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## Therapeutic Innovation Australia receives new funding to support scientists working on COVID-19 projects

TIA has been awarded \$1.2 million from the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Scheme managed by the Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment. The funds will support research infrastructure at TIA's **National Biologics Facility (NBF)** that is key to Australia's efforts in developing a vaccine for COVID-19.

COVID-19 will have an ongoing impact on all our lives until the global medical research and development community can discover, develop and produce new ways to treat, mitigate or prevent this disease.

The Queensland and Victorian Nodes of the NBF are playing a central role in the development of vaccines and other therapeutics to fight COVID-19. The awarded funds will be invested in critical staff positions in technical and operational roles to support a range of projects.

For example, the global Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) initiated a series of global partnerships to develop vaccines against the novel coronavirus on a timescale never before achieved. One of these is a novel "molecular clamp" vaccine platform developed by a University of Queensland team led by Prof Paul Young, Dr Keith Chappell and Prof Trent Munro. NBF has been critical to the progress of this project, which is now at the clinical testing phase.

Prof Trent Munro, Director of the National Biologics Facility's Queensland and project team member, said:

*"The NCRIS TIA Biologics infrastructure has been a key enabler in moving the UQ COVID-19 vaccine program at speed into the clinic. This additional investment will allow us to onboard critical additional staff to enhance the facility and our capabilities"*

Dr Stuart Newman, CEO of TIA, said:

*"This additional investment will focus on a critical part of research infrastructure that is often overlooked – expert operational and technical staff that are the lifeblood of all of our facilities."*

Mr Terry Slater, Chair of the TIA Board, said:

*"We are delighted that the Australian Government is continuing to support this vital work that draws on our national excellence in medical research."*

TIA also recently announced the award of ten Pipeline Accelerator voucher projects totalling \$400,000 to support access by Australian researchers to key research infrastructure facilities.

### About TIA

Therapeutic Innovation Australia (TIA) is a not-for-profit research infrastructure organisation that manages funding under the **Translating Health Discoveries** project that is part of the Australian Government's **National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS)**. TIA manages investment in hard and soft infrastructure to enable external access to a network of translational research capabilities, enabling and accelerating translation of research discoveries towards clinical testing.

### For more information, please contact:

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