mRNA Victoria Pipeline Program – Round 1

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

VICTORIA
State Government

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1. Program Overview

1.1 Background

mRNA Victoria has partnered with BioNTech to establish a state-of-the-art clinical and R&D manufacturing facility at La Trobe University's Bundoora campus and support translation and commercialisation of local research. The GMP clinical scale mRNA manufacturing facility (**GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility**) is currently under construction, and BioNTech launched their R&D Production Laboratory in November 2025. The R&D Production Laboratory has begun producing research grade RNA materials for Australian researchers.

Once complete, the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility will produce next generation mRNA vaccines and treatments for Phase I, II and III clinical trials. This facility will be available for medical research institutes, biotech and life science companies to develop early stage and clinical vaccines and therapies, with access to BioNTech's world-leading expertise in mRNA product development.

Established in May 2021, mRNA Victoria is a Victorian Government business unit within the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (**DJSIR**) responsible for building a leading mRNA and RNA industry in the Asia Pacific region. Victoria is positioned at the forefront of mRNA innovation to advance the next generation of RNA-based therapies.

Victoria, through mRNA Victoria, has partnered with BioNTech to provide access to clinical-scale manufacturing at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility, subsidised by the State, in order to remove significant cost and access barrier to translation and commercialisation.

mRNA Victoria and DJSIR (the Department) will administer this Program.

1.2 About the Program

The purpose of this Grant Program is to advance mRNA research of innovative therapeutics and vaccines towards readiness for manufacture at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility for phase I clinical trials. The Victorian Government has established the mRNA Victoria Pipeline Program (the Program) and the first round will provide up to $2 million to advance pre-clinical mRNA candidates towards GMP manufacturing for Phase 1 clinical trials.

1.3 Program Objectives

The Program will provide non-dilutive funding with the aim to advance pre-clinical mRNA candidates towards GMP manufacturing for Phase 1 clinical trials.

The objectives of the Program are to:

- increase the pipeline of candidates for manufacturing of pre-clinical mRNA by BioNTech

- support preclinical proof-of concept studies and activities in Victoria for mRNA-based therapeutics and vaccines at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 3 or above (refer to section 4.1, figure 1)
- leverage the presence of BioNTech in Australia and access their unique expertise and skills to build sector capability in mRNA commercialisation
- clinical proof-of-concept studies
- manufacturing of pre-clinical mRNA by BioNTech
- access to professional guidance on product development, Target Product Profile (TPP) strategy, IND-enabling studies (non-clinical toxicity studies, CMC) and regulatory strategy.

1.4 Program Outcomes

Program Outcomes will form the basis for evaluation of the Program. The following outcomes are expected to be achieved through the Program:

- mRNA vaccine or therapeutic candidates have advanced from the pre-clinical stage towards Phase 1 clinical trials
- project teams have produced, or will produce, a candidate therapeutic or vaccine that is suitable to manufacture at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility
- more therapeutic or vaccine candidates are available, or will be available, to use the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility.

1.5 Promoting Gender Equality

Under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (VIC), the department has a duty to promote gender equality. This Program seeks to promote gender equality by encouraging the increase in participation of women in Applicant project teams.

This mVP Program allocates a proportion of the Assessment Criteria weighting (5% total) in favour of Applicants with project teams who include at least 50% members who are women or are led by a woman as Chief Investigator (CI)

2. Available Funding

Applicants may apply for grant funding of up to a maximum of $1 million (exclusive of GST).

2.1 Project Budget

Applicants must provide evidence that they have sufficient funds, in addition to the Program funding, to complete the Project.

If the Project budget exceeds the grant funding, Applicants must provide evidence they have sufficient funds to complete the Project.

3. Applicant Eligibility

3.1 Eligible Applicants

Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- hold an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be an eligible legal entity type as at Section 3.2
- operate from a Victorian location, or be headquartered in Victoria, or have a subsidiary based in the State
- hold the Intellectual Property or have the rights to commercialise the technology-innovation in Australia and major international markets.

3.2 Eligible entity types

Applicants must be one of the following legal entity types[1]:

- a company registered under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)
- an incorporated association registered under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)
- a statutory corporation such as a university, hospital or TAFE.

3.3 Ineligible Applicants

The following are not eligible to apply:

- a Commonwealth, state or local government agency or body[2]
- a State department, agency, entity or other body established under the Public Administration Act 2004 (VIC) or equivalent legislation of another Australian jurisdiction

[1] Applicant entities must be registered with appropriate regulator/s, which may include but are not limited to: Australian Securities and Investment Commission, Consumer Affairs Victoria and/or other applicable regulators.
[2] This exclusion applies also to a body corporate under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

- a company not incorporated in Australia
- an unincorporated association
- a trust or incorporated trustee
- a partnership or an individual partner on behalf of a partnership
- an individual
- a sole trader.

3.4 Other conditions of applying

Applicants should note that if successful in receiving a grant, they must agree to:

- comply with the Fair Jobs Code, if applicable, and hold a Fair Jobs Code Pre-Assessment Certificate
- hold appropriate insurances for the Project [e.g. public liability]
- participate in future Program evaluation activities
- use best endeavours to spend the majority of the Grant funding in Victoria and conduct the funded eligible activities in Victoria, unless activities cannot be undertaken in Victoria (e.g. specialist providers not available in Victoria)
- if employing Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for the purposes of the Project, the FTE must be based in Victoria
- successful applications funded by the Program that result in eligible clinical candidates must commit to negotiating in the first instance with the State (and its assignees) to manufacture the candidate at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility if the candidates progress to clinical trials.

4. What will be funded

Projects proposed for funding must be for:

- mRNA vaccines – for infectious diseases, microbial and other emerging health threats, or
- mRNA therapeutics – including mRNA-based treatments for cancers, genetic disorders, rare diseases and autoimmune conditions.

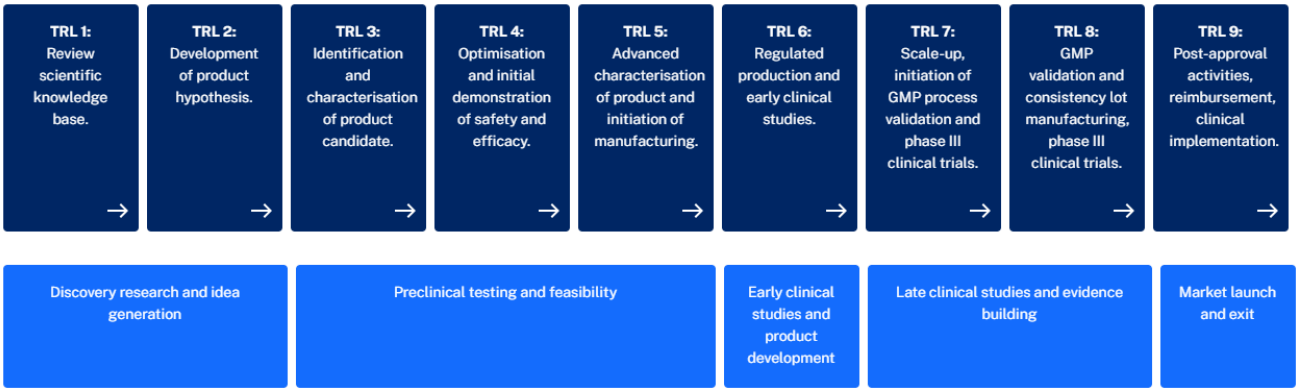
mRNA candidates must be assessed as at the TRL 3-5 stage, with TRL 2 considered in exceptional cases (see Section 4.1).

4.1 Project Eligibility

Projects must:

- be undertaken in Victoria, or where activities must be undertaken outside Victoria, the application must explain why (e.g. access to specific expertise not available in Victoria).
- have identified a candidate that has demonstrated proof-of-principle in vitro and in vivo (animal studies) at a TRL 3 or higher. See Figure 1 below for TRL definitions. Candidates at TRL 2 may be considered in exceptional cases, if they are about to progress to TRL 3 or have a credible plan to achieve TRL 4 within two years. TRL 2 candidates must exhibit a high likelihood of therapeutic potential and merit further investigation for clinical development.
- be a product that is capable of being produced at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility in Victoria.
- be completed within three years. Projects will be required to detail clear and achievable milestones to progress to a higher TRL within three years from the time of applying for the Program.

Figure 1 – Technology Readiness Levels Definitions



4.2 Intellectual Property

Applicants must hold or secure transferable rights to required background intellectual property (IP), with access on commercial terms for market entry, and confirm freedom to operate.

The Applicant must have a clear plan to secure any background IP required for the commercialisation of their mRNA candidate.

mRNA Victoria and BioNTech SE does not seek or retain ownership of any IP arising from or associated with funded projects. All IP remains with the participating organisation or company.

4.3 Eligible activities & expenses

The Grant must be spent on eligible activities and expenditure as listed below.

Eligible activities and expenses include:

- accessing facilities, capabilities, or services to test, verify and validate, develop or scale up a manufactured product for new market opportunities
- purchasing capital equipment to support end-to-end product development
- preclinical and validation studies, including proof-of-concept, safety, efficacy and stability assessments
- manufacture of pre-clinical mRNA at the BioNTech R&D Production Laboratory.
- production of prototype or pilot batches and preparation for GMP manufacturing at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility.
- application of enabling technologies to improve product performance, manufacturability or cost-efficiency
- activities supporting regulatory readiness, such as pathway planning, certification or approvals
- commercialisation planning, including reimbursement strategy, market testing and feasibility studies
- activities on product development, Target Product Profile (TPP) strategy and IND-enabling studies
- regulatory and intellectual property fees and charges associated with registering domestic or international patents or other intellectual property enforcement expenses, with a limit of maximum 20% of Grant Funding
- access to specialist equipment, infrastructure or external expertise essential to Project delivery
- workshops or training activities for up-skilling in commercialisation
- equipment, consumables and services required for the research activity as outlined in the Project description provided that such equipment, consumable or service is not listed as an ineligible activity/expense in section 4.4.

The Department makes the final decision on what is an eligible activity or expenditure in alignment with Program Objectives.

4.4 Ineligible activities & expenses

Ineligible activities may include:

- activities that are already funded or have been partially funded by other government funding or activities that have already begun are ineligible.

Ineligible expenditure may include:

The Grant cannot be spent on the following:

- usual operational expenditure, including existing staff costs, communications, travel, internal or business operational training, entertainment, accommodation, maintenance, office computing equipment, printing, stationery, postage, bank charges, rent and utilities and management fees to parent companies
- routine replacement or minor upgrade of plant and equipment
- basic and routine professional services including legal and accounting fees
- any amount paid on account of goods and services tax
- costs related to preparing the grant application, preparing any Project reports and preparing any Project variation requests
- building routine websites, sales and promotional activities, marketing or communications campaigns
- expenses incurred prior to Grant Agreement execution
- any other expenditure as determined by the Department that does not meet Program Objectives.

4.5 Project Duration

Projects are expected to commence on execution of the Grant Agreement with the Department and be completed within 3 years.

Applicants will be required to supply Project specific dates that fit within the above timeframes, as part of their application. Applicants may also be required to provide proposed key deliverables or Project milestones.

5. How to apply

5.1 Key Dates

Key dates are available on the Program website. https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/mrna-victoria-pipeline-grant-program-round-one

Applications must be submitted in the portal by 5 pm on the closing date. Please note that late applications will not be accepted other than in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Department.

The application open period will be 5 weeks.

All Applicants will be advised via email of the outcome of their application within approximately 3 months from the closing date.

The above indicative timeline is subject to change at the sole discretion of the Department. Applicants are not to rely on this indicative timeline and the Department does not accept any liability in relation to any consequences attributable to reliance on this timeline.

5.2 Submitting an application

Applicants should undertake the following steps to apply:

1. Carefully read these Program Guidelines and the 'Frequently Asked Questions' found on the Program website. https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/mrna-victoria-pipeline-grant-program-round-one
2. Compile all necessary application supporting documents as detailed in the 'Documentation and Information Requirements' section below.
3. Submit application online via 'Apply now' button on the Program website.
4. Ensure you receive an email confirmation of application submission. Please check spam/junk mail if confirmation email cannot be seen in your inbox.

Only final applications that are lodged with the Department will be considered and assessed. Applications that are still in 'draft' and have not been submitted upon Program close will not be assessed.

Applicants will be required to declare in the application form that all information in their application is true and correct.

5.3 Documentation and Evidence Requirements

Notes on support documents and material submitted via the Program website:

- You can upload and submit up to 10 files and/or 10 URLs (external links).
- Attached files can be no more than 25MB in size each.

- It may be necessary to combine supporting material into one document in some instances, i.e. multiple images or letters of support may be compiled into one PDF or JPG file.

	Mandatory or Optional	Documentation
1	**Mandatory**	A detailed **Project plan** that may include: • a Project description • Project timeline and milestones • details of internal resources allocated to the Project • the role of any Project partners • Project risks and mitigation strategies • detailed Project budget.
2	**Mandatory**	A **Letter of Support** or other written confirmation from BioNTech that confirms the applicant's candidate could likely be manufactured at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility. Please email ICAustralia@biontech.com to contact the BioNTech Innovation Centre to discuss your project.
3	**Mandatory**	**Quotations** from suppliers detailing costs, or a more detailed Scope of Services from a third-party service provider
4	**Mandatory**	**Evidence of sufficient funds** Applicants must provide evidence which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Department, that the Applicant has the ability to fund any Project activities that are not funded by the Grant .

5	**Mandatory (for applications of $50,001 or more)**	For applications of $50,001 or more, financial accounts are required. Unless an exemption applies (see section 6.4), Applicants must provide evidence which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Department, that the Applicant is financially viable and able to deliver the Project and its outcomes. This requires at a minimum, the provision of the following: • Audited Financial Reports from the last three financial years (including Profit & Loss Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flows, and notes to the accounts). If accounts are not audited, unaudited accounts from an Accountant will be accepted. • If the most recent Financial Report is more than six months old, then up to date management or interim accounts for the current year, including Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet. Also, in the case of public listed corporations, a half yearly financial report. • If less than 3 years of financial records are available, Eligible Applicants must submit either Audited or External Accountant prepared financials for the available period and the company's financial projections for the next three financial years, including Profit and Loss Statement and Cash Flow.
6	**Mandatory Fair Jobs Code Pre-Assessment Certificate (PAC)**	Applications seeking Victorian Government funding of $500,000 or more (exclusive of GST) are required to hold a Fair Jobs Code Pre-Assessment Certificate (PAC). Applicants can visit the Fair Jobs Code website to complete and submit the online application form via the Fair Codes Job Portal. This link provides information on how to apply and what documentation is required to have available at the time of completing the application.

7	**Optional**	A **Target Product Profile** is a strategic document that defines the desired characteristics of a product under development. It may include sections such as Product Description, Indication, Key Attributes, Regulatory Pathway, Manufacturing, IP Strategy, Commercialization, Timeline, Resources, Risks, and Budget. An example template is available from the Program Website, or the Applicant can submit their own.

6. Assessment

This is a competitive program and successful applications will be required to rate highly against the Program's assessment criteria compared to other eligible applications.

6.1 Assessment Process

The following assessment process will be followed:

1. Applications will be verified against the eligibility criteria
2. Eligible applications will be assessed by an external assessment panel and will be scored against the assessment criteria (at section 6.2) to create a ranking of projects.
3. All supplementary attachments and information provided as part of the application will be taken into consideration during the assessment process.
4. Applications may undergo due diligence checks, including financial risk assessments where required.
5. The mRNA Victoria Scientific Advisory Board will review the ranking of projects in an advisory capacity.
6. Final review will be undertaken by departmental executives to consider due diligence findings and determine the number of recommended Applicants subject to funding available.
7. Funding recommendations will be made to the Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs for final decision.

6.2 Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed on how well they meet the assessment criteria as outlined below.

Applicants will be asked to respond to the criteria (column 1) and keep in mind assessment considerations and weighting (columns 2 and 3).

To be competitive, an application must address each assessment criterion and make a case for funding that can be substantiated. Any underlying risks and assumptions should be clearly stated.

Further information may be sought from Applicants if required.

Assessment Criteria	What will be considered	Weighting
1. Project alignment and impact	• Clear description of the proposed Project demonstrating alignment with the Program's objectives and outcomes. • Potential for the Project to progress to clinical scale manufacturing, including at the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility. • Evidence of a clear public health or clinical gap, including disease burden or population/user need, and the Project's potential for meaningful impact. • Expected benefits of developing the mRNA candidate in Victoria, including job creation, enhanced innovation capacity, and sovereign capability.	25%
2. Commercial potential	• A clear description of the pathway to market for the proposed mRNA candidate, including anticipated regulatory approvals and commercialisation strategy. • Evidence of market opportunity, including size, growth potential, and unmet need for the indication. • Intellectual property position and strategy, including patents filed or planned. • Plans for partnerships, licensing, or co-development to enable commercialisation. • The innovation, uniqueness, and ability of the proposed candidate to address the identified unmet need.	30%

3. Project readiness and capability to deliver	• Description of how the candidate meets the required minimum TRL 3 and provide justification for the Application if the TRL level is TRL 2. • The proposed Project delivery arrangements, including budget, deliverables and milestones to be achieved within three years. • Timeliness of the Project, including why funding is necessary at the current stage. • Capability and capacity of the Applicant and Project team to deliver the Project, including track record, skills and intellectual property to be allocated to the Project. • Detail of any Project oversight arrangements.	30%
4. Need for government support	• Evidence demonstrating that the Project would not proceed without government support or would achieve significantly less impact. • Evidence that government funding will accelerate the Project or provide significant additionality. • Plans to leverage additional funding, partnerships, or co-investment to amplify the Project's sustainability and impact. • The project's value for government money to achieve the Program objectives and outcomes.	10%
5. Promotion of gender equality	• The applicant demonstrates that at the time of project commencement, the project team will consist of at least 50% members who are women.	2.5%
	• The applicant's project is led by a Chief Investigator who is a woman.	2.5%
		100%

6.3 Due Diligence checks

Applicants may be subject to due diligence checks to enable the Department to assess financial and other non-financial risks associated with the application.

Such checks may include:

- the potential for reputational risk to the State
- the risk profile, financial viability and management capacity of the Applicant's business over the duration of the proposed activity
- whether the proposal has received funding through other means
- the delivery performance of other grants contracted with the Victorian Government and whether the Applicant has failed to meet key contractual obligations.

Outcomes from such assessments may be taken into account in any decision to recommend or award a Grant and in contracting with successful Applicants.

The Department may, at any time, remove an Applicant from the application and assessment process, if in the Department's opinion, association with the Applicant may bring the Department, a minister or the State of Victoria into disrepute.

6.4 Financial Risk Assessments

Applicants will be required to undergo a Financial Risk Assessment. The documents required are listed in section 5.3. Applicants with less than 3 financial years of operation are still eligible to apply. If the last three financial year's reports are not available, Eligible Applicants must submit either Audited or External Accountant prepared financials for the available period and the company's financial projections for the next three financial years, including Profit and Loss Statement and Cash Flow.

Applicants may be exempt from an FRA if they satisfy one of the following conditions:

- Entities applying for a Grant of up to and including $50,000
- Publicly funded universities and educational institutions.

7. Notification of Outcomes

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their Grant application via email.

The Department will endeavour to notify Applicants of the outcome of their application within 3-6 weeks.

8. Conditions of Funding

8.1 Funding Offer

Applicants will be advised in writing if they are successful and will be required to accept the funding offer in writing 10 days from the date of the offer.

An offer of funding is not binding on the Department unless and until both the Department and the Applicant execute the Grant Agreement.

The Department requires that any offer remain confidential until after an agreement has been executed and the funding formally announced.

8.2 Grant Agreements

Successful Applicants will be invited to enter into a legally binding Grant Agreement with the State of Victoria (State) as represented by the Department.

The Applicant will be required to sign the Grant in 30 days from acceptance of offer. The funding offer may lapse if the Grant Agreement is not signed by the Applicant within the timeframe given. The Department is the final signatory to the Grant Agreement.

The Project, and any expenditure of funds associated with the Project, must not commence until the Grant Agreement has been executed. Agreement execution means the Grant Agreement has been signed by both the Department and the Applicant.

Once the Grant Agreement has been executed, the Grant Recipient (successful Applicant) will be required to commence the Project by the Commencement Date and within the agreed timeframe.

The Grant Agreement details all funding obligations and conditions such as:

- the Project and Project outcomes
- payments/payment milestones
- funding use
- Grant activity/milestone deliverables and due dates
- reporting on Project activity, spend and Project outcomes
- accounting and audit
- publicity and acknowledgment
- a ROFR
- refund events
- termination rights
- compliance with policies and laws (as applicable).

A copy of the Grant Agreement template is available upon request.

8.3 Grant Payments

Payments will be made against the proposed Project timelines and in milestone payment instalments.

8.3.1 Eftsure bank account verification

Prior to Grant payments being issued, the Department will use Eftsure software for verification of bank details. Eftsure is an Australian digital software company that deliver real time payment verification assurance to payment issuers. It is used to help reduce payment fraud and errors by ensuring electronic funds transfers go to the right payees. For more information on Eftsure and how they securely verify bank details, please visit the Eftsure website.

Successful Applicants will be provided further information on how this process works and what is required of them.

8.3.3 Refund Events

The Department has the right to a refund of the whole or part of the Grant amount paid in certain circumstances which are set out in the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement. This includes failure to meet milestone deliverables or complete the Project in the manner agreed to in the Grant Agreement or where there is conduct which may bring the Department, minister or State into disrepute.

8.4 Publicity and acknowledgement of support

Successful Applicants may be required to attend a presentation ceremony and agree to be photographed for news articles or appear in videos regarding the Program. Grant recipients must co-operate with the Department in relation to all publicity and promotion of the Grant.

The Department requires Grant Recipients to acknowledge the Victorian Government's support on all promotional materials and appropriate signage, which must be consistent with the Guidelines for Victorian Government Advertising and Communications or as otherwise specified by the Department. The Department will supply the Grant Recipient with a logo suite and associated brand guidelines, as well as a guide on how to acknowledge government support, for the purposes of acknowledgment. Grant Recipients must obtain written approval from the Department before making public announcements about receiving the Grant.

The Department may publicise the benefits accruing to a Grant Recipient associated with the grant and the State's support for the Project, and recipients must cooperate with the Department in promoting the Program. These requirements are currently outlined in the Grant

Agreement. The Department may include the name of the Grant Recipient, and the amount of funding granted in any publicity material and in the Department's annual report.

8. Program Evaluation

As a condition of funding, successful Applicants will be required to deliver regular Project reports in accordance with conditions set out in the Grant Agreement. As a condition of funding, Grant Recipients will be required to participate in any Program monitoring and evaluation activities initiated by the Department. This may include completing surveys throughout the Program and for a nominated period of time after Program completion to measure progress to achieving outcomes. Reporting is critical to the Department in understanding Program impact, supporting continuous improvement in Program design and delivery, and delivering effective Grant Program outcomes for Victoria.

9. Privacy Statement

Any personal information provided for this Program will be collected and used by the Department for the purposes of assessing eligibility, program administration, program review and evaluation.

The Department completes a range of eligibility assessments that may include data matching to clarify the accuracy and quality of information supplied. This is part of our auditing and monitoring processes and for confirming eligibility across this Program.

In assessing an application for the Program as well as in any audit or evaluation of a successful Grant, it may be necessary to share personal information with State and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies, as well as other external experts. If personal information about a third party is included in the application, the Applicant must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.

The Department collects demographic information for economic reporting purposes. No personal information is used in reporting; all reports are presented with aggregated data.

Any personal information about the Applicant or a third party will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed, or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and other applicable laws.

Enquiries about access or correction to your personal information, can be emailed to mrnavictoria@ecodev.vic.gov.au. Other concerns regarding the privacy of personal information, can be emailed to the Department's Privacy Unit at privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au. The Department's privacy policy is also available by emailing the Department's Privacy Unit.

10. Department Probity and Decision-making

The Victorian Government makes every effort to ensure the Grant application and assessment process is fair and undertaken in line with the published Program Guidelines.

Decisions in recommending and awarding Grant funding under this Program are at the Minister's and Department's discretion. This includes not making any funding available or approving a lesser amount than that applied for.

These guidelines and application terms may be changed from time to time, within the discretion of the Department and the changes will apply to your application.

The Department may request the Applicant provide further information should it be necessary to assess an application to the Program's policy objectives.

Victorian Government staff are required to act in accord with the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees (Section 61) issued under the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Vic). This includes an obligation to avoid conflicts of interest wherever possible and declare and manage any conflicts of interest that cannot be avoided.

10.1 Applicant conflict of interest

A conflict of interest arises where a person makes a decision or exercises a power in a way that may be, or may be perceived to be, influenced by either material personal interests (financial or non-financial) or material personal associations. A conflict of interest may arise where a Grant Applicant:

- has a professional, commercial, or personal relationship with a party who is able to, or may be perceived to, influence the application assessment process, such as a Victorian Government staff member, or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation which is likely to interfere with or restrict the Applicant from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently.

Applicants must advise the Department of any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest relating to a Project for which it has applied for funding.

10.2 Feedback to unsuccessful Applicants

Due to the expected high volume of applications for this Program, feedback on individual application outcomes will not be able to be provided.

10.3 Complaints

If an Applicant wants to lodge a complaint or provide feedback to the Department about the process for a Grant application, requests can be made via this online form, by sending a written request to mrnavictoria@ecodev.vic.gov.au or 1800 878 969.

Requests can be made in relation to the application process and adherence to these guidelines. Re-assessment of an application or overturning of a funding decision for a merit-based Grant, will not be considered through the complaints process.

Once your complaint has been received by the Department, it will be acknowledged within 2 working days and provided to the review team to be resolved. Your complaint will be resolved within 28 business days unless further investigation is required. If further investigation is required, you may be contacted by phone or email asking for additional information.

11. Payment of GST on Grant funding

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable, we will add GST to your Grant payment.

> Example: If the approved funding is $100,000 GST exclusive, the Department will process payments totalling $110,000 ($100,000 GST exclusive funding + $10,000 GST).

12. Legislation and Policy obligations

Fair Jobs Code

The Victorian Fair Job Code enables the Victorian Government to use its purchasing power to promote secure employment and fair labour standards and ensure compliance with employment, workplace and industrial laws.

The code sets standards that suppliers and businesses contracting with Victorian Government must meet:

- Standard 1: Comply with all applicable employment, industrial relations and workplace health and safety obligations.
- Standard 2: Promote secure employment and job security.
- Standard 3: Foster cooperative and constructive relationships between employers, employees and their representatives.
- Standard 4: Foster workplace equity and diversity.
- Standard 5: Promote supply chain compliance.

Suppliers and businesses are required to:

- meet standard 1 to be able to receive a pre-assessment certificate

- address standards 2 - 5 in their Fair Jobs Code plan (for high value procurement contracts and significant business expansion grants).

Applicants can visit our website to complete and submit the online application form to Apply for a Fair Jobs Code Pre-Assessment Certificate. This link provides information on how to apply and what documentation is required to have available at the time of completing the application.

marra ngarrgoo, marra goorri: The Victorian Aboriginal Health, Medical, and Wellbeing Research Accord

marra ngarrgoo, marra goorri (the Accord) endeavours to improve the ethical standards of health, medical and wellbeing research that impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Victorian Government is a Party to the Accord and strives to uphold its values and guiding principles to ensure improved ethical standards and cultural safety, and adherence to self-determination principles.

Applications from organisations and collaborative partners that have endorsed marra ngarrgoo, marra goorri and can outline how they uphold its principles are encouraged.

13. Record keeping for recipients / Accounting and Audit

Grant recipients must keep proper accounts as required by law and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

Recipients may be subject to audit and will be required to retain records following completion of the Project and provide access and produce evidence (such as business activity statements, bank statements, financial reports, sales reports and invoices, payroll reports to demonstrate impact and turnover) and assist the Department, its representatives, and the Auditor General of Victoria with the conduct of the audit, as required.

14. Further Information (optional)

Further information regarding this Program can be found here: https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/mrna-victoria-pipeline-grant-program-round-one

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact mRNA Victoria at mrnavictoria@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Any discussions you may have with the Department are for information only and do not constitute advice. Applicants should seek independent advice before making an application or entering into a Grant Agreement.

15. Glossary

- **Applicant** means an individual or organisation that has submitted the Application for funding for a Grant
- **Application** means the application submitted by the Applicant to the Department for funding
- **Program** means mRNA Victoria Pipeline Program
- **Project** means the activities specified in the Application by the Applicant for which the grant is provided
- **Grant** means funding provided by the Department to organisations or individuals for a specified purpose to meet government policy objectives
- **Grant Agreement** means a legally binding document that details the terms and conditions of the Grant and sets out the relationship between the parties
- **Grant Recipient** means the legal entity that has entered into a Grant Agreement with the Department.
- **State or Department** means the State of Victoria through its Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Appendix

BioNTech clinical scale mRNA manufacturing facility

BioNTech is establishing a clinical scale mRNA manufacturing facility at La Trobe University's Bundoora campus. The BioNTech Clinical Manufacturing Facility, also known as the GMP Clinical Manufacturing Facility, is an anchor tenant for the La Trobe University City of the Future, a $5 billion precinct transforming the Bundoora Campus.

The new facility will produce next generation mRNA vaccines and treatments (including oncology treatments) for clinical trials for medical research institutes, biotech and life science companies, as well as BioNTech's own investigational drug and vaccine candidate products.

Construction of the facility commenced in mid-2024. Once complete, the facility will produce next generation mRNA vaccines and treatments for Phase I, II and III clinical trials.

This facility will be available for medical research institutes, biotech and life science companies to develop early stage and clinical vaccines and therapies, as well as producing BioNTech's own investigational drug and vaccine candidate products.

BioNTech R&D Production Laboratory

The R&D Production Laboratory has begun producing research grade RNA materials for Australian researchers.

The BioNTech R&D Production Laboratory is now available to researchers for the manufacture of research grade RNA materials and lipid formulation for pre-clinical studies. Researchers can access BioNTech's expertise and proprietary technologies to design and manufacture research RNA and lipid materials, which will be scalable and aligned with the processes used in the BioNTech clinical scale mRNA manufacturing facility.