

From: events events@nfmri.org.au
Subject: [Test] New Alzheimer's disease project announced
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To: > nranner@nfmri.org.au

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2025 grant rounds now closed

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National Foundation for Medical Research and Innovation



**THE MASON
FOUNDATION**
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Together with [The Mason Foundation \(managed by Equity Trustees\)](#), NFMRI wishes to congratulate Dr. Emma van der Westhuizen for her successful application. The project below is set to commence in July 2025:

Dr. Emma van der Westhuizen, St. Vincent's Institute of Medical Research,
\$145,000 (2025-2027)

"Enhancing microglial phagocytosis of toxic amyloid-beta peptides using small molecules"

Dr. Emma van der Westhuizen's research focusses on an immune protein found on the surface of microglia that recognises sugar found in toxic protein deposits. People with Alzheimer's disease (AD) have higher amounts of this protein and amyloid-beta proteins (A β) in the brain than people without AD.

The preliminary results of Dr. van der Westhuizen and colleagues suggest that strategies to remove or block this protein may lead to the development of effective AD medications. There are no small molecules targeting this protein currently in clinical trials and few labs working to develop these

currently in clinical trials and now have working to develop these.

This innovation consists of several new small molecules that target this protein which are more likely to breach the blood-brain-barrier than larger antibodies. Her team has 3D images showing some of their small molecules bind to the pocket with moderate strength.

Funding provided by The Mason Foundation (managed by Equity Trustees) and NFMRI will be used to test these molecules in cell models of AD so that Dr. Emma van der Westhuizen and her team can translate them into pre-clinical animal models of AD.

More information about NFMRI's current grants is available on our website [here](#).

NFMRI Funding Opportunities:

Our 2025 grant rounds have now closed. Those wishing to invite our CEO, Dr. Noel Chambers to deliver a presentation at their institution should complete this [enquiry form](#). The presentations help researchers better understand our funding opportunities and the translational pathway.

More information on our funding opportunities can be found on our website [here](#).

Partnering with NFMRI

NFMRI is always happy to consider partnership opportunities with other foundations, trusts, organisations or individuals looking to support innovative medical research in Australia and achieve greater outcomes from their funding. We are able to work within the disease and geographic parameters of our partners to collectively support new programs focussing on translation. This can better enable academic research outcomes, discoveries and innovations to move beyond academia and attract next stage partners including government, industry and venture capital. These partners have the expertise, capability and capacity to take research to the next stage, navigate the complex regulatory and approval systems and enable access to those in the community who are in need sooner.



NFMRI partners with funders of medical research to create impact



Supporting Medical Research
Advancing Innovation
Enabling Collaboration

A focus on creating impact
NFMRI partners with other funders, applying its strategy, systems, networks and expertise to achieve common goals.

Founded in 1977 and with DGR1 status the National Foundation for Medical Research and Innovation (NFMRI) has an established partnering program assisting other funders of medical research achieve better outcomes.

Supporting medical research that is important in the translation of discoveries leading to new innovations including; medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, devices, biologics and tools NFMRI has built specific expertise, capability and capacity that has enabled success.

Through our partnering program NFMRI is collaborating with other funders to achieve our missions.

[Contact us](#) to learn more and enquire about how we can work together.

1

GOVERNANCE

Strong governance forms the foundation of what we do, our culture and our partnerships.

2

STRATEGY

Our strategy focuses on targeted support that addresses gaps to enable translation.

3

SYSTEMS

NFMRI has built bespoke scalable systems and capability specific to our strategy.

4

TRACK RECORD

Proven track record of success with breadth and depth across diseases and innovations

nfmri.org.au enquiries@nfmri.org.au

NFMRI focuses strictly on supporting early stage biomedical innovations (drugs, vaccines, devices, diagnostics, biologicals and tools) advancements to cross the 'valley of death'. Our processes, systems capability and capacity have been purpose built to support a unique strategy and deliver impact by assisting publicly funded research organisations to attract next stage partners along the innovation pathway.

This strategy and support has already prevented a number of research projects from withering-on-the-vine. These projects have attracted next stage partners, secured investment and entered clinical trials across a number of diseases and innovations.

Based upon a framework of good governance, scalable systems and reproducible evidence of success, NFMRI established a targeted partnering program to assist other well-governed funders of research access our capability and capacity. Every dollar put towards our partnerships is distributed to innovative projects that meet the objectives of both NFMRI and the partner.

If your organisation would like to discuss a potential partnership further, please don't hesitate to contact Dr Noel Chambers by emailing enquiries@nfmri.org.au

Recent blog posts

- [Research translation, the beginning starts with the end](#)
- [Considerations when applying for NFMRI support](#)
- [Research with purpose: thinking differently](#)



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