

MEDIA RELEASE

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World's First Professional Qualification Course for Eye Bankers

The Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) and The University of Melbourne are introducing the world's first professional qualifications course for eye bankers – the custodians of human tissue for eye transplant surgery.

“The international course has been developed in conjunction with sector partners the Eye Bank Association of Australia and New Zealand (EBAANZ) and DonateLife Australia,” said Dr Graeme Pollock from CERA’s Lions Eye Donation Service (LEDS), who leads the course academic and teaching team.

“The course, placed within the University of Melbourne’s Medical School (ranked by the Times Higher Education Supplement 2016 as the top university in Australia - with their Medical School in the top 10 in the world), will leverage from the accumulated knowledge and expertise of our system and from leading world experts in the field,” he said.

The genesis of the course is the growing sophistication and technical advancement of the sector combined with an international call for education at a higher level and for professional minimum qualifications.

The course is ideal for those new to eye banking and those working in relevant sectors wishing to improve their knowledge and skills.

“Graduates will transition beyond the fundamentals of eye banking and emerge as knowledgeable professionals and eye tissue custodians. They will develop skills that can be applied to all stages of eye tissue management including donor selection and recovery, recipient donor management, tissue examination and legal and regulatory requirements,” said Dr Pollock.

The online course, international in content, is designed in two parts: firstly, a one subject Specialist Certificate minimal qualification (one 12-week semester), with the option to continue towards the Graduate Certificate level (two additional subjects).

Both courses are now accepting applications and the Specialist Certificate course work will start in September 2017.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Mark Pearce on mark.pearce@unimelb.edu.au or 03 9929 8705 or 0423 783 756.

ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR EYE RESEARCH AUSTRALIA

The Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) is an independent medical research institute established in 1996. CERA has grown into Australia’s leading eye research institute and is a leader for research output in the world. CERA conducts eye research that makes real-life impacts and is unravelling the causes of diseases, preventing blindness through earlier diagnosis and better treatments, and restoring sight.

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CERA is closely affiliated with Ophthalmology at the University of Melbourne, Department of Surgery, and is co-located with the Department at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. This three-way partnership between CERA, the University and the Hospital, is key to the successful translation of our research from the bench to the bedside.

ABOUT LIONS EYE DONATION SERVICE

Lions Eye Donation Service, a department within CERA, is a joint venture between Lions Clubs of Victoria and Southern New South Wales, CERA, and the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Melbourne. It routinely provides corneas and sclera for transplantation and research across Victoria and Tasmania. Lions Eye Donation Service is a member of the Eye Bank Association of Australia & New Zealand (EBAANZ), works collaboratively with Donatelife, and is a supporter of the Global Alliance of Eye Bank Associations.