

MedChem Australia's first update brings news of the outcomes from our Round 1 Call for Applications. We greatly look forward to collaborating with these outstanding researchers and assisting them in advancing their exciting drug discovery programs. We extend our gratitude to everyone who took the time to submit a proposal.

## MedChem Australia announces inaugural Round 1 projects



*Clockwise from top left: Prof. Matthias Ernst; Prof. Rebecca Ritchie & Dr. Chengxue Helena Qin; Dr. Nicolas Liao & Prof. Marnie Blewitt; A/Prof. Elaine Wong; Dr. Kim Loh; A/Prof. David Croucher & Dr. Sharissa Latham*

Australia's first national initiative dedicated to breaking down capability barriers by providing subsidised medicinal chemistry expertise to promising drug discovery programs has announced its inaugural Round 1 projects to tackle a range of diseases.

Applications were received from universities and research institutes from four states, addressing unmet needs across eight different therapeutic areas. Following assessment by the independent [Selection and Review Committee](#), six projects were selected, three as 'Portfolio Projects' and three 'Pilot Projects'.

MedChem Australia Portfolio Projects will be backed by game-changing support in medicinal chemistry and DMPK at an 80 per cent subsidy.

Pilot Projects will receive mentorship, advice and other support, with the aim to progress toward being 'Portfolio Project' ready.

The projects seek to develop new therapeutic interventions for different cancers, heart disease, a paediatric genetic disorder, hearing loss, and obesity.

Director of MedChem Australia, [Professor Brendon Monahan](#), said each selected project aligns with MedChem Australia's goal to facilitate

the translation of cutting-edge research into tangible advancements in drug discovery.

*"Our thanks to everyone who submitted an application. We congratulate the successful applicants for their outstanding proposals and we look forward to working with them to progress the projects towards becoming much-needed new safe and effective medicines that can transform the lives of people and communities around the world."*

*"Collaboration and multi-disciplinary teams are essential in developing new therapies. Our experienced drug hunters are able to contribute to these projects in a way that will add real value and set them up for success down the track."*

*MedChem Australia Director, Professor Brendon Monahan*

## MedChem Australia Successful Round 1 Recipients

### Portfolio Projects

**Development of HCK-inhibitors to improve anti-cancer immune checkpoint response and to treat chronic lung inflammation** (Olivia Newton-John Cancer Research Institute), *Prof. Matthias Ernst, Annalisa Carli, Dr. Ylva Bozikis.*

**Development of a New Class of GPCR Biased Agonist for Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction** (Monash University) *Prof. Rebecca Ritchie, Dr. Chengxue Helena Qin, Dr. Annaliese Dillon*

**Epigenetic approach to treating Prader Willi Syndrome (WEHI)** *Dr. Nicholas Liau, Prof. Marnie Blewitt, Prof. James Murphy*

### Pilot Projects

**Selective targeting of oncogenic JNK signalling** (Garvan Institute of Medical Research) *A/Prof. David Croucher, Prof. Jonathan Morris, Dr. Sharissa Latham*

**Developing a new protein kinase inhibitor for metabolic disease** (St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research) *Dr. Kim Loh, A/Prof. Jonathan Oakhill, Dr. Christopher Meoli*

**Novel small molecules for treatment of sensorineural hearing loss** (Ear Science Institute Australia) *A/Prof. Elaine Wong, Prof. Marcus Atlas, Prof. Lee Yong Lim, Dr. Connie Locher, Dr. Victor Chuang*

MedChem Australia looks forward to welcoming applications for Round 2 of the initiative, towards the end of the year.

If you are interested in discussing an application, or if you would like to find out more about MedChem Australia, you can book a call [here](#).

For enquiries please contact:  
[admin@medchemaustralia.org](mailto:admin@medchemaustralia.org)