

Media Release

Mr Danny Pearson MP

Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs

Minister for Finance



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BACKING THE NEXT GENERATION OF MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS

The Allan Labor Government is backing breakthrough research that has potential to save millions of lives worldwide and position Victoria as a global leader in next-generation vaccines and medicines.

Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs Danny Pearson today announced the latest recipients of the mRNA Victoria Research Acceleration Fund.

Six Victorian research teams will share in \$1.7 million to accelerate new mRNA-based treatments for heart disease, Alzheimer's, and neurological and autoinflammatory diseases.

The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health will receive more than \$535,000 for two projects that will use mRNA technology to prevent and treat Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's affects more than 470,000 Australians and without breakthrough treatments, this number will more than double by 2058.

The University of Melbourne will receive more than \$145,000 to design an antiviral drug that uses mRNA technology to stop multiple respiratory viruses. Local startup Zittra Medicines will receive more than \$485,000 to tackle Sandhoff and Tay-Sachs diseases – a severe, genetic neurological disorder affecting children.

The Hudson Institute of Medical Research will use more than \$130,000 to develop new mRNA-based treatments to tackle autoinflammatory disease, and a \$395,000 grant will support RMIT University to develop targeted gene therapy treatment for atherosclerosis.

Through its grant programs, mRNA Victoria has provided \$30.6 million to support 63 research projects since 2021 – unlocking medicines and vaccines and establishing a world-leading mRNA industry in Victoria.

BioNTech is establishing a mRNA manufacturing facility at La Trobe University's Bundoora campus. Victoria is the only place in the world where both mRNA global leaders – Moderna and BioNTech – have chosen to establish research and development and manufacturing operations.

The Labor Government is also supporting Victoria's medical research institutes with more than \$24 million invested in the *Victorian Budget 2025/26* so they can continue generating lifesaving treatments and supporting jobs.

The Labor Government's investment of more than \$1 billion in health and medical research over the past decade continues to drive growth, create jobs and support incredible breakthroughs in treatment and care.

Health technologies and medical research are identified as top priority areas in the Economic Growth Statement.

For a full list of the mRNA Victoria Research Acceleration Fund recipients, visit djsir.vic.gov.au/mrna-victoria/research.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs Danny Pearson

"We're backing Victoria's world-class researchers to discover the next generation of life-saving vaccines and medicines – cementing Victoria as a global hub for medical research."

"mRNA technology is the next frontier in medical research, and these grants will ensure our researchers continue their pioneering work to unlock new treatments."

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