

## Melbourne researcher wins national award for mental health work

A discovery that shows that the brain structure of teens is related to their personality and behaviour has earned a Melbourne University graduate a national award.

Dr Sarah Whittle, a Postdoctoral Fellow from the Orygen Youth Health Research centre, will be awarded the Discovery Award at tonight's (Friday 20 November) Research Australia "Thank You" Day Awards in Melbourne.

Among six awards, the Griffith University Discovery Award recognises an early career researcher whose paper or discovery has already demonstrated its importance or impact.

Dr Whittle completed her PhD in 2007 in the Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne. Her unique study addressed the neuroanatomical features of individuals at risk of mental health problems during adolescence.

Her study was the first to show that a biological basis exists for differences in teen personality and in teen argumentative behaviour during interactions with their parents. This has significant implications for understanding a range of psychiatric disorders in adolescence.

The study received extremely positive reviews and resulted in an excellent record of publications in high impact journals locally and internationally.

The Awards celebrate the achievements of organisations and individuals who have helped advance medical and health research in Australia. They are a highlight of Research Australia's "Thank You" Day campaign to raise public awareness about the benefits of health and medical research to the community.

The "Thank You" Day awards will be held tonight (Friday 20 November) at BMW Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne. This year's winners are:

- Macquarie Group Foundation Great Australian Philanthropy Award: **Clive Berghofer AM**
- Victorian Government Leadership and Innovation Award: **Professor Joseph Sambrook**
- Griffith University Discovery Award: **Dr Sarah Whittle**
- Advocacy Award: Professor **Ian Hickie AM FASSA**
- Leadership in Corporate Giving Award: **Macquarie Group Foundation**
- Research Australia Lifetime Achievement Award: **Elaine Henry OAM**

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### About Research Australia

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