

Dr Tessa Gargett is a BHI Alumni and is currently working as a postdoctoral research scientist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

1. When were you based at the BHI?

I completed my PhD at the BHI between 2010-2013.

2. What were you doing then?

PhD student in the Virology Group under the supervision of Professor Eric Gowans.

3. What attracted you to work/study at the BHI?

The brand new research facility [which had opened in 2009] and the opportunity to conduct clinically relevant research.

4. What were the best things about working/studying at the BHI?

A great mix of academic and clinical researchers and a culture that supported students and early career researchers. The private write-up rooms for students working on their thesis were very valuable and something not offered at many other research institutes.

5. Do you have a favourite memory of your time at the BHI?

Lots of long afternoons absorbed in flow cytometry. TQEH Research Day when you got to discover what everyone else had been working on in the last year. And the fun social activities like Christmas lawn bowls!

6. Would you recommend the BHI as a place to work/study? Why?

Definitely, it has a friendly culture with lots of high quality translational research being conducted.

7. What have you done since you left the BHI?

I am currently working as a postdoctoral research scientist on phase I clinical trials at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

8. What is your biggest career highlight so far?

Treating our first melanoma patient with a new cell therapy as part of a Phase I clinical trial. I was responsible for manufacturing the cell therapy product, and then following the patients' immune response to treatment. I was there at the bedside when the first treatment was infused and I was incredibly excited and a bit nervous as well (the patient was fine!!).

9. What advice would you give to any current/future students at the BHI?

Make the most of the social activities, it's fun and a great networking opportunity. I regularly run into other former BHI students and we're always happy to help each other out by lending some reagents or accessing a piece of equipment!