

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



Monday, 23 August 2021

## A STEP CLOSER TO VICTORIA'S FIRST mRNA COVID-19 VACCINE

With clinical trials of Australia's first mRNA coronavirus vaccine due to start in coming months, a key piece of equipment has arrived in Victoria to enable the critical manufacturing capability of mRNA vaccines to commence.

A new \$1 million NanoAssemblr machine has been shipped in from Canada and will allow Boronia-based company IDT Australia to create the final product for mRNA vaccines.

It is the only machine of its kind in Australia and can process nanoparticles into final liquid drug form, sterilise the product and fill vials with mRNA vaccines.

The equipment will manufacture more than 150 doses for Phase 1 clinical trials of Australia's first locally-developed mRNA coronavirus vaccine, as part of a trial run by the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (MIPS).

To make the trial possible, the Victorian Government has invested \$5 million of support for the MIPS candidate.

IDT's new mRNA manufacturing capability brings a level of expertise to Victoria that is currently unavailable anywhere else in Australia. The collaboration between MIPS, the Doherty Institute and IDT Australia reinforces the strong mRNA sector in Victoria, our research strength and manufacturing capability.

The MIPS candidate is Australia's leading mRNA vaccine candidate, delivering next-generation vaccine support for ongoing COVID-19 protection, future pandemics and research capabilities for new drug and research breakthroughs.

The clinical trials are due to start in October 2021, with preliminary results from the trials expected in the first half of 2022.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Medical Research Jaala Pulford

*"Victoria leads the nation in mRNA expertise with universities, research institutes and industry working together to accelerate local mRNA development and manufacturing."*

*"We've acted swiftly to establish mRNA Victoria and committed \$50 million to grow mRNA capability here, and we're already making great progress."*

### Quote attributable to Monash University Professor of Pharmaceutical Biology Colin Pouton

*"This machinery will allow us to work with IDT Australia to produce our second generation COVID-19 vaccine in preparation for Phase 1 clinical trials, which will be conducted through our partnership with the Doherty Institute."*

### Quote attributable to CEO of IDT Australia Dr David Sparling

*"Victoria has a vibrant mRNA ecosystem and partnering with MIPS and the Doherty on translating mRNA clinical research to development of the vaccine on a smaller commercial scale is very exciting."*