

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 31 August 2022

LEADING PANDEMIC THERAPEUTICS CENTRE IN MELBOURNE

A new centre will be established in Melbourne's biomedical precinct to advance Victoria's pandemic preparedness and fast-track the design and development of life-saving treatments.

Canadian philanthropist and businessman Geoffrey Cumming will donate \$250 million to the University of Melbourne to establish the centre – the largest ever philanthropic donation to Australian medical research.

Mr Cumming is a Canadian-born businessman who is chairman of Karori Capital Ltd, a private investment firm based in New Zealand. He has been a notable philanthropist, making significant donations to Canadian and New Zealand medical research causes throughout his career.

Backed by a \$75 million Labor Government investment over 10 years, the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics will initially be based within the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity before being located at the new Australian Institute for Infectious Diseases (AIID) set to open in 2027.

The world-leading research centre will focus on rapidly developing, testing and commercialising new treatments to tackle infectious diseases, and will attract international research experts to Victoria.

Since 2014, the Government has invested more than \$1.3 billion in medical research, including \$400 million for the AIID, and brought Moderna's first mRNA vaccine manufacturing facility outside North America to Melbourne.

In July, the Government launched its Health and Medical Research Strategy: 2022-2032, outlining a vision for Victoria to continue its status as a global leader in medical research by supporting more breakthroughs, driving economic growth, creating jobs and saving lives.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"This is an investment in our leading medical researchers to create life-saving therapeutics and vaccines for infectious diseases and help us fight future pandemics."

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

"This generous donation demonstrates absolute confidence in Victorian medical researchers to develop breakthrough treatments."

Quote attributable to Geoffrey Cumming

"We aim to create solutions to minimise the impact of future pandemics and create greater societal resiliency internationally in the decades ahead."

Quote attributable to Doherty Institute Director Professor Sharon Lewin

"The Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics will focus on research in emerging, high potential molecular platforms and to develop new therapeutics with unprecedented speed."