

# The Pros and Cons of Developing a Program of Research vs. Individual Studies

## An Interactive Workshop

Subha Ramani MBBS PhD  
Jocelyn Lockyer PhD  
Heather Armson MD MCE

June 17, 2019 Calgary, Alberta

# Agenda

- Goals & Definitions
- Participant Introductions: Name, Department, Research Role
- Please write down two learning goals for this workshop
- Small group discussion of programmatic experience
- Case Study
- Developing & Designing a program of research
- Challenges & Solutions to sustaining a program of research
- Small group discussion & report back: Design a program
- Next Steps
- Questions?

# Developing a program of research

- “Each successive study should be guided by the previous research studies. The aim of this systematic, continuous inquiry is the cumulative production of new knowledge in a substantive area. Once the researcher’s latest study is completed, then he or she knows the most appropriate path to take for the next study.”
- “Synthesizing a program of research requires attention to the conceptual findings and methodological approaches in the context of pragmatic influences on the program’s evolution”

Beck, 2016





UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

# Objectives

This workshop will draw on the experience of the researchers and participants to:

- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of taking a programmatic approach to research vs. doing individual studies.
- Identify the key considerations involved in setting up a program of studies.
- Discuss various steps in adding value to a research team- from entry to timely task completion to scholarly output.

# Small Group Discussion

- Have you participated in research which involved sequential/series of studies?
  - If yes, what do you think enabled the program?
- Have you engaged in single studies that could have proceeded to sequential studies?
  - What strategies could have enabled progressions from a single study to a program of research?
- Report Back



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

**R2C2**



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

# Content



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

# Break

# Challenges & Solutions to Sustaining a Program of Research

- What are your thoughts about potential challenges?

# Challenges & Solutions to Sustaining a Program of Research : TIPS

- 1. Be strategic in planning a program of research
- 2. Seek a mentor
- 3. Seek a research-intensive environment
- 4. Seek research opportunities and responsibilities
- 5. Develop grant writing expertise
- 6. Talk to others about your ideas
- 7. Learn about funding opportunities
- 8. Extend your work and get your ideas out
- 9. Cultivate several lines of inquiry

# Discipline



Self aware of time

Concentrate on  
effective use of  
time

Limit interruptions

Say NO





Distraction

Procrastination



# TIME MANAGEMENT



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

GOALS

Planning

Prioritize

Schedule

Manage distractions

Analyze progress

Balance

Reward

**PRIORITY**

**Just Do It!**



LEARN  
HOW  
TO SAY  
“NO”

## ASK

Does it fit your priorities?

State you are not the right person for the task

Express gratitude but respectfully decline

Do not provide specific excuses for decline

Are there parts of the ask that you can complete?

If stuck blame your supervisor/mentor/boss!



# Establishing your network

- Work with peers with similar interests
- Become part of a community of scholars
- Mine existing study findings
- Transform presentations into publications
- Use a reference manager and automate search in literature of key words etc.
- Set measurable goals yearly as well as 5 and 10 year goals
- Develop grantsmanship
- Develop a team approach that works across multiple projects
- Keep your CV up-to date and make sure all scholarly productivity is captured
- Highly productive researchers say NO

(Nolan et al., 2008)

# Joining a team

- Compatible with the team and is the topic within your area of priority
- Meaningful role
- Time zones and scheduling
- Bringing people up to speed
- Does everyone agree that new members are needed
- Clarify your role in presentations and publications
- Role of Technology

# RESEARCH TRAJECTORY



NOVICE	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
WRITING/PRESENTATIONS	AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE	INVITED PRESENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer-reviewed journals</li> <li>• Review panels</li> </ul>	
Identification of research area	Refinement of research question/area	Active research program Broadening/advancing research ideas
Testing protocols or components of study	Small scope studies	1-5 year studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Departmental /institutional support</li> <li>• Member of funded grant</li> <li>• Small pilot studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional association</li> <li>• Small Foundations</li> <li>• Early career awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large granting organizations</li> </ul>