



RESEARCH  
ADVOCACY  
CURE

# SNAPSHOT

## PROJECTS STARTED IN 2023 FUNDED BY MS AUSTRALIA

	CAUSES & PREVENTION	DEVELOPING BETTER TREATMENTS	A CURE FOR MS VIA REPAIR & REGENERATION OF CELLS	
GENETICS & EPIDEMIOLOGY	<b>UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Dr Nicholas Blackburn is investigating the role of rare genetic changes in the development of MS.	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, NSW</b> Dr Kieren Po is looking at optimising disease-modifying therapy for people living with MS.	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Professor Tomas Kalincik is investigating the use of haematopoietic stem cell transplantation to prevent and reverse MS disability.	
	<b>UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Dr Bennet McComish is unravelling how MS prevalence has evolved.	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE, NSW</b> Dr Alexandre Xavier is shedding light on how epigenetics influence clinical outcomes in people living with MS.		
IMMUNOLOGY		<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE, SA</b> Dr Iain Comerford is using models of MS to target specific receptors involved in the pathogenesis of MS.		
		<b>ST VINCENT'S CENTRE FOR APPLIED MEDICAL RESEARCH, NSW</b> Dr Jennifer Massey is looking at resetting the immune system using Autologous Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (AHSCT).		
NEUROBIOLOGY	<b>EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Dr Christopher Latella is unravelling the mechanisms of muscle weakness and motor performance in MS.	<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY, QLD</b> Ms Sofia Jimenez Sanchez is investigating the immune characteristics of participants in the RAMBLE trial.	<b>UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, WA</b> Associate Professor Jennifer Rodger is identifying effects of neurological changes on myelin-producing cells.	
		<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY, QLD</b> Associate Professor Justin Kavanagh is shedding light on the relationship between muscle activation and clinical MS fatigue scales.	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, NSW</b> Associate Professor Laura Piccio is targeting immune cells of the brain to enhance remyelination in MS.	
		<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Associate Professor Justin Rubio is investigating neuroinflammation in primary progressive MS due to changes in DNA.	<b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Ms Danica Nheu is developing a new therapeutic approach to repair the central nervous system in MS.	
SOCIAL & APPLIED RESEARCH	<b>CURTIN UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Dr Eleanor Dunlop is investigating dietary factors in MS in children.	<b>UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Professor Bruce Taylor is looking at the National Disability Insurance Scheme and if it works well for people living with MS.		
	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, QLD</b> Dr Suzanne McDonald is identifying personalised triggers of fatigue in MS.	<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG, NSW</b> Ms Olivia Wills is exploring a brain-healthy lifestyle for people living with MS.		
		<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Dr Steve Simpson-Yap is investigating diet quality and patient health outcomes over 10 years in people with MS.		<b>THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Ms Alice Saul is exploring the role of pain in MS.
		<b>THE SUMMER FOUNDATION, VIC</b> Professor Jacinta Douglas is looking into housing and support needs and preferences of people with MS.		

INCUBATOR GRANT

SCHOLARSHIP

PROJECT GRANTS

FELLOWSHIP

	GENETICS & EPIDEMIOLOGY	IMMUNOLOGY	NEUROBIOLOGY	SOCIAL & APPLIED RESEARCH	
CAUSES & PREVENTION	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND NZ</b> ANZgene is a major collaboration mapping the genetic make-up of people with MS to identify which genes influence MS susceptibility and why.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Professor Bruce Taylor is measuring the prevalence (number of existing cases) and incidence (number of new cases) of MS at various centres in Australia</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Associate Professor Anneke van der Walt is looking at the risk of cervical precancer and cancer in women with MS.</p>	<p><b>MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Dr Belinda Kaskow is investigating whether a specific immune cell (regulatory T cells) have normal function in clinically isolated syndrome (CIS), the precursor of MS.</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Mastura Monif is looking at the role of a receptor on an immune cell type called monocytes to see if it could be a new therapeutic target in MS.</p>	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA</b> The MS Australia Brain Bank, based at the University of Sydney, is securing valuable MS tissue from donors across Australia, to be used by researchers to advance our understanding of the neuropathology of MS.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, NSW</b> Professor Alexander Klistorner is unravelling the mechanisms of progressive MS.</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Lucy Vivash is developing a new imaging test to assess the progression of MS in clinical trials.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, TAS</b> Associate Professor Brad Sutherland is examining the role of the blood brain barrier to determine how MS begins.</p>	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA</b> The Australian MS Longitudinal Study is tracking the practical issues in the lives of people affected by MS, including quality of life, economic impact and employment.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Dr Charles Malpas is studying different aspects of thinking and memory impairment in MS to develop a model for use in the clinic.</p> 	
	DEVELOPING BETTER TREATMENTS	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND NZ</b> The PrevANZ Vitamin D Prevention Trial is measuring whether vitamin D can prevent MS in people at high risk of developing the disease.</p> 	<p><b>ST VINCENT'S CENTRE FOR APPLIED MEDICAL RESEARCH, NSW</b> Dr Malini Visweswaran is examining immune cells in people undergoing AHSCT for MS.</p> <p><b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY, QLD</b> Professor Simon Broadley is leading a clinical trial of rituximab to reduce the development of other autoimmune diseases during alemtuzumab treatment for MS.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE, SA</b> Dr Iain Comerford is working to stop T cells, a type of immune cell, entering the brain in MS.</p> <p><b>AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, ACT</b> Associate Professor Anne Bruestle is exploring a new approach to improve the delivery, effectiveness and safety of existing MS treatments.</p>	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA</b> Haematologists and neurologists around Australia are running the Australian MS Haematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant (AHSCT) Register. They track the effectiveness of this chemotherapy treatment with bone marrow transplants to treat MS.</p> <p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND INTERNATIONALLY</b> MS Australia is a managing member of the International Progressive MS Alliance to accelerate treatments for progressive MS.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Dr Steve Simpson-Yap is investigating the effects of treatments on long-term disability outcomes in MS.</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Yi Chao Foong is investigating smart phone apps to predict asymptomatic progression and treatment failure in MS.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Dr Izanne Roos is working towards preventing disability in patients with severe forms of MS.</p> <p><b>LA TROBE UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Jacqueline Orian is exploring the role of platelets in MS with the aim of developing a new MS therapy.</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Alistair Govier-Cole is investigating how cells that normally repair myelin, may be involved in perpetuating the autoimmune reaction against myelin.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, NSW</b> Mr Samuel Klistorner is investigating chronic inflammation around longstanding lesions in MS.</p>	<p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND NZ</b> The MS Australia Clinical Trials Network coordinates information about MS trials for the MS community.</p> <p><b>WORKING ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND NZ</b> InforMS is developing an online MS Patient-Centred Portal to facilitate self-management of healthcare by people with MS and shared decision making with their care team.</p> <p><b>MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Dr Yvonne Learmonth is working towards delivering healthcare provider training for remote exercise delivery in MS.</p> <p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Daniel Merlo is working towards detecting early changes in memory and speed-of-thinking to improve care in MS clinical practice.</p> <p><b>MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY, NSW</b> Dr Milena Gandy is working towards advancing the psychological care of adults with MS.</p> <p><b>CURTIN UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Associate Professor Lucinda Black is shedding light on diet in MS to improve disease outcomes.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Ms Rebekah Allison Davenport is improving the clinical understanding of sexual dysfunction, depression and anxiety in MS.</p> <p><b>MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, WA</b> Dr Yvonne Learmonth is exploring crisis resilience in people living with MS with the aim of developing guidelines for managing MS in emergencies.</p> <p><b>NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH AUSTRALIA, NSW</b> Dr Phu Hoang is investigating walking patterns in MS in order to develop guidelines for healthcare professionals to use when treating leg weakness.</p>
A CURE FOR MS VIA REPAIR & REGENERATION OF CELLS				<p><b>MONASH UNIVERSITY, VIC</b> Dr Steven Petratos is developing a new therapeutic approach for brain repair in MS.</p> <p><b>MENZIES INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH, TAS</b> Dr Kalina Makowiecki is identifying the missing link between myelin loss and neurodegeneration.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, QLD</b> Dr Lachlan Rash is developing a new drug to detect and treat nerve damage in MS.</p> <p><b>FLOREY INSTITUTE OF NEUROSCIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH, VIC</b> Dr Sarrabeth Stone is investigating regulators of brain immune cell function that promote brain tissue healing.</p> <p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, VIC</b> Professor Tomas Kalincik and Professor Trevor Kilpatrick are working towards early detection and treatment of progression in MS.</p> <p><b>MENZIES INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH, TAS</b> Professor Kaylene Young is investigating pathways to protect and repair the central nervous system.</p>	



**A U S T R A L I A**

## **RESEARCH ADVOCACY CURE**

### **ABOUT MS AUSTRALIA**

MS Australia is Australia's national multiple sclerosis (MS) not-for-profit organisation that empowers researchers to identify ways to treat, prevent and cure MS, seeks sustained and systemic policy change via advocacy, and acts as the national champion for Australia's community of people affected by MS.

MS Australia represents and collaborates with its Member Organisations, people with MS, their carers, families and friends and various national and international bodies to:



**Fund, coordinate, educate and advocate for MS research as part of the worldwide effort to solve MS**



**Provide the latest evidence-based information and resources**



**Help meet the needs of people affected by MS**

### **ABOUT MS AUSTRALIA GRANTS**

MS Australia has a robust and transparent research strategy that involves scientific experts thoroughly critiquing all our research to ensure that we are targeting the research priorities identified by the MS community in Australia.

The International Research Review Board serves as a scientific advisory group to MS Australia. They assist in identifying the strengths of Australian research and help ensure that MS Australia's strategy complements the global MS research effort.

Our Research Management Council consists of a multidisciplinary team that oversees the peer-review process of all funding applications and funding allocations for investigator-driven research. Every research application is evaluated on both its scientific merit and relevance to MS. The grant process is conducted with integrity and transparency, and is modelled on the most stringent grant review systems worldwide, including the Australian Government's National Health and Medical Research Council review process.

For more information on the scientific committees, research strategy and funded projects please visit [www.msaustralia.org.au](http://www.msaustralia.org.au).