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BioNTech opens advanced mRNA manufacturing facility in Australia to accelerate next-generation therapies

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New clinical-scale facility at La Trobe University in Melbourne will advance mRNA research and clinical development across cancer, cardiovascular and neurological diseases in the Asia-Pacific region.

La Trobe University is now home to one of the world's leading biopharmaceutical companies, with the official opening of BioNTech's state-of-the-art, clinical-scale mRNA manufacturing and research facility at the University's campus in Melbourne's north.

The Hon. Colin Brooks MP, Treasurer, State of Victoria, joined Minister for Economic Development Anthony Carbines to open the new BioNTech manufacturing facility in Bundoora on 20 October, marking a major milestone for Victoria's life sciences sector and sovereign manufacturing capability.

Chancellor the Hon. John Brumby AO said the opening demonstrated the ambition behind La Trobe's $5 billion University City development – to bring world-leading research and global industry together in Melbourne's north.

"BioNTech's decision to establish its manufacturing and research facility at La Trobe is exactly the kind of collaboration we envisaged for University City; one that takes great research beyond the laboratory and turns it into new treatments, new industries and new opportunities.

"BioNTech has already begun its vital mRNA research and development work in our Eagleworks Innovation Centre. As of today, it now has a state-of-the-art clinical-scale manufacturing facility on our campus. That is a powerful example of what can happen when universities, industry and government work together."

The planned facility at La Trobe will support researchers to develop investigational mRNA-based treatment options, as well as manufacture investigational candidates for clinical trials in the Asia-Pacific region.

The initial focus will include potential new treatments for cancer, heart disease, neurological and autoinflammatory diseases, as well as potential new vaccines.

La Trobe Vice-Chancellor Professor Theo Farrell said the opening brought together two areas for which La Trobe is renowned: health innovation and artificial intelligence.

“Some of the most exciting advances in medicine will come from bringing together biotechnology, mRNA and artificial intelligence – and that is now happening right here at La Trobe,” Professor Farrell said.

“Through our Australian Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Medical Innovation (ACAMI), supported by Victorian Government funding, our researchers will be able to work alongside one of the world’s leading biotechnology companies to accelerate discovery and help translate research into new treatments.

“This is what we want our University City to be: a place where world-class researchers, students and industry work side by side on discoveries that can improve lives in Australia and globally.”

Victorian Minister for Economic Development Anthony Carbines said: “We’re backing lifesaving scientific breakthroughs and local jobs, making Victoria a top global destination for medical research. Victoria is the only place in the world to host both global leaders in mRNA, leading the future of medical innovation.”

The Hon. Colin Brooks MP, Treasurer and Member for Bundoora said: “Medical research is a massive driver of economic growth, investment and highly skilled jobs. BioNTech’s world-class facility in Bundoora will help deliver the next generation of life-changing treatments.

Sierk Poetting, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer at BioNTech said: “Our partnership with the Victorian Government demonstrates how public-private collaboration can build lasting capabilities aimed at driving innovation in medicine. I am proud of the milestone we reached with today’s inauguration and look forward to the years ahead as we continue working with our partners to further strengthen the local mRNA ecosystem and empower groundbreaking research and development that are aimed at making a difference for patients worldwide.”

Located within La Trobe’s University City precinct, the new facility is the cornerstone of BioNTech’s partnership with the Victorian Government. The local ecosystem aims to support up to 1200 jobs in the wider industry over the next 10 years.

BioNTech’s intention to establish a clinical-scale mRNA manufacturing facility at La Trobe’s Bundoora campus was first announced in December 2023.

Complementing the BioNTech mRNA manufacturing facility, the new Australian Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Medical Innovation (ACAMI) was also announced then and officially launched in 2024.

In June 2025, La Trobe switched on its NVIDIA DGX H200 supercomputer, the first to be commissioned at an Australian university, enabling faster translation of research into clinical trials and personalised therapies.