to that he held a post-doctoral position at the University of Melbourne after finishing a PhD (in 1989) at the University of Leeds. He currently leads the Drought Resilience Mission hosted by CSIRO Agriculture and Food. His research expertise is in the physiology and development of crop plants and more recently the science underpinning the regulation of genetically modified sugarcane cultivars. In 2009 he was awarded a Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowship and spent 5 months in Panama (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute) researching the reproductive biology of the weedy sugarcane relative *Saccharum spontaneum*. In 2013 he was appointed to the Independent Science Panel advising on the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.

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Fiona Cameron

Prof. Cameron has a PhD on gene regulation from Macquarie University with a productive research career with the CSIRO of over 20 years in the areas of gene regulation, gene delivery, drug formulation and gene therapy. Prof. Cameron has also published in the field of antibiotic resistance. She worked in research management of the CSIRO Nanotechnology Emerging Science area and the CSIRO National Flagship for Food Futures, before running the Innovation and Consulting unit at the University of Western Sydney. Her subsequent role was Executive Director for Biological Sciences and Biotechnology at the Australian Research Council, where Prof. Cameron was additionally responsible for the major grants schemes (Centres of Excellence, Industrial Transformation Research Program, Special Research Initiatives). She now sits on a number of advisory boards of ARC and other research Centres. Prof. Cameron works as a consultant in the higher education sector and has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors course.



Michael Considine

Dr Considine is a plant biologist and currently holds an ARC Future Fellowship at the University of Western Australia. He studies the genetics and genomics of development and stress biology, particularly of fruit and tree crops. His primary biological expertise is oxidation/reduction metabolism, and the role this has in developmental transitions, as well as acclimation to stress and climate change. He has worked in both academic and industry institutions and brings a unique perspective of bridging academic and agricultural R&D. He has had great success establishing international and multidiscipline teams to address industry challenges. Dr Considine is primarily laboratory-based but also contributes to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in genetic and genomic disciplines. He has also served on several industry, institutional and cross-institutional boards.

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Tessa Gargett

BA. BSc(Hons) PhD(Medicine)

Dr. Gargett is an immunologist working at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Her research interests include cell and gene therapies to treat chronic diseases. She is based at the Translational Oncology Laboratory (Centre for Cancer Biology) and she is the Scientific Lead on the CARPETS and KARPOS Phase 1 clinical trials of CAR-T therapies in patients with metastatic melanoma and glioblastoma, in collaboration with researchers at the Baylor College of Medicine, Texas. She also performs basic research investigating tumour immunology and CAR T cell biology. She received her PhD in 2013 from the University of Adelaide for a project investigating T cell-targeted DNA vaccines for HIV. In 2023 she was awarded the Florey Research Fellowship. She is a member of the SA Pathology Institutional Biosafety Committee, the Australian Society for Immunology, and the International Society for Cell and Gene Therapy and helps to run International Day of Immunology and Science in the Pub public events for her local community.



Grant Logan

Dr. Grant Logan is a scientist at the Children's Medical Research Institute, Westmead and a conjoint senior lecturer at the University of Sydney. He has over twenty-five years' experience in the design and application of viral vector systems for gene transfer in medical research and more recently in the biotechnology therapeutics sector. Many of Dr. Logan's research papers reflect his strong interest in the use of gene therapy to modulate immunity or the immune system's response to virus vector systems and how this influences gene transfer. Dr Logan commenced his career in diagnostic virology and public health environmental science, including the detection and monitoring of viruses and pathogens in the environment. Dr Logan sits on the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Sydney Children's Hospital Network. He also maintains an interest in beekeeping and is a member of the Amateur Beekeepers Association of NSW.

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Michael Michael

Assoc. Prof. Michael is a molecular biologist working at Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide. He is also the Cancer Program Lead at Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute, Flinders University. Originally a founding scientist at one of Australia's first biotechnology companies Calgene Pacific/Florigene Pty Ltd, Assoc. Prof. Michael now supervises the Gene Expression Lab in Flinders Centre for Innovation in Cancer, where he studies the contribution of epigenetics and RNA-mediated processes to tumour initiation and progression. His priorities are to identify biomarkers that can inform clinical decisions and to develop novel therapies. He completed both his undergraduate and Ph.D. studies in genetics at the University of Melbourne and is a long-standing contributor to the Flinders Institutional Biosafety Committee.



Geraldine O'Neill BSc (Hons1), PhD

Geraldine O'Neill is Head of the Children's Cancer Research Unit at Kids Research, The Children's Hospital at Westmead and Conjoint Professor of Cancer Cell Biology, University of Sydney Faculty of Medicine and Health. Geraldine has a long-standing interest in the role of the tumour microenvironment in cancer progression and response to therapy, with a particular focus on the development of improved preclinical models for brain cancer. She completed her PhD at the Kolling Institute of Medical Research, University of Sydney and then undertook post-doctoral studies at Fox Chase Cancer Centre in Philadelphia, USA, returning to Australia with award of an NHMRC Howard Florey Post-doctoral Fellowship and then NSW Cancer Council Career Development Fellowship. She is Deputy Director of the Kids Cancer Alliance Translational Cancer Research Centre and member of Scientific Advisory Committees of the Clinical Oncology Group – Neuro-oncology (COGNO) and the Queensland Children's Hospital Foundation. Geraldine Chaired the Children's Medical Research Institute/Children's Hospital at Westmead Institutional Biosafety Committee from 2014-2020.

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Gabrielle O'Sullivan

BSc (Hons) PhD MPH (Hons)

Dr Gabrielle O'Sullivan is the Executive Officer of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Institutional Biosafety Committee. She has a BSc in microbiology (major) and chemistry (minor) from University College Dublin and a PhD in biochemistry and immunology from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Her post-graduate work was in medical microbiology and biochemistry. Her PhD was in the area of acute phase reactants, lectins and amyloid formation. Her post-doctoral research was at the University of Sydney focusing on cellular immunology and cell migration, specifically Langerhans cells, cytokines and glycosaminoglycans. She has a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Sydney and has made contributions to genetics and public health education, epidemiology, public health and the ethics and biosafety of gene technology. She co-developed and co-ordinated a very successful short course on genetics and public health at the University of Sydney and co-authored a book on the ethics of inheritable genetic modification. Dr O'Sullivan has extensive experience in science-based risk communication and risk assessment of gene technology, particularly in the contexts of biomedical research, clinical trials and gene, cell and molecular therapies. She has contributed to many gene technology reviews and is a co-chair of the Australia and New Zealand Legal and Regulatory Affairs Committee of the International Society Cell and Gene Therapy and a cross-member of the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee and the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee.



Kelly Pearce

BSc (Hons), PhD, GAICD

Dr Kelly Pearce has worked in Agricultural Research for over 22-years and continues to coordinate many regional science and innovation projects in her role as Chief Executive Officer at The Facey Group which is a non-for-profit Agricultural Research and Development organisation based in Wickiepin, WA. Kelly holds a number of industry positions including- Grower Group Alliance Director and Ministerial appointment to the Biosecurity Council of WA, the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority and the Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme. Kelly is a 2012 Nuffield Scholar, Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Research Fellow with the Australian Farm Institute. Kelly is also a Grain and Sheep Producer from Yealering in Western Australia with her family.

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Jason Smythe

BSc (Hons), PhD, Grad.Cert.Mgmt. FIML, FAICD

Dr Jason Smythe has over 30 years research and senior management experience in the biotechnology sector in Australia and USA. He holds a B.Sc. (Hons) degree in Immunology from Monash University, a Ph.D. from The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research, and performed his postdoctoral studies as an NHMRC C.J. Martin Fellow at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda (USA). Dr Smythe has held senior R&D Management positions at Johnson & Johnson; the Children's Medical Research Institute; CSIRO; Monash University and The University of Melbourne and as Chief Scientific Officer at the Australian Tissue Engineering Centre Limited; Benitec Limited, and Horizon Science Pty Ltd. He has published over 30 manuscripts and numerous professional reports, been granted 5 patents and awarded 4 International Fellowships. He was an Editor of the Journal Expert Opinion on Biological Therapy for over 10 years and was a Member of numerous NHMRC Grants Review Panels. Dr Smythe also holds a Graduate Certificate in Change Management (Grad.Cert.Mgmt) from the AGSM and a Company Directors' Diploma from The Australian Institute of Company Directors. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD) and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management (AFAIM). He has been a Director of several successful Biotechnology Companies and Professional Associations and has been a Member of GTTAC since 2004.



Jane Visvader

BSc (Hons), PhD

Jane Visvader is Joint Head of the Division of Cancer Biology and Stem Cells at The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. She carried out PhD studies in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Adelaide, and held subsequent positions at the Salk Institute and Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, as a Research Associate/Instructor. In 1998, she was appointed to the Victorian Breast Cancer Research Consortium as a Laboratory Head at WEHI. She is the recipient of an Australia Fellowship and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, The Royal Society (London) and the Academy of the American Association for Cancer Research. Her primary research interests are directed towards understanding the breast epithelial hierarchy, identifying molecular pathways that modulate its function, and elucidating cells susceptible to breast oncogenesis. These studies have culminated in a number of clinical trials.

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Calum Wilson

Professor Calum Wilson is a Plant Pathologist and teaching academic working within the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) at the University of Tasmania. He completed his PhD in Plant Virology from the University of Western Australia in 1992, worked briefly with the Department of Primary Industry in the Tasmanian State Government before taking up an academic position at the University of Tasmania in 1994. He is currently Research Leader for vegetable crops and previously held the role of Centre Leader for the Perennial Horticulture centre within TIA.

His research portfolio is diverse with work across a range of crops and plant pathogens (viral, bacterial, fungal). Major research interests include development and characterisation of host plant resistance and elucidation of the epidemiology and ecology of pathogens. His group has contributed toward the basic studies of crop genetics, physiology and chemistry associated with disease development and resistance, and notably, the novel development of disease resistant varietal clones. He has served on the Tasmanian Government, The University of Tasmania and private industry Institutional Biosafety Committees and contributed to discussions around the Tasmanian Moratorium on release of GMOs into the Tasmanian environment.



Paul Young

B.Sc (Hons), PhD (London), FAHMS, FASM

Paul Young is Professor of Virology, currently seconded to Research Development in the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's Office of Research and Innovation at The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. He gained his PhD from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine in 1986 and returned to Australia in 1989 to join the University of Queensland. His research interests are in understanding the molecular basis of virus induced disease, developing new and improved diagnostics as well as vaccine and therapeutic control strategies for a number of viral pathogens of both human and animal origin. Molecular biology, including recombinant DNA and protein technologies are at the core of his research activities. Prof Young is President-elect of the International Union of Microbiological Societies and has been the President of the Australian Society for Microbiology (2012-2014), the Australasian Virology Society (2001-2011) and the Asia-Pacific Society for Medical Virology (2012-2015).
