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1. AAMRI news

1.1 *Victorian MRI event at Parliament House*

On 18 February, Victorian medical research institutes took centre stage at Victoria's Parliament House to [celebrate 99 years of medical research institute success in Victoria](#). Over 100 guests attended, including guest speakers: Ms George Crozier MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Health; Hon David Davis MP, the Victorian Minister for Health and Ageing; Hon Daniel Andrews MP, Leader of the Opposition in Victoria; Mr Harold Mitchell AC, Chairman of the Florey Institute; Prof Brendan Crabb, AAMRI President and Director of the Burnet Institute.

2. Government update

2.1 *Parliamentary inquiry into skin cancer*

The House of Representatives Health Committee has announced an inquiry into skin cancer. Submissions from interested individuals and organisations are due by COB 12 March 2014. Further info [here](#).

2.2 *Reminder: comments sought on GM cholera vaccine trial*

The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator is seeking comments on a draft risk assessment for a genetically modified cholera vaccine trial. Feedback is due by 6 March. Further info [here](#).

2.3 National mental health review (including research)

The Federal Government has assigned the National Mental Health Commission to undertake a review of mental health services and programs across the government, private and non-government sectors. Mental health research is within scope of the review. The final report is expected by 30 November 2014. Further info [here](#).

2.4 Shadow Assistant Minister for Health steps down

The Hon Melissa Parke MP, has stepped down from her role as Federal Shadow Assistant Minister for Health for family reasons. A replacement has yet to be announced.

2.5 HealthinSA Advisory Board announced

[HealthinSA](#) (Health Industry South Australia) is an initiative of the SA Government to promote South Australia as a destination for health care industries, research and academia. Further information on the new *HealthinSA* Advisory Board is available [here](#).

3. NHMRC & ARC

3.1 NHMRC Bibliometric Report

The NHMRC bibliometric report, [Measuring Up 2013](#), assessing the biomedical publication output and impact of Australia's research sector was released on 13 February. The report shows that over the five-year period of 2005-2009:

- Australian health and medical publications had a relative citation impact 17% above the world average, with NHMRC-funded publications, in particular, being 60% above the world average;
- The number of Australian health and medical research publications increased by 44% between 2002-2006 and 2005-2009, with Australia contributing 3.1% of total world biomedical publications (from an estimated 1.1% of global health research dollars);
- Australia's medical research institutes outperformed other research sectors and world benchmarks, with a relative citation impact 65% above the world average and 40% above Australia overall;
- International collaborations increased between 2005 and 2009, with 44% of biomedical research papers having an international author in 2009; this is important, because papers with an international author had an average citation impact almost double that of publications without an international author.

Outcomes of publication output and impact for individual medical research institutes and universities is available in the appendix to the report (pp 89-).

3.2 Further NHMRC grants announced

On 18 February, the Health Minister announced the [outcomes](#) of the following NHMRC grant schemes: Development Grants, Partnership Projects, Program Grants, Post-graduate Scholarships and Targeted Call for Research - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

A summary of the results of the 18 Feb grant announcements can be found [here](#).

Overall results and statistics to date for the 2013 NHMRC grant application round can be found [here](#). More than \$800 M has been committed to 1,137 new grants. A further round of Partnership

Projects is under review with outcomes expected in early-mid 2014. Funding outcomes of the Mental Health Targeted Call for Research - Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention are expected by mid-2014.

3.3 NHMRC webcast on replacement, reduction & refinement of animal use

A webcast by Prof Thomas Hartung (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health) on initiatives for the replacement, reduction and refinement of animal use was streamed by the NHMRC on 13 February. See webcast [here](#).

3.4 NHMRC consultation on potential health impacts of wind farms

The NHMRC is seeking public comment on their draft Information Paper regarding scientific evidence on the potential effects of wind farms on human health. Submissions are due COB 11 April. Further info [here](#).

3.5 NHMRC - best practice in gender equity policies

The NHMRC has published examples of best practice in gender equity policies at research organisations on its [website](#). All NHMRC Administering Institutions were invited in 2013 to identify approaches in place to support gender equity. The NHMRC received responses from 46 organisations. Key examples from the responses are listed on the website.

4. Sector news

4.1 CRC funding announcement

The Minister for Industry, the Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, announced \$186 M in funding for the 16th round of the CRC program, including a further \$34 M over 6 years for the Cancer Therapeutics CRC, and an additional \$28 M over 5 years for the Hearing CRC. Further info [here](#).

4.2 NSW Government awards \$15.5 M in cancer fellowships

The NSW Government announced \$15.5 M in Cancer Institute NSW Fellowship Grants to 26 researchers. Further info [here](#).

5. Reports and resources

[Report on Government Services 2014, Volume E: Health](#) - released by the Productivity Commission, the report includes information on public hospitals, primary and community health, and mental health management.

[Heart Health](#) - The Victorian Government's five-year plan to improve heart disease prevention efforts and enhance cardiac services, launched on 31 January by Minister for Health, the Hon David Davis MP.

[Inspiring smarter brain research in Australia report](#) - Minister for Health, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, launched a paper on the future of brain research in Australia. Developed by the 2013 Theo Murphy High Flyers Think Tank in association with the Australian Academy of Science, the paper proposes that Australia undertakes a major project encompassing wide-ranging research into the function and structure of the brain.

[Australia: Benchmark Report](#) - This Austrade report includes information on trends in R&D investment, relative impacts of Australian scientific publications, global comparison of Australian industry sectors and more.

[AMA Public Hospital Report Card 2014](#) - This report by the Australian Medical Association includes an analysis of state-by-state public hospital performance data.

6. Funding & award opportunities

[Wellcome Trust Pathfinder Awards](#) - Provide pilot funding for academic-industry partnerships to develop early-stage applied research and development projects on orphan and neglected diseases. Applications close 3 March.

[Fresh Science-FameLab](#) - This is a national competition for early-career researchers wanting to share their work with the media and the public. Nominations have been extended to 3 March.

[NSW Government Medical Devices Fund](#) - A \$5 M per annum, competitive technology development and commercialisation program. Preliminary applications close 4 March.

[2014 Victorian Premier's Award for Health and Medical Research](#) - Provided by the Australian Society of Medical Research (ASMR) in partnership with the Victorian Government, this award is for an early career researcher (at least 2 years into PhD or awarded PhD after 1 Jan 2012). Applications close 14 March.

[Avant Scholarships](#) - Avant Mutual Group's Doctors in Training Research Scholarship Program provides full-time and part-time research scholarships for interns, resident medical officers and doctors-in-training to assist in meeting the costs of approved research training programs. Applicants must hold an insurance policy with Avant. Applications close 31 March.

[Dementia Research Foundation Grants](#) - The 2014 Dementia Grants Program includes project grants, fellowships, travel awards and PhD scholarships for new investigators (i.e. researchers who have not been a principal investigator on a grant worth more than \$50 K, excluding scholarships and fellowships, and within 8 years of being awarded their PhD). First round applications close 4 April.

[EMBL Australia PhD travel grants](#) - Provide up to \$3,500 for short trips of less than 6 weeks, or up to \$7,500 for a longer visit of up to 6 months. Applications for travel between 1 July 2014 and 31 December 2014 are due by 4 April.

[Australian Academy of Science Awards](#)

- [France-Australia Science Innovation Collaboration Program](#) - Up to \$6,000 for travel by early career researchers to France; applications close 4 April.
- [AAS honorific awards for scientific excellence](#) - Nominations for a range of honorific awards are due by 17 April.
- [Funding for research conferences](#) - Expressions of Intent are due by 30 July.
- [Research Awards](#) - Applications due by 30 July.
- [Travelling Fellowships](#) - Several travelling fellowship programs are open, with applications due 30 July.

[L'Oreal Australia & NZ for Women in Science Fellowships](#) - These fellowships are awarded to three early-career female researchers. Nominations close 16 April.

[Australian Museum Eureka Prizes](#) - Include prizes for research and innovation; leadership and commercialisation; science communication and journalism; and school science. Nominations close 2 May.

[Next round of CRC bids](#) - Opens 3 March and closes 3 July. Register your interest for an information session [here](#).

[New \\$400K private-public fund](#) to support research into infectious diseases transmitted from animals to humans - Established by the re-launched National Foundation for Medical Research and Innovation in partnership with the NSW Department of Primary Industries, funding is available for research on new vaccines, medicines and diagnostic tools. Expressions of Interest will open in March.

[Old Government Science and Innovation Grants](#) - This new \$8.75 million funding program will offer grants of up to \$500,000 for new **collaborative research projects** led by Queensland-based universities or research organisations, and up to \$300,000 for **early- and mid-career fellowships**. Applications open soon.

****Find out which prizes you, your colleagues or your staff could be eligible for with the searchable Inspiring Australia [Science Prize Calendar](#).**

7. Upcoming conferences & events

Save the Date: AAMRI 2014 National Convention, Canberra, 27-28 October. The AAMRI Convention is a free event for AAMRI member organisations only. We encourage MRI Directors to attend and to invite a representative from their Board, their COO and/or another member of their executive (e.g. CFO, Deputy Director).

[Inaugural Centenary Institute Conference](#) - Future of Experimental Medicine: *Inflammation in Disease and Ageing*, Sydney, 16-19 March 2014.

[AusMedTech 2014](#) - Melbourne, 1-2 April

[World Congress of Cardiology 2014](#) - Melbourne, 4-7 May

[Science at the Shine Dome 2014](#) - Canberra, 27-29 May

[BIO International Convention](#) - San Diego, 23-26 June

[20th International AIDS Conference](#) - Melbourne, 20-25 July

[15th International Conference on Systems Biology](#) - Melbourne, 14-18 September

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