

**2025 BPA Early Career Researcher Network**

**Student and Early Career Researcher Excellence Plenary**

**Description**

The BPA Student and ECR Plenary recognises outstanding achievement by a student and an early career researcher. The award is open to all Honours and postgraduate students, as well as those working at any level (i.e., research assistant through to post-doctoral researcher), in areas with relevance for advancing biological understandings and interventions of psychiatric disorders.

In 2025, the BPA Plenary will again be awarded to one student and one ECR. Awardees are invited to deliver a special talk (20 minutes) at the annual Biological Psychiatry Australia conference held from 26th to 28th October in Melbourne, Australia, and will receive complimentary registration and a commemorative certificate. In addition, there will be some financial support to travel to the conference sponsored by [Mindgardens](https://www.mindgardens.org.au/).

BPA ECRN allows any one individual to be awarded only one monetary award per year so winning this Plenary Award will deem you ineligible for the Travel Award or Professional Development grant.

**Eligibility**

Applicants must:

* be currently enrolled in a program (Honours/Masters/PhD) or working at an Australian university or research institute (research assistant/trial coordinator/post-doc etc).
* if awarded a PhD (not a requirement), have been conferred within 2 years of the due date for this application (4th July, 2025), taking into consideration career interruptions as defined by the [current NHMRC criteria](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/resources/nhmrc-relative-opportunity-policy).
* be a current member of Biological Psychiatry Australia.
* have a track record relative to opportunity in biological psychiatry research.

**Selection criteria**

The following criteria will be assessed relative to career stage and opportunity:

1. Research output (30% for ECR, 20% for student)

* Awardees will demonstrate the impact of their research through publications and conference participation.

1. Leadership, outreach, and science communication (30%)

* Awardees will demonstrate contribution to outreach, public communication, and leadership initiatives such as public communication of work, community engagement, committee involvement, and student mentoring.

1. Presentation topic (30%)

* A brief description of the topic and work to be covered in the presentation. Do not need to provide data, as is done in an abstract submission. Awardees will demonstrate novelty and exceptional initiative in their work.

1. Motivation (10% for ECR, 20% for student)
   * Overview of motivation to apply for this plenary and what the anticipated benefits of it will be.

**Application process**

1. A CV including:

* Full name
* Education (Including date of PhD conferral, if relevant)
* Relevant employment history
* Statement of career aspirations for the next five years (250 words)
* Awards/Scholarships
* Leadership and service activities (e.g. membership of societies and committees, peer review experience, administrative responsibilities)
* Community engagement activities
* Publications - please use the following sub-headings for your publications
* Original refereed publications
* Reviews
* Preprints
* Book Chapters
* Patents
* First-author conference oral presentations
* First-author conference poster presentations

1. Statement

* Proposed plenary topic (400 words)
* How will this plenary help your career development? (250 words)

1. Career interruptions

* Please summarise any career interruptions and contextualise your research outputs relative to opportunity (ROPE).

**Deadline:** 4th July 2025

Please compile both documents into a single PDF file. Text should be 11pt Arial Font. Please e-mail the application to [biolpsychaustralia.ecrn@gmail.com](mailto:biolpsychaustralia.ecrn@gmail.com) by the closing date at 5pm AEST. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.