

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health
Acting Premier



Tuesday, 14 December 2021

VICTORIA TO BECOME HOME OF mRNA VACCINE MANUFACTURING

Victoria will become the first place in the southern hemisphere to manufacture mRNA vaccines, after the Victorian Government reached an in-principle agreement with the Commonwealth Government and Moderna.

Under the deal – announced by Acting Premier James Merlino and Prime Minister Scott Morrison today – Moderna’s new manufacturing and finishing facilities, and Australian research centre will all be based in Victoria.

The manufacturing facility will be capable of producing up to 25 million vaccine doses per year from 2024, with the capacity to scale up to 100 million doses per year to combat future pandemics.

It is expected to create up to 500 jobs during construction and around 500 ongoing roles – driving the development of a local mRNA ecosystem that does not currently exist in Australia. mRNA has not only created a new frontier for vaccine development but also become a promising new weapon in the fight against a range of diseases.

As well as mRNA COVID vaccines, the new facility will be able to produce other therapeutics which can be used in the treatment of cancer, rare diseases, cellular engineering and protein-replacement therapy.

Most importantly, developing mRNA manufacturing capability in Victoria will provide vaccine security, ensuring manufacturing can be contracted locally to avoid global supply chain issues and creating a more robust defence against future pandemics.

Victoria is already Australia’s leader in pharmaceutical and biological manufacturing, responsible for nearly 60 per cent of Australia’s pharmaceutical exports – making it our highest value advanced manufactured export.

Earlier this year, the Victorian Government announced up to \$400 million in funding for a new Australian Institute of Infectious Disease in Victoria to lead the fight against future pandemics.

Victorian scientists and manufacturers recently also created Australia’s first mRNA COVID-19 vaccine candidate – Australia’s first ever mRNA drug product – in just five months, enabling clinical trials to begin in the new year.

Quote attributable to Acting Premier James Merlino

“This is a huge announcement not just for Victoria, but the whole country – being able to manufacture mRNA vaccines and treatments locally will lock in vaccine security both on our shores and across our region.”

Quote attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas

“This will be a boon for both our economic recovery and our fight against future pandemics. Victoria’s medical research sector supports more than 30,000 jobs across institutes, universities and industry – contributing almost \$21 billion to the Victorian economy.”

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

“This deal recognises that the home of Australian mRNA expertise is right here in Victoria.”