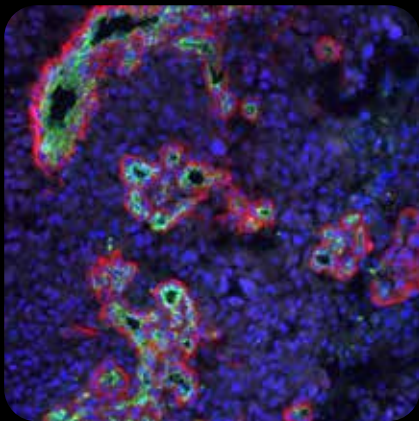




25 / 26

IMPACT REPORT

Every gift carries a story - of love, loss, hope, and a determination to build a better future for South Australians living with disease or injury of the brain, spine and nerves.

THANK YOU. 100% OF EVERY GIFT FUNDS LIFESAVING RESEARCH

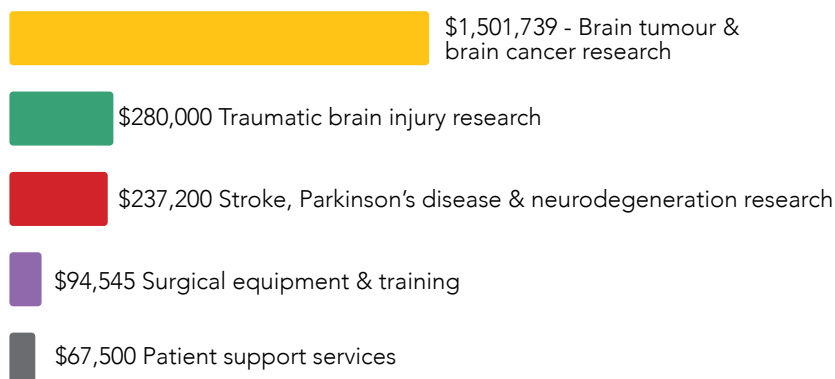
Your support funds research into the cause, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disease, injury or malfunction of the brain, spine and nerves. Real progress is being made against brain tumours, stroke, aneurysm, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and Parkinson's disease.

48 GRANTS AWARDED WORTH

\$2.19^M

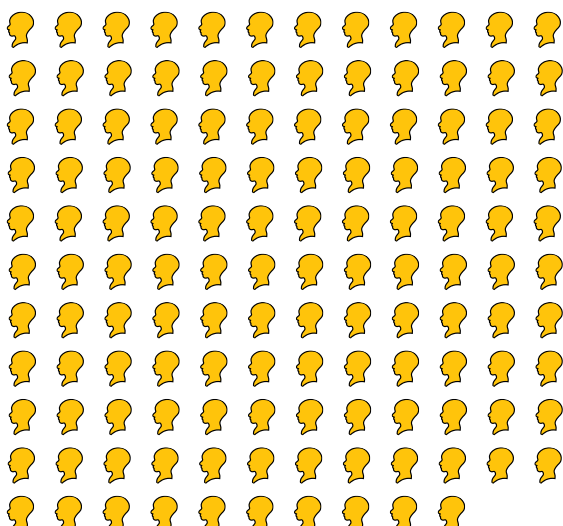
The largest funding year in the Foundation's 63 year history

WHERE IT WENT...



\$65^M
Competitive funding awarded to NRF supported projects

130 FAMILIES SUPPORTED BY SA'S BRAIN CANCER NURSE CONSULTANT



\$134,413

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

\$45,000

CITY TO BAY FUN RUN
TEAM NEURO

\$86,052

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

63

YEARS FUNDING
NEUROSURGICAL RESEARCH



@NRFTeamNeuro



@NeuroSurgicalResearchFoundation



@neurosr_foundation



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BOARD MEMBERS



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Assoc Prof Frances Corrigan SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Dr Ema Knight SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

“Dad wanted future generations of doctors to have knowledge, research and treatments available to help patients in ways that simply weren’t possible in his time. Thank you for helping continue a legacy that means so much to me and my family.”

MS NADIA KINGHAM - DAUGHTER OF
NRF CO-FOUNDER DR TREVOR DINNING

A YEAR OF RECORD IMPACT

“Better research leads to better lives — and that work has only been possible because of the dedication of our clinicians, researchers, supporters and families who continue to stand with us.”

DR NICK VRODOS FRACS | NRF PRESIDENT



This has been a landmark year for the NRF. Thanks to you, we delivered our largest funding year in the Foundation’s 63-year history — more than \$2.1 million awarded across 48 research projects, 24 scholarships and critical equipment. We are pleased to be supporting more clinical trials than ever before, enabling South Australian patients to access promising new treatments. Over the past five years, your support has helped South Australian researchers convert NRF seed funding into more than \$65 million in competitive national grants — proof of the extraordinary return your generosity generates.



Throughout the year we held three Statewide Neurosurgery Meetings, bringing together surgeons, clinicians, researchers and health professionals for a unique opportunity to exchange knowledge and showcase emerging research. Thank you to our event sponsors who make these valuable gatherings possible, fostering collaboration across the neuro community to drive innovation forward.

Throughout this report, you will see QR codes linking to stories beyond these pages. I’d like to share an inspiring video from one of my patients, brain tumour warrior Francesca Klemich, who generously shared her story with us.



We are so grateful to every supporter, donor, fundraiser, sponsor, researcher and volunteer who has contributed to the NRF this year, thank you.

Your support allows us to champion new ideas, nurture rising researchers and invest in work that makes a genuine difference. We hope you enjoy reading about the incredible progress and breakthroughs you have made possible in this report.



HEAR FROM FRANCESCA

Dr Nick Vrodos, FRACS
NRF President



RESEARCH THAT REACHES PEOPLE

This year has been another incredible chapter for the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation, driven by the generosity, dedication and belief of our extraordinary community.

Together, we have continued to invest in world-class research, funding more than \$2.1 million in grants, scholarships and equipment to advance discoveries across brain tumours, stroke, traumatic brain injury and other neurological conditions.

One of the most exciting areas of progress is to see more clinical trials here in Adelaide enabling our patients to access the latest advances in treatment.

Just as importantly, we remain committed to supporting patients and families through some of the most challenging moments of their lives, through the Adelaide Brain Tumour Support Group and the SA Brain Cancer Support Nurse, providing connection and guidance to around 130 patients annually.

This impact was beautifully captured by Cecilia, brain tumour warrior and dear member of our NRF community. Diagnosed at just 28 years old, Cecilia has faced surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, but has transformed her experience into one of advocacy, connection and hope. A long-term NRF ambassador you can often find her volunteering at an event, taking on the City-Bay for NRF Team Neuro, or lending a supportive ear to someone who needs it.

“Having this resource, having these people, has really changed my life”

CECILIA PASCALE

Stories like Cecilia’s remind us why research matters - because behind every discovery is a person, a family and a future we are working to change.

I am incredibly grateful to our researchers, volunteers, fundraisers, partners, donors and supporters. To everyone who shares our vision throughout the year, your commitment makes this progress possible.

Together, we are building a future where more patients survive, recover and thrive.

Ginta Orchard
NRF Executive Officer



HEAR CECILIA'S STORY

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF NEUROSURGERY

● ADVANCING NEUROSURGICAL CARE THROUGH RESEARCH | DR ADAM WELLS

Over the past year the RAH Clinical Neuroscience Research Group has continued to build a diverse and collaborative research portfolio made possible through the support of the NRF.

Our leading ROTEM-TBI project investigating blood clotting following brain injury using advanced test techniques now has 400 enrolled participants. This represents a major milestone, as efforts now shift to data analysis and publication. We plan to expand this work into an interventional study in collaboration with interstate and international partners.

Our chronic subdural haematoma studies, RiSE and FiCS, continue to progress, investigating why bleeding recurs after treatment. Recent findings have identified a potentially key protein in the bleeding pathway, with Dr Abhiram Hiwase presenting this work at the 2026 Neurosurgical Society ASM, where it has been nominated for the Andrew Kaye Poster Prize. We plan to extend this program to include a trial evaluating surgical methods.

We are also supporting the introduction of Australia's first recruitment site for an international trial comparing surgical approaches for aneurysms, led by Dr. Jorn Van Der Veken.

Alongside these projects, we continue to foster the next generation of researchers through supervision of undergraduate, post-graduate, masters and PhD students. Together, these achievements reflect the enormous impact of NRF support in the neurosurgical research space.



● IMPROVING THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF PITUITARY TUMOURS | DR EDWARD MIGNONE

Through the Abbie Simpson Clinical Fellowship, the NRF is supporting Dr Edward Mignone as he undertakes his PhD and develops innovative ways to improve the diagnosis and treatment of hormone-secreting pituitary tumours.

The Fellowship is helping fund Dr Mignone's PhD while he completes a prestigious research placement at Oregon Health & Science University in the United States, collaborating with international experts and accessing one of the world's largest pituitary tumour databases.

Using artificial intelligence to analyse these large datasets, Dr Mignone aims to develop tools that help clinicians diagnose pituitary tumours earlier and better predict which treatments will be most effective—bringing more personalised care to patients in the future.



CAR-T CELL TRIALS

For adults and children diagnosed with aggressive brain cancer, treatment options remain limited. Thanks to your ongoing support, the first Australian CAR-T cell trial for patients with recurrent glioblastoma is about to enter its next phase.

At the Royal Adelaide Hospital, researchers are advancing the KARPOS CAR-T cell clinical trial, investigating new ways to improve this highly personalised immunotherapy. Unlike chemotherapy or radiation, CAR-T cell therapy harnesses a patient's own immune cells, genetically reprogramming them to recognise and attack cancer cells.



A NEW APPROACH TO BYPASS THE BLOOD BRAIN BARRIER

Dr Adam Wells | \$250,000 over two years

Neurosurgeon Dr Adam Wells is partnering with Prof Michael Brown and the Centre for Cancer Biology Translational Oncology Team to lead the next phase of the KARPOS trial. Using a specialised catheter system, the CAR-T cell therapy will be delivered directly into the cerebrospinal fluid, bypassing the blood-brain barrier to increase effectiveness. Patients will also receive additional medicines designed to improve the treatment's effectiveness and reduce toxicity.



BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CAR-T THERAPIES

Assoc Prof Lisa Ebert | \$50,000

Building on years of NRF support for the KARPOS and paediatric diffuse midline glioma LEVI'S-CATCH clinical trials, Assoc Prof Lisa Ebert is investigating how CAR-T cells enter brain tumours, with the goal of engineering therapies that can more effectively reach and destroy cancer cells.



MANUFACTURING THE FUTURE

Dr Tessa Gargett | \$50,000 Equipment Grant

Every CAR-T treatment used in the KARPOS and LEVI'S-CATCH trials is manufactured here in Adelaide. New closed-system manufacturing equipment funded by the NRF will streamline this process, support future Phase 2 clinical trials and help expand access to these promising therapies to more patients.



HEAR FROM DR GARGETT



HEAR FROM A/PROF EBERT

NEW PURPOSE & SMARTER TREATMENT



“It left my little cousins without a mum, and I never forgot the devastating consequences of glioblastoma”

PROF CEDRIC BARDY

\$300,000 OVER 3 YEARS | BRAIN CANCER

Prof Cedric Bardy | Old Drug, New Tricks

Developing a new cancer drug can take decades. Prof Cedric Bardy and his team are taking a different approach by investigating whether an existing medicine could become a new treatment for recurrent glioblastoma.

Their clinical trial will evaluate trifluoperazine (TFP), a medication that has been safely used for many years for other conditions, to determine whether it can slow the growth of aggressive brain tumours. The study will compare different methods of delivering the drug while closely monitoring how it reaches the tumour and responds within the body.

For Prof Bardy, the work is also deeply personal. Inspired by the loss of his aunt to glioblastoma, he is driven by the hope that future families will have more options than his own once did. For patients with recurrent glioblastoma, where treatment options are extremely limited, repurposing an existing medicine could provide a faster pathway to new therapies.



\$50,000 | BRAIN CANCER

Assoc Prof Hien Le | Get Smart Optimising Radiation Therapy

Not every breakthrough comes from a new drug. Sometimes it comes from delivering treatment in a better way.

Assoc Prof Hien Le is leading the SMART clinical trial, investigating whether changing the timing and dose of highly targeted stereotactic radiosurgery before brain surgery can improve outcomes for patients with brain metastases.

The trial will compare a single high-dose treatment with three smaller doses before surgery, assessing cancer control, side effects and patients' quality of life.

By refining an established treatment approach, the SMART trial aims to make care safer, more effective and better tailored to each patient's needs.

“The SMART trial aims to make care safer, more effective and better tailored to each patient's needs”

ASSOC PROF HIEN LE



NEW PAEDIATRIC BRAIN CANCER TRIAL COMES TO ADELAIDE

When a breakthrough treatment reaches patients, it is the result of years of research, collaboration and preparation behind the scenes.



One of the NRF's most significant investments has been supporting South Australia's adult and paediatric brain tumour biobanks—creating a vital resource for researchers working to better understand brain cancer and develop new treatments.

The South Australian Neurological Tumour Bank (SANTB) at Flinders University and the Paediatric Brain Tumour Biobank preserve precious tumour samples and associated clinical data, allowing researchers locally and internationally to access the resources they need to accelerate discovery.

“I think we are about to take the jump and start moving forward with survival of brain cancer like we did with leukaemia over the last many years.”

PROF JORDAN HANSFORD

This shared research infrastructure is already supporting cutting -edge research. PaedNeoVax—an Australian-first clinical trial investigating personalised mRNA cancer vaccines for children and adolescents with aggressive brain tumours is expecting to enrol their first patient right here in Adelaide.

“Instead of individual projects trying to collect their own samples, we’ve created something that can support many projects—more efficiently, and at higher quality,”

DR REBECCA ORMSBY

Using advanced genome sequencing, researchers will identify the unique features of each child's tumour before creating a vaccine designed specifically to help their immune system recognise and fight the cancer. The trial, led through a national collaboration including SAHMRI, the University of Queensland, Providence Therapeutics and ANZCHOG, will involve children from eight paediatric hospitals across Australia.

By investing in the foundations of research, your support is helping South Australian researchers contribute to world-leading collaborations and creating opportunities for the next generation of discoveries.



VITAMIN C TREATMENT OFFERS NEW HOPE FOR TBI PATIENTS

A promising new treatment for traumatic brain injury (TBI) is now progressing to a first-in-human clinical trial at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.



Led by Assoc Prof Mark Plummer, in collaboration with researchers from The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, the team has developed a novel high-dose formulation of Vitamin C known as sodium ascorbate.

After a severe head injury, swelling inside the skull can increase pressure on the brain, causing further damage to already vulnerable tissue. Current treatment with hypertonic saline helps reduce this pressure but does not protect brain cells from ongoing injury and can have significant side effects at high doses.

"Vitamin C is essential for normal brain function, and after a brain injury, levels fall dramatically," explains Associate Professor Plummer. "Our new drug formulation overcomes previous limitations, enabling it to be given in doses hundreds of fold higher to stop the brain from swelling and potentially protect brain cells from dying."

"This would not have been possible without the generous support of the NRF, which funded the pivotal early research. If the clinical trials are successful, this could become the first treatment for traumatic brain injury that not only reduces brain swelling but also protects brain cells from further damage."

ASSOC PROF PLUMMER

● THE POWER OF SEED FUNDING | \$75,000



ICU Consultant and PhD Candidate Dr Aniket Nadkarni received a \$75,000 NRF grant in 2025 to test this new treatment on pre-clinical models.

Results demonstrated that the treatment effectively reduced pressure within the injured brain without harmful increases in blood salt levels. These findings have paved the way for a Phase 1 first-in-human clinical trial, where researchers will assess the safety and feasibility of the treatment in patients.

FROM SEED FUNDING TO NATIONAL IMPACT

What a time the last year has been! The university merger to form Adelaide University has brought together two institutions with major strengths in cancer research, creating an exciting collaborative research environment. In particular, combining the brain tumour discovery research strength of the University of South Australia with the clinical expertise of the University of Adelaide augurs well for translating brain tumour research into new therapies for patients in South Australia. We look forward to what this may bring in the coming years.

The brain tumour research environment in South Australia has grown enormously over the last decade, largely due to the incredible backing the NRF and its supporters have provided to local researchers. The NRF's strategy of providing small seed funding to develop promising brain tumour projects to the point where they can attract major national funding has really paid off. This is exemplified by a \$3 million Medical Research Future Fund Brain Cancer Mission grant recently awarded to a project led by Assoc Prof Quenten Schwarz, which aims to develop new therapies for diffuse midline glioma, a currently incurable form of childhood brain cancer. Attracting this funding would not have been possible without the seed funding the NRF provided for the early work on this project.



We are really pleased to have hosted both the Cooperative Trials Group for Neuro-Oncology (COGNO) and Australian Brain Cancer Research Alliance (ABCARA) meetings at the Adelaide Convention Centre in 2026. The two major national brain cancer bodies choosing Adelaide for their annual scientific meetings, the first time away from the Eastern states, demonstrates the strong national standing brain tumour research in South Australia now has.

“Attracting this funding would not have been possible without the seed funding the NRF provided for the early work on this project.”

We were also grateful for an NRF Personnel Grant to support Ms Sakthi Lenin to continue to develop our pre-clinical models that allow for the advanced assessment of new potential therapies for glioblastoma.

Professor Stuart Pitson
NRF Chair of Brain Tumour Research
Adelaide University

ADVANCING MODELS & NEW DISCOVERIES



Building better models. Finding better treatments.

● PROF STUART PITSON | \$40,740

In Memory of Elise Ross with the James & Diana Ramsay Foundation



JAMES & DIANA
RAMSAY
FOUNDATION

Glioblastoma is one of the most aggressive brain cancers, yet researchers are still limited by laboratory models that don't accurately reflect how these tumours behave in people.

Thanks to NRF supporters, Professor Stuart Pitson and his team are developing advanced "humanised" models that combine patient-derived brain tumour cells with a functioning human immune system.

These next-generation models will give researchers a far more realistic way to study how glioblastoma grows, spreads and responds to new treatments before they reach patients.

By improving the tools researchers rely on every day, this project has the potential to accelerate the development of more effective therapies and bring promising discoveries closer to clinical trials.



New discovery reveals hidden driver of brain cancer

● DR NIRMAN ROBINSON | \$49,963

One of the hallmarks of Glioblastoma is its ability to grow rapidly and spread throughout the brain, making it impossible to remove completely with surgery alone, inevitably leading to recurrence.

Dr Robinson and his team at the Centre for Cancer Biology have identified a protein signalling pathway – CD47-ROBO2- that helps drive tumour growth and migration.

The CD47 protein acts as a "don't eat me" signal, helping tumour cells hide from the immune system. This research discovered that CD47 also protects another protein ROBO2 from being broken down inside cancer cells, allowing it to accumulate and fuel tumour growth.

Loss of CD47 or ROBO2 proteins in lab models slowed tumour growth and reduced cancer spread, highlighting a new potential treatment target.

DISCOVERY RESEARCH



Overcoming Treatment Resistance

Dr Chloe Shard \$50,000
Supported in memory of John "Griff" Griffen

Investigating how blood vessels and immune cells help glioblastoma resist treatment, while developing engineered immune therapies designed to overcome these barriers.



Mapping Glioblastoma in Detail

Assoc Prof Pascal Duijf \$42,000

Using artificial intelligence to map the complex ecosystem of glioblastoma, revealing how cancer and immune cells interact to improve diagnosis, treatment decisions and understanding of therapy resistance.



Understanding Tumour Evolution

Dr Helen Palethorpe \$50,000

Developing patient-derived glioblastoma organoids that mirror tumour changes during treatment, helping researchers understand therapy resistance and develop more personalised treatment strategies.



Decoding Tumour Communication

Prof Cedric Bardy \$50,000

Investigating the long cellular microtube protrusions gliomas use to grow, spread and resist treatment, with the goal of identifying new therapeutic targets to improve survival and quality of life.



Targeting Brain-Tumour Connections

Dr Olivia Morris-Hanon \$49,959 | Supported in memory of Phil Matalone

Exploring how glioblastoma cells communicate with surrounding neurons and investigating ways to disrupt these connections to slow tumour growth and improve treatment outcomes.



Stopping Tumour Recurrence

Dr Briony Gliddon \$50,000 | Supported by Munno Para Foodland

Studying how glioblastoma changes between diagnosis and recurrence to identify why treatments fail and uncover new targets for future therapies.



Unlocking New Research Possibilities

Prof Jose Polo \$50,000 Equipment Grant BioCAM Duplex multi-electrode array

Establishing Adelaide's first high-resolution electrophysiology platform to study brain organoids, neural networks and tumour-neuron interactions in real time.



Advancing Brain Cancer Research Technology

Assoc Prof Guillermo Gomez \$50,000 Equipment Grant LumiPore™ platform

Introducing Australia's first photoporation platform to accelerate gene research, drug discovery and the development of new cell-based therapies for adult and paediatric brain cancers.



Engineering Next-Generation CAR-T Therapy

Dr Nicole Wittwer \$50,000 Supported in memory of Mark Weber

Developing dual-target CAR-T cells designed to attack both brain tumour cells and their supporting blood vessels, improving treatment precision while reducing toxicity.



Improving Pituitary Tumour Treatment

Assoc Prof Sunita De Sousa \$50,000

Supporting laboratory research into the genetic drivers of pituitary tumours and potential new therapies identified through clinical research.

UNRAVELLING THE ORIGINS OF CHILDHOOD BRAIN CANCER



● \$2.9M TO ABOLISH-DMG
PROF QUENTEN SCHWARZ

Last year, the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation, together with the Adelaide Crows Foundation, invested \$30,000 in Prof Quenten Schwarz's pioneering stem cell research into childhood brain tumours, supporting advanced laboratory models to better understand how these devastating cancers begin.

Today, that work has helped lay the foundation for a major milestone.

Quenten and his collaborators have now secured a \$2.9 million Medical Research Future

Fund (MRFF) grant to lead ABOLISH-DMG, a five-year national research program investigating the genetic and environmental causes of diffuse midline glioma (DMG)—one of the deadliest childhood brain cancers, with an average survival of just nine months.

Using cutting edge stem cell technology, the team will recreate the earliest stages of brain development to identify the genetic changes that drive DMG and create more accurate models for testing future treatments.

Continuing its support, the NRF also funded a new EVOS M3000 Imaging System (\$20,000) this year. The specialised microscope allows researchers to safely monitor and isolate delicate stem cell colonies inside sterile culture environments, providing an important capability for the next phase of this groundbreaking research.

From an early research grant to nationally funded discovery, this is the power of investing in ideas with the potential to change lives.



Finding New Treatment Targets

● DR MEL TEA | \$50,000 | NRF PAEDIATRIC RESEARCH

Dr Tea and her team are investigating a promising new treatment target for diffuse midline glioma - sphingosine kinase 2 (SK2). Using advanced laboratory models to evaluate an SK2 inhibitor already in Phase II clinical trials for other cancers—bringing potential new therapies for children one step closer.



HEAR FROM DR TEA

A MAJOR MILESTONE FOR STROKE RESEARCH



“The ongoing support of the NRF community and generous donors enables us to deepen our understanding, uncover new treatment targets and ultimately improve outcomes for patients.”

● STROKE

A \$3.518M MILESTONE

A huge milestone over the past year has been the award of a \$3.518M NHMRC Ideas grant (2026-2030), which is taking a 'beyond the brain' approach to treating long-term cognitive impairment post-stroke. We are evaluating the utility of restoring a healthy microbiome, via faecal microbiota transplant to treat cognitive impairment out to 1-year post-stroke. This study will also identify predictive and diagnostic biomarkers of cognitive decline, neurodegeneration and dysregulation of the microbiota-gut-brain axis long-term post-stroke SND. The exceptional national/international investigator team encompasses expertise in discovery science, clinical and stroke lived-experience.

NRF research funds were used to generate pilot data for the grant, highlighting the impact of how NRF seed funding can translate into significant national funding investment. The NRF is also generously contributing a further \$500k to the program, supporting purchase of essential research equipment and salary to retain skilled post-doctoral researchers. Stay tuned over the next 5 years as we embark on this exciting project!

● SPINAL CORD INJURY

BLADDER ASSESSMENT BREAKTHROUGH

The Spinal Cord Injury group is excited to share the submission and conferral Dr Ryan Dorrian, whose work investigated a novel electrical stimulation model (graft antenna) following SCI (co-funded by the NRF). Given the significant impact bladder dysfunction has on quality of life for people living with SCI, a component of Ryan's PhD project established a bladder assessment tool. For this work, Ryan was selected as a Poster Finalist at the National Neurotrauma Society's Annual conference in Milwaukee, USA.



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

Professor Renée Turner
NRF Chair of Neurosurgical Research
Adelaide University

ADVANCING RESEARCH ACROSS NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

From brain injury and stroke to Parkinson's disease and emerging technologies, NRF-supported researchers are working to improve diagnosis, treatment and quality of life for people affected by neurological conditions.



Building the next generation of neural implants

ASSOC PROF MATTHEW GILBERT | \$50,000 BRAIN INJURY & PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Developing soft, bio-compatible neural interfaces that better mimic human tissue, with the aim of creating safer and more effective treatments for neurological injuries and disorders.



Understanding outcomes after aneurysm treatment

DR JORN VAN DER VEKEN | \$75,000 ANEURYSM

Expanding research into the cognitive effects of aneurysm treatment, using imaging and biological markers to improve patient selection and long-term outcomes.



Tracking the impact of head collisions in junior athletes

HUGH McCLOSKEY \$25,000 | TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY & CONCUSSION

This world-leading study combining smart mouthguard technology, advanced MRI imaging and cognitive testing aims to better understand concussion risk and provide evidence-based guidance to protect young athletes.



Developing a blood test for stroke

DR FEARGAL RYAN \$50,000 | STROKE

Investigating blood-based biomarkers of blood-brain barrier damage after stroke, with the goal of creating faster and more accessible tools to guide treatment decisions.



Detecting Parkinson's risk earlier – FIND-TBI Study

DR ANGUS McNAMARA \$50,000 | BRAIN INJURY & PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Exploring whether a promising biomarker test can identify early biological changes linked to Parkinson's disease in people with a history of traumatic brain injury.



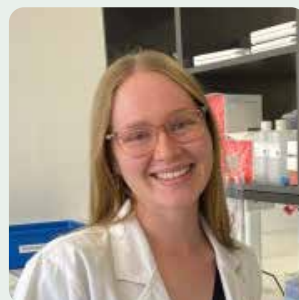
Gaming for cognitive health in Parkinson's disease

MADELEINE HOLMES VICKERS | \$50,000 PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Investigating whether a combination of serious gaming cognitive training and brain stimulation can help preserve cognitive function for people living with Parkinson's disease.

JOHN CROWLEY SCHOLARSHIP

Honouring the memory of John Crowley, who tragically passed away from a head injury sustained in a motorcycle accident. His legacy now supports emerging researchers.



TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

DR LAURA MAY CARR

Studying how traumatic brain injury accelerates brain ageing to identify new therapeutic targets.



CHRONIC SUBDURAL HAEMATOMA

LOLA KAUKAS

Improving personalised care for chronic subdural haematoma by predicting which patients are most at risk of recurrence.



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Each year, scholarships made possible through the generosity of donor families and supporters are helping emerging researchers pursue discoveries that improve the lives of people affected by traumatic brain injury, stroke, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury and brain tumours.



● NRF VACATION SCHOLARSHIP | BRAIN TUMOUR

Bang Khanh Ong

Supervisor: Assoc Prof Quenten Schwarz

Investigating the genetic origins of childhood brain cancer using advanced stem-cell models.

Jakob Deeb

Supervisor: Assoc Prof Sunita De Sousa

Exploring new genetic drivers of pituitary tumours to improve diagnosis and future treatment.

● RICHARD BUTTERY NRF GLIOBLASTOMA VACATION RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Hoang Dung Nguyen

Supervisor: Prof Stuart Pitson

Testing potential new therapies for diffuse midline glioma using existing drugs that could progress rapidly to clinical trials.

● CHRIS ADAMS RESEARCH GRANT | BRAIN TUMOUR

Dr Olivia Morris Hanon

Investigating how brain tumours communicate with healthy brain cells to drive recurrence, opening new possibilities for targeted therapies.

With thanks to the Adams and Buttery families, Strong Enough to Live, and our supporters for helping develop the next generation of brain tumour researchers.



● ANTHONY WALSH TBI SCHOLARSHIP

Hasini Kapuwelle

Investigating how disrupted brain energy supply contributes to long-term damage following traumatic brain injury.

Carl Llewellyn Hooper

Developing promising peptide therapies to improve recovery after traumatic brain injury.

● NRF VACATION SCHOLARSHIP | STROKE

Thinuri Lankathilaka

Supervisor: Dr Shannon Stuckey

Exploring how chronic inflammation contributes to long-term brain damage after stroke.

Anchal Satish Nair

Supervisor: Dr Rebecca Hood

Investigating the role of brain inflammation in stroke recovery and ageing.

Thank you to the Walsh, Simpson families, and everyone whose generosity continues to inspire and support the next generation of neuroscience researchers.

● DONALD SIMPSON NEUROSCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP

Sidra Khan

Brain tumour research.

Rosie Costigan-Dwyer

Stroke research.

Reeya Chetan Patel

Spinal cord injury and paediatric neuro-oncology research.

Isaac Saywell

Parkinson's disease research.



ELLA'S STORY FROM PATIENT TO NURSE



Four years after becoming the first child at Adelaide's Women's and Children's Hospital to undergo brain tumour surgery using a new minimally invasive endoscope, Ella is returning to the hospital environment in a very different role – as a nurse.

When Ella lost her sense of smell during the 2020 bushfires, her mum knew something wasn't right. An MRI revealed a pilocytic astrocytoma and Chiari malformation. Ella was just 15.

She underwent surgery the day before her 16th birthday. At the time, her biggest concern wasn't the surgery itself – it was losing her hair.

The new endoscope allowed neurosurgeons to access Ella's tumour through an incision of approximately one centimetre, rather than the much larger incision traditionally required. This meant less disruption to healthy brain tissue, less hair removal and the potential for a faster recovery.

Ella was the first patient to undergo the procedure using the new equipment, which had initially been borrowed from interstate. Following her surgery, the Women's and Children's Hospital acquired its own equipment with support from the NeuroSurgical Research Foundation and the Wilkins Family Foundation.

Today, Ella has completed her Diploma of Nursing and undertaken placements at both the Women's and Children's Hospital and Royal Adelaide Hospital – including alongside some of the healthcare professionals who cared for her as a teenager.

She is now beginning her nursing career in the Neurosurgery Department at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Her own experience has given Ella a unique perspective on the importance of research, technology and compassionate care. During her placements, she developed a particular interest in supporting people affected by neurological conditions, including stroke and brain injury.

"I've experienced first-hand how important it is to have access to the right equipment and the right people at the right time. Now I want to be part of giving that same care and support to someone else."

Ella's journey is a powerful reminder that the impact of community support can reach far beyond a single procedure. It can help change what is possible for a patient – and inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals to give back.

EQUIPPED FOR SUCCESS

Every gift to the NRF carries a story — of love, loss, hope and a determination to create better futures for patients and families.



A Family's Hope for Future Generations: The Wilkins Family Foundation

When Kristen Wilkins was diagnosed with a brain tumour, her family experienced first hand the importance of expert care and advanced technology.

Their support has funded the SONOCA 300 neuroendoscopy ultrasonic aspirator, giving paediatric neurosurgeons at the Women's and Children's Hospital access to advanced technology that enables safer, minimally invasive tumour removal and improved recovery for young patients.

"This equipment makes a vast difference in outcomes for children with tumours in critical locations. It enables a minimally invasive approach and improves recovery."

Dr Xenia Doorenbosch



HEAR KRISTEN'S STORY



Shimmi for Immi: Advancing Care in Imogen's Memory

In memory of their beloved daughter and sister, Imogen, the Cenko family hosted a night to shine and remember on what would have been her 21st birthday. Their gift has funded the LEVICS Micro-Instrument with irrigation and aspiration - an advanced surgical tool supporting children undergoing complex brain and spinal procedures.

By improving precision and visibility during delicate operations, the instrument helps surgeons remove tumours while preserving healthy tissue and vital functions.

Through their generosity, Imogen's legacy will continue to improve care for children and families.



Running for Olly: Turning Heartbreak Into Hope

When Cat and Matt Thornett joined Team Neuro for the 2025 City-Bay Fun Run, they ran in honour of Cat's dad, Olly, who had recently been diagnosed with glioblastoma.

Together with family and friends, they raised \$16,000 to support brain tumour research, funding a Thermo Fisher Scientific NanoDrop Ultra — equipment that helps researchers analyse precious tumour samples and accelerate discoveries.

Sadly, Olly passed away on 25 October 2025, but his family's determination to create something positive in his memory continues. During a visit to the Centre for Cancer Biology, young grandson Ollie hugged a photo of his Grandpa on the plaque recognising his legacy — a powerful reminder of the love behind every gift and the hope that future families will face a different story.



PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS

Through research, partnerships and community connection, NRF is supporting people affected by neurological conditions — helping create better futures both in the clinic and beyond.



● BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH SA - FROM DISCOVERY SCIENCE TO THE CLINIC

More than 70 clinicians, researchers and advocates came together for the 3rd Annual Brain Tumour Research SA Symposium, showcasing South Australia's growing strength in brain tumour research and clinical translation.

Under the theme From Discovery Science to the Clinic, presentations explored advances in CAR-T cell therapy, tumour biobanking, imaging, molecular therapies and paediatric brain tumour research — demonstrating how collaboration can turn discoveries into better treatments for patients.



With support from Jones Radiology, ICON Cancer Centre, Servier and Radiology SA, the symposium brought together the expertise and collaboration driving brain tumour research forward



● PEACE OF MIND COMMUNITY ZOO DAY

NRF was proud to support the Peace of Mind Foundation SA Community Day at Adelaide Zoo, creating a welcoming space for brain tumour patients, carers and families to connect, relax and enjoy time together away from hospitals and appointments.

For families navigating the challenges of a brain tumour diagnosis, these opportunities for connection and belonging matter.



● ORANGE BUTTERFLY FOUNDATION GALA

NRF also proudly supported the Orange Butterfly Foundation Gala, celebrating its work with South Australians living with traumatic brain injury (TBI).

The event brought together a community united by resilience, recovery and hope, while raising awareness and vital funds to support people affected by brain injury. Inspiring stories from TBI survivor and Paralympic gold medallist Alexa Leary and Olympic champion Kyle Chalmers highlighted the strength of those navigating life after injury.

TURNING EVERY STEP INTO PROGRESS

CITY - BAY - TEAM NEURO



\$45K

Raised including \$16,000 raised in memory of Olly, and \$25,000 continuing Anthony Walsh's legacy for TBI research scholarships.

80

More than 80 participants ran, walked and fundraised to support better treatments and outcomes for people affected by neurological conditions, including those living with brain cancer and brain injury.



The NRF Team Neuro community once again demonstrated the power of coming together, raising an incredible \$45,000 for neurosurgical research in South Australia at the 2025 City-Bay Fun Run.

Behind every step was a story of hope, remembrance and determination. Catherine and Matt raised an outstanding \$16,000 in honour of Catherine's father, Olly, who was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2024. Team Surfcon raised \$4,575 in memory of founder Mark Weber, supporting research that will help future generations. Long-time NRF supporters Team Tony Tony Tony continued Anthony Walsh's legacy, raising an incredible \$25,000 to support TBI research scholarships.

Our wonderful volunteers also played a vital role, creating a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere for participants on the day.

We are incredibly grateful to every runner, fundraiser, volunteer and sponsor — The Dinning Family, Surfcon and Pick a Local, Pick SA Fruit & Veg — whose generosity is helping drive discoveries and improve outcomes for patients and families.



CELEBRATING THE COMMUNITY BEHIND THE RESEARCH

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation (NRF) was proud to celebrate the generosity and dedication of our supporters at a special reception hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, at Government House Adelaide.

The biennial event recognised the individuals, families, organisations and community fundraisers whose commitment continues to drive advances in brain tumour, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, stroke and Parkinson's research across South Australia.

2026 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Top Row (L-R): James & Diana Ramsay Foundation, Wilkins Family Foundation, Mercurio Family of Bache Bros

Second Row: (L-R) Brave for Dave, Running for Richard, Shimmi for Immi

Third Row: (L-R) Tony, Tony, Tony, The Honourable Catherine Branson AC, Melanie Cooper AM

Bottom Row (L-R): Cecilia Pascale, Pat Scalzi, Fred Caruso

OTHER AWARD RECIPIENTS

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION

Medtronic

Jones Radiology

MAJOR BENEFACTORS

Radiology SA
Memorial Hospital

Calvary Adelaide Hospital
Foodland Munno Para

Device Technologies

NRF LIFE MEMBERS & HONOUR BOARD

NRF LIFE MEMBERS

Helli Campbell
Richard Fewster
Glenn McCulloch AM
Mel Zerner

Richard Campbell
Derek Frewin AO
Robert Neill

Francis X Donlan
Carolyn Hewson AO
Brian North AO

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

Wilkins Family Foundation

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

Strong Enough to Live

Medtronic

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

Bache Family
Coopers Brewery Foundation
Harvey Foundation
Glenn McCulloch AM

June Bowman
Fred Caruso
Jones Radiology

Cherry Auction
Fay Fuller Foundation
Jody Koemer

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION - SILVER (\$50,000+)

Barbara Kelley & Family
Letcombe Foundation
Patrick of Coonawarra
Running for Richard

Brave for Dave
Brian & Sue North
Radiology SA

Francis X Dolan
Fred & Marina Pascale
Nick & Elise Ross

FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION - SILVER (\$25,000+)

Adelaide Crows Foundation
Peter & Roslyn Griffiths
Griffen Family
Pete's Army
Antony & Mary Louise Simpson
Richard Turner
Mel Zerner

Calvary Adelaide
Carolyn Hewson AO
Icon Cancer Centre
Santosh Poonnoose
Shimmi for Immi
Nick & Anna Vrodos

CMV Foundation
Device Technologies
Memorial Hospital
Rick Schembri
Tony Tony Tony
Walk for Phil

BENEFACTORS (\$10,000+)

Adelaide Brain Tumour Support (ABTS)
Melanie Cooper AM
Simon Fahey
Tyler Fuller
Frank & Margaret O'Neill
Radio Italia
Sovereign Order St John

Olly Andruchowycz
Coopers Brewery
Foodland Munno Para
Cassandra Hewett
Ginta Orchard
Servier
Weber/Surfcon

Catherine Branson AC
Margaret Dingle
Foodland Supermarkets
LifeHealthCare
Cecilia Pascale
Richard & Susan Simpson
Wiggy

AMBASSADORS

Cherrie Adams
Kerry Buttery
Chloe Drogemuller-Fiebig
Chelsea Dawn Fuller
Gross & Family
Toni McArthur
Patrick Renner
Lauren Spear
Ella Vaccaro

Jessica Anderson
Alicia Critchley
Casey Kay Fitzhardy
Tyler Fuller
Francesca Klemich
Cecilia Pascale
Matt Rowett
Rosel Stokes
Kristen Wilkins & Family

Charles Brice
Pam Downward
Di Floreani
Lucinda Gregory
Bethwyn Levi
Allison & Lili Pearson
Simon Schwerdt
Natalia Thompson
Dean Williams

2025 GREY MAY

\$185,000

RAISED FOR BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH

Every May, our community comes together to turn awareness into action, standing alongside the thousands of Australians whose lives have been affected by brain tumours.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, more than \$185,000 was raised during Grey May 2025 to help fund vital brain tumour research. Throughout May, communities, workplaces, schools and sporting clubs proudly wore grey, hosted fundraising events and honoured loved ones.

Supporters also had the opportunity to see the impact of their generosity firsthand during our Research Update and Lab Tour, where they met the researchers working to develop better treatments for brain tumours. We were proud to support the Cancer Nurses Society of Australia SA State Group Annual Breakfast, held under the theme "What's New in Brain Cancer."



Our heartfelt thanks go to the many businesses, schools, sporting clubs, community groups and individuals who championed Grey May. Special thanks to Munno Para Foodland, who raised \$6,719, including Andrew's inspiring head shave in honour of his mum, and to Brave for Dave, whose community fundraising contributed an incredible \$6,500. A special shout out to Jones Radiology and Radiology SA for donating \$10 from every brain tumour MRI throughout May, and to our Impact Partners whose generosity and commitment continue to make Grey May such a success.

Thank you to everyone who donated, fundraised, volunteered and shared our message. Your generosity is helping accelerate research, inspire hope and move us closer to a future where brain tumours are no longer a devastating diagnosis.



● SUPPORTING BRAIN TUMOUR RESEARCH

2025 GREY MAY



Thank you!

\$1,501,739

Your generosity helped fund a record-breaking donation to brain tumour research in 2026



POWERED BY COMMUNITY



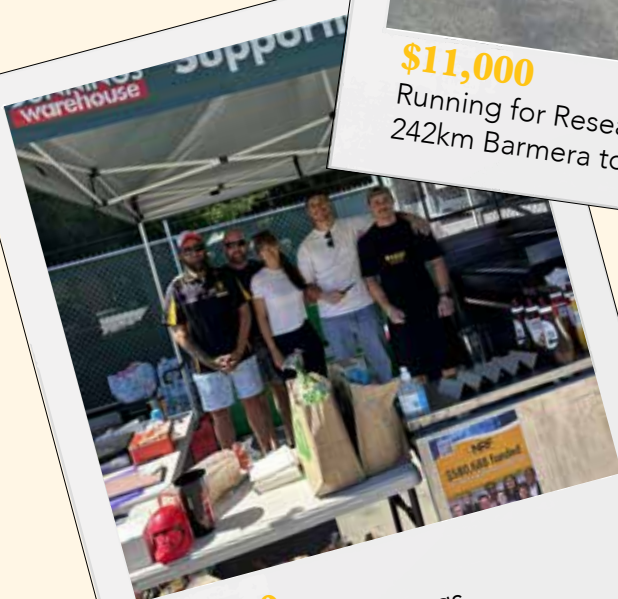
\$3,500
Tyler Fuller's Golf
Day TBI Fundraiser



\$5,500
Alex and Oscar's 24 Hour
Run for Jordan & Phil



\$11,000
Running for Research – GG's
242km Barmera to the Bay



\$1,500
Tyler Fuller's Bunnings
BBQ for TBI Research



\$3,340
The Beat Bop
Brain Tour

\$114,800 RAISED BY COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING



\$6,000
Harper's Go Gold for Childhood
Brain Cancer



\$6,000
Brave for Dave Nadia Fantasia
Fundraiser in Memory Dave Fiebig



\$6,300
Brave for Dave
Grey May Clash



\$2,000
Andrew's Shave for a
Cure Grey May



\$43,000
Griff's Brain Cancer
Research Fundraiser Lunch

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 & 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.



● 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	Olly Andruchowycz	Rod Ayres	Paul Barrett
Barbie Brown	Richard Buttery	Cath Cantlon	Imogen Cenko
Pete Cutting	Rob Douch	Nhan Duong	Graham Erlandsen
Martin Fawbert	Sarah Fazzalari	Dave Fiebig	Elene Galanopoulos
John Griffen	Jillian Helen Gulliver	Patricia Hayward	Theresa Malone
Phil Matalone	Julie Louise Mazzachi	Jed McDonald	Mark McPherson
Duncan McLean	Katrina Moore	Greg Mutze	Louise O'Keefe
Frances Pienaar	Carmel Pilla	Shane Robinson	Elise Ross
Jo Scanlon	Richard Schembri	Robert Searcy	Lyn Sears
Christine Simmons	Mark Brenton Stanley	Chris Thornton	Patrick Tocaciu
Grant Trueman	Dustin Turner	Tarnya Van Driel	Tony Walsh
David Ward	Rosemary Waterman	Mark Weber	Rebecca Weeding
Rosemary Elizabeth Wright			



● 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



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

FINANCIALS

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation Incorporated. For the Year Ended 31st March 2026.

The NeuroSurgical Research Foundation Inc Statement of Comprehensive Income

		2026	2025
		\$	\$
NOTE			
INCOME - RESEARCH FUND			
Donations and Fundraising	2	1,971,183	1,244,689
Investment Income		180,443	26,595
TOTAL INCOME		2,151,626	1,271,284
LESS EXPENSES			
Research Grant Expenditure	4	(1,948,104)	1,586,144
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) RESEARCH FUND		203,522	(314,860)
INCOME - SCHOLARSHIPS FUND			
Donations and fundraising		16,598	127,400
Investment Income		15,871	9,576
TOTAL INCOME		32,469	136,976
Less expenses scholarship awards		(14,866)	(16,948)
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) SCHOLARSHIP FUND		17,603	120,028
INCOME - OPERATIONS FUND			
Investment Income		176,993	134,865
Membership		287	582
TOTAL INCOME		177,280	135,447
LESS EXPENSES			
Administrative Expenses		(388,852)	(311,445)
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) OPERATIONS FUND		(211,572)	(175,998)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		9,553	(370,830)

NOTES

Note 4 - RESEARCH GRANTS EXPENDITURE

Flinders University - Brain Tumour Research	150,000	50,000
Flinders University - Research Assistant	75,000	20,000
SAHLN Brain Tumour Research	---	50,000
Uni SA - Brain Tumour Research	728,726	711,331
Other Brain Tumour Research	225,000	---
Adelaide Uni - Chair	---	67,104
Adelaide Uni - Stroke	---	50,000
Adelaide Uni - SCI/TBI	96,745	91,375
Adelaide Uni - Neurodegeneration	150,000	197,112
RAH - Brain Tumour Research	150,000	150,000
Brain Tumour Nurse	25,000	25,000
Scholarships & PhD	40,800	62,400
SAHMRI	---	50,000
BTRSA	10,071	50,000
Equipment	164,545	50,000
Unallocated research grants	132,217	(38,178)
	1,948,104	1,586,144

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN ACCUMULATED FUNDS

Year ended 31 March 2026	Research Fund	Scholarship Fund	Operations Fund	Total
Accumulated funds at beginning of year	1,614,242	344,825	3,813,956	5,773,023
Total comprehensive income	203,522	17,603	(211,572)	9,553
Accumulated funds at end of year	1,817,764	362,428	3,602,384	5,782,576
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

Note 5 UN-ALLOCATED RESEARCH GRANTS PAYABLE

Opening balance	29,919	68,097
Current year expense - Unallocated research grants	132,217	(38,198)
Closing balance	162,136	29,919

Statement of Financial Position

	Note	2026	2025
		\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents		228,358	160,509
Inventories		---	500
Receivables		19,793	577
Prepayments and accrued income		2,125	2,124
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		250,276	163,710
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Office Equipment and Computer Software		455	627
Managed Investment Portfolio		5,722,720	5,731,651
Investments		37,571	29,676
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		5,760,736	5,761,954
TOTAL ASSETS		6,011,012	5,925,664

CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables		6,828	9,419
Un-allocated research grants payable	5	162,136	29,919
Research grants payable		---	50,000
Accrued expenses		---	9,918
Provisions		59,472	53,385
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		228,436	152,641
TOTAL LIABILITIES		228,436	152,641

NET ASSETS	5,782,576	5,773,023
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS	5,782,576	5,773,023

WilliamBuck
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 - Secretary - by either phone (08) 8371 0771 or email ginta.orchard@nrf.com.au.

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





NRF

NeuroSurgical
Research Foundation

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

INSPIRED TO MAKE AN IMPACT? SCAN TO MAKE YOUR DONATION TODAY