



# QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute aims to improve health by developing prevention strategies, new diagnostics and better health treatments.

## Our mission

Better health through medical research

## Our vision

To be a world-renowned medical research institution that translates discoveries into clinical practice

## Our objectives

### 1. Foster scientific excellence

Excellence is the foundation of translating research to society and starts with leading researchers' discoveries.

#### Key strategies

- Recognise and reward scientific excellence.
- Continue to prioritise employment security for faculty.
- Fund early-stage research to leverage external grants.
- Continue to ensure research authenticity.
- Identify opportunities and change the emphasis of research to maximise the chances to be leaders.
- Stress a strong multi-disciplinary commitment to address key health challenges or further develop new inter-disciplinary clusters.

#### Performance measures

- Maintain number one position, among competitor institutes, for scientific output (measured by number of publications annually).
- Maintain a five-year growth rate of more than 15% for total citations.
- Increase quality and quantity of scientific output (measured by h-Index) of Faculty to 40 by 2020 and maintain that level.

### 2. Build scientific, institutional and international connectivity

The success of the Institute is dependent on the links it builds locally and internationally.

#### Key strategies

- Maintain strong relationships with the Herston campus and the universities and take an active involvement in the redevelopment of the Herston campus.
- Actively participate in the Brisbane Diamantina Health Partners Advanced Health Research and Translation Centre as one of eight of Queensland's leading hospitals, health bodies, universities and research institutes.
- Maintain and strengthen the Institute's Asia Strategy that seeks to identify opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and fundraising in Asia.
- Develop greater links with European and US laboratories, building on ongoing collaborations.
- Continue to identify opportunities and support the delivery of international research conferences in Brisbane.

#### Performance measures

- Increase invitations to speak at international conferences to 100 in five years (measured using data gathered in the Institute's annual census).
- Increase international lectures to 200 in five years.
- Increase invitations to speak at national conferences to 150 in five years.

### 3. Undertake research with economic, clinical and community consequences

Our mission requires us to go beyond discovery research and to also increase our commercial-related activities, to translate our research to the clinic through clinical trials, and to engage with the community.

#### Key strategies

- Consolidate 'bench to business to bedside (B2B2B)' into the philosophy and functioning of the Institute.
- Continue to operate the 'SEED Box' (Scientific Exploitation and Entrepreneurial Development) fund to support projects that have advanced beyond the proof-of-concept stage to help them grow toward commercialisation.
- Maintain the focus on translational research.
- Strengthen collaborations with clinical partners, especially those on the Herston campus.
- Undertake research of relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- Engage with our community of supporters relevant to our growing programs in cancer, infectious diseases, mental health and chronic disorders.

## Contribution to government objectives

QIMR Berghofer contributes to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community, *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities*, to Create jobs in a strong economy, to Keep Queenslanders healthy and to Give all our children a great start. We contribute to Create jobs in a strong economy by leveraging government support five-fold annually. We are actively recruiting researchers in areas of high importance to Queensland — including cellular immunotherapies, tropical diseases, vaccine development, cancer and genetics — and have expanded to more than 900 scientists, visiting scientists, students and support staff. Each of the four programs — Cancer, Infectious Diseases, Mental Health and Chronic Disorders — has been selected to align with the needs of Queensland. In the process, we have seen some of our commercial ideas grow into new start-up companies. In the next five years we envisage that these will grow and create more employment and that other licensing and start-up opportunities will come from our pipeline of research.

We directly contribute to the Queensland Government's objective to Keep Queenslanders healthy and to Give all our children a great start by translating the knowledge we produce and discoveries we make into improved clinical practice, thereby strengthening our public health system. QIMR Berghofer's research focusses on improving the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of a range of diseases and conditions relevant to Queenslanders, which will help address pressures facing the public health care sector by lessening rates of disease and improving quality of life and health care practices. Our research in cancer and mental health is particularly important given our ageing population. Our work in infectious diseases, especially tropical diseases, is vital given the increasing numbers of people living in the tropics and the pole-ward migration of species due to climate change bringing tropical diseases closer to major population centres. Our research into mental health, such as dementia, Alzheimer's and depression, addresses rises in the incidence of these diseases due to demographic and social changes. Our work in our expanding Chronic Disorders program will address many of the health impacts associated with changes in our demographics and lifestyles, including health impacts affecting children. Our work is helping to broaden and deepen Queensland's economic base, especially in the high-value, high-growth health and medical sector.

QIMR Berghofer is a translational research facility, where research develops from the laboratory bench through to the patient's bedside. In developing our research, we promote and develop industry linkages, which is in keeping with our understanding that 'bench to bedside' incorporates a business phase (B2B2B). The Institute's research supports different Queensland scientific and medical sectors by researching and creating new and improved treatments and screening programs for various diseases and disorders.

## Performance measures

- Maintain the percentage of QIMR Berghofer researchers engaged in collaborations with clinicians at 60% or greater (measured using data gathered in the Institute's annual census).
- Increase the number of active clinical trials to 40 in five years.
- Grow commercial income to \$10 million per year in five years.

## 4. Strengthen enabling mechanisms

To succeed with our ambitious program, an integrated strategy has to be in place, which includes personnel, infrastructure, expertise and financial support.

### Key strategies

- Diversify and expand income sources.
- Expand external stakeholder and consumer reference groups.
- Continue to plan and roll out a major philanthropy campaign.
- Maintain expenditure on required cutting-edge, large-scale equipment.
- Ensure efficiency across all operations.
- Maintain a high level of internal communication and input into decision making.

### Performance measures

- Achieve an increase in philanthropic income.
- Achieve an increase in commercial income.
- Achieve an increase in NHMRC and MRFF grant funding.

## Strategic risks

A scan of the environment in which QIMR Berghofer is operating highlights the following major strategic risks:

- Loss of funding, through constriction or re-focusing of national research funding, State Government funding, donor support or a drop in competitive grant funding success, resulting in a reduction in the Institute's research program.
- Problems experienced in a clinical trial or experimental research, or a fall in research or ethical standards, resulting in reputational damage.
- Over-burdening compliance/governance, stretching limited Institute human resources and resulting in reduction of service and standards.
- An inability to recruit and retain the highest-quality researchers in a competitive market, resulting in a reduction in QIMR Berghofer's reputation for scientific excellence.
- A decline in standard of research infrastructure, resulting in lowered research output.





## QIMR Berghofer Strategic Plan continued

### Key opportunities

- Continue to partner with key collaborating Institutions — including the Brisbane Diamantina Health Partners, the Herston Precinct and the Queensland Genomics Health Alliance — to maximise the impact of the Institute's research.
- Continue to tailor QIMR Berghofer's research program to the needs of the community.
- Establish a reputation as a world-leading location for cell therapy development and manufacturing.
- Continue to diversify income stream through commercialisation, philanthropy and rental income.
- Grow companies based on the discoveries at the Institute.

