

# Media Release

**Mr Tim Pallas MP**

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Trade



Friday, 7 October 2022

## **BIONTECH COUP: MORE mRNA MANUFACTURING, RESEARCH IN MELBOURNE**

Victoria is continuing to lead the way in mRNA manufacturing with the Andrews Labor Government agreeing to an in-principle partnership with ground-breaking German biotechnology company BioNTech.

The developers of the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 mRNA vaccine have chosen Victoria to establish their Asia-Pacific mRNA clinical research and development centre which will form part of BioNTech's global network. The new facility will support researchers to translate their work into medical breakthroughs.

Treasurer Tim Pallas and Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford today announced an in-principle partnership with BioNTech to establish a clinical scale mRNA manufacturing facility in Melbourne, with Victoria and BioNTech entering formal discussions to bring this world leading company into the State.

The arrangement would see BioNTech deliver next-generation mRNA therapeutics and vaccines for research and clinical trials, including infectious diseases, cancer medicines and personalised cancer treatments.

It also includes BioNTech establishing its Artificial Intelligence-driven early warning and identification technology, which can be used to detect future disease threats and rapidly develop new treatments and vaccines, at the Victorian site.

Founded in 2008 in Germany, BioNTech has become a world leader in mRNA research and in 2020 successfully developed the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for COVID-19.

The in-principle partnership follows the Australian Government, Moderna and Victorian Government partnership to set up an mRNA vaccine manufacturing facility at Monash University – helping protect Australians against future pandemics, supporting local industry and creating highly skilled jobs.

Victoria is 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.

The Labor Government has invested \$1.3 billion in medical research since 2014 and has helped create more than 100,000 direct and indirect full-time jobs in the state's biotech sector.

### **Quote attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas**

*"This is a major coup for Victoria – it will see incredible collaboration opportunities for our researchers and international biotech companies."*

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

*"BioNTech and Moderna are the only companies in the world to deliver mRNA products to market and soon they will both call Victoria home."*

**Quotes attributable to CEO and Co-Founder of BioNTech Professor Uğur Şahin**

*“This partnership is a major step forward to enable access to mRNA technology and promote collaboration.”*

*“Australia provides excellent academic research, and we are looking forward to collaborating with world-class scientists and researchers to strengthen Australia’s mRNA ecosystem and jointly develop novel treatments and vaccines for people worldwide.”*

**Quote attributable to Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre CEO Professor Shelley Dolan**

*“Peter Mac’s research extends from fundamental discovery that translates into cancer treatments, providing the perfect opportunity to collaborate with a world leading company such as BioNTech.”*