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VIERTEL FOUNDATION AWARDS \$3.75M IN THREE MEDICAL FELLOWSHIPS

FUNDING AUSTRALIAN TALENT AND INNOVATION IN MEDICAL SCIENCE

\$3.75 million has been awarded to three mid-career Australian researchers through the prestigious annual Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation Senior Medical Research Fellowships in association with Bellberry.

In 2018 the grants will support projects in immunology therapies to fight cancers and disease, and measures to transform the health of Aboriginal young people.

The 2018 Senior Medical Research Fellows are:

1. Dr Kim Jacobson, Monash University's [Biomedicine Discovery Institute](#)
2. Dr Laura Mackay, University of Melbourne, [Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity](#) (Doherty Institute)
3. Associate Professor James Ward, [South Australian Health and Medical Science Institute](#) and Flinders University, Adelaide

(See following pages for details on each)

Jodi Kennedy, General Manager of Charitable Trusts and Philanthropy, said Equity Trustees valued the partnership with fellow trustees Justice Debra Mullins (Chair), Rex Freudenberg, and Paul de Silva: "We are committed to supporting the objectives of the Viertel Foundation, and honoured to be a trustee of one of Australia's largest charitable foundations which distributes around \$8 million annually.

"It is a privilege to work with our fellow trustees. Some of them knew and worked with Charles Viertel until he passed away in 1992, leaving this Trust to continue to support the causes he cared so much about during his life," Ms Kennedy said.

Each Fellow will receive \$1.25 million (\$250,000 per year for five years) to support the critical work of Australia's most outstanding mid-career researchers and continue the development of their expertise. For the third year, Bellberry Limited has funded an additional joint Bellberry-Viertel Fellowship to the same value.

Of the two Viertel Fellowships funded directly by the Foundation, one is awarded to a woman and one to a man as part of the Foundation's commitment to encouraging excellence and gender equality in the fields of medical and scientific research.

Professor Peter Leedman, Chairman of the Viertel Foundation's Medical Advisory Board, revealed that the 2018 candidates were a very strong and closely matched high quality field representing very different disciplines, making the decision of selecting three from the six finalists extremely challenging.

"We really saw the depth and breadth of scientific research in Australia and it was truly inspiring. Every candidate is worthy of support for their research into areas which will have a critical impact on advancing health outcomes for Australians and the world," he said.



Bellberry CEO, Kylie Sproston said: "There are relatively few opportunities like this in Australia – offering stability for a research endeavour for five years. If we want to have a vibrant future for medical research in Australia, we need to provide grants that support mid-career researchers to build their teams and deliver the outcomes they are working so hard to achieve – whether it's a new approach to cancer therapies or interventions to get better health outcomes for our First Australians."

"This Foundation is a classic example of the power of philanthropy to fund incredibly worthwhile initiatives that have a real impact on our community," concluded Ms Kennedy.

In addition, five clinical investigation scholarships were awarded, each of \$85,000 for one year to:

1. Dr Claudia de Bella (University of Melbourne)
2. Dr Gareth Gregory (Monash University)
3. Dr Piero Perucca (Monash University)
4. Dr Charlotte Slade (Melbourne Health)
5. Dr Craig Wallington-Beddoe (Flinders University)

Click the link for more about the [Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation](#) and [Bellberry](#).

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