



*Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak about AUSiMED, this new exciting not for profit, health promotion charity of which I am delighted to be one of its Patrons.*

AUSiMED will raise money to bring the best Australian and Israeli scientists together, from any institution, to collaborate on medical research projects. I am sure that this endeavour will result in some really significant health improvements for Australia, Israel and the World.

As a research scientist, I am excited by the establishment of AUSiMED because its activities are based on two important principles which I strongly support.

**First, AUSiMED is supporting international research collaborations.**

Today the international scientific community recognizes the need for multidisciplinary efforts which have the best chance of achieving success in curing diseases. The latest influenza outbreak illustrates the value of collaboration, since just weeks after the first infections occurred, each country has a sample of the virus to aid development of vaccines and other crucial data. There are numerous examples, in the most prestigious medical journals, where an authorship of 10 -30 scientists appears on papers covering a wide array of medical problems.

The concept of cross-country collaboration is also strongly supported by the Australian Academy of Science which concluded that for Australia to maintain its significant contribution to world science and to the productivity of the Australian economy, it needs to embrace international research collaborations. AUSiMED is all about funding international research collaborations.

**The second strength of AUSiMED is its support of medical research collaboration between two great medical research nations – Australia and Israel. Thus it's a perfect match.**

AUSiMED brings scientists with exceptional drive and determination to collaborate and to utilise the “can-do” approach of Israeli researchers and their exceptional track record of getting products to market. Both countries are high performers in research globally. Australia was ranked 9th in the world by the OECD both for the number of scientific publications it produced per head of population as well as being 10th in the world for the number of its scientific publications cited around the world.

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Australia can learn from Israel as in 2012, Israel had the highest level of research and development expenditure as a percentage of GDP in the world. In contrast, Australia was placed 14th in the world, below the OECD average.

On this basis, the collaboration between the scientific leaders of our two countries in bringing differing ideas and experiences to bear on common goals, establishes the framework for a very powerful and exciting research program.

AUSiMED research will cover all areas of medicine but with particular emphasis on areas where Australia and Israel excel such as neuroscience in which Israel established a centre of excellence called the “Cognitive Medicine I-Core” a field where

Australia also leads the world. A mission to Israel last year by a group of neuroscientists resulted in a new collaborative project currently being developed together with AUSiMED.

Further collaborations facilitated by AUSiMED will focus on melanoma, a cancer with a very high incidence in both countries. Funding will also focus on breast cancer, as together with melanoma, these cancers are of particular interest for both countries. In the area of breast cancer research, AUSiMED and the National Breast Cancer Foundation in Australia are currently developing a collaborative project to be jointly funded.

Further projects cover the field of ovarian cancers in which Israel has the highest prevalence in the world. A call by AUSiMED to the scientific community for suitable projects with innovative research ideas led to an overwhelming response requiring only money to start this exciting research partnership.

There is more information about AUSiMED on your tables and some of you may receive some further mail from AUSiMED in the coming weeks.

I am extremely delighted to be a part of this new organisation, which was endorsed this year by the Tax Office as an Item 1 Health Promotion Charity. So I do hope that you will support AUSiMED and its efforts to strengthen the research ties between Israel and Australia.