



The Coalition's Policy

Key Commitments

Science and research are fundamental to Australia's competitiveness and improved standard of living.

The Coalition has a strong record supporting science and research, investing around \$10 billion a year to deliver real outcomes for Australia.

We established the landmark Medical Research Future Fund, the single largest investment in medical research in Australia.

As part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda, the Coalition created the Biomedical Translation Fund, which will provide \$500 million to commercialise more of Australia's world-class medical research.

Our National Innovation and Science Agenda will see an additional \$145 million invested to boost collaboration and encourage stronger linkages between universities and industry.

We are investing \$200 million to develop a focused, co-ordinated approach to dementia research to improve the diagnosis, treatment and care for those with dementia in Australia.

The Coalition will continue to develop Australia's medical research capabilities by:

- investing \$7 million to improve the clinical trial landscape in Australia
- investing \$20 million for a research and clinical partnership on childhood cancers
- providing over \$650 million in the next four years to fund medical research priorities through the Medical Research Future Fund and the Biomedical Translation Fund
- delivering an ongoing commitment to dementia research
- supporting international collaboration and innovation in medical research
- implementing a Digital Health Innovation Agenda

Our Plan to Develop Australia's Medical Research Capabilities

The Coalition will continue to develop Australia's research and science capabilities.

The Coalition spends almost \$10 billion a year supporting science and research.

We established the landmark Medical Research Future Fund, the single largest investment in medical research in Australia.

The Medical Research Future Fund will provide a sustainable source of funding for important medical research, including over \$400 million in the next few years, rising to \$1 billion a year once fully established. This funding is in addition to the \$850 million for medical research provided through the Medical Research Endowment Account.

Our \$1.1 billion National Innovation and Science Agenda will bolster research and drive innovation and entrepreneurship across every sector of the economy. The Agenda will see an additional \$127 million invested in university research funding to encourage stronger linkages between universities and industry and a further \$18 million invested in collaboration programmes.

As part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda, the Coalition also created the Biomedical Translation Fund, which will provide a further boost to health and medical research by effectively making \$500 million (\$250 million of funds matched by the private sector) available over two years to commercialise more biomedical discoveries.

1. Investing \$7 million to improve the clinical trial landscape in Australia

The Coalition will remove red tape barriers to conducting clinical trials in Australia.

The Coalition will make it easier for clinical trial businesses to operate in Australia and attract more international investment.

A reorganisation of existing clinical trials architecture within and across jurisdictions will seek to link prospective sponsors with research expertise, locations and participants, and provide the necessary administrative support to expedite trial commencement. This work will be led by the Commonwealth and involve ongoing collaboration with States and Territories.

This work will develop best practice approaches to improve efficiencies, sponsor engagement, trial start-up times and outcomes, and explore the potential for the digital revolution to advance clinical trials activity.

Our commitment will result in more clinical trials taking place in Australia and, combined with new measures to promote patient recruitment, will give more Australians immediate access to the lifesaving therapies that clinical trials provide. Adolescents and young adult patients are

typically too old to participate in paediatric clinical trials and too young to participate in adult clinical trials. To address this, the Coalition will remove barriers for adolescents and young adult cancer patients to access clinical trials for anti-cancer therapies.

The Coalition will fund demonstration trials to build domestic capacity to initiate world-class trials for this age group which will attract industry partnerships in future trials.

Our commitment will ensure hundreds of adolescents and young adult cancer patients have immediate access to cutting-edge anti-cancer treatments and embed clinical trial processes into standard adolescent and young adult care.

2. Investing \$20 million to boost childhood cancer research

The Coalition is committed to reducing the rate of Cancer for all Australians.

We will commit \$20 million to boost children cancer research.

Our investment to the Zero Cancer Collaboration Network is focused on improving survival and quality of life for children who currently have no cure for their cancer.

The Zero Cancer Collaboration Network establishes a national network that connects research centres of excellence in every major city, ensuring children across the country are supported.

The Zero Cancer Collaboration Network brings researchers, doctors and cancer patients together to deliver real-time discovery of the best individualised treatment for each cancer. That network will be used to map the molecular and genetic structure of tumours, responses to treatments, and share treatment results. The data collected will speed the urgent diagnosis and prescription of treatments for high-risk childhood cancer patients.

The ultimate goal is to have enough data to eradicate all childhood cancer deaths.

This ground-breaking high-tech national research collaboration will focus on personalised cancer treatments for children who have high risk cancers. The research collaboration will initially benefit 200 children each year who currently have no cure for their childhood cancer and will improve the way experts treat all childhood cancers to help reduce the long-term effects of cancer-related therapies on the survivors of childhood cancer.

The ultimate aim of this initiative is to see every child with cancer – up to 1,000 children per year – accessing this cutting edge technology by 2020 and to push survival rates for childhood cancer toward 100 per cent.

Our \$20 million commitment will be used to establish infrastructure in key research centres across Australia.

3. Providing over \$650 million in the next four years to fund medical research priorities through the Medical Research Future Fund and the Biomedical Translation Fund

The Coalition's landmark Medical Research Future Fund will provide a sustainable source of funding for important medical research, including over \$400 million in the next few years, rising to \$1 billion a year once fully established.

The Medical Research Future Fund creates a more coordinated and strategic way to fund medical research and address national health priorities.

It will complement existing health and medical research funding to improve health outcomes by distributing new funding in more diverse ways to support stronger partnerships between researchers, healthcare professionals, governments and the community.

The eminent members of the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board, appointed in April 2016, will set out the Strategies and Priorities to inform decisions made by the Coalition.

In developing these priorities the Board will consider:

- the burden of disease on the Australian community
- how to maximise the practical benefits from medical research to as many Australians as possible
- how to ensure that funding under the MRFF complements and enhances other financial assistance provided for medical research

The Coalition's \$250 million Biomedical Translation Fund will leverage matched private sector investment to commercialise new Australian biomedical discoveries.

The fund, a major initiative under the Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda, will support researchers through the often complex and expensive early commercialisation stages.

It will ensure that more of Australia's world-class biomedical research is retained in Australia to benefit Australians and our economy.

4. Ongoing commitment to dementia research

The Coalition is committed to dementia research.

When elected in 2013 the Coalition committed to providing \$200 million, the largest ever financial commitment, for dementia research. This funding was allocated in the 2014-15 Budget and led to the establishment of the new National Institute for Dementia Research.

The National Institute for Dementia Research has already invested in large scale dementia research, including almost \$35 million for Dementia Research Team Grants, to find a cure for this disease.

The Coalition announced \$43 million to support bold and innovative new ideas to not only tackle the impacts of dementia but to find ways of preventing and curing the debilitating disease.

The National Institute for Dementia Research also developed the Strategic Roadmap for Dementia Research and Translation Priorities in Australia. The Roadmap will help to better target and prioritise our research spend. The Roadmap supports a longer-term plan to find a cure for dementia while also focusing on the immediate need to identify the best treatment interventions to ensure people living with dementia maintain a high quality of care and quality of life.

In order to quickly identify and support the interventions that will improve the care provided to those currently living with dementia, the Coalition will convene a Dementia Care Forum.

The Forum will bring together dementia care providers, researchers, health professionals, carers groups, industry members and policy makers to promote the generation of ideas with a specific focus on identifying the on-the-ground projects that could have an immediate impact on the lives of those living with dementia, their carers, and their families.

These projects will then be considered for funding from within existing funds to give a direct boost to the treatment and care for those living with dementia.

5. Supporting international collaboration and innovation in medical research

As part of our commitment to the National Innovation and Science Agenda, the Coalition will clarify and simplify inbound and outbound procedures for experimental samples and other materials used in the course of medical research.

These reforms will ensure Australian researchers have the agility required for international collaboration and fostering innovation, while operating at the cutting edge of scientific advances.

This will result in research funds being spent on research, rather than costly specialised courier services and red tape.

6. Implementing a Digital Health Innovation Agenda

The Coalition will continue the development of its digital health innovation agenda, including:

- continuing trials for the My Health Record to ensure patients can seamlessly share their important health information with their doctors and clinicians
- providing better access to health data and opportunities for the public to control who can access their data
- improved digital services for the public, health providers, and medical researchers by increasing access to online support tools and simplified digital versions of existing paper forms

The Choice

The Coalition spends around \$10 billion every year supporting science and research.

The Coalition's establishment of the landmark Medical Research Future Fund will provide a sustainable source of funding for important medical research, including over \$400 million in the next few years, rising to \$1 billion a year once fully established.

Under the Coalition, funding under the Medical Research Endowment Account increased from \$750 million in 2013 to a record of almost \$850 million in 2015.

Our National Innovation and Science Agenda will see an additional \$145 million invested to boost collaboration and encourage stronger linkages between universities and industry.

We committed \$2.3 billion to provide funding certainty for Australia's critical research infrastructure, which includes the Australian Synchrotron and Square Kilometre Array.

We are investing \$200 million to develop a focused, co-ordinated approach to dementia research to improve the diagnosis, treatment and care for those with dementia in Australia.

We are also refreshing our science and research priorities, delivering targeted programs to increase the number of students studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and reviewing our research infrastructure to ensure our investments are well-targeted and delivering results.

Labor has a track record of cutting research.

During their last term Labor repeatedly tried to cut funding to medical research.

In 2011, Labor tried to rip \$400 million from medical research but back flipped at the last minute after researchers protested in the street.

It was also Labor who ripped \$140 million out of medical research in their last budget through tricky accounting that withheld money from the NHMRC and forced them to claim back what they'd spent – no way to give certainty to the medical research sector.

The reality is that only the Coalition can be trusted to invest in medical research.

Costs

The Coalition will invest \$20 million to build Australia's medical research capabilities.



THE NATIONALS
for Regional Australia

For further details of the Coalition's plan go to
www.liberal.org.au/our-plan
nationals.org.au/our-plan/