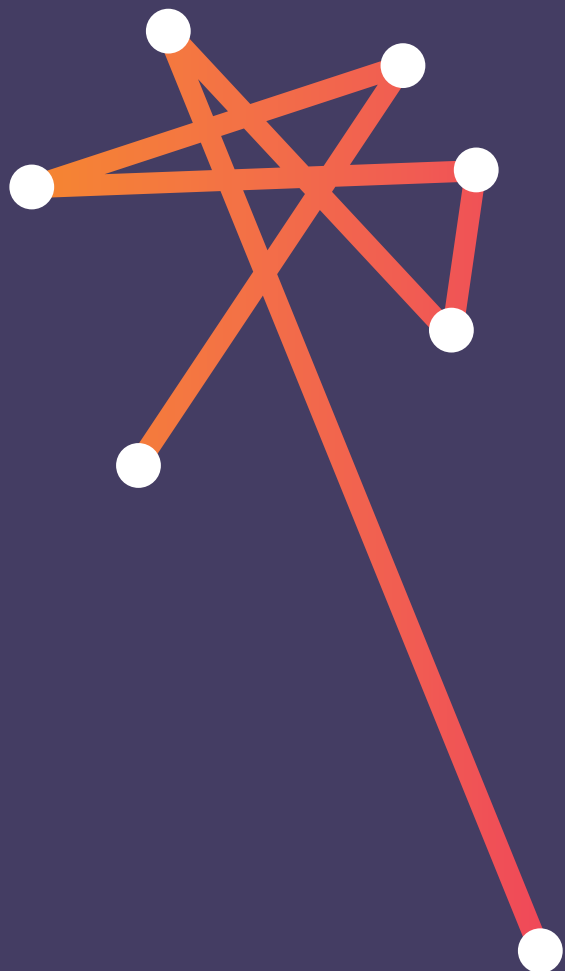


Annual Industry OPEN DAY

Wednesday
30 September 2026
9.30am – 4.00pm



Translation Impact Collaboration



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the range of
research groups
at NeuRA and
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Annual Industry Open Day

WEDNESDAY 30 September 2026 | 9.30am – 4.00pm

Partnering to Translate Brain Science into Impact

Special Guest: The Hon David Harris MP, Minister for Medical Research

Arrival and Networking	
9.30am – 9.55am	Tea and coffee (Atrium)
9.55am – 10.00am	Minister Harris arrives, greeted by - Professor Matthew Kiernan AM, CEO, NeuRA - Leisa Rathborne, CEO, South East Sydney Local Health District - Professor Cheryl Jones, Dean Medicine & Health, UNSW Sydney
Opening Session (Atrium)	
10.10am – 10.15am	Acknowledgement of Country Professor Matthew Kiernan AM
10.15am – 10.25am	Opening address Minister David Harris, NSW Minister for Medical Research
10.25am – 10.30am	Response from SESLHD to Minister Harris Ms Leisa Rathborne, Chief Executive, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
10.30am – 10.35am	Response from UNSW Sydney to Minister Harris Professor Cheryl Jones, Dean Medicine and Health, UNSW Sydney
Symposium 1 Future Therapeutics in Brain Health	
Chair: Dr Steve Kassem	
10.40am – 10.55am	Imaging and the Future of Brain Therapeutics Professor Michael Barnett (University of Sydney)
10.55am – 11.10am	The RNA Revolution: New Platforms for Precision Therapeutics Professor Pall Thordarson (UNSW RNA Institute)
11.10am – 11.25am	Q&A
Panel Discussion Industry Career Pathways	
Chair: Professor James McAuley	
11.30am – 12.00pm	Dr Manny Simons, Lilly Australia and New Zealand Followed by a panel discussion with Dr Vinay Prusty and Poonam Chapke (Eli Lilly)
12.00pm – 1.00pm	Networking Lunch (Level 3)

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Symposium 2 Precision Diagnostics and Clinical Trials		Chair: Dr Hannah Timmins
1.00pm – 1.15pm	Linking Diagnostics and Therapeutics: Enabling Earlier Intervention in Neurodegenerative Disease with a focus on Alzheimer’s disease diagnostics Dr Niti Dawar (Roche Diagnostics)	
1.15pm – 1.30pm	From Diagnosis to Therapy: Precision Medicine for Rare Neurological Disease Professor Michelle Farrar (NeuRA/UNSW)	
1.30pm – 1.45pm	Q&A	
1.45pm – 2.15pm	Afternoon Tea (Foyer/Courtyard)	
Symposium 3 Research x Industry – Scaling Impact		Chair: Tegan Cox
2.15pm – 2.30pm	How to Scale Research: From Discovery to Industry-Ready Platforms Professor Bronwyn Fox AO (UNSW)	
2.30pm – 2.45pm	Australian Discovery, Global Impact: How Teva Partners to Turn Science into Medicines Dr Phillip Fromm (Teva)	
2.45pm – 3.00pm	Scaling Precision Diagnostics: Consensus Guidelines for Blood-Based Biomarkers Associate Professor Emma Devenney (NeuRA)	
3.00pm – 3.15pm	Q&A	
3.15pm – 4.00pm	Drinks and networking (Atrium)	

Speakers



Leisa Rathborne, Chief Executive of the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD), an experienced NSW Health executive with more than 30 years' leadership across metropolitan health services, including significant experience within South Eastern Sydney Local Health District. She has held senior executive roles at St George Hospital and the Royal Hospital for Women, leading complex clinical and corporate operations and driving improvements in safety, quality and access to care.

Leisa has also held senior leadership roles within Health Infrastructure, partnering with Local Health Districts and clinicians to deliver major hospital redevelopments that support contemporary models of care and workforce sustainability. Commencing her career as a physiotherapist, she brings a strong patient-centred perspective to executive leadership. She holds postgraduate qualifications in health management and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Professor Cheryl Jones is Dean Faculty of Medicine and Health, UNSW Sydney and an Honorary Paediatric Infectious Diseases Physician with Sydney Children's Hospital Network. Prior to joining UNSW, she held senior executive positions at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne. She is a Director/Board Member of the Australian Medical Council, the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, Neuroscience Research Australia, Children's Cancer Institute, Black Dog Institute and Scientia Clinical Trials. She has held senior leadership roles in multiple Australian Government statutory and technical advisory authorities, professional societies, international research societies and Non-Government Organisations (including the WHO).

She is a world authority on childhood infectious diseases, an internationally recognised clinician scientist and a key opinion leader in workforce education. Her research in emerging infections of the brain and childhood infections has changed global policy and practice. She is a Life Member of the Australian Society for Infectious Diseases and Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health & Medical Sciences, and Royal Society of NSW.



Professor Michael Barnett is the McLeod Professor of Neurology at the Brain and Mind Centre (BMC), University of Sydney and consultant neurologist and Director of the MS Service at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH) Sydney. He trained in neurology at RPAH and received further subspecialty training in Neuroinflammation and Neuro-ophthalmology at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, and Moorfields Eye Hospital, in London. He subsequently completed a PhD in MS pathophysiology at the University of Sydney and has particular research interests in MS neuropathology and neuroimaging. He co-founded two successful med-tech companies, including the Sydney Neuroimaging Analysis Centre (SNAC), the first regulatory-compliant neuroimaging

analysis / central MRI reading for MS clinical trials in the southern hemisphere. He is currently SNAC's Chief Research Officer, where his team leads the development and application of AI-derived algorithms and imaging biomarkers to further understanding of the mechanisms of neurological disease, improve diagnostic specificity and enhance treatment paradigms.

Speakers



Professor Pall Thordarson is Director of the UNSW RNA Institute and the program leader for the NSW RNA Production and Research Network. Prof Pall Thordarson (Palli) obtained his BSc. from the University of Iceland in 1996 and a PhD in Organic Chemistry from The University of Sydney in 2001. Following a Marie Curie Fellowship in the Netherlands he returned to Australia in 2003 and was then appointed at UNSW Sydney in 2007 as a Senior Lecturer where he became a Full Professor in 2017. He served as the President of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI) from 2022–2024.

Palli has published over 160 refereed papers, including in prestigious journals such as Nature and Nature Nanotechnology. His research interest ranges from Nanomedicine, RNA and peptides to Supramolecular and Systems Chemistry. He is focused on advancing our understanding of how molecules interact with one another and ‘self-assemble’, and how self-assembly can then be harnessed to create novel functional materials and systems. He has received several awards including the 2012 Le Fèvre Memorial Prize from the Australian Academy of Science for outstanding basic research in Chemistry by a Scientist under the age of 40 and the 2025 Leighton Memorial Medal from the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI) for outstanding contributions to research, technology, leadership and the advancement of the chemical sciences.



Dr Manny Simons is the General Manager of Lilly Australia and New Zealand.

Prior to returning to Sydney in 2026, Manny was Senior Vice President of Gene Therapy at Lilly, and the CEO and Co-Founder of Akouos, a precision genetic medicine company and wholly-owned subsidiary of Lilly.

Manny has over twenty years of experience in biomedical research and new company formation. Prior to founding Akouos, he held leadership roles in business and corporate development at Voyager Therapeutics and Warp Drive Bio (acquired by Ginkgo Bioworks and Revolution Medicines). He was also an Entrepreneurial Fellow

at Flagship Ventures, where he was a member of the founding team of Seres Therapeutics.

Manny earned an A.B. magna cum laude in Neuroscience and Music from Harvard College; a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering from MIT under Professor Robert Langer; and an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.



Dr Vinay Prusty is Executive Director – Medical Neuroscience at Eli Lilly. He is a Strategic Medical leader with an excellent track record of creating high-performing teams-led medical organizations at local, regional, and global levels by providing strategic direction and guidance to them to drive growth and international expansion of businesses in the health care sector. An academician, clinician and over the last two decades been involved in breakthrough research in diabetes, obesity, haemophilia, growth hormone and now in neuroscience.

Speakers



Poonam Chapke is Senior Director, Specialty Business Unit ANZ at Eli Lilly, with more than 21 years' experience in pharmaceutical marketing, sales, consumer health and healthcare advertising. She has held senior leadership roles across cardiometabolic health, oncology, immunology, virology and anaesthesia, with end-to-end business unit P&L accountability and experience managing products across the full lifecycle.

She has played a key role in major Australian product launches, including Eli Lilly's cardiometabolic incretin launches and AbbVie's launches in acute myeloid leukaemia and immunology. Earlier in her career, she developed and delivered award-winning creative campaigns and promotional programs in the advertising industry.

Poonam is recognised for her inclusive leadership style and ability to build engaged, high-performing teams. She has led cross-functional marketing, sales and advertising account service teams, represented Australia on global brand teams, and chaired AbbVie Australia's Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Council, supporting the development of the company's first EEDI and Reconciliation Action Plan strategy.



Dr Niti Dawar joined Roche Diagnostics Australia in April 2022. She brings with her 5 years of experience in Medical and Scientific Affairs from Roche APAC office in Singapore in different disease areas like Hematology, Coagulation, Blood Screening, Alzheimer's and Critical Care. She has been supporting pre-launch, launch and post launch activities for the same. She has been instrumental in establishing new biomarkers integrating them in clinical practice and working with clinicians to improve clinical decision making.

She brings with her over 12 years' experience in the field of Lab Medicine heading the Lab Services of various established Hospitals with approximately 200–500 beds in New Delhi. She also has been a Visiting Hematologist at Clinipath Laboratories Perth, Australia. She has been instrumental in setting up 3 Labs from scratch.

She has been involved in building up the medical and scientific affairs team in APAC. She has been involved in various accreditation audits involving various quality assurance checks.

Niti has joined the team at Roche Diagnostics Australia primarily to support the medical affairs relating to Neurology and Cardiometabolic.



Professor Michelle Farrar is Professor of Paediatric Neurology and Neuroscience at NeuRA, UNSW Medicine and Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN). Her work focuses on neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative diseases in children, advancing research and care to predict, prevent, diagnose and treat disease more precisely. It includes clinical care, clinical trials, neurophysiology, training of residents and fellows, clinical research and collaborating with scientists in translational research.

She leads Australasian and international collaborations, serves on global expert committees for rare diseases and advanced therapeutics, and has received numerous honours, including the Australia and New Zealand Association of Neurologists Leonard Cox Award and successive NHMRC and Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute of Australia fellowships, recognising her outstanding contributions to neuroscience and child health.

Speakers



Professor Bronwyn Fox AO is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) at UNSW Sydney, where she leads research and innovation to deliver societal and economic impact through world-class discovery, global partnerships, and research translation.

Bronwyn is an internationally recognised materials scientist who has helped reshape carbon fibre and composite manufacturing by connecting fundamental chemistry with real-world industrial production. She cofounded Carbon Nexus, a \$100 million open-access facility that catalysed a globally connected composites ecosystem, working with national and international industry partners. Her work has driven advances in energy-efficient manufacturing, high-rate composite production, as well as digital and AI technologies, contributing to new patents, global collaborations and the creation of high-value jobs. A defining feature of her leadership is deep international engagement, particularly with Germany, where she has helped secure major bilateral research programs and position Australia within leading manufacturing innovation networks.

In 2025, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to public administration, scientific research and development, advanced manufacturing, and tertiary education. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, Engineers Australia, the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, the Royal Society of New South Wales, and the Royal Society of Victoria and serves on multiple national and international boards. She is passionate about building globally connected research ecosystems and supporting the next generation of science and innovation leaders.



Dr Phillip Fromm is Director of New Targets, Immunology and Neuroscience at Teva Pharmaceuticals Australia. With more than 15 years of experience in biologics drug development, he has built a career translating scientific discoveries into potential new medicines. Phillip has extensive expertise spanning immunology, neuroscience, target discovery, translational validation, and therapeutic antibody development, with experience leading programs from early discovery through to the clinic. In his current role, he leads efforts to identify and validate novel therapeutic targets and biologics opportunities that can deliver meaningful differentiation for patients. A respected collaborator across global discovery and clinical development

organisations, Phillip is passionate about building effective partnerships between academia and industry. His mission is to develop mechanistically grounded, differentiated biologics that can become transformative therapies and improve the lives of patients worldwide.



Associate Professor Emma Devenney is a neurologist and an NHMRC Emerging Leader Fellow. She is also a Conjoint Associate Professor at the UNSW Sydney School of Medicine and Health.

Emma obtained her medical degree at Queen's University, Belfast, United Kingdom. She completed her neurology training through the tertiary neurology unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast and spent time as the neuroimmunology fellow at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. She was awarded a UNSW international PhD scholarship in 2013 and completed her PhD in 2016. Since then, she was awarded the Beryl Bayley MNDRA post-doctoral fellowship and most recently, an NHMRC investigator grant to advance research into identifying and understanding biomarkers for the detection and monitoring of neurodegenerative diseases.

Emma is currently the Principal Investigator on the DIAN study (Dominantly Inherited Alzheimer Network), an international study of familial Alzheimer's disease funded by the US National Institute on Ageing.



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