

RESPECT RESEARCH

THE GREENS' PLAN TO BACK RESEARCHERS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THE FUTURE



Medical research has led to numerous life-changing and life-saving discoveries right here in Victoria. Medical research in Victoria is growing quickly, but we need to do more to fast-track research that will benefit us all.

Victoria is a world-leader in medical research. Researchers have discovered new vaccines, drugs and treatments that are saving lives.

Research in Victoria is growing. But because Victorian funding hasn't kept pace, our research is now at risk. Victorian research institutes are losing entire research teams and world-leading researchers to other states and countries that are funding research properly. In addition, new scientific knowledge is sitting on the shelf, rather than being developed into new medicines and technologies.

Our medical researchers need our support to make new discoveries that will benefit us all, create new jobs, and grow medical research in Victoria.

OUR PLAN

The Greens 'Respect Research' plan will ensure that researchers have the skills, technology, and opportunities to unlock the secrets to better lives for Victorians, and address the medical challenges of the 21st century.

Our plan includes:

- Making Victoria a world-leader in antimicrobial resistance
- Australia's first Drug Discovery Centre
- Support for researchers to turn discoveries into practical benefits
- A Victorian Centre for Gender Equity in Science, to break down the barriers to women's success in research

MAKING VICTORIA A WORLD-LEADER IN ANTI-MICROBIAL RESISTANCE

We need long-term direction and investment to give researchers and institutes the confidence to plan their research for the future. The Greens will establish a 20-year plan to make Victoria a world-leader in antimicrobial resistance research.

By 2050, 10 million people are predicted to die every year because of antibiotic resistance. Without adequate protection from infection, crucial medical procedures like chemotherapy could be too dangerous to perform. But right now, just 500 researchers world-wide are working to solve this problem.

Our plan is to begin by conducting an inventory of Victoria's research capabilities to identify gaps in our technology, infrastructure and resources that need to be filled for Victoria to become a world-leader in antimicrobial resistance. We can then fill these gaps with an evidence-based and government-led strategy.

This strategy might include:

- promoting research into new rapid diagnostics to cut unnecessary use of antibiotics,
- developing IT systems to provide antimicrobial stewardship guidance for GPs,
- promoting in-hospital research, and
- attracting world-leading researchers.

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The planned Drug Discovery Centre will also allow for the faster development of new antibiotics in the fight against antimicrobial resistance.

National and international funding for research into antimicrobial resistance from both government and philanthropic sources is set to grow substantially over the next 20 years, including through the United Nations and World Health Organisation. If we build our research capacity now, Victoria will be in an ideal position to attract more external funding and create new jobs in the future.

A DRUG DISCOVERY CENTRE

The Greens' plan would contribute \$29.8 million over three years to the construction of a world class Drug Discovery Centre at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute in Melbourne. This is the first institute of its kind in Australia, and will be used by medical researchers from across the state.

The Drug Discovery Centre will empower medical researchers to take basic scientific discoveries and transform them into new medicines faster than ever before. A Drug Discovery Centre will benefit us all, by:

- developing more effective and efficient treatments,
- creating almost 1500 new Victorian jobs, and
- attracting pharmaceutical investment to Victoria.

The Drug Discovery Centre will accelerate the development of new medicines, including the potential development of new antibiotics to fight antimicrobial resistance.

TRANSLATING DISCOVERIES

The Greens' plan would provide \$56 million over four years in funding towards improving Victoria's medical research commercialisation and translation capabilities.

Currently, new scientific discoveries are sitting on the shelf because our medical researchers don't have the

support they need to turn them into medicines, technologies, and diagnostic tools.

Our plan will ensure that scientific research that happens in Victoria actually benefits Victorians and people around the world. Funding will go to four major areas:

- Providing researchers with specialist knowledge and expertise around intellectual property and proposition assessments to identify the best projects for development
- Providing proof of concept funding to allow researchers to bridge the first 'valley of death', where many projects end due to a current lack of funding
- Expanding capabilities in business development with more resources and specialist advice for researchers
- Training staff involved in research development to build skills and knowledge

This initiative will create 1600 new jobs in science and technology, \$90 million in better commercial outcomes, \$36 million by attracting additional external funding, and \$320 million in health and social benefits.

THE VICTORIAN CENTRE FOR GENDER EQUITY IN SCIENCE

The Greens will contribute \$1.8 million to establish the Victorian Centre for Gender Equity in Science (the Centre), which will be matched by the sector.

There are still too many barriers to keeping and promoting women in science, which means men still dominate at the higher levels of research.

The Centre will empower collective and grassroots action within clusters of institutes and organisations to break down these barriers, based on the model of the Women in Science Parkville Precinct collective.

Beginning with the medical research sector, the Centre will empower women by tracking progress towards



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gender equity in science, testing new ideas to address inequity, and shaping the necessary policy reforms.

The Centre is an important step towards equal representation of women in senior leadership positions, equal access to opportunities for women, and retaining highly trained women in medical research and science more broadly.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

The cost to deliver our Respect Research platform is \$87.8 million over the forward estimates.

This cost is made up of:

- \$200,000 over one year to conduct an inventory of Victoria's research capabilities and needs to become a world-leader in antimicrobial resistance,
- \$29.8 million over three years towards the construction of the Drug Discovery Centre,
- \$56 million over four years to fund better medical research commercialisation and translation in Victoria, and
- \$1.8 million to establish the Victorian Centre for Gender Equity in Science.