



**RESEARCH**  
**AUSTRALIA**  
CONNECTING • ENGAGING • INFLUENCING

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**Annual Report**  
2017-2018

Research Australia is *the* national alliance representing the **entire health and medical research pipeline** from the laboratory through to the patient and the marketplace.





# Chair foreword

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As the year draws to its close, I am more convinced than ever of the role that health and medical research can and must play in every Australian's life and how Research Australia can enable this awareness and conversation.

The depth of knowledge throughout the Research Australia membership is staggering to say the least. From research into obesity, dementia and cancers to name but a few, through to the technology platforms of the future to assist in decoding diseases, Australia's health and medical research is world class. As I have said on so many occasions, there is no doubt innovation in this sector has the potential to make a significant contribution to Australia's future prosperity.

As the national voice for health and medical research, Research Australia is uniquely positioned to convene representatives from across the entire pipeline connecting everyone from basic researchers through to the patient and consumer. We do this because we believe that it is incumbent on us to drive a national conversation and encourage bold ideas that will drive advancements and changes to ensure every Australian enjoys the benefit of our country's incredible talent and investment in health and medical research.

Research Australia has had a strong year with even stronger engagement with its membership and the broader showcasing of the remarkable work it is doing. Equally importantly, we have ensured that our members' views are reflected in our policy submissions and that, as a collective, we influence the changes that we believe need to be implemented to support future growth and innovation.

In particular, my thanks to the Research Australia team under the expert guidance of our CEO and Managing Director, Nadia Levin. Their efforts continue to yield palpable dividends to our members, and I am most appreciative of the professionalism and enthusiasm with which they approach every opportunity.

I also extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Board Directors whose support and advice has proved invaluable yet again. I look forward to 2019 and Research Australia continuing to advocate and champion our vital, impressive sector through thoughtful leadership and by providing a national platform for members to participate in the development of policy and other areas to ensure that great research delivers great outcomes.



**Chris Chapman**  
Chairman, Research Australia



## CEO foreword

The 2017/2018 financial year has been an incredible 12 months for health and medical research (HMR). We have seen further disbursements from the Medical Research Future Fund and the translation objectives of it are now better understood and entrenched in the sector.

For Research Australia, our advocacy efforts have been rewarded with the \$240 million Frontiers Programme announced as part of the May Federal Budget. What a great opportunity this is for a different approach to funding cutting edge research that has the potential to transform every aspect of how we deliver evidence-based healthcare. The approach is bold and encourages an economies-of-scale style of thinking in an accelerated timeframe – we are confident the HMR community is up to the challenge.

The dial has also shifted, perhaps more subtly, in other areas such as the policy work around changes to the National Health and Medical Research Council's grants programs and the growing levels of collaboration and visibility of research that is carried out on behalf of us all.

Research Australia has enjoyed a year of close engagement with our membership and it has been tremendous to expand conversations within our alliance and encourage the sharing of information and research. This then showcases what our sector is capable of but also provides input to the all-important policy and investment settings that provide the framework for everything we do.

The doubling of our efforts from our unique position as the trusted voice of the entire HMR pipeline has provided some great insights. For example, our annual Australia Speaks! Opinion polling has been asking Australians for their opinions on HMR and its

role in our society since 2003. The change in some areas of opinion is significant, particularly in the digital health space, while HMR's critical role in our society remains a priority of the highest order.

With your assistance, Research Australia's policy and advocacy work remains responsive to our changing environment and emerging issues. This is something we look forward to continuing with vigour and pride in 2019.

While much has been achieved, we need to ensure the true value of HMR as a driver of a healthy population and healthy economy is recognised and embraced across the many communities we serve: patients and consumers; governments and investors; the private, public and not-for-profit sectors; and everyone in between on the HMR pipeline.

Collectively we extend our knowledge and even better, when we collaborate, we put that knowledge to work.

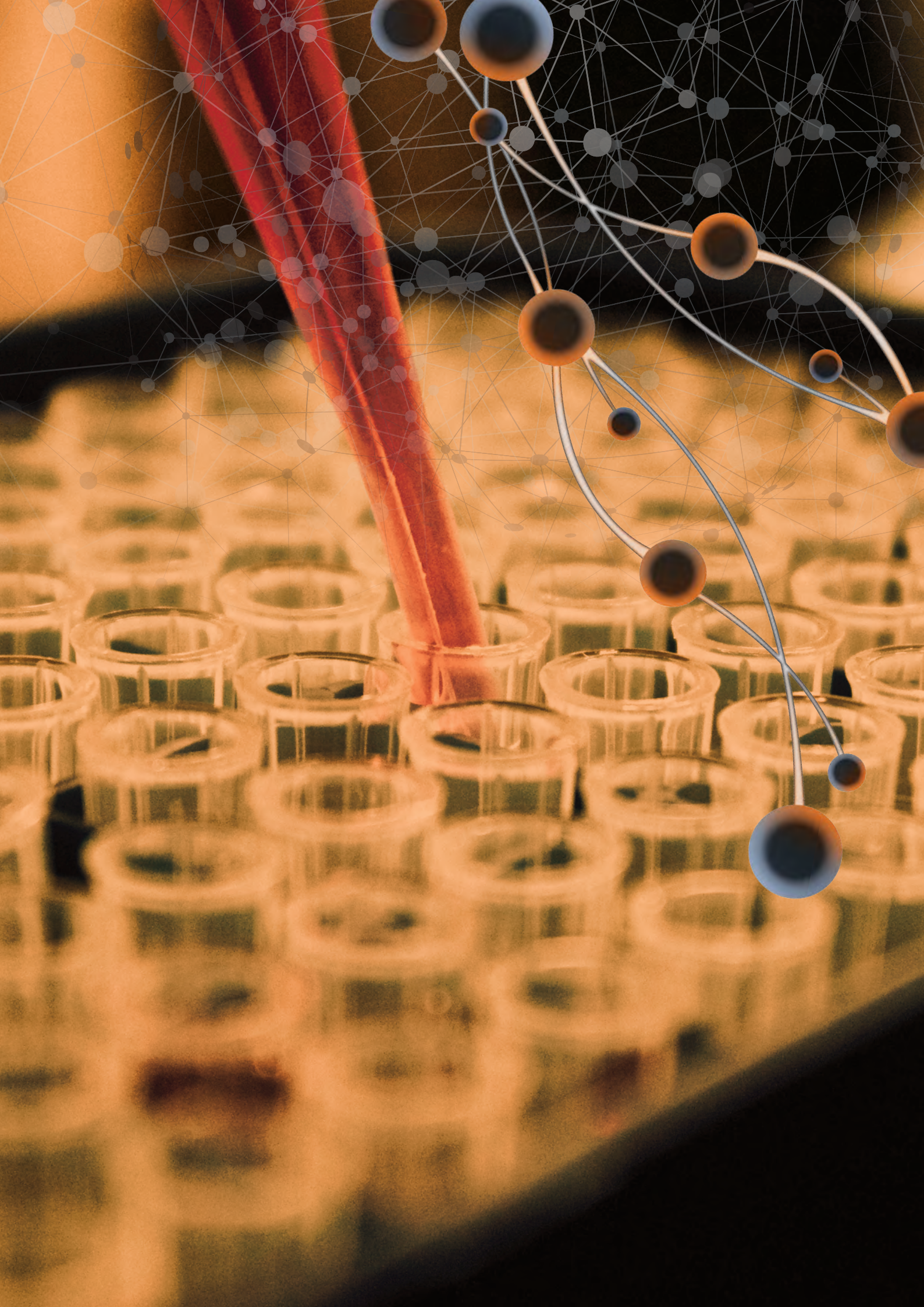


**Nadia Levin**

CEO & Managing Director  
Research Australia









# Board of Directors

With appreciation to our Chair and Board of Directors who are tireless in their advocacy for health and medical research. Our board's representation is across both the public and private sector.



**Mr Chris Chapman**

Chair since November 2016  
President, International  
Institute of Communications  
Director since August 2016



**Prof Nicholas Fisk**

Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
(Research), UNSW Sydney  
Director since  
December 2015



**Ms Annette  
Schmiede**

Executive Leader, Bupa  
Health Foundation  
Director since  
August 2015



**Prof Alexandra McManus**

Consultant, Health & Medical  
Research  
Adjunct Professor, Faculty of  
Health Sciences, Curtin University  
Director since November 2012



**Mr Peter Wills AC**

Deputy Chair  
Director, Wills  
Advisory Pty Ltd  
Director since 2000



**Assoc. Prof  
Greg Kaplan**

Chief Operating Officer,  
Ingham Institute  
Director since  
November 2014



**Prof Ian Jacobs**

President & Vice-  
Chancellor, UNSW  
Sydney  
Director since  
March 2016



**Prof Mary Foley**

Managing Director,  
Telstra Health  
Director since August 2017



**Ms Nadia Levin**

Chief Executive Officer  
& Managing Director,  
Research Australia  
Director since January 2016



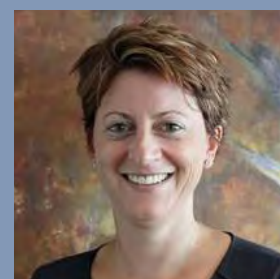
**Jenny Morawska**

Chief Executive Officer  
and Managing Director  
The Morawska Group  
Director since  
November 2017



**Dr Andrew Nash**

Senior Vice President –  
Research, CSL Limited  
Director since  
November 2013



**Dr Alison Butt**

Director, Research  
Strategy Office, UNSW  
Sydney  
Director since  
November 2011







# A collaborative strategy

The 2017-2018 financial year saw the first twelve months of implementation of our Collaborative Strategy. Built upon over 200 points of consultation with our members, the Strategy focuses Research Australia around three key strategic objectives:

- ◆ Data as a national resource
- ◆ Embedding research in Australia's health system
- ◆ Smarter investment in health and medical research

This sharper focus has enabled us to deliver for our members and act as an expert, impartial adviser to governments and policymakers across Australia.

Under our *Data* objective, we have built greater awareness of the challenges Australian researchers face in accessing health data for research purposes through:

- ◆ Our work with the Capital Markets CRC on the blog *Flying Blind 2: Researchers and the Health Data Maze* which will culminate in a major report to Government in FY19
- ◆ As members of the Australian Digital Health Agency's Research Programs Reference Group
- ◆ Through our Research Australia Speaker Series which brought the story of health data to NSW Parliament House

This is in addition to our focused policy work on, for example, the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Data Availability and Use where Research Australia worked with the Taskforce within the Prime Minister's Department responsible for developing the Government's response.

In the context of our *Smarter Investment* objective, we continue advocating for the foundational funding of Australian health and medical research: the ARC, the NHMRC, the Medical Research Future Fund and the Biomedical Translational Fund. All four funding sources are important in maintaining the ecosystem of Australian health and medical research and we look to maximise investment through these streams.

For example, it became apparent to us that with the right Government investment, Australia has the opportunity to lead markets and create new markets in the kinds of cutting-edge, frontier investments in health and medical research which will transform how healthcare is delivered to future generations. We were gratified that Federal Health Minister, Hon Greg Hunt MP announced in the 2018 Federal Budget a commitment of \$240 million over 5 years to the Frontier Medical Research Program and we thank the Department of Health and the Medical Research Future Fund board for embracing the idea.

*Embedding research in Australia's health system* is how we ensure Australians have access to the best, evidence-based healthcare in the world. This is an area of increasing focus for Research Australia and its members, as consumers become more vocal in demanding advanced treatments and escalating health costs push governments to run smarter, more efficient health systems – these are shifts, cultural and otherwise, that Research Australia embraces wholeheartedly.



# A collaborative strategy

Following extensive consultation with our sector and detailed consideration and feedback from Research Australia Directors, the Collaborative Strategy was finalised and approved in June 2017.

## The Vision, Mission and Goals

Refreshing Research Australia's Vision, Mission and Goals and Value Proposition has been an important part of redefining a role for Research Australia which both reflects what our sector wants us to be doing and demonstrates how we will lead the health and medical research (HMR) sector in the future.

## Our vision

Research Australia envisions a world where Australia unlocks the full potential of its world-leading health and medical research sector to deliver the best possible healthcare and global leadership in health innovation.

## Our mission

To use our unique convening power to position health and medical research as a significant driver of a healthy population and contributor to a healthy economy.

## Our goals

**Connect** researchers, funders and consumers to increase investment in health and medical research from all sources.

**Engage** Australia in a conversation about the health benefits and economic value of its investment in health and medical research.

**Influence** government policies that support effective health and medical research and its routine translation into evidence-based practices and better health outcomes.



# A Collaborative Strategy – Priority Projects

There are multiple projects which will be rolled out over the next five years in support of the key strategic objectives.

At any given time, we run a multitude of campaigns, policy projects and thought leadership programs. We are always open to hearing from organisations (members or otherwise) who are interested in partnering with us.

**Priority areas that look at key strategic objectives and actions and already underway include;**

1

**Data**  
as a national  
resource

Promoting the  
value of data as a  
national resource

Encouraging policy  
settings for shared,  
linked and secure  
data

Educating  
consumers on how  
wellbeing can be  
advanced with  
technology

2

**Embedding  
research**  
in Australia's  
health system

Stronger links  
to enable faster  
uptake of evidence-  
based practice

Policies and  
incentives required  
to support better  
integration of  
clinical care with  
HMR

3

**Smarter  
investment**  
in health and  
medical research

Promoting the  
economic value  
of HMR

Advocating for  
better alignment  
of existing HMR  
funding

Championing  
commercialisation







## Our Forums

**Research Australia forums are convened to unite the health and medical research sector on a common platform. They provide unique opportunities for members and key sector influences to connect enabling communication and collaboration.**

### CONNECT – SPEAKER SERIES

May 2018 saw the start of what we trust will be a very successful model – the Speaker Series. These events bring together a diverse audience of thought leaders and commentators to hear and contribute to discussion on the critical issues confronting the sector.

The inaugural event convened over 100 key stakeholders at NSW Parliament to discuss and debate the topic 'Is the sector ready to

harness the transformative power of data?' It was kindly sponsored by the Garvan Foundation.

The panel consisted of a range of experts from across the digital health space including consumer advocates and data specialists. The event attracted parliamentarians and health professionals alike, including the NSW Health Minister, and the Parliamentary Secretary for Digital Inclusion.





## CONVENE – HEALTH ECONOMICS ROUNDTABLE

Research Australia partnered with Macquarie University Centre for the Health Economy, convening a roundtable addressing the role of health economics in the health and medical research sector. Specifically, we aimed to drive a deeper understanding of the importance of health economics in HMR, create a platform to promote the value of the discipline and highlight opportunities for sensible evidence-based improvements within the health system.

This was the first in a series of Health Economics Roundtables which will become a permanent biannual fixture on the Research Australia calendar and a key forum for ensuring researchers and policymakers have access to the latest and best research on the value of health and medical research.

The event included discussions on:

- ◆ Exploiting the opportunity: How health and medical researchers and health economists can drive smarter investment in HMR
- ◆ How health economists want to work with the health and medical research sector
- ◆ Shaping the questions these collaborations could interrogate





## CONNECT – ANNUAL HEALTH & MEDICAL RESEARCH AWARDS

We celebrated yet another incredible Awards Gala Dinner in Melbourne to shining light on the incredible efforts and achievements of individuals and teams who make the difference to all our lives through their contribution to health and medical research.

Honouring exceptional talent and innovation is a key part of Research Australia's role in advocacy for the sector. Each year we are further inspired by the people who continuously challenge science and help to improve the health and wellbeing of not only the nation but the world.

- ◆ **Advocacy Award** – Sanfilippo Children's Foundation
- ◆ **Data Innovation Award** – Professor Helmut Butzhueven
- ◆ **Great Australian Philanthropy Award** – Andrew Forrest AO and Nicola Forrest
- ◆ **Griffith University Discovery Award** – Dr Avnika Rubarelia, Monash University
- ◆ **Health Services Research Award** – Australian & New Zealand Hip Fracture Registry
- ◆ **Leadership in Corporate Giving Award** – The QBE Foundation

Research Australia would like to thank the wonderful supporters and partners of the 2017 Health and Medical Research Awards, and acknowledge the incredible finalists and winners.

For more information about the 2017 event and previous Awards please see [researchaustralia.org](http://researchaustralia.org)







## CONVENE – UNIVERSITY ROUNDTABLES

The Research Australia University Roundtable provides a forum for Research Australia's university members to Identify and advance current issues for universities in health and medical research, encourage engagement between universities and the broader HMR sector, and provide

information and advice to the Research Australia Board.

The last financial year's quadrennial Roundtables were kindly hosted by member universities and speakers covered a wide range of topics some of which are included in the table below.

<b>Health policy to address chronic disease and improve public health</b>	Professor Andrew Wilson, Director, Menzies Centre for Health Policy, University of Sydney Chair, Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee
<b>Turning what we know into what we do</b>	Professor Jeffrey Braithwaite, Professor of Health Systems Research, Macquarie University Founding Director, Australian Institute of Health Innovation Director, Centre for Healthcare Resilience and Implementation Science
<b>The future of 'big data' in health and medical research</b>	Professor Louisa Jorm Professor, Faculty of Medicine, UNSW Sydney Director, Centre for Big Data Research in Health
<b>Machine Learning, Pattern Recognition and HMR</b>	ARC Laureate Professor Svetha Venkatesh, Deakin University Director, Centre for Pattern Recognition and Data Analytics (PRaDA)
<b>Biocurate – Venture Catalyst</b>	Dr Glenn Begley, CEO Biocurate
<b>MRFF Progress and the next Priorities; and the Academy of Health and Medical Sciences</b>	Professor Ian Frazer AC Chairman of the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board Inaugural President, Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences
<b>A new understanding of health and disease – implications for how we undertake and communicate research</b>	ARC Laureate Professor Paul Griffiths Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney
<b>Menzies Health Institute Queensland</b>	Professor Paul Scuffham, Deputy Director of the Menzies Health Institute Queensland Director of the Centre for Applied Health Economics at Griffith University
<b>Translational Simulation in Healthcare</b>	Professor Victoria Brazil, Bond University Medical director of the Gold Coast Simulation Service

## INFLUENCE – RESEARCH AUSTRALIA PUBLIC OPINION POLL

As major stakeholders in health and medical research, ordinary Australians' opinions count. Research Australia has been seeking out those opinions on health and medical research and its role in our society since 2003. Over the past 15 years it has been clear Australians consider healthcare and health and medical research as a high priority and recognise that the significant investment made in this important sector is for the benefit of us all. Here is a snapshot of some of those opinions.

Here is snapshot of some of those opinions captured in June 2018.

### *Decision Making about Health and Medical Research*

- ◆ Nearly two thirds (65%) of people told us they would be confident contributing their own opinions to help direct government funding
- ◆ Only 22% were confident they would be listened to
- ◆ Only 17% would know how to contact

## 11 PRECISION MEDICINE

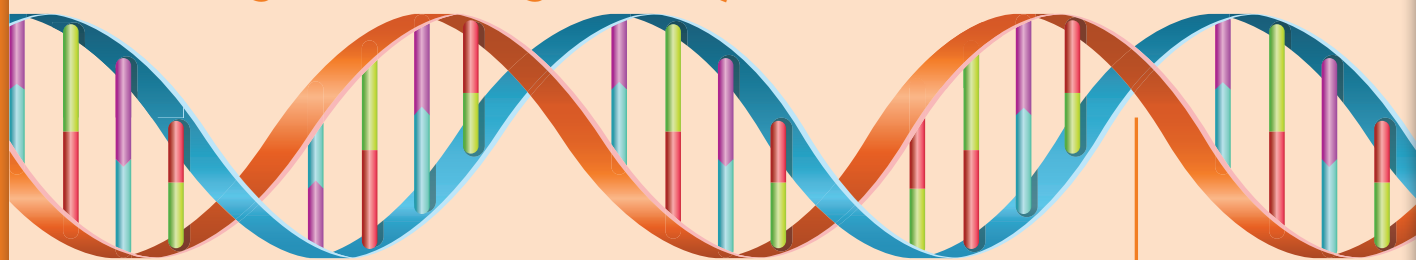
**QUESTION:**  
If you had a disease and there was the opportunity to use genetic testing to identify the most effective drug, would you do so?

**Precision medicine uses genetic testing to identify the best treatment for an individual patient.**

It relies on using evidence from previous patients to understand how people with different genetic traits respond to different drugs for particular diseases, such as cancer. It enables doctors to prescribe drugs for new patients that have worked before for other patients with similar genetic profiles.

The use of genetic testing in this way is expanding rapidly but is still relatively new. We wanted to understand how people feel about it.

### Use genetic testing to treat your disease?



**22%** would need more information

**75%** of people would be willing to use genetic testing to identify the most effective drug

**3%** would not be prepared to do so

Research Australia Opinion Polling 2018





### *The Australian Government partnering with charities*

- ◆ There is an increasing tendency for governments to partner with charities to support research.
- ◆ 53% of people who donate to charity already would be likely to donate more if they know government is going to match their donations.
- ◆ Only 4% would be less likely to donate.



### *Precision medicine*

- ◆ 75% of people would be willing to use genetic testing to identify the most effective drug for a disease they had. 95% of this group would be willing to share the results for research purposes.

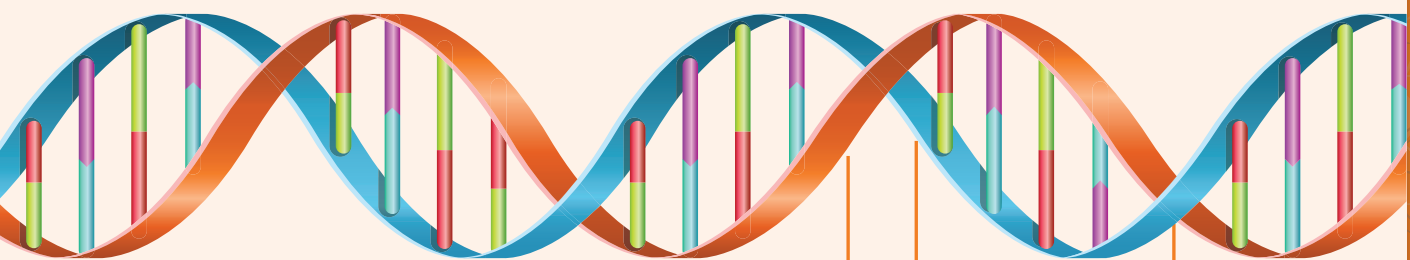
Research Australia would like to acknowledge and thank valued member Roy Morgan Research for conducting the poll and co-hosting the formal launch of the report at their offices.

**This technique only works because data collected from other people about their genetic makeup and what drugs did and didn't work has been compiled. This information is then used to identify links between some genes and particular drugs.**

It relies on people who undergo treatment contributing their data, and as this library grows it becomes more accurate. But would someone undergoing this treatment be willing for their data and the results of their treatment to be collected and used in this way?

**QUESTION:**  
Would you be willing for the results from your genetic tests and your treatment to be used to improve treatments for future patients?

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**95%** of people who told us they would use genetic testing to identify the most effective drug are willing for their results to be used to improve treatments for future patients

**4%** of people would need more information

**1%** of people responded No

Research Australia Opinion Polling 2018

# Influence – Research Australia

## government policy and submissions

Research Australia has made multiple submissions in the last financial year and all submissions reflect not only the advocacy work of Research Australia, but importantly the views and input of our members.

The details of these submissions can be viewed on the Research Australia website.

The table below outlines some of the policy work during the financial year but does not include the verbal submissions or responses by Research Australia representatives into the various Inquiries or Senate hearings during the same period.

Visa Simplification Review of NHMRC funding programs	<b>September 2017</b>
Framework for research use of My Health Records A Digital Economy Strategy for Australia	<b>November 2017</b>
NHMRC Peer Review Consultation Pre-Budget Submission to the Australian Treasurer	<b>December 2017</b>
Therapeutic Goods Amendment Bill 2017	<b>January 2018</b>
Electoral Legislation Amendment (Electoral Funding and Disclosure Reform) Bill 2017	<b>February 2018</b>
Review of the ACNC legislation Taskforce on the Aged Care Workforce Strategy	<b>March 2018</b>
Senate Inquiry into the accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia WA Sustainable Health Review	<b>May 2018</b>



# Acknowledgments

The contributions and commitment from our membership gives our alliance the strength to fulfil our vision and mission.

We'd like to acknowledge support in these key areas:

- ◆ Participation in policy submissions
- ◆ Sponsorship of forums convened
- ◆ Bespoke consulting
- ◆ Hosting of roundtables
- ◆ Research to showcase in INSPIRE publication
- ◆ Corporate Partnership
- ◆ Award nominations

We also thank our Foundation members for their ongoing loyalty and support without which we could not have achieved so much for the sector.

**If your organisation is not a member then now is the time to join the alliance of the health and medical research sector. Request more information from the Research Australia team on 02 9295 8546 or [admin@researchaustralia.org](mailto:admin@researchaustralia.org).**



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@ResearchAustralia



Follow us on LinkedIn  
Research Australia

## Financial summary

Research Australia is financially sound and has met all its financial obligations. Its main source of income continues to be from membership and sponsorship.

### Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income For the year ended 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>4</b>	692,858	679,486
Employee benefits	<b>5</b>	(650,400)	(603,348)
Depreciation and amortisation	<b>9</b>	(5,093)	(7,497)
Marketing and events		(97,784)	(50,919)
Travelling		(41,019)	(32,125)
Consultancy and contractor		(20,574)	(44,433)
Administrative		(98,591)	(79,734)
Loss on disposal of assets		(2,206)	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>(915,667)</b>	<b>(818,056)</b>
Finance income		9,016	15,938
Finance expenses		(1,144)	(1,447)
<b>Net finance income</b>		<b>7,872</b>	<b>14,491</b>
<b>Loss for the year</b>		<b>(214,937)</b>	<b>(124,079)</b>
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive loss for the year</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>(214,937)</b>	<b>(124,079)</b>

The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements, in particular **note 20**.



# Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018

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	Note	2018	2017
<b>ASSETS</b>		\$	\$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	7	372,986	102,530
Term deposits	7	176,503	541,508
Trade and other receivables	8	732,051	329,350
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,281,540</b>	<b>973,388</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	9	7,451	13,230
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>7,451</b>	<b>13,230</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,288,991</b>	<b>986,618</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	1,033,167	507,242
Employee benefits	11	18,020	26,635
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,051,187</b>	<b>533,877</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,051,187</b>	<b>533,877</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>237,804</b>	<b>452,741</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained earnings	12	237,804	452,741
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>237,804</b>	<b>452,741</b>

The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements, in particular **note 20**.



[researchaustralia.org](http://researchaustralia.org)

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