



# australasian cognitive neuroscience society

ABN 15 847 011 482 | ARBN 665 262 288

## ACNS Young Investigator Award

### Aim

To recognise an outstanding cognitive neuroscientist in Australasia who is making internationally recognised contributions to their field. Consideration will be given to career disruptions (e.g., parental leave, relocation, illness, etc.). Diversity is a key value of the ACNS and guides our selection process.

The submission deadline for these awards is by close-of-business on **Friday 21st August 2026 (AWST)**. All nominations must be submitted electronically – please see below for details. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the ACNS Awards Policy found [here](#).

### Eligibility Criteria

- Working in any area of cognitive neuroscience (broadly defined).
- No more than 10 years from the receipt (date of letter of conferral not graduation) of their doctoral degree as of 1 July 2026 (not including career disruptions).
- Currently employed (at least 0.5FTE) at a university or research institution within the Australasian region. Researchers currently based in Australasia who have conducted their research internationally are welcome to apply.
- Current membership of the Australasian Cognitive Neuroscience Society.

### Career Disruption

The committee will consider career disruptions when determining an applicant's eligibility and assessing achievements. A career disruption involves a prolonged interruption to an applicant's capacity to work. This can include (but is not limited to): pregnancy/parenthood/adoption; major illness or injury; carer responsibilities including parental leave and care for immediate family (e.g., spouse, children or parent); time spent out of the academic environment (e.g., employment in industry, periods of unemployment); natural disasters directly impacting research productivity (e.g., closure of research facilities due to flood, fire, earthquake, pandemic). Teaching, clinical and administrative loadings within academic positions are typically not considered career disruptions for the purposes of this award. For example, 40/40/20 (teaching/research/administration) or 80/20 (research/clinical) academic roles would *not* be considered disruptions.

Applicants should clearly outline the career disruption as part of their application. It is up to the applicant the level of detail provided. Applicants should provide a corrected time since PhD estimation, and the details behind the correction (e.g., dates, FTE fraction, etc.) should be provided, as well as an estimated impact on productivity.

The ACNS Awards Review Panel will first assess the career disruption to determine eligibility of the application. If the application is assessed as *eligible*, the panel will then take into account the impacts of the disruption on track record in their assessment.

Please note that in the interests of fairness, the ACNS Executive cannot provide guidance on the eligibility of an application with career disruption prior to the meeting of the Review Panel.

### **Assessment Criteria**

Demonstration of a significant scientific contribution to research in cognitive neuroscience, broadly defined as the biological or brain foundations of mental/cognitive processes and behaviour. The committee will consider:

1. The quality of publications, particularly focusing on the applicant's nominated Top 5 (with citations and other signs of impact or recognition).
2. Awards, fellowships, and grants
3. Other signs of international recognition for research outcomes such as invitations to present at major conferences or international institutions.
4. Evidence of established research independence and leadership.
5. Past or current involvement in ACNS, including conference attendance and service, will be looked upon favourably but is not an eligibility criterion.

Applications will be assessed by the ACNS Awards Review Panel following the ACNS policy.

### **Award**

A \$1000 cash prize, an invitation to present the YIA Keynote Lecture at the 2026 Australasian Neuroscience Alliance Conference, and conference registration. If attending face-to-face, travel costs up to \$500 and conference dinner costs (if applicable) will be provided.

### **Application**

All applications are self-nominated. The following components are required:

- Contact information for the nominee (name, institution, position and email).
- Brief CV summary (max 2 pages) including:
  1. Academic qualifications
  2. List of current and previous positions.
  3. List of significant Awards, fellowships, and grants.
  4. Indications of national/international recognition of contribution and standing in the field. This might include major conference presentations or invitations to present at international institutions, prominent positions on editorial boards, review panels, or professional societies, and other indicators of an international reputation.
  5. Contributions to open science practices, including preprints, data sharing, code sharing, contribution to software packages.
- Summary of your current research interests, particularly highlighting research achievements or significant outcomes (max 300 words).
- List of Top 5 publications, with a brief description for each of the significant contributions made and any recognition received (e.g. signs of impact or recognition such as citations received, editorial commentaries, Faculty of 1000 listing). Preprints should not be included in this section (max 1 page)
- Full publication list attached as additional pages (only in press/published, conference abstracts). Preprints should not be included in this section.
- Statement outlining career disruption (if applicable; max 1 page). Please estimate the impact this may have had on your track record. All applicants are encouraged to outline the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their research. Sensitive information should not be included as part of the career disruption

statement. This section is about estimating the impact of the disruption, not the details of the disruption itself.

- Equity statement (if applicable; max 1 page). See Diversity Statement in the [ACNS Awards Review Policy](#).

Submit all components in the one pdf and send to [awards@acns.org.au](mailto:awards@acns.org.au).

If you have any questions about the application and selection process, please email ACNS Secretary [acns@acns.org.au](mailto:acns@acns.org.au).

### **Version Control**

Version 2 19/06/2023

Version 3 19/07/2024

Version 4 24/06/2025

Version 5 9/06/2026