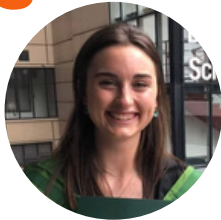




Awards

Confirmation of candidature



Congratulations to **Ciara Danes** who gave an excellent Major Review presentation mid-February. Ciara had her PhD candidature confirmed.



University Medal Academic Excellence

Congratulations to **Riley Furbank** who completed his Honours with **Kai Chan** in 2024. He demonstrated exceptional academic excellence across his studies and is now starting his PhD with Kai.

Want to know more about Riley's Honours project? Visit our [Website](#).



Visiting Fellowship

Dr Yao Xuan has been successful for an award of the GRDC International Visiting Fellowship. The application was led by **Dr Jing Zhang**. Dr Yao will work with Jing and Prof Bob Furbank for three months to improve canola drought tolerance by enhancing photosynthesis. Dr Yao is a scientist at Yazhouwan National Laboratory and an Adjunct Professor at Huazhong Agricultural University. Her research mainly focuses on genetic improvement of canola, including traits like oil content and abiotic stresses (drought and waterlogging) tolerance.



Agility Funds

Congratulations to...

Carrie and Hendry and their teams for being awarded the Training Centre's first Agility Funds!

These first Centre Agility Awards are made in honour of the late **Professor Dabing Zhang**. As one of the most highly cited scientists, regularly ranking in the top 0.1% globally, his prolific contributions in top-tier journals such as *Science*, *Nature*, and *Nature Plants* have shaped the field. Over his 25-year career, Dabing published 315 papers and was recognized as a highly cited author for four years.

In 2014, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Adelaide. Since then, he held joint professorial appointments at UA and SJTU, fostering scientific collaboration between the two countries. His numerous accolades include national awards, recognition from TWAS, and a place in the Asian Scientist Top 100. Beyond his research impact, Dabing mentored and supervised 150 students and young researchers, obtained 13 patents, and developed five rice cultivars.

His passing is an immense loss to the plant science community and a profound sorrow for his students. He will always be deeply missed. The Centre wishes to honour his legacy by awarding these funds in his memory.



Chaoqun Carrie Shen on the project "Enhancing Protoplast Transformation and Regeneration in Monocot and Dicot Crops Using Developmental Regulators". Collaborating with **Nay Chi Khin, Rosy Raman and Benjamin Kurya**. Amount awarded \$25,000.

Hendry Susila on the project "Heritable, transgene-free, and tissue-culture-free genome editing using a novel virus induced genome editing system". Collaborating with **Harsh Raman and Nay Chi Khin**. Amount awarded \$25,000.