

Australian Stem Cell Researchers Receive \$3 Million Funding

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Stem Cells Australia's expert team of doctors and scientists will be supported by partnerships with key Australian charities including Genetic Cures Australia and HeartKids.



Stem Cells Australia and The University of Melbourne have welcomed \$3 million Federal Government funding to advance stem cell research towards new treatments.

The Accelerated Research program of the Medical Research Future Fund grant will be used to support national teams of experts to take stem cell research from the laboratory into the clinic.

The two initial projects will focus on using stem cells to test new ways to save the sight of children with rare genetic defects that slowly cause blindness, and to pioneer new approaches for the treatment of congenital heart disease.

Stem Cells Australia Program Leader and University of Melbourne Professor Melissa Little said stem cell science has now advanced to the stage where it can impact future medical treatments.

"We can use stem cells to assess whether a new drug or gene therapy is safe and effective, as well as explore how to repair parts of the body through stem cell therapy," Professor Little said.

"This funding will go a long way in helping our research."

University of Melbourne Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis welcomed the announcement.

"The University greatly values its partnership with Stem Cells Australia and the significant work its researchers undertake," Professor Davis said.

"This funding will enable researchers at Stem Cells Australia to apply their knowledge in key areas of unmet medical need, which will benefit people well into the future."

Stem Cells Australia's expert team of doctors and scientists will be supported by partnerships with key Australian charities including Genetic Cures Australia and HeartKids.

This grant will also fund additional disease teams in the near future.

Stem Cells Australia is a national research consortium with a proven track record in collaborative stem cell research. Established in 2011 through the Australian Research Council's Special Research Initiatives scheme, the additional funding will enable researchers to apply their knowledge in key areas of unmet medical need.

Stem Cells Australia partners with 14 universities and medical research institutes nationally and is hosted by the University of Melbourne.