

Australia invests \$300 M in medical research projects for better healthcare

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The government directly invested a record \$1.28 billion in health and medical research in 2019-20



The Australian Government is investing \$300 million in ground-breaking health and medical research projects across Australia aimed at delivering better treatments, diagnosis and care.

On 15 Dec 2020 Government made an announcement that includes \$260 million for 283 research projects through the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Ideas Grants scheme.

Preeclampsia is a serious complication of pregnancy for which there is currently no cure and no way to accurately predict women at risk. The research aims for healthy babies and addresses the rate of still births. Associate Professor Tu'uhevaha Kaitu'u-Lino will receive \$1.1 million to help improve pregnancy outcomes for women by developing a screening test to identify women at risk of preeclampsia. This research team is using large collections of human blood samples to screen for novel proteins within pregnant women's blood. Using artificial intelligence team selects the best biomarkers and combines them with clinical information to develop a multi-marker blood test to predict women at risk. The funding will support thousands of researchers over the next 3-5 years.

Ideas Grants support a broad range of research from discovery science through to clinical research, health services and public health research. This year's Ideas Grants include 45 grants focused on cancer research, 68 grants on infectious diseases and 13 grants on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

In its second year, the Ideas Grants scheme sees equal funded rates for female and male chief investigators and one-quarter of awarded grants led by an early to mid-career researcher.

The government is also investing close to \$6.9 million in the early careers of outstanding health and medical researchers through 64 postgraduate scholarships.

The new grants will support Australia's health and medical research workforce and will lead to advances in many areas of health research and medicine. In total, the Government directly invested a record \$1.28 billion in health and medical research

in 2019-20.

Australian Government will invest a record \$6.6 billion in health and medical research between 2020-21 and 2023-24.