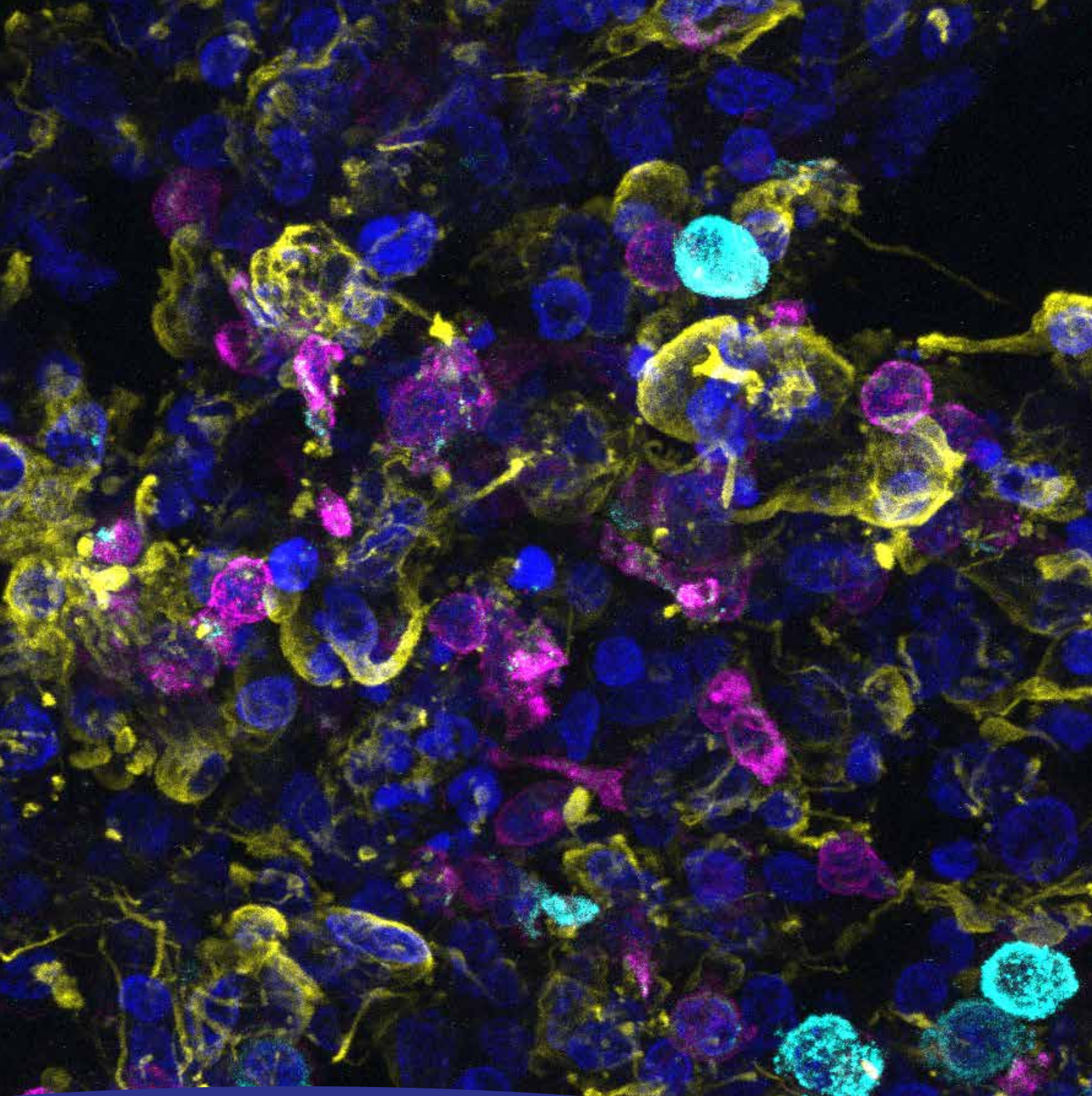


NRF

NeuroSurgical Research Foundation

IMPACT REPORT 2024/25

NeuroSurgical Research Foundation

Thank you for supporting the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation. 100% of your generous donations go to vital research into disease and conditions of the brain and spine.

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation was formed in 1963 and was the first of its kind in Australia. The objective of the Foundation is directed to funding research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disease, injuries or malfunction of the brain, spine and nerves. Our founders ensured that the Foundation supports all administrative costs, to make sure 100% of all donations go towards research.

Our researchers share a common goal, to improve the lives of people facing a neurosurgical or neurological disease diagnosis, now and in the future.

We fund research into the following diseases and conditions:

- Brain Tumours & Brain Cancer
- Neurotrauma:
  - Spinal Cord Injury
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Concussion
- Neurodegeneration:
  - Parkinson's Disease
- Vascular Disease:
  - Stroke
  - Aneurysms

There are many ways you can help to fund our research:

- Give today.
- Pledge over time - join us as a regular giver.
- Fundraise for us.
- Plan for the future - make a gift in your will.

DONATIONS TO THE NEUROSURGICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

@NRFTeamNeuro

@neurosr_foundation

@NeuroSurgRF

Thank you to our volunteer designer Jessica Anderson for producing this report. Cover Image: microscopy image glioblastoma cells supplied by Centre for Cancer Biology - an alliance of SA Pathology and the University of South Australia

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pays respect to Elders past and present

Contents

Board Members 2024/25

Dr Nick Vrodos
President

Mr Tim Neill
Hon Treasurer

Ms Ginta Orchard
Secretary
Executive Officer

Mr Andrew Goodhand
Chair Investment Committee

Assoc Prof Santosh Poonnoose
Vice President & *Chair Scientific Committee*

Ms Melanie Cooper AM

Ms Nadia Kingham

Dr Simon Sandler

Mr Stephen White

Dr Xenia Doorenbosch

Advisory Members 2024/25

Assoc Prof Renée Turner	NRF Director of Neurosurgical Research
Prof Stuart Pitson	NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research
Prof Peter Reilly AO	Scientific Committee
Assoc Prof Frances Corrigan	Scientific Committee
Dr Glenn McCulloch AM	Scientific Committee
Dr Adam Wells	Abbie Simpson Clinical Fellow

President's Report

This year marks my 25th year on the Board of the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation, and I am so proud of what we are achieving together. When I first joined, the idea of awarding over $1.6 million in research grants and scholarships in a single year would have seemed impossible — fantasy numbers. And yet, thanks to your incredible support, here we are. Not only is this the most we've ever awarded, but it's a clear sign that we are continuing to grow, with more impact than ever before.

As a practicing neurosurgeon, I see every day the difference that your support makes. Our strength at the NRF lies in something truly unique: we are an organisation led by neurosurgeons and researchers linking cutting-edge research and real-world clinical care. This model means discoveries move more quickly from the bench to the bedside, and patient experiences can directly inform the next wave of scientific inquiry. On top of this we are not tied to any one single university or research institution, meaning we can focus on funding the best of the best. This collaborative approach drives progress faster, and our impact has spread even further this year with more collaborative links to institutions interstate and overseas than ever.

Over the past five years, NRF-funded seed projects have attracted more than $36 million in federal and other competitive funding, transforming modest donations into major national investment. Every dollar you give is amplified — not only through matched funding but through the ripple effect of training, collaboration, and clinical innovation.

We saw the appointment of Hayley Henley, South Australia's first dedicated Brain Cancer Support Nurse this year. In just her first six months, Hayley has supported over 75 patients and families, providing tailored care and bridging the often-isolating gap between hospital and home. Her role is already proving invaluable, and demand has outpaced even our expectations — a reminder of just how vital and overdue this kind of support has been.

Training and retaining the next generation of neurosurgical researchers and clinicians continues to be a cornerstone of our mission. Supporting research assistants, PhD students, clinical fellows, and early-career scientists doesn't just build knowledge — it builds our future.

We also continue to invest in long-term infrastructure, like the South Australian Neurological Tumour Bank, SA Paediatric Brain Cancer Biobank and in pioneering collaborative projects such as Brain Tumour Research SA (BTRSA).

On a personal note, one of the year's most meaningful events was the Donald Simpson Memorial High Tea and Book Launch. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with heartfelt memories - bringing together patients, colleagues, friends, and family to honour a remarkable neurosurgeon and raise funds to support the next generation of neuroscientists.

To every researcher, supporter, donor, volunteer, fundraiser, and family who has contributed to the NRF this year: thank you. Your belief in our mission gives us the strength to push forward and the ability to change lives — one discovery at a time.

Dr Nick Vrodos FRACS
NRF President

Director of NRF NeuroSurgical Research Report

To support our mission of understanding the short-term and long-term impacts of stroke on the brain and how this influences outcomes, we have established collaborations with neuroscientists, neuroimaging specialists and biomarker specialists at University of Copenhagen, University of Edinburgh and Flinders University. Here's a snapshot of our current projects:

Stroke Research Program Led by Assoc Prof Renée Turner

Donata Joy (Research placement student, University of Nottingham) and Wishayantant Thirasantikamol (1st year PhD student) have been working on our MRFF-funded SPRINTS project, alongside Monash University collaborators, assessing the efficacy of re-purposing a drug currently used for chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, befetupitant to treat cerebral oedema following stroke.

Paige Minagall (Honours student) and Jack Hawke (Honours student) are investigating the abundance of iron within the brain, and the response of the brains innate immune cells, the microglia, respectively long-term post-stroke. They seek to better understand when and where secondary neurodegeneration pathology occurs post-stroke, to help inform on the therapeutic window and identify novel treatment targets to improve outcomes.

Rosie Costigan-Dwyer (2nd yr PhD student) is uncovering the long-term impacts of post-stroke on the neurovascular unit, which is critical for neuronal function, and how this may underly worsened outcomes. Samantha Joubert (1st yr PhD student) will be to spending the next year at the University of Copenhagen to explore how alterations in the sugars lining the blood vessels, the glycocalyx, impacts both the signalling across, and the integrity of, the blood-brain barrier post-stroke.

Dr Tim Webber (ICU Consultant, 2nd yr PhD student), working as part of a highly collaborative discovery science and clinical researcher team, has developed a clinically-relevant model of subarachnoid haemorrhage with vasospasm. This will provide a valuable platform for assessing novel therapies for this devastating complication of subarachnoid haemorrhage.

Shannon Stuckey (NRF Post-Doctoral Fellow) recently completed her PhD, where she uncovered the complex interplay between aging and neuroinflammation on long-term stroke outcomes. I'm pleased to say that Shannon is staying on with the team as an NRF-funded Post-Doctoral fellow.

Dr Rebecca Hood (NRF Post-Doctoral Fellow) has been working with colleagues at SAHMRI and Flinders University exploring the nature and extent of dysregulation of the gut-brain axis following stroke. She has revealed that microbiome alterations persist long-term following stroke can impact inflammation, brain atrophy and long-term outcomes following stroke.

We are grateful for the generous and ongoing support of the NRF donors, it enables us to keep doing what we love - continually striving to deepen our understanding of stroke injury, uncover new treatment targets, and ultimately, improve outcomes for patients with stroke – so on behalf of the team, a big thank you! We look forward to seeing you at the NRF events throughout the year, and for your continued support.

Associate Professor Renée Turner
NRF Director of NeuroSurgical Research

NeuroSurgical Research
The University of Adelaide

Head Injury Research Program

Led by Associate Professor Frances Corrigan, Head Injury Laboratory

The support from the NRF has continued to allow us to continue to expand our work into understanding why axons degenerate following head injury and investigating mechanisms to reduce this damage. We have partnered with Argenica Therapeutics to test their novel drug, showing promising early results in reducing post-concussion symptoms. PhD student, Carl Hooper was also able to work with the University of Queensland to test another drug aimed at modulating the immune response post-injury. Hasini Kapuwelle has continued her research journey, starting her PhD this year to investigate how interrupting fuel supply to axons may impair their function. Eloise Arthur also completed her Honours and is hoping to start her PhD project looking at modulating complement function to reduce axonal injury. Justin Krieg was awarded his PhD and has taken up a job as part of the Australian Government Graduate Program, so we wish him well in his new role!

RESEARCHER: **Associate Professor Frances Corrigan**

FUNDING: **$49,849**

TITLE: **Is oligodendrocyte dysfunction the key to axonal degeneration following head injury?**

PROJECT: After head injury, axons can degenerate over time, causing lasting cognitive and motor issues. This project investigates whether damage to tiny fuel-delivery channels between oligodendrocytes and axons contributes to this ongoing axonal degeneration, aiming to uncover new targets to prevent neurodegeneration following head injury.

Neurodegenerative Disease Research Program

Led by Associate Professor Lyndsey Collins-Praino, Cognition, Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disease Laboratory

Our group is contributing to international efforts to re-define PD based on its biology, rather than motor symptom presentation. By measuring biomarkers in individuals with known exposure to risk factors for PD, such as a history of traumatic brain injury, we hope to be able to not only identify risk of PD development earlier, but also predict individual disease trajectory in established PD. As part of this, we recently published a review on the link between traumatic brain injury and PD, as well as an original article investigating whether a history of TBI influences rate of PD progression.

We also recently completed a trial of NeuroOrb-PD, our novel “Serious Games”-based system for delivering cognitive training in PD. Data analysis is currently under way, and NRF has funded the next phase of this trial, which will look at whether pairing the NeuroOrb-PD with cortical stimulation can improve cognitive outcomes in PD.

RESEARCHER: **Associate Professor Lyndsey Collins-Praino**

FUNDING: **$50,000**

TITLE: **Pumping the Brakes: Targeting Klotho expression to reduce accelerated brain ageing and improve functional outcomes following traumatic brain injury**

PROJECT: Traumatic brain injury affects an estimated 69 million individuals per year. The over-arching aim of the project is to investigate whether accelerated brain ageing due to TBI is associated with reductions in the Klotho protein, and whether this can be reversed by targeting Klotho gene expression.

NeuroSurgical Research
The University of Adelaide

STROKE RESEARCH

RESEARCHER:	Dr Rebecca Hood
FUNDING:	$50,000 - NRF Personnel Grant
ROLE:	Research Assistant, Translational Neuropathology Laboratory

PROJECT: Working across multiple stroke research projects including Secondary Neurodegeneration, No re-flow phenomenon, SPRINTS Project Stroke Prevention of Reperfusion Injury and Neuroinflammation – a Therapeutic Strategy.

STROKE RESEARCH

RESEARCHER:	Dr Shannon Stuckey
FUNDING:	$50,000 - NRF Personnel Grant
TITLE:	Research Assistant, Translational Neuropathology Laboratory

PROJECT: Will contribute to vital stroke surgery research across multiple projects, undertaking specialised training to address a critical need for lab personnel. This will increase the lab's capacity enabling more projects, collaborations and research output.

NEURODEGENERATION RESEARCH

RESEARCHER:	Dr Angus McNamara
FUNDING:	$50,000 - NRF Personnel Grant
TITLE:	Research Assistant, Cognition, Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disease Laboratory (CANDL)

PROJECT: Lead the FIND-TBI study and investigate why TBI significantly increases risk of later developing a neurodegenerative disorder, including Parkinson's disease.

NeuroSurgical Research
The University of Adelaide

NEURODEGENERATION RESEARCH

RESEARCHER: Dr George Opie

FUNDING: $47,112

TITLE: Modulating the shape of brain oscillations to drive clinical benefits in Parkinson's disease.

PROJECT: This project aims to develop a novel non-invasive brain stimulation technique that targets abnormal brain activity linked to Parkinson's disease symptoms, offering a potential alternative to current therapies that often cause side effects and lose effectiveness over time.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY RESEARCH

RESEARCHER: Hugh McCloskey

FUNDING: $50,000 - NRF Personnel Grant

ROLE: Research Assistant, Centre for Orthopaedic and Trauma Research

PROJECT: Investigating Adelaide MRI metrics as trauma screening and return-to-play tools for contact sport athletes.

BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH

RESEARCHER: Dr Yannan Yang

FUNDING: $50,000 - 2024 MRFF Early to Mid-Career Researchers Grant $843,021

TITLE: Nanorobotics vaccine-boosted CAR-T immunotherapy for treating diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma: A Preclinical Study

PROJECT: We have developed a nanorobot-based vaccine technology to improve the T cell response for solid tumours. This project will perform a preclinical study to develop and validate the nanorobot-based vaccine boosted CAR-T therapy for treating inoperable DIPG tumours.

NRF Research Vacation Scholarship
The University of Adelaide

RESEARCHER: Jack Hawke
RESEARCH AREA: Neurodegeneration

VACATION PROJECT: Characterising how brain inflammation changes with age – insights that are vital for understanding conditions like Parkinson's disease and stroke, helping identify new treatment targets.

SUPERVISORS: Associate Professor Lyndsey Collins-Praino, Cognition, Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disease Laboratory, Associate Professor Renee Turner Transitional Neuropathology Laboratory.

RESEARCHER: Chantelle Patterson
RESEARCH AREA: Stroke

VACATION PROJECT: Determining the efficacy of APP96-110 as a treatment for ischaemic stroke.

SUPERVISORS: Associate Professor Renée Turner and Dr Rebecca Hood, Translational Neuropathology Laboratory.

ANTHONY WALSH TBI VACATION SCHOLARSHIP
RESEARCHER: Hasini Kapuwelle
RESEARCH AREA: Traumatic Brain Injury

The Anthony Walsh TBI Vacation Scholarship was created in memory of Anthony Walsh, who sadly passed away from a Traumatic Brain Injury after a tragic hit and run. His loved ones continue to honour his memory by raising funds and supporting research through their fundraising group Tony Tony Tony

VACATION PROJECT: Working across several projects investigating how brain injuries evolve and testing new therapeutics to improve outcomes after injury.

SUPERVISORS: Associate Professor Frances Corrigan Head Traumatic Brain Injury Research Program

Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship

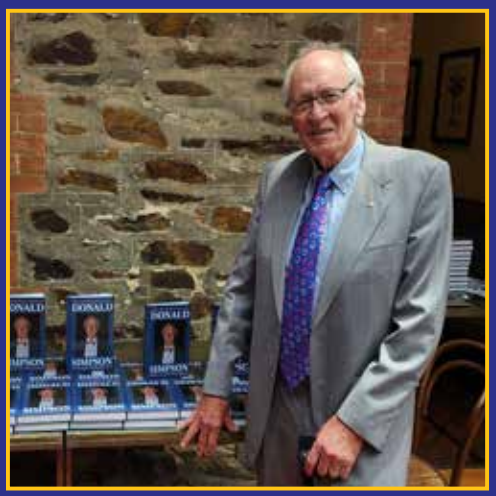
The **Donald Simpson** High Tea and Book Launch, held on Sunday, 24th November at Ayers House, was an incredible success. The event raised $30,000, with the appeal raising a total of $137,500 to help establish the new Donald Simpson Neuroscience Scholarship.

The event was attended by 118 friends, family, and colleagues who gathered to honour the remarkable legacy of Donald Simpson, a pioneering South Australian neurosurgeon, beloved mentor, and humanitarian. The event also celebrated the book launch of the biography **Donald Simpson – Neurosurgeon and Humanitarian.** Highlights of the afternoon included heartfelt addresses from authors Glenn McCulloch and Peter Reilly, trainees, colleagues and friends of Donald's, who shared insights into his character, career, and influence.

The event also celebrated the awarding of the inaugural **Donald Simpson Scholarships** to 10 junior neuroscientists, enabling them to attend the 2024 Australasian Neurotrauma Network Annual Symposium helping advance their research in stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and Parkinson's disease.

Eleanor Bowley Schubert – one of last year's recipients, won Best Oral Presentation by a South Australian PhD Student at the Symposium and is now heading to a post-doctoral position at the prestigious Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology of Behaviour in Bonn, Germany.

"My PhD research explores how traumatic brain injury (TBI) may increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease by triggering tau protein pathology. Using clinically relevant models, I investigate how even a single head injury could contribute to long-term neurodegeneration. My work aims to improve early detection and interventions for those most at risk."



Top Left: First Recipients: Ryan Dorrian, Kavi Sivasankar, Angus McNamara , Glenn McCulloch , Peter Reilly, Rosie Costigan-Dwyer , Shannon Stuckey and Samantha Edwards

Top Right: Eleanor Bowley-Schubert

Bottom Left to Right: Authors Glenn McCulloch AM and Peter Reilly AO

NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research Prof Stuart Pitson

University of South Australia & SA Pathology Centre for Cancer Biology

It's been an exciting year of brain tumour research at the Molecular Therapeutics Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology (an alliance between UniSA and CALHN). Our ongoing efforts to build resources to enhance translational brain tumour research in SA continue to show real value. In collaboration with paediatric oncologist Prof Jordan Hansford (WCH/SAHMRI), and with support from the NRF, Wilkins Family Foundation and Harvey Foundation, we have developed advanced new models of diffuse midline glioma—incurable brain tumours that occur in young children with a desparate need for new therapies. These models are rare and have enabled collaborations with A/Prof Quenten Schwarz (UniSA) and Dr Yannan Yang (University of Adelaide), helping secure multiple large Australian Medical Research Future Fund grants to develop new treatments. These are exciting projects that we hope can make a real difference for children with these devastating brain tumours.

We are deeply grateful for the financial support received in the last year. The South Australian Produce Market Cherry Auction community raised $100,000 for brain tumour research—an incredible achievement that is now supporting a joint project with A/Prof Guillermo Gomez (UniSA) on new therapeutic approaches for recurrent glioblastoma, along with vital equipment. This summer we also hosted Matthew Lim, a Monash University medical student, supported by the Richard Buttery NRF Glioblastoma Research Vacation Scholarship. He spent eight weeks investigating DNA mutations in glioblastoma cells.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the NRF's critical support for Brain Tumour Research SA (BTRSA), a collaborative of SA scientists and clinicians formed in 2021 to drive translational focus to current research and catalyse better outcomes for brain tumour patients. Its success to date is thanks in large part to the support provided by the NRF.

Prof Stuart Pitson
NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research Centre for Cancer Biology - University of South Australia

PAEDIATRIC BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA - CENTRE FOR CANCER BIOLOGY

RESEARCHER:	Prof Stuart Pitson
FUNDING:	$50,000
TITLE:	Targeting sphingosine kinase 1 as a novel therapeutic strategy in childhood medulloblastoma.

PROJECT: Medulloblastoma is a common and aggressive childhood brain tumour. Current treatments can cause permanent and debilitating neurocognitive impairment in children, and so there is a significant need for less toxic therapies. This project explores targeting sphingosine kinase—a protein highly expressed in a sub-type of medullablastoma and linked to poorer survival—as a potential less toxic therapy, aiming to improve outcomes and quality of life for children impacted by these tumours.

Brain Tumour Research
University of South Australia

University of South Australia

Centre for Cancer Biology - Molecular Therapeutics Laboratory

RESEARCHERS:	Dr Briony Gliddon, Prof Stuart Pitson & Dr Melinda Tea
FUNDING:	**Wilkins Family Foundation** - Sandy & Michael Wilkins Funding: $75,000 (over 3 yrs) **Harvey Foundation** $25,000 Total project funding $100,000 (2023 -2025)
TITLE:	Developing advanced preclinical models of paediatric brain cancers.

PROJECT: This project is creating a living paediatric brain cancer biobank using tumour samples to develop cell lines, organoids, and advanced preclinical models. Focusing on malignant paediatric brain tumours, the biobank will facilitate better understanding of tumour growth and treatment resistance, enabling the discovery and evaluation of new therapies.

RESEARCHER:	Prof Stuart Pitson
FUNDING:	$200,000 over 3 years (2024 - 2026) **Fay Fuller Foundation**
TITLE:	Overcoming the blood-brain bariier for improved brain tumour therapy.

Fay Fuller Foundation

PROJECT: This project aims to develop a new method for delivering anti-cancer drugs to brain tumours, with a focus on glioblastoma (GBM). Researchers will test the effectiveness of three drugs across diverse GBM cell types, evaluate whether an immune-modulating drug can help these drugs cross the blood-brain barrier, and assess the effects of combinational therapy in pre-clinical models. Successful outcomes will be of direct relevance to treatment of other brain tumour types and have the potential for rapid translation to clinical trials.

RESEARCHER:	Prof Stuart Pitson
FUNDING:	$20,000 - **Nick & Elise Ross** **James & Diana Ramsay Foundation**
TITLE:	Generate superior preclinical models of human glioblastoma, leading to improved translation of research and better patient outcomes.

JAMES & DIANA RAMSAY FOUNDATION

PROJECT: This project will develop superior preclinical models of glioblastoma that closely reflect key features of the disease—tumour invasiveness, heterogeneity, immune microenvironment, and an intact blood-brain barrier. Using models that produce human immune cells and incorporate patient-derived tumours, will improve the clinical relevance of research and speed up the development of more effective treatments.

Brain Tumour Research
University of South Australia

Centre for Cancer Biology

BRAIN TUMOUR THERAPEUTICS GROUP

RESEARCHER: Dr Melinda Tea

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Developing advanced models for recurrent glioblastoma for preclinical evaluation of new therapies

PROJECT: The survival rate for glioblastoma has barely improved due to limited treatment options. Despite aggressive treatment, and irrespective of initial response to standard therapy, most patients succumb to the disease due to recurrence of the primary tumour through mechanisms of resistance. This proposal aims to identify specific mechanisms by which these complex tumours develop resistance to existing therapies and to develop clinically relevant models to assess approaches to overcome these mechanisms.

BRAIN TUMOUR THERAPEUTICS GROUP

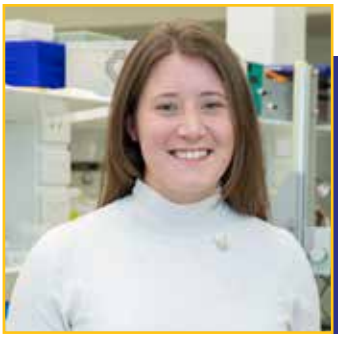
RESEARCHER: Dr Briony Gliddon

FUNDING: $50,000

PROJECT SPONSOR: **Munno Para Foodland**

TITLE: Preclinical evaluation of sphingosine kinase 2 inhibitors as new glioblastoma therapeutics

PROJECT: This project investigates SK2, an enzyme hyperactivated in glioblastoma and linked to poor outcomes. Using SK2 inhibitors—one already in Phase II trials for other cancers—researchers will evaluate their effectiveness in advanced preclinical models. If successful, this work could fast-track SK2-targeted therapies into phase II clinical trials for glioblastoma patients.



TISSUE ARCHITECTURE AND ORGAN FUNCTION LABORATORY

RESEARCHER: Kaitlin Scheer

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Exploiting PDLIM4 as a new target for rapidly progressing glioblastoma tumours.

PROJECT: This project uses patient-derived glioblastoma organoids (GBOs) to study tumour variability and identify biomarkers linked to aggressive disease. We found that variable growth rates from patient-derived GBOs matched differences in patient survival, and identified PDLIM4 as a key marker in fast-growing tumours. This study will now explore PDLIM4 as a potential therapeutic target for treating highly aggressive glioblastoma.

Brain Tumour Research
University of South Australia

Centre for Cancer Biology

CELLULAR-STRESS AND IMMUNE RESPONSE LABORATORY

RESEARCHER: Dr Nirmal Robinson

FUNDING: $49,927

TITLE: Combined targeting of CD47 and cysteine metabolism to treat glioblastoma

PROJECT: Glioblastoma (GBM) cells escape from immune cells by producing a 'don't eat me' signal known as CD47. We have made a major breakthrough by discovering that, if GBM cells lose CD47, they increase the import and metabolism of the amino acid cysteine as a survival mechanism. We propose to preclinically evaluate a new treatment strategy combining the targeting of both CD47 and cysteine metabolism using clinically ready drugs.

CANCER PHARMACOGENOMICS LABORATORY

RESEARCHER: Assoc Prof Pascal Duijf

FUNDING: $48,332

TITLE: Harnessing genetic abnormalities in glioblastomas to develop new treatments

PROJECT: Among glioblastomas, 83% have abnormally acquired extra copies of many or all 1,165 genes located on chromosome 7. We have identified candidate drugs which we hypothesise eradicate glioblastoma cells with such genetic abnormalities. This project will create new 'isogenic' cell models to test our candidate drugs alongside patient-derived glioblastoma models and on patient-derived models.

CANCER PHARMACOGENOMICS LABORATORY

RESEARCHER: Dr Iman Lohraseb

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Targeting a common genetic alteration in glioblastoma

PROJECT: Analysing over 80 million experimental data points from genome-wide CRISPR, RNAi and drug screens involving 6,658 drugs, we identified three strong candidate drugs that could benefit 88% of glioblastoma patients. We will create 'isogenic' glioblastoma cell lines without the genetic drug targets and test our drugs on these 'isogenic' cell models and on primary glioblastoma patient-derived cells.

Research Projects

UNISA BRAIN TUMOUR

RESEARCHER: Dr Sidra Khan

FUNDING: $50,000 - NRF Personnel Grant
In memory of Chris Thornton

TITLE: Research Assistant, Centre for Cancer Biology, Translational Oncology Laboratory & RAH Clinical Trials Unit

PROJECT: Supporting Adult and Pediatric Phase 1 Study of Autologous GD2-Specific CAR T Cell Therapy in Recurrent GD2-positive Glioblastoma Multiforme: Ongoing Assessment and Dose Escalation Trial.

UNISA NEURODEGENERATION
NEURODEGENERATION RESEARCH EQUIPMENT

RESEARCHER: Associate Professor Larisa Bobrovskaya, Health and Biomedical Innovation

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: The PiezoSleep Behavioural Tracking System

PROJECT: This project will use Australia's first fully non-invasive system to monitor sleep, breathing, and circadian rhythms in models of neurological disorders. It will support research across three SA universities to explore how sleep disturbances affect conditions like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, test new therapies, and study links between sleep, diet, and the gut microbiome in brain disease.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL PITUITARY TUMOUR RESEARCH
NUCLEAR MEDICINE

RESEARCHER: Dr James McNeil

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Development of a novel molecular imaging scan to better identify and treat prolactinomas

PROJECT: Currently no functional imaging tests are available for the diagnosis of prolactinomas, the most frequent pituitary tumour subtype. In this world-first study, we will assess the ability of this new imaging scan to diagnose tumours more accurately, predict treatment response and guide surgical planning.

Brain Tumour Research

FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE

RESEARCHER: Dr Marguerite Harding

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Audit of Hormone Receptors Expression in Meningiomas

PROJECT: This project will study hormone receptor expression in meningiomas to better understand risk factors, disease progression and outcomes, laying the foundation for new tools and models to identify new targets for adjuvant hormone-based therapies.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN NEUROLOGICAL BRAIN TUMOUR BANK (SANTB)

RESEARCHER: Bree Hodgson

FUNDING: $50,000 - NRF Personnel grant
In memory of Dustin 'Dusty' Turner

ROLE: Research Assistant, SANTB

PROJECT: A research assistant will strengthen the SA Neurological Tumour Bank (SANTB), enabling more tailored support for individual projects, ensuring uninterrupted specimen collection, and reducing delays in data access—critical improvements that will enhance research efficiency and impact.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

RESEARCHER: Prof Cedric Bardy

FUNDING: $50,000

TITLE: Understanding Radiation Sensitivity in Paediatric vs. Adult Glioblastoma

PROJECT: This project aims to study the radiation sensitivity of brain tumours in adults and children with Glioblastoma (GBM). We will grow and radiate tumour cells from both age groups in the lab, simulating clinical protocols. By comparing responses, we hope to understand age-related treatment effectiveness. Additionally, we will examine how the brain environment influences tumour response and create lab models to simulate the complex molecular environment of GBM.

PAEDIATRIC BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HEALTH & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

RESEARCHER: Prof Jordan Hansford

FUNDING: $150,000 over 3 years (2025 - 2027)

TITLE: South Australian Paediatric Brain Cancer Biobank – Brain Turbo SA

PROJECT: Establishing a comprehensive, well annotated and run paediatric brain cancer biobank will foster and expand high quality discovery and clinical research in South Australia.

Special Gifts Advancing Brain Tumour Research

Joe Scalzi, Adam Wells, Ginta Orchard, Nick Vrodos and Steve Maras

SOVEREIGN HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN, KNIGHTS OF MALTA

A generous $20,000 donation from the Sovereign Hospitaller Order of Saint John, Knights of Malta, supported the work of the SA Neurological Tumour Bank and enabled Dr Morris Hanon to complete advanced training in cutting-edge brain tumour imaging techniques in the USA and Germany. This included training in correlative temporal multi-omic analysis of patient-derived brain tumour organoids, an area of expertise not currently available in Australia. This support has strengthened South Australia's research capacity and brought us closer to more effective treatments for aggressive brain tumours.

We sincerely thank the Order for their impactful contribution.

Callum Hann, Angelo Demasi, Donna Mercurio, Luke Domingo, Adam Wells, Penny Reidy

2024 CHERRY AUCTION RAISES RECORD-BREAKING $100,000 FOR BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH

Thank you to the SA Produce Market and its wonderful community for supporting groundbreaking brain tumour research. Donna Mercurio of Bache Bros was crowned the 2024 Cherry Queen with her record-breaking $85,000 bid for the season's first box of delicious cherries. This bid was generously topped up with $15,000 by Scalzi Produce and contributions from the SA Produce Market, SA Chamber of Fruit and Veg, Ceravolo Orchards and other silent partners. These funds are supporting research to develop personalised therapies for recurrent brain tumours, and a PCR machine to study how genetic mutations drive tumour growth.

Charlie Edwards, A/Prof Quenten Schwarz, Louise McDonald, Prof Stuart Pitson and Reilly O'Brien

ADELAIDE CROWS FOUNDATION IN MEMORY OF JED McDONALD

Thank you to the Adelaide Crows Foundation for raising an impressive $30,000 at their gala dinner and silent auction, partnering with the NRF to support groundbreaking childhood brain cancer research. This generous donation is funding research that is utilising advanced cell modelling to identify early biological changes that drive tumour development in children.

As a gesture of thanks, members of the Adelaide Crows Foundation team including Manager Louise McDonald and players Reilly O'Brien and Charlie Edwards were invited to visit the University of Adelaide's Centre for Cancer Biology to learn more about this cutting-edge research managed by A/Prof Quenten Schwarz and Prof Stuart Pitson.

Paediatric Brain Tumour Research Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Royal Adelaide Hospital Clinical Trials Unit & Centre for Cancer Biology – Translational Oncology Laboratory

RESEARCHER:	Prof Michael Brown
FUNDING:	$50,000 NRF Paediatric Fund
TITLE:	Making immunotherapy for childhood brain cancer more effective

PROJECT: Diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG) is the most common, aggressive and lethal childhood brain cancer. While genetically engineering a patient's own white blood cells against DIPG to make chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T cell immunotherapy shows promise, it's not effective in all cases and can cause adverse effects. This project explores a breakthrough method that may overcome the current limitations of CAR-T therapy.

RESEARCHER:	Dr Lisa Ebert
FUNDING:	$300,000 over 3 years (2023 - 2025) **James & Diana Ramsay Foundation**
TITLE:	Developing new immune-based therapies for brain cancer

JAMES & DIANA RAMSAY FOUNDATION

PROJECT: Glioblastoma is the deadliest brain cancer, with few effective treatments. This project uses CAR-T cell therapy—immune cells isolated from a patient's blood, genetically engineered to give them cancer killing activity and then returned to the patient's bloodstream—to target tumours from within. Two clinical trials are underway, KARPOS and LEVI'S CATCH, but further funding is needed to treat additional patients and support our lab-based research to improve this promising therapy for Australians facing glioblastoma.

RESEARCHER:	Dr Tessa Garrett
FUNDING:	$48,072
TITLE:	Clinical CAR-T manufacturing for children with Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma

PROJECT: Brain tumours are the leading disease-related cause of death in children, especially those deep in the brain, like DIPG. This project supports the manufacturing of personalised CAR-T cell therapies at SA Pathology for a national trial (LEVI'S CATCH) at Sydney Children's Hospital. This trial, named after a patient with the disease, is offering hope for new treatment options for children with currently incurable brain tumours.

CAR-T cell immunotherapy funding win

The CAR-T cell immunotherapy research projects run by Professor Brown, A/Prof Lisa Ebert and Dr Tessa Gargett received $150,000 in additional funding from the UK based Brain Tumour Research charity. This international collaboration will allow researchers to investigate if increasing the production of a special form of immune stimulating molecule IL-2, can 'boost' the tumour-killing function of CAR-T cells, potentially leading to long-term tumour control.

NRF Scholarship Recipients

Fostering the next generation of brilliant minds

CHRIS ADAMS RESEARCH GRANT

RESEARCHER: Ruhi Polara

PROJECT: Targeting CD47 to exploit glioblastoma's metabolic vulnerabilities, offering a novel therapeutic approach to improve patient outcomes.

Supervisor: Dr Nirmal Robinson, Cellular Stress and Immune Signalling Lab, Centre for Cancer Biology UniSA

STRONG ENOUGH TO LIVE PHD SCHOLARSHIP

RESEARCHER: Bryan Gardam

PROJECT: Investigating the Dendritic Cell – T Cell Axis in Glioblastoma to Explore New Combination Immunotherapy Treatment Options

Supervisors: Assoc Prof Lisa Ebert & Prof Michael Brown, Translational Oncology Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA

STRONG ENOUGH TO LIVE PHD SCHOLARSHIP

RESEARCHER: Dr Dione Gardner-Stephen

PROJECT: Identification and assessment of new treatment options for the childhood cancer medulloblastoma

Supervisor: Assoc Prof Quenten Schwarz, Neurovascular Research Lab, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA

RICHARD BUTTERY GLIOBLASTOMA RESEARCH VACATION SCHOLARSHIP

RESEARCHER: Matthew Lim

PROJECT: Investigating how patient glioblastoma cells resist chemotherapy. This work will improve our world-leading preclinical models – aiding future evaluation of new experimental therapies.

Supervisor: Prof Stuart Pitson, Molecular Therapeutics Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology UniSA

NRF VACATION SCHOLARSHIP

RESEARCHER: Martin Wong

PROJECT: Identifying biomarkers that predict tumour changes after treatment, helping tailor therapies to improve outcomes for patients.

Supervisor: Assoc Prof G Gomez, Tissue Architecture & Organ Function Lab, Centre for Cancer Biology UniSA

NRF VACATION SCHOLARSHIP

RESEARCHER: Mahshiat Tahsin

PROJECT: This project uses genomics, stem cell and organoid disease modelling to identify new genes predisposing children to high-risk brain cancer.

Supervisor: Assoc Prof Q Schwarz, Neurovascular Research Laboratory, Centre for Cancer Biology, UniSA

Photos top to bottom: Photos top to bottom: Ruhi Polara, Cherrie Adams (Back L-R) Matt Adams, Martin Adams. Cherrie Adams, Bryan Gardam, Martin Adams. Cherrie Adams, Assoc Prof Quenten Schwarz, Dr Dione Gardner-Stephen and Martin Adams. Kerry Buttery and Matthew Lim. Martin Wong and Dr Chloe Shard. Mahshiat Tahsin.

Abbie Simpson Clinical Fellow Dr Adam Wells

The past 12 months have marked an exciting period of growth and momentum for neurosurgical research at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, with several key projects advancing and new opportunities taking shape - all made possible through the ongoing support of the NRF.

We continue to place a strong emphasis on student engagement and training the next generation of clinician-researchers. This year, we've welcomed a new cohort of undergraduate and Honours students from the University of Adelaide and Flinders University, joining our growing group of Masters and PhD candidates who are driving innovation across a range of important research areas.

Thanks to the support of NRF and the John Crowley Memorial Scholarship, PhD Student Abhiram Hiwase attended the 2024 International Neurotrauma Symposium (INTS) in Cambridge to present our work on a global stage. You can read more about this on page 23.

Our flagship study, ROTEM-TBI, which uses a rapid bedside blood test to detect clotting problems in patients with traumatic brain injury, has now enrolled over 350 patients — a major milestone. We've also launched a new sub-study, collecting and analysing patient blood samples to explore specific proteins involved in clotting. These insights will help improve early diagnosis and targeted treatment for critically injured patients.

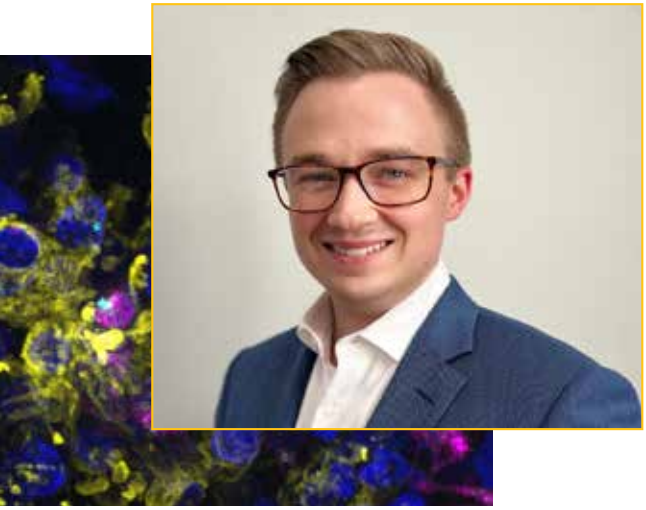
Our work on chronic subdural haematoma (cSDH) — a condition where blood builds up on the surface of the brain, often requiring surgery — is also making real strides. Two parallel studies, "Pre-operative ROTEM in Elective Chronic Subdural Haematoma Evacuation (RiSE)" and "Characterising Fibrinolysis in Chronic Subdural Haematoma (FiCS)", are investigating why up to one in three patients experience recurrent bleeding after surgery. Through detailed analysis of haematoma fluid using mass spectrometry, early findings have uncovered key inflammatory and coagulation markers. This work, supported by expert collaboration with Professor Marten Snel at SAHMRI, is guiding us toward identifying new biomarkers that could help prevent repeat bleeds and improve recovery outcomes.

We're proud that our cSDH studies have been positively received by patients and community members who recognise the importance of this work. With this momentum, we are now exploring the possibility of expanding recruitment across South Australia and interstate to amplify our impact.

Thank you to the NRF and its supporters — your generosity continues to drive discovery and shape the future of neurosurgical care.

Dr Adam Wells
Neurosurgeon, Royal Adelaide Hospital

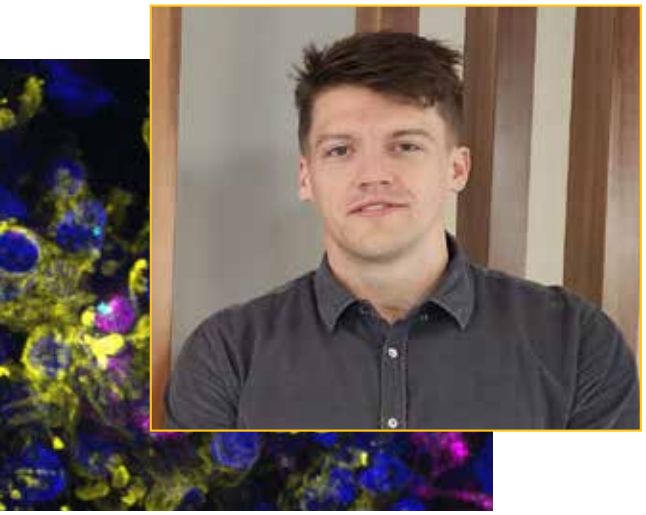
Abbie Simpson Clinical Fellow & Scholarships



Endoscopic endonasal transsphenoidal surgery (EETS) to remove pituitary adenomas is now an accepted approach since first being described in 1992. Over the last 30 years, the complication rate associated with endoscopic transsphenoidal surgery has dramatically improved, namely rates of CSF leak, visual outcomes and degree of tumour resection. Post operative endocrinopathy from damage to the pituitary gland and/or stalk does not appear to have reduced overtime at a similar rate to other complications.

My research will examine the South Australian experience with EETS and determine if the same relationship exists between surgeon experience and rates of post operative endocrinopathy. Furthermore, the accuracy of neuronavigation in skull base surgery will be quantified and identification of the difference in membrane receptor expression between pituitary gland and pituitary tumour will be examined.

Dr Nick Candy
Neurosurgical Accredited Registrar and PhD Candidate



My research is investigating ways to improve pituitary tumour surgery by identifying membrane receptor differences between normal gland and adenomas, aiming to develop fluorescence-guided techniques that better distinguish tumour from healthy tissue. It will also examine whether cabergoline treatment causes scarring in prolactinomas, potentially complicating surgery. Findings could enhance surgical precision and inform future treatment decisions.

Dr Chris Ovenden
Neurosurgery Service Registrar and PhD Candidate

Scholarships

Dr David Tan
Neurosurgeon and Spinal Surgeon, RAH

DINNING MEMORIAL NEUROSURGICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Minimally-invasive skull base approaches have evolved significantly in the past decades to take on complex skull base pathology with improved safety profile. Currently there is a critical knowledge gap in this area with no local training opportunities in Australia. The Dinning Memorial Neurosurgical Scholarship will allow me to train in this innovative cranial base approach through an observership of Professor Doo-Sik Kong at Samsung Medical Centre in South Korea who is an acknowledged expert in this area, as well as attend the hands-on cadaveric endoscopic endonasal and transorbital skull base course directed by Professor Theodore Schwartz at Weill Cornell in New York, and the International Workshop on Endoscopic Transorbital Skull Base Surgery organised by the Endoscopic Transorbital Society.

Dr Annika Mascarenhas
Neurosurgeon - John Crowley Memorial Scholarship

DINNING MEMORIAL NEUROSURGICAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Dinning Memorial Neurosurgical scholarship will support my training through the prestigious Charles G. Drake Clinical Fellowship in Neurovascular Therapy through University of Western Ontario at London Health Sciences Centre. I will gain hands-on experience in advanced techniques such as endovascular coiling, embolisation, and stent placement for conditions including aneurysms, AVMs, and stroke.

On return, I plan to use this acquired skillset to help expand southern neurointerventional and stroke services in Adelaide. I will be the first female dual-trained neurosurgeon in Australia and New Zealand, within a highly specialised group of fewer than ten with this added skill set.

Dr Abhiram Hiwase
MBBS, PhD Candidate

JOHN CROWLEY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Thanks to the generous support of the Crowley family and the NRF, I had the privilege of presenting our NRF-funded research at the 2024 International Neurotrauma Symposium (INTS) in Cambridge. I also undertook training in ICM+ software for advanced ICP analysis—skills that will directly strengthen our neurotrauma research capabilities here in South Australia.

Our oral presentation received strong academic interest and led to new collaborations with Cambridge University Hospitals, SAHMRI's Proteomics Facility, and Monash University. Our research focuses on three core areas: evaluating ROTEM in acute traumatic brain injury (TBI), investigating coagulation abnormalities in chronic subdural haematoma (CSDH), and mapping the proteomic landscape of CSDH specimens. We've now enrolled over 400 patients across these studies.

In January, I was also honoured to be appointed as an Honorary Clinical Lecturer at the University of Adelaide. I'm deeply grateful to the NRF and the Crowley family for supporting not only innovative research, but also early-career clinician-scientists like myself, who are passionate about improving outcomes in neurosurgery.

Symposiums

BTRSA 2ND SYMPOSIUM - FROM DISCOVERY TO THE CLINIC

The 2nd Brain Tumour Research SA (BTRSA) Symposium, held on 22 September 2024, brought together 52 experts—from researchers to clinicians—to advance brain tumour research and patient outcomes in South Australia.

Hosted by the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation and BTRSA, the event featured 16 presentations spanning lab discoveries, biobanking, clinical trials and patient care. Beyond formal talks, the symposium fostered vital collaboration through informal discussion—strengthening networks and sparking new ideas.

Special thanks to sponsors

ADELAIDE MICROSURGICAL SKULL BASE ANATOMY SYMPOSIUM 18 AUGUST 2024

The Adelaide Microsurgical Skull Base Anatomy Symposium brought together worldleading neurosurgeons, radiologists and medical experts for education, and hands-on training.

Focused on improving outcomes for patients with complex skull base conditions, the symposium combined interactive workshops and expert-led presentations covering skull base approaches, surgical instrumentation, and radiological anatomy.

A standout feature was the intensive hands-on cadaveric workshops, where trainees refined practical skills under the guidance of internationally renowned faculty from Switzerland, Brazil, Spain, and across Australia.

The NRF proudly supported this educational initiative, which plays a vital role in advancing neurosurgical training and innovation in SA and beyond.

Thank you to our session sponsors

Thank you to our exhibit sponsors

NRF Executive Officer Ginta Orchard

This was a record-breaking year for the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation (NRF) with extraordinary momentum—we awarded our largest ever funding, over $1.6 million across 40 vital research projects and scholarships. None of this would be possible without you and the power of our incredible community.

One of our proudest milestones was welcoming Hayley Henley, South Australia's first-ever Statewide Brain Cancer Nurse Consultant. In collaboration with our funding partner SA Health, we have committed $375,000 over 3 years to support this vital service (SA Health $300,000, NRF $75,000). In just six months, Hayley has already supported over 75 families, highlighting the urgent need for this role. Her impact has been immediate—and the demand, overwhelming. We are already exploring ways to expand this critical role so more families can access the help they urgently need.

We also welcomed Nicole Parker as our new Digital and Event Fundraising Officer. Nicole launched our inaugural Be Bold Go Gold campaign for childhood brain cancer research, raising over $3,400 in February with the support of new ambassador Elizabeth Rocca and Radio Italiana 531.

In 2025, we introduced our first NRF Personnel Grants, providing direct support to early-career researchers and research assistants—recognising that research progress takes people. We also hosted several advanced training workshops for neurosurgeons and scientists, strengthening South Australia's research capacity.

This year's Grey May was our biggest yet, raising over $170,000 for brain tumour research. From hospital stands to the Munno Para Foodland wall of support, we were proud to meet new faces, share stories, and grow our community.

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of our partners and donors—including the SA Produce Market, the Sovereign Order of St John, and the Adelaide Crows Foundation—whose generous contributions are helping to transform brain cancer care and research.

A special congratulations to former NRF President Glenn McCulloch, who was recognised with a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his outstanding service to neurosurgery, research and education.

But above all, thank you. To every donor, fundraiser, volunteer, sponsor, patient and family: your support makes it all possible. Together, we are driving the next generation of neurosurgical breakthroughs—and bringing hope where it's needed most.

Ginta Orchard
NRF Executive Officer

Thanks to your fundraising and support, South Australia now has its first adult Brain Cancer Support Nurse. Hayley Henley has already helped over 75 patients and families, providing vital support as they navigate their brain cancer journey.

Grey May 2024 Doubles Record $170,000 for Brain Tumour Research

Thanks to your incredible support, Grey May 2024 was our biggest yet— doubling last year's total and raising more than $170,000 to fund life-saving brain tumour research and support!

Thank you to everyone who donated, fundraised, attended an event, lit up a star of hope, showed their support with Grey May merch, took part in our raffle and silent auction, shared their story and helped raise awareness this Grey May. Every action made a difference—with 100% of funds raised go directly to brain tumour research, helping improve outcomes for patients and families.

A big thank you to our wonderful sponsors and matching partners, The Memorial Hospital, Jones Radiology, Calvary Adelaide Hospital, and St Andrew's Hospital who helped make our Giving Day a huge success. Service sponsors Jones Radiology, Radiology SA and Icon Cancer Centre also donated $10 from every brain scan throughout May.

GREY MAY SERVICE SUPPORTERS

$10 from every brain tumour scan and service donated to brain tumour research

Jones Radiology · ICON CANCER CENTRE · radiology SA

BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH SA & ADELAIDE BRIN TUMOUR SUPPORT GROUP

Spread awareness and provided information at these locations

Calvary Adelaide Hospital · munno para FOODLAND · The Memorial Hospital · St Andrew's Hospital

Brain Tumour Warrior Mandy, bought new community partner Munno Parra Foodland on board, driving awareness and donations with a raffle, donations, and a token wall fundraiser raising $7,730!

The Riverland community showed incredible support once again through Brave for Dave, raising $10,000 with help from Riverland Netball Association, Riverland Hockey, Barmera-Monash FC, and Loxton Football Club.

The UniSA Centre for Cancer Biology hosted our Brain Tumour Research Update and Lab Tour, showcasing the latest breakthroughs and unveilling the new Felicity's Countess equipment, donated in memory of Felicity Plew.

Grey May ended with a special community celebration at the Cathedral Hotel, where supporters gathered to meet South Australia's first Brain Tumour Support Nurse, a position made possible thanks to generous donors like you.

We couldn't have done it without you. Your support brings us closer to better treatments—and one day, a cure.

Thank you for going grey in May.

Ginta with Susan O'Neil CEO Jones Radiology

Ginta with Susan Coe CEO and Staff, Memorial Hospital

Uni SA Building

Volunteers Cecilia and Kerry Calvary Adelaide Hospital

THANK YOU!
Community Fundraising Raises $110,000

Brave4Dave – Riverland Clash
In memory of Dave Fiebig

Brave4Dave - Nadia Fantasia Fundraiser
In memory of Dave Fiebig

In Memory of Felicity Plew
Countess Equipment

Tyler Fuller & Family
Traumatic Brain Injury Fundraiser

Kerry & Kellie
Walk for Dusty and Phil Amalfi Coast

Shimmi for Immi
In Memory of Immi Cenko

Griff's Brain Cancer
Lunch Fundraiser

Be Bold Go Gold Morning Tea
Calvary Hospital

Running for Mum
Paige's Canberra Fun Run

Brain Awareness Week Raffle
Memorial Hospital

Adelaide Brain Tumour Support Group
Christmas Lunch

Thank you to our other amazing community fundraisers!
Tara's Headshave - Tara Mutz , HOKA Sydney Run - Liam Scanlan, HBF Run for a Reason – Alan Gill, Sally Lennon, Richard Garcia, Jamie Reeves, Jonessa Munachen, Kaely Bettella,Sienna Hicks, City2Surg – Kate Said, Brisbane Half Marathon - Anthony Collins, Big Grinch Pete's Army - Jessica Cutting

Fundraising Supporting the NRF

The objective of the Foundation is directed towards funding research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disease or malfunction of the brain, spine and nerves and it is through the generosity of our supporters that we are able to continue this lifesaving work.

DONATIONS AND REGULAR MONTHLY PAYMENTS

The NRF relies on your generosity to continue to support vital neurological and neurosurgical research and to be able to donate equipment for both research and treatment.

Regular monthly donations are a great way to spread your giving throughout the year, and an annual statement summarising your donations will be delivered to you.

One-off donations and regular monthly donations can be made either online, at www.nrf.com.au, by clicking the "Donate Now" button, scan the QR code on this page or by completing the enclosed form.

GIFTS IN WILLS

Looking for a way to make your final wishes really count? Consider leaving a gift in your Will to the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation. To leave a gift in your Will to the Foundation, contact your solicitor, who will advise you of the required documentation. The correct full name to be listed in your will should read NeuroSurgical Research Foundation.

You can also leave a gift in your Will online and create a legally valid Will in as little as 15 minutes using Willed. Visit nrf.com.au/gifts-in-wills to learn more.

Thank you to the following for leaving a gift in their Will to the NeuroSurgical Research Foudation:

Basil Reginald Burke
Phyllis Joan Crowley
Ronald Graham Dalip
Felicity Plew

IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS

In memoriam gifts are donations that may be made in lieu of sending flowers, or in memory of a loved friend, relative, or colleague. They are a positive and thoughtful way to honour the memory of a loved one. Family members are notified of all donors, and gifts are receipted and acknowledged promptly.

The NRF wishes to acknowledge the following In Memoriam donations received from families and friends in memory of their loved ones:

Chris Adams
Penelope Byrne
Steven Fenk
Theresa Malone
Jed McDonald
Louise O'Keefe
Yvonne Ellen Slipper
Vince "Vincenzo" Villano
Rod Ayres
Pete Cutting
Dave Fiebig
Graeme Marshall
Jennifer Moloney
Judith Ann Rischbieth
Chris Thornton
Tony Walsh
Sue Bignell
Charles Charie Daw
Richard Hall
Phil Matalone
Jacob Neale
Jo Scanlon
Patrick Tocaciu
Mark Weber
Richard Buttery
Michael Docherty
Brian Kretschmer
Julie Louise Mazzachi
Maria Nicolaci
Richard Schembri
Dustin Turner

IN CELEBRATION & FACEBOOK FUNDRAISERS

Next time you're celebrating a birthday, anniversary, engagement, or special event, why not ask friends and family to skip presents and donate to lifesaving research instead?

The NRF wishes to acknowledge the following In Celebration donations received this year via our website and Facebook Fundraisers.

Cherrie Adams
Jess Elsegood
Mandy Moseley-Greatwich
Jenny Tocaciou

SCAN ME

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA AND MAKE YOUR DONATION TO THE NRF TODAY!

NRF Team Neuro Raised $38,200 in 2024

In was an outstanding effort at the 50th City to Bay Fun Run, NRF Team Neuro raised an incredible $38,200 to fuel life-saving neurosurgical research.

With 84 runners and walkers across four teams, NRF Team Neuro came together to support those fighting neurosurgical disease. Many to honour loved ones lost to brain cancer, stroke, Parkinson's disease and traumatic brain injury.

Long-time sponsors Jones Radiology not only backed the event, but saw their own Mark Sparnon cross the finish line first for Team Neuro in just 47 minutes! Other standout teams included Tony Tony Tony, Running for Mel, and newcomers Surfcon SA, who rallied around their colleague facing a brain cancer diagnosis.

Researchers, neurosurgeons, families and friends all united for the cause Thank you to everyone who raced, fundraised or volunteered. Every dollar raised goes directly to research.

NRF Team Neuro


Team Surfcon

Running for Mel Mario & Pat and Corena

Tony, Tony, Tony - A, B, Christine Walsh, Glen Smelt, Bronwhy Veale and Angelique Smelt.

Jones Radiology - Mark Sodano and Family


CTB 2024 Volunteers

Jakob & Tara Sparkes

Jasmin and Friends

Jones Radiology - Will Ransome

Thanks to our long term sponsor

NRF Life Members Honour Board

NRF LIFE MEMBERS

Helli Campbell
Richard Campbell
Francis X Donlan
Richard Fewster
Derek Frewin AO
Carolyn Hewson AO
Glenn McCulloch AM
Robert Neill
Brian North AO
Mel Zerner

STAR OF THE FOUNDATION ($1,000,000+)

James & Diana Ramsay Foundation

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION - PLATINUM ($500,000+)

John Crowley Scholarship
SA Police - Ride Like Crazy

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION - DIAMOND ($250,000+)

Strong Enough to Live
Wilkins Family Foundation

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION - GOLD ($100,000+)

June Bowman
Cherry Auction
Coopers Brewery Foundation
Fay Fuller Foundation
Harvey Foundation
Jones Radiology
Anthea Dinning & Nadia Kingham
Jody Koerner
Glenn McCulloch AM

MAJOR BENEFACTORS - SILVER ($50,000+)

Barbara Kelley & Family
Fred Caruso
Jo Cooper
Francis X Donlan
Brian & Sue North
Fred & Marina Pascale
Patrick of Coonawarra

MAJOR BENEFACTORS - BRONZE ($25,000+)

Brave for Dave
Calvary Adelaide
CMV Foundation
Crows Foundation
Peter & Roslyn Griffiths
ICON
Letcombe Foundation
Memorial Hospital
Pete's Army
Rick Schembri
Antony & Mary Louise Simpson
Richard Turner
Running for Richard
Nick & Anna Vrodos
The University of Adelaide

BENEFACTORS ($10,000+)

Adelaide Brain Tumour Support (ABTS)
Adult Brain Cancer Support Association (ABCSA)
Australian Executor Trustees
Coopers Brewery
Simon Fahey
Harris Foundation
Tyler Fuller
LifeHealthCare
Medtronic
NuVasive
Frank & Margaret O'Neill
Picnic for Carmel
Santosh Poonnoose
Nick & Elise Ross
SANTOS
Sarah Constructions
Shimmi for Immi
Sovereign Order St John
Tony Tony Tony
Walk for Phil
Wiggy
William Buck
Mel Zerner

BENEFACTORS ($5,000+)

Margaret Dingle
Casandra Hewett
Ginta Orchard
Morgan Stanley
Pete ❤ Pete
Richard & Susan Simpson

AMBASSADORS

Cherrie Adams
Jessica Anderson
Charles Brice
Kerry Buttery
Alicia Critchley
Pam Downward
Chloe Drogemuller-Fiebig
Casey Kay Fitzhardy
Di Floreani
Chelsea Dawn Fuller
Tyler Fuller
Lucinda Gregory
Gross & Family
Bethwyn Levi
Toni McArthur
Cecilia Pascale
Allison & Lili Pearson
Patrick Renner
Matt Rowett
Simon Schwerdt
Lauren Spear
Rosel Stokes
Natalia Thompson
Allys Todd
Ella Vaccaro
Tarnya van Driel
Kristen Wilkins & Family
Dean Williams

Financials 2024/5

The NeuroSurgical Rsearch Foundation Incorporated. For the Year Ended 31st March 2025.

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation Inc Statement of Comprehensive Income	NOTE	2025 $	2024 $
INCOME - RESEARCH FUND			
Donations and Fundraising		1,244,689	1,014,217
Investment Income		26,595	166,578
TOTAL INCOME		**1.271,284**	**1,180,795**
LESS EXPENSES			
Research Grant Expenditure	4	1,586,144	1,057,412
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) RESEARCH FUND		**(314,860)**	**123,383**
INCOME – SCHOLARSHIPS FUND			
Donations and fundraising		127,400	---
Investment Income		9,576	43,044
TOTAL INCOME		**136,976**	**43,044**
Less expenses scholarship awards		**(16,948)**	**---**
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) SCHOLARSHIP FUND		**120,028**	**43,044**
INCOME – OPERATIONS FUND			
Investment Income		134,865	443,367
Government parental leave payments		---	15,889
Membership		582	673
TOTAL INCOME		**135,447**	**459,929**
LESS EXPENSES			
Administrative Expenses		311,445	287,675
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) OPERATIONS FUND		**(175,998)**	**172,254**
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		**(370,830)**	**338,681**

NOTES

Note 4 - RESEARCH GRANTS EXPENDITURE

Flinders Brain tumour research	50,000	---
Flinders Research Assistant	20,000	49,848
SAHLN Brain Tumour Research	50,000	58,834
Uni SA Brain tumour Research	711,331	164,160
Uni SA Paed	---	47,790
Uni Adel Chair	67,104	321,891
Uni Adel Stroke	50,000	100,000
Uni Adel TBI / SCI	91,375	80,731
Uni Adel neurodegeneration	197,112	200,000
RAH Brain tumour research	150,000	93,080
RAH Stroke	---	50,000
SAHMRI Brain tumour research	50,000	72,194
Scholarships & Phd	62,400	---
SA Brain Tumour Support Nurse	25,000	---
SANTB	50,000	---
Equipment	50,000	---
Unallocated research grants	(38,178)	(181,116)
	1,586,144	**1,057,412**

Note 5 UN-ALLOCATED RESEARCH GRANTS PAYABLE

Opening balance	68,097	249,213
Current year expense Unallocated research grants	(38,178)	(181,116)
Closing balance	**29,919**	**68,097**

Statement of Financial Position	Note	2025 $	2024 $
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents		160,509	487,059
Inventories		500	500
Receivables		577	1,476
Prepayments and accrued income		2,124	2,149
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		**163,710**	**491,184**
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Office Equipment and Computer Software		627	886
Managed Investment Portfolio		5,731,651	5,788,205
Investments		29,676	27,209
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		**5,761,954**	**5,816,300**
TOTAL ASSETS		**5,925,664**	**6,307,484**
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables		9,419	5,107
Un-allocated research grants payable	5	29,919	68,097
Research grants payable		50,000	48,327
Accrued expenses		9,918	7,035
Provisions		53,385	35,065
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		**152,641**	**163,631**
TOTAL LIABILITIES		**152,641**	**163,631**
NET ASSETS		**5,773,023**	**6,143,853**
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS		**5,773,023**	**6,143,853**

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN ACCUMULATED FUNDS

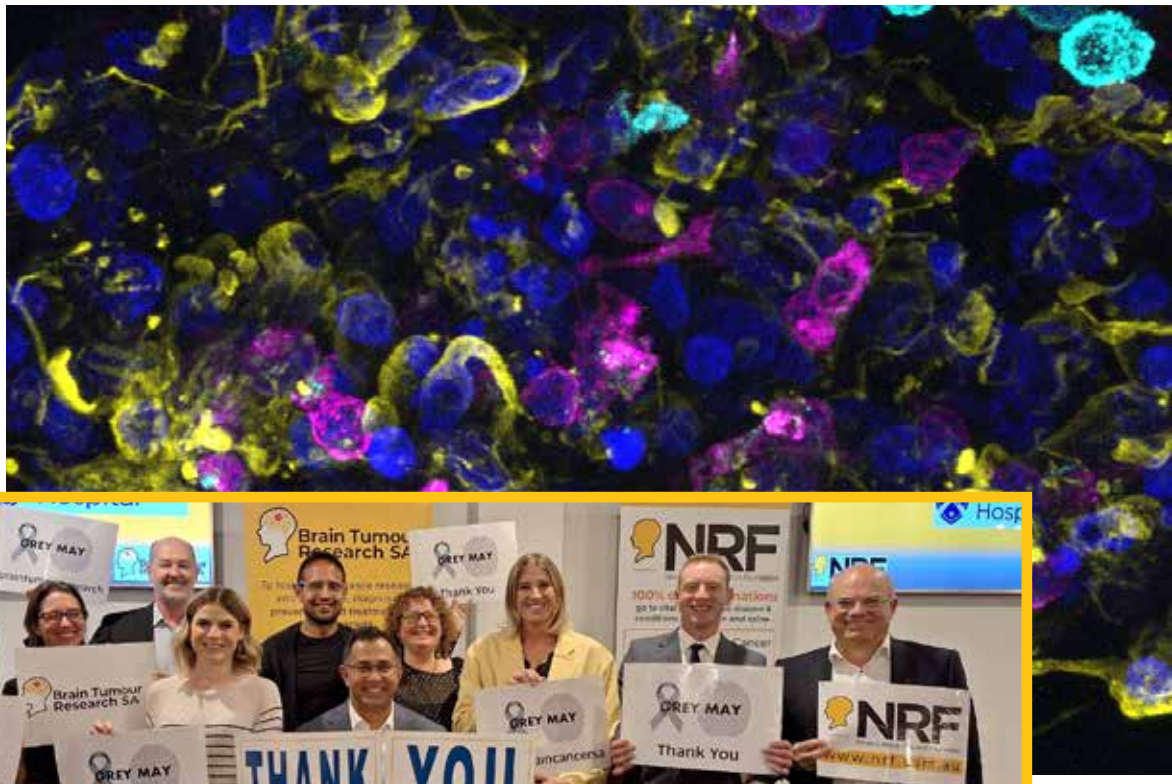
Year ended 31 March 2025	**Research Fund**	**Scholarship Fund**	**Operations Fund**	**Total**
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	1,929,102	224,797	3,989,954	6,143,853
Total comprehensive income	(314,860)	120,028	(175,998)	(370,830)
Accumulated funds at end of year	**1,614,242**	**344,825**	**3,813,956**	**5,773,023**

Year ended 31 March 2024	**Research Fund**	**Scholarship Fund**	**Operations Fund**	**Total**
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	1,805,719	181,753	3,817,700	5,805,172
Total comprehensive income	123,383	43,044	172,254	338,681
Accumulated funds at end of year	**1,929,102**	**224,797**	**3,989,954**	**6,143,853**

William Buck
ACCOUNTANTS & ADVISORS

This financial report has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (SA) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. These pages are extracts from the Audited Financial Statement. If you require a full set of the Financial Statement, please contact Ginta Orchard - Hon Secretary by either phone (08) 8371 0771 or email ginta.orchard@nrf.com.au.

Thank you to William Buck for pro-bono audit services.



NeuroSurgical Research Foundation
Executive Officer: Ginta Orchard
PO Box 698, North Adelaide SA 5006
Phone: (08) 8371 0771
Mobile: 0419 844 511
Email: info@nrf.com.au
Website & Online Donations: www.nrf.com.au

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and pays respect to Elders past and present.

SCAN ME

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA AND MAKE YOUR DONATION TO THE NRF TODAY!