

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



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VICTORIAN PLEDGE FOR INSTITUTE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The Andrews Labor Government will establish an Australian Institute for Infectious Disease in the heart of Melbourne's renowned Parkville biomedical precinct to lead the fight against future pandemics.

The *Victorian Budget 2020/21* will include an investment of \$155 million towards the \$550 million institute, with the University of Melbourne and its partners contributing a further \$150 million and the remaining funds to be sought from the Commonwealth Government.

Our contribution includes an immediate allocation of \$5 million to complete a business case for the facility, which will combine the strengths of some of the world's leading research institutes. The business case is due for completion in mid-2021 and construction of the Institute would create 350 jobs.

Once operational, the Institute will provide a massive boost to the biomedical sector and could support up to 5,000 jobs, including up to 850 jobs at the Institute itself.

The Institute will create the largest centre of expertise in the Indo-Pacific region and will establish Victoria as a global leader in understanding infectious disease – accelerating research into the prevention of future pandemics and rapidly developing treatments.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of backing science and research in getting ahead of outbreaks and keeping people safe – with the institute designed to deliver everything researchers need to detect, analyse, manage and treat infectious diseases.

This investment will supercharge the ongoing efforts of the world-leading researchers at Victoria's 12 medical research institutes to combat coronavirus. The Australian Institute of Infectious Disease will be the new home of the Burnet Institute and being located next to the Doherty Institute, will also allow the Doherty to expand its research operations.

The initiative will also bring together the brightest minds from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research, the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, the University of Melbourne and Melbourne-headquartered global biotechnology company CSL, to ensure Victoria and Australia are prepared for future challenges.

The facility will include next-generation laboratories and high-containment facilities that will help researchers improve our understanding of infectious diseases, with a robotic biobank facility that will ensure international best practice for specimen storage in large-scale clinical trials.

A cross-disciplinary Centre for Infectious Diseases Modelling will allow the development of more sophisticated models to predict disease patterns, while a new facility at the Royal Melbourne Hospital will facilitate early-stage clinical trials to quickly develop vaccines and treatments.

Health workers will train to respond to outbreaks at a new state-of-the-art education and simulation facility featuring advanced video conferencing and data-sharing capabilities to link the centre to researchers throughout Australia and Asia, strengthening our cooperation in preventing and managing future outbreaks.

Victoria's medical research institutes already employ more than 4,800 people. The state's wider medical research sector supports more than 30,000 jobs across institutes, universities and industry.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“Victoria leads the world in medical research and is the natural home for an infectious diseases institute to protect our state and our nation against future pandemics.”

“We’ve only got through this pandemic by backing our scientists and researchers. We’ll continue to do that and create high-skilled jobs right here in Melbourne.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

“The Australian Institute for Infectious Disease will give Victoria’s world-class medical researchers what they need to make groundbreaking discoveries that will change lives and save lives.”

Quote attributable to University of Melbourne Vice-Chancellor Professor Duncan Maskell

“We welcome this significant commitment from the Victorian Government to partner with the University of Melbourne, Doherty Institute and Burnet Institute to establish a new world-class hub designed for collaborating on infectious diseases and global health research.”