

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Medical Research



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BOOSTING PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS WITH RESEARCH GRANTS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting Victoria's best and brightest in medical research, with a new \$17 million grants program helping to boost pandemic preparedness.

Minister for Medical Research Ben Carroll today announced the inaugural Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics grants have been awarded to 22 research teams, involving more than 80 researchers from the Doherty Institute, University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

The grants will assist researchers in the development of novel therapeutics for pathogens most likely to be involved in possible future pandemics, as well as developing treatments for other infectious diseases and viruses.

They will also assist with research to identify disease threats before they emerge, limiting the impact of outbreaks and preventing life-threatening outcomes.

Two landmark projects to be supported by the grants include the development of antiviral therapeutics for respiratory infections using gene editing and mRNA technologies, and creating a suite of precision microbiome-based biotherapeutics.

The Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics was launched in 2022 – Victoria was selected as the location for the centre over other world-leading medical research cities, recognising the state's global reputation in the biomedical sector and development of landmark technologies.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested almost \$1.3 billion into the sector, boosting Victoria's reputation as a global leader in medical research. This includes establishing the Australian Institute for Infectious Disease and bringing Moderna's first mRNA vaccine manufacturing facility outside North America to Melbourne.

Earlier this month, a new mRNA manufacturing and research facility and clinical cancer program was announced in partnership with the German biotechnology company BioNTech.

Additionally, the Labor Government launched the *Health and Medical Research Strategy: 2022-2032* in 2022, outlining a vision for Victoria to continue its status one of the world's best cities for medical research – the strategy supporting more breakthroughs, driving economic growth, creating jobs and saving lives.

The centre is currently reviewing application for the second round of grants, with \$5 million in funding available to medical researchers globally. For a list of all round one grant recipients and more information on the Centre and the Foundation Grants program, please visit cgcpt.edu.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Medical Research Ben Carroll

"These grants are an investment in our leading medical researchers – helping us prepare to fight future pandemics and advance new technologies for life-saving treatments."

"Victoria is a star on the global medical research stage, and it is important we continue to back our homegrown talent to make lifechanging discoveries to support people right across Australia and the world."

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