

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



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HONOURING OUR RISING STARS IN HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

Victoria's most promising medical researchers will be acknowledged in the 2021 Premier's Awards for Health and Medical Research, with nominations opening today.

The prestigious awards recognise early-career health and medical researchers currently completing their PhD studies making exceptional contributions to health and medicine.

Five award categories reflect the breadth of evidence-based analysis being undertaken by researchers across Victoria. The categories are :

- Basic Science Researcher
- Clinical Researcher
- Aboriginal Researcher undertaking research in any field of health and medical research
- Health Services Researcher
- Public Health Researcher.

Category winners will receive \$5,000, with one category winner to be selected to receive the coveted Premier's Excellence Award and an additional \$15,000.

Last year's winner of the Premier's Excellence Award and Basic Science Researcher Award, Dr Simone Park, received the top honour for looking into local immune protection against cancer and infection.

Dr Park's innovative work with the University of Melbourne and the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity explored how certain types of cells can prevent the progression of cancer and inhibit viral infection, revealing encouraging evidence to advance disease treatment in the future.

In the past year, the Andrews Labor Government has invested more than \$590 million in medical research – including up to \$400 million for a new Australian Institute of Infectious Disease to lead the fight against future pandemics.

Over the past five years, the *Medical Research Acceleration Fund* has supported dozens of health and medical research projects to a total value of \$11.9 million.

The Premier's Awards were established in 1995 in partnership with the Australian Society for Medical Research. To find out more and apply, visit djpr.vic.gov.au/medical-research-awards. Applications will close on 17 January 2022.

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

"Innovation in medical science is more important than ever – that's why we back our early-career researchers so they can continue to develop and thrive."

"It's people who make Victoria a world leader in health and medical research and these awards are a great way to showcase the amazing talent we have coming through."

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