

# Novartis Australia and BioCurate Pty Ltd announce first collaboration to accelerate early stage drug discovery

Oct 31, 2018

- *Novartis is the first global biopharma to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BioCurate Pty Ltd to collaborate on early stage drug discovery projects with a view to providing expert industry-focused scientific advice and expertise to BioCurate*
- *The collaboration provides a valuable opportunity to identify and translate innovative research from two of the world's top ranked<sup>1</sup> universities for biological sciences – Monash University and the University of Melbourne*
- *While Novartis is Australia's largest sponsor of clinical trials<sup>2</sup>, the MoU with BioCurate emphasises an additional focus of identifying early stage innovation and academic research which addresses unmet patient needs*

**Sydney, October 31, 2018** – The Australian biomedical research company BioCurate Pty Ltd and Novartis today announced that they would collaborate on early stage drug discovery projects that have potential to address an unmet need.

This collaboration marks BioCurate's first with the global pharmaceutical industry.

Head of Strategic Partnerships at Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia, Brett Roberts, said the collaboration with BioCurate is a unique opportunity to work with Monash University and the University of Melbourne on new innovative medicines.

"We are very excited to be able to bring together the global scientific and technical expertise of researchers at the Novartis Institute of Biomedical Research (NIBR) with BioCurate's expertise in curating and translating early stage science into development ready Australian research projects," said Mr Roberts.

BioCurate CEO, Dr C. Glenn Begley said the company recognised the importance of early engagement with a range of leading industry partners to ensure new drug development programs are informed and aligned with addressing unmet patient and market needs.

"We are delighted to collaborate with Novartis – a first-class innovator with considerable expertise and infrastructure that can potentially support Australia's drug discovery and development capabilities," Dr Begley said.

"We are hopeful this collaboration will ultimately lead to better health outcomes for the global community and continue to build Australia's expanding innovation economy."

Dr Begley said the collaboration with Novartis marks the first in a number of similar arrangements currently under discussion with other potential industry partners.

"BioCurate is uniquely positioned to lead the establishment of a number of international industry experts that are able to provide invaluable scientific advice, commercial insight and partnering opportunities to BioCurate

and Australia's medical research sector." Dr Begley said.

BioCurate is a joint venture of Monash University and the University of Melbourne, supported by the Victorian State Government. Operating independently of the universities, it provides commercial focus, expertise and funding necessary to address the barriers to success and drive early decisions, with the intent of boosting the successful development of new medicines.

BioCurate is housed in the internationally renowned 'Parkville Precinct' in Melbourne, a cluster of 30 world-class hospitals, research institutes, teaching and biotech organisations employing approximately 10,000 researchers.

Novartis Australia Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Simon Fisher, said it was a unique opportunity to leverage an internationally experienced team dedicated to rigorous analysis of local science to address unmet patient needs as well as commercial potential.

"This collaboration opens the door to overcome barriers that limit the translation and commercialisation of early stage research progressing to new medicines and providing benefits to patients," Dr Fisher said.

"We know the research undertaken in Australia is as good as anything globally so this is an opportunity to help advance the outputs of Australian science. We hope that collaborations of this kind will benefit Australian science and patients."

Whilst the therapy focus areas of the BioCurate/Novartis partnership are yet to be confirmed, the focus will be to triage and prioritise the highest quality early stage research opportunities from BioCurate's review of a promising portfolio of projects.

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[Novartis Australia and BioCurate Collaboration Announcement Media Release \(PDF 0.3 MB\)](#)

## References

1. The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018 (Life Sciences)  
[https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2018/subject-ranking/life-sciences#/page/0/length/25/subjects/3051/sort\\_by/rank/sort\\_order/asc/cols/stats](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2018/subject-ranking/life-sciences#/page/0/length/25/subjects/3051/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats) (Accessed 24 October 2018)
2. AusTrade Clinical Trials Capability Report 2018 [austrade.gov.au/news/latest-from-austrade/2018/new-report-spotlights-australias-capability-in-clinical-trials](http://austrade.gov.au/news/latest-from-austrade/2018/new-report-spotlights-australias-capability-in-clinical-trials) (Accessed 24 October 2018)

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- [https://www.novartis.com/au-en/au-en/sites/novartis\\_au/files/FINAL%20BioCurate%20Collaboration%20Media%20Release%20-%20311018\\_0\\_0.pdf](https://www.novartis.com/au-en/au-en/sites/novartis_au/files/FINAL%20BioCurate%20Collaboration%20Media%20Release%20-%20311018_0_0.pdf)
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