

24 November 2021

## Centenary Institute receives \$1.8m in funding for cardiovascular research

World-leading research into cardiovascular disease has been boosted with three researchers from the Centenary Institute securing Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program grants from the NSW government.

A leading cause of death globally, cardiovascular disease includes a range of conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels. It is Australia's leading cause of death and one of the nation's largest health problems.

The researchers will use the grants to investigate and improve patient health in the areas of inherited heart disease and aortic aneurysms.

Professor Mathew Vadas AO, Executive Director at the Centenary Institute, congratulated the researchers on their success.

“Cardiovascular disease causes one in four deaths in Australia with a further 1.2 million Australians living with one or more heart or vascular conditions. Acceleration of research in this critical health area is required to help Australians live longer and healthier lives.”

“I'm thrilled to see our talented scientists gain this support for their technologically advanced and insightful projects which will lead to improved cardiovascular outcomes for the wider community,” said Professor Vadas.

### Successful Centenary Institute scientists and their research:

**Dr Richard Bagnall.** *Centenary Institute. Awarded a Cardiovascular Senior Researcher Grant. \$750,000 over three years.*

Dr Bagnall will use the funding to improve genetic diagnosis in patients and their families with inherited heart disease. He will turn patient's blood cells into heart cells in cell-culture dishes to identify the genetic causes of disease and explore patient-specific therapeutics.

**Associate Professor Mathias Francois.** *Centenary Institute and The University of Sydney. Awarded a Cardiovascular Senior Researcher Grant. \$677,000 over three years.* Associate Professor Francois will use the funding to identify new biomarkers to predict the risk of adverse cardiac events for patients suffering from left ventricular non compaction cardiomyopathy. This is a condition in which a weakened heart muscle cannot pump blood effectively.

**Dr Justin Wong.** *Centenary Institute. Awarded a Cardiovascular Early-Mid Career Researcher Grant. \$450,000 over three years.*

Dr Wong will use the funding to identify new ways to treat aortic aneurysms (a bulge in the wall of the aorta that can rupture) through chemical modification of aneurysm-regulated genes.

Funding high quality cardiovascular research, the NSW Government's Cardiovascular Research Capacity Program aims to drive scientific discoveries, support the development

of novel and innovative therapies, and improve health outcomes for patients with cardiovascular disease.

[ENDS]

**Images:**

Dr Richard Bagnall

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Associate Professor Mathias Francois

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y8AKTQDw\\_LZv0bRDYiUSwGoiS0f2Hf8g/](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y8AKTQDw_LZv0bRDYiUSwGoiS0f2Hf8g/)

Dr Justin Wong

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dT-v7yhh6zYUqZlqT54S\\_aKsDmZhIk8F/](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dT-v7yhh6zYUqZlqT54S_aKsDmZhIk8F/)

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**About the Centenary Institute**

The Centenary Institute is a world-leading independent medical research institute, closely affiliated to the University of Sydney and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Our research focuses on three key areas: cancer, inflammation and cardiovascular disease. Our strength lies in uncovering disease mechanisms and applying this knowledge to improve diagnostics and treatments for patients.

**For more information about the Centenary Institute, visit [centenary.org.au](http://centenary.org.au)**