

# MEDIA RELEASE

June 2018

## Applications are NOW OPEN for the 2018 Centenary Institute's Medical Innovation Awards – open to all institutes and universities in Australia.

The Centenary Institute's Medical Innovation Awards, considered to be one of the most prestigious prizes for early-career researchers, recognises bold young Australians who are taking the risks to ask the big questions of today – those questions that have most people saying "but that's impossible".

The Awards with a total prize pool of \$55,000 focus on creativity and innovation – essential ingredients in all human endeavours. The 1<sup>st</sup> place \$30,000 In Memory of Neil Lawrence Prize, proudly sponsored by *Commonwealth Private*, will be presented to the biomedical research scientist based in Australia who demonstrates the most creative and innovative approach to their research concept with the 2<sup>nd</sup> place to receive the *Bayer Innovation Award* of \$15,000 and 3<sup>rd</sup> place *Val Morgan Award* of \$10,000. Following its continuing popularity, the People's Choice Award will be run again, where the Australian public have the opportunity to vote in the \$2,000 People's Choice Award.

Each year the Awards attract an outstanding quality of applications from some of our nation's best and brightest minds. The Awards adjudicators are some of the most esteemed scientists (such as Professor Ian Frazer AC), considered to be in the top 0.1% globally. Such a high-profile judging panel ensures the quality and excellence of each year's winners and encourages only outstanding and highly original applications every year from Australia's young leading scientists.

The Centenary Institute is dedicated to supporting the medical research sector as a whole, and firmly believes in encouraging scientific innovation, with 80% of the biggest scientific discoveries for humanity from researchers younger than 45 years of age. It is essential that we continue to support these next Nobel Laureates if we are to ensure a domestic culture of research excellence.

Supporting young scientists now, more than ever, has become even more important as the funding climate becomes more challenging. Since 1983, the proportion of government science funding to younger researchers has more than halved. There are only approximately 20,000 mid-career researchers in Australia and only a handful receive funding to test their own creative ideas. The vast majority have to leave research altogether.

"Exceptional young scientists can be hard to keep in Australia and we hope this Award not only celebrates their achievements but also encourages a domestic culture of brilliance in medical research," Centenary Institute Executive Director, Professor Mathew Vadas AO.

The Centenary Institute Medical Innovation Awards is not only about supporting Australia's next Nobel Laureates – it is about ensuring the nation's overall health and prosperity. These aspirational young scientists are rewarded for their ability to apply their creative ideas to tackling and overcoming some of the most chronic conditions affecting our community (such as cancer, inflammation and cardiovascular disease) in order to save thousands of lives, in Australia and globally.

Full details of the Award and how to apply can be found at [centenary.org.au/cimia](http://centenary.org.au/cimia).

The Centenary Institute Medical Innovation Awards would not be possible without the commitment and generosity of the Awards partners Commonwealth Private, Val Morgan, Bayer Australia Limited, NSW Office of Health and Medical Research, the Lawrence Family and the philanthropy of generous individuals who support the Award.

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For more information about Centenary Institute, visit [www.centenary.org.au](http://www.centenary.org.au)

