



WA Life
Sciences
Innovation Hub



Outcomes and Achievements

Facilitating Collaboration,
Impact and Growth (2019-2025)

April 2026



Powered by

MTPConnect

Australia's Life Sciences
Innovation Accelerator



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA

In partnership with



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A message from our partners





The Government of Western Australia

It is remarkable to reflect on how far the Western Australian Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) has come in such a short time, driving innovation and making a substantial contribution to the growth of the biomedical sector. Founded just over seven years ago, as one of five Innovation Hubs developed by the Western Australian Government, WALSIH has rapidly evolved into a cornerstone of our state's innovation ecosystem.

Since WALSIH was established in 2018, it has helped biomedical companies secure over \$143.5 million in funding, hosted more than 235 events for the sector and brought their global connections closer to Perth.

These achievements are a testament of the partnership and collaboration that went into creating WALSIH. This includes the Cook Government's commitment to ensuring we are harnessing WA's unique strengths in medical research and biomedical

innovation. This vision was bolstered by the talent and capability of our partners, The University of Western Australia, and MTPConnect, to realise these opportunities to the fullest.

I acknowledge the foundational contributions of Professor Kevin Pflieger, Sue MacLeman, Professor Dawn Freshwater, Fiona Roche, and Dr Deb Cousins, whose leadership brought WALSIH to life. Today, under the guidance of Dr Tracey Wilkinson and Professor Pflieger, WALSIH continues to thrive, supported by an exceptional team from MTPConnect and UWA's Perth Biodesign.

Innovation hubs like WALSIH are more than just services, they are communities of ideas, collaboration, and opportunity. They attract investment, promote partnerships, and drive innovation. Our Government is proud to support WALSIH as we commit to advancing the State's medical innovation, which will deliver benefits for not just our economy but for the health of all Western Australians and beyond.



Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
Minister for Medical Research;
Science and Innovation
Western Australian Government

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) was envisioned as a dynamic, collaborative hub that would help unlock Western Australia's largely untapped potential in the health and medical life sciences (HMLS) sector, with MTPConnect contributing its expertise, funding, resources and networks to support the growth of the state's HMLS industry.

MTPConnect was established by the Australian government as an Industry Growth Centre in 2015. We now operate as Australia's life sciences innovation accelerator, an independent, not-for-profit organisation championing growth of Australia's vibrant life sciences sector by backing companies to develop new medical products, and access global markets through trade missions and collaborations. Achieving this requires a coordinated national approach and we are pleased to have worked closely alongside the WA Government and The University of Western Australia to build WA's burgeoning HMLS sector since 2018.

Seven years on, this report outlines how WALSIH's impact has far exceeded expectations, becoming a cornerstone for HMLS innovation, commercialisation and connectivity in WA. It is a national exemplar of how strategic partnerships can supercharge innovation.

We believe WALSIH's success largely lies in its partnership structure with all partners co-funding and supporting activities. By embedding MTPConnect within the WA ecosystem and working hand-in-hand with the WA Government and The University of Western Australia, WALSIH was established from day one to be agile, inclusive and deeply connected. This partnership model allows for smooth collaboration across silos – linking researchers, clinicians, entrepreneurs and investors – and serves as an effective conduit between WA and the rest of Australia – and the world.

Combining deep local knowledge with national connectivity has been a recipe for successfully sparking collaborations and partnerships, enabled by embedding MTPConnect's WALSIH staff within our national stakeholder engagement team.

We know that access to funding is the biggest challenge facing HMLS innovators and our WA team has helped address this by supporting an increasing number of WA applications to be competitive in national funding programs. These efforts have made a difference, with a number of WA companies awarded funding through MTPConnect's highly competitive accelerator programs. In MTPConnect's [BioMedTech Horizons Program \(Rounds 2, 3, 4\)](#), WA medtech projects received 17 per cent of total funding. Twenty-five per cent of MTPConnect's Clinical Translation and Commercialisation Medtech program awardees are based in WA. Most recently, 37 per cent (three of eight) of pharmaceutical innovation projects awarded funding through MTPConnect's [Targeted Translation Research Accelerator Drugs and Devices program](#) were from WA. And we know this has a positive knock-on effect as funded companies are then well suited for investment that amplifies their grant funding.

WALSIH is a model of partnership that works, and one we're proud to continue to champion.

Congratulations to the WALSIH team and our WA partners on seven years of exceptional job growth and economic impact through health innovations. And a big thank you to the HMLS community who have come along with us on this journey. We look forward to continuing to work together to advance innovation and improve lives and livelihoods in WA and beyond.



Stuart Dignam
Chief Executive Officer and
Managing Director
MTPConnect



The University of Western Australia

The University of Western Australia (UWA) is proud to be partnering with the WA Government and MTPConnect to serve the Western Australian health and medical life sciences sector, and consequently the people of WA, Australia and the world who will benefit from the translation of WA biomedical and health innovation.

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) has evolved over the last seven years to become a truly inspiring partnership, not only of the three parties named above, but of all the amazing researchers, innovators, clinicians, consumers and industry professionals that have contributed to the numerous workshops, networking events, roundtables, programs, delegations, mentoring meetings, consultations and collaborations.

Western Australia has a wonderful ecosystem of dedicated individuals and organisations striving to improve people's health and wellbeing, willing to go above and beyond to help each other. This is the secret sauce of WA. WALSIH therefore plays a critical role in being the concierge, the connector and the facilitator, reducing the friction so innovation can accelerate.

UWA is also proud to administer Perth Biodesign, which celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2026. This initiative trains innovators using the internationally recognised Stanford Biodesign methodology to identify and validate unmet needs through clinical immersion and develop new technologies to address them. Through needs-driven innovation, Perth Biodesign has created a powerful flywheel effect: trained innovators become successful entrepreneurs creating high-quality jobs; successful companies strengthen the ecosystem and attract global

investment; and a stronger ecosystem enhances WA's reputation, attracting top talent.

The program has evolved into a comprehensive portfolio addressing unmet workforce development needs across the sector, with alumni now leading commercialisation programs, directing innovation portfolios, and shaping health technology policy across industry, academia, healthcare, and government.

Through the WALSIH partnership, UWA is pleased to offer the highly-successful Perth Biodesign Flagship program and industry PhD research engagement program (iPREP), along with mentoring and connections, strategy and policy advice, and international partnerships, including the Biodesign BioBridges. This combined with Biodesign bootcamps, UWA Capstone, Biodesign NEXT, the Springboard Medical Manufacturing Alliance, Westside Collaboration Space and Floreat Innovation Park, UWA is pleased to be supporting biomedical and health innovators at multiple stages of their journey towards impact.

UWA is excited to continue this partnership with the WA Government and MTPConnect – so much has been achieved and there is still so much potential to be realised!



Prof Anna Nowak | Deputy Vice
Chancellor (Research)
The University of Western
Australia (UWA)

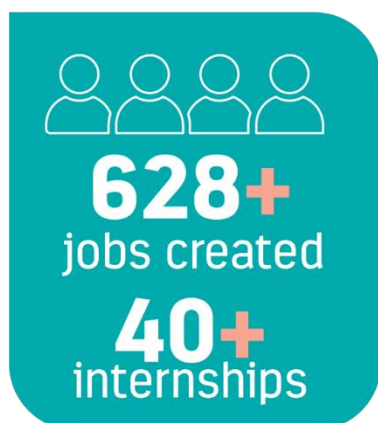
Executive Summary

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) is a partnership between the [Western Australian Government](#), [MTPConnect](#) (Australia’s life sciences innovation accelerator) and [The University of Western Australia](#) that has supported growth in the state’s health and medical life sciences (HMLS) sector since 2019. This report outlines the key activities and programs WALSIH delivers across research, industry and government to connect the ecosystem, build workforce capability and strengthen commercialisation.

WALSIH’s activities are structured around three strategic pillars:

- **Connect** by enabling collaboration through events, communications, and international partnerships.
- **Transform** by building a skilled, multidisciplinary workforce that can translate research into commercial outcomes.
- **Propel** by accelerating commercialisation and investment readiness to create jobs, attract funding and retain companies in Western Australia.

Tangible impact*



The WA HMLS ecosystem includes researchers, innovators, entrepreneurs, clinicians, policy makers and industry. WALSIH has enhanced connectivity of this ecosystem through hosting and supporting over **350 events** attended by almost **10,000 participants** and building

*Company-reported outcomes from 40 companies who have received strong support from WALSIH.

**“[Economic value of the health and medical research sector in Western Australia](#)”, delivered by Deloitte Access Economics for AAMRI WA Chapter demonstrates an economic return of \$2.61 for every \$1 invested in WA medical research.

strong communication channels to keep the sector informed. WA has been connected to the world through **30 outbound** and **22 inbound delegations** and through international partnerships with key global centres such as [Texas Medical Center \(TMC\)](#), [Medical Alley](#) and [New England Medical Innovation Center \(NEMIC\)](#) which act as two-way bridges.

Local workforce development has been building innovation, product development, commercialisation and manufacturing capability and capacity in the state. Through UWA's [Perth Biodesign](#) and [iPREP](#) programs, and national [Researcher Exchange & Development within Industry \(REDI\)](#) programs established by MTPConnect, WALSIH has **upskilled 1,072 participants** across **143 events**, **trained 170 innovators since 2023** and developed an **alumni network of more than 800 professionals**.

The collective actions of WALSIH's UWA/Perth Biodesign and MTPConnect teams have been a powerful catalyst accelerating growth of the WA HMLS ecosystem through improving the investment readiness of companies. Creating, supporting, advising and funding WA start-ups and SMEs has helped create hundreds of jobs, attract significant investment into WA and retain HMLS companies in the state.

Beyond job creation and funding metrics, case studies included here bring to life the breadth and value of WALSIH's support to companies and innovators, illustrating WALSIH's impact. [Matilda Health](#) has progressed from Perth Biodesign training to international impact in women's health and [VeinTech](#) has expanded from a local innovation to international markets through the [NEMIC BioBridge](#) partnership.

Collectively, WALSIH's work is helping position Western Australia as a competitive hub for health and medical innovation and is contributing to economic diversification, improved health outcomes, and a sustained pipeline of talent and investment.

WALSIH events by the numbers

Delivered **350+** events with **≈ 10,000** participants

Supported **30** outbound and **22** inbound delegations

Upskilled **1000+** participants across **140+** events
Trained **170** innovators since 2023
800+ alumni network

About the WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub

The WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub (WALSIH) is a partnership between the Western Australian Government, MTPConnect and The University of Western Australia (UWA). All parties co-fund activities to accelerate the growth of the state's health and medical life sciences (HMLS) sector to create new jobs and support economic diversification.

WALSIH is one of five WA Government Innovation Hubs that deliver programs to connect the innovation community, build capacity and new skills, attract investment, and foster commercialisation. The Innovation Hubs also include [CyberWest](#), the [WA Data Science Innovation Hub](#), [GreenTech Hub](#) and the [Creative Tech Village](#).

Originally funded through the Western Australian Government's [New Industries Fund](#), since 2022, WALSIH has been key to implementing the state's [Health and Medical Life Sciences Industry Strategy](#). This strategy is co-owned by the [Department of Energy and Economic Diversification](#) (DEED, formerly Department of Jobs, Tourism, Sciences and Innovation, JTSI) and the [WA Department of Health](#) (WA DoH).

The WALSIH team, led by Dr Tracey Wilkinson (MTPConnect) and Professor Kevin Pflieger (UWA), work together to manage and drive a varied and valuable annual program of activities that deliver growth opportunities for the WA HMLS sector.

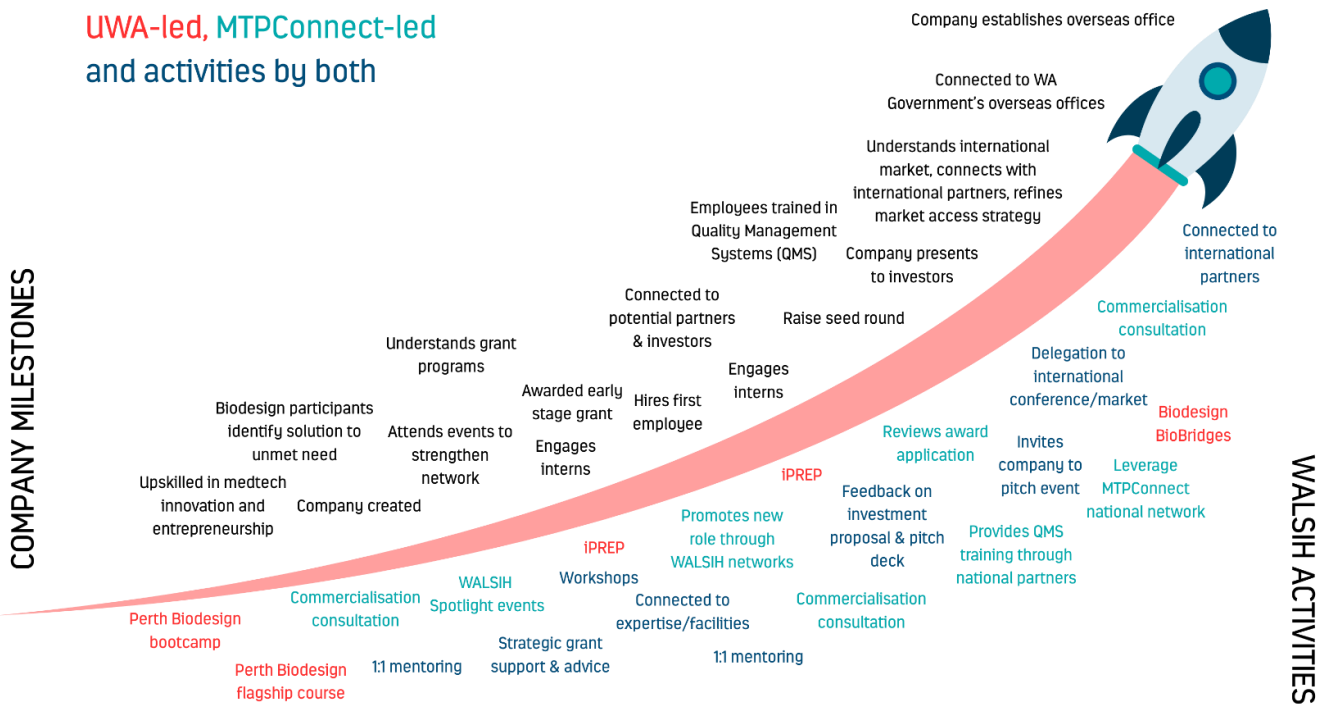
The team works with stakeholders across the entire innovation pipeline, from discovery research to companies scaling internationally. Leveraging the expertise and networks of the three partners, WALSIH taps into connections and resources across Australia and the globe to transform the sector and propel innovations towards impact.

WALSIH's offices are in the [Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research](#) building on the [QEII Medical Centre](#) (QEIIMC) campus, WA's largest hub of HMLS organisations and geographically the largest medical centre in the southern hemisphere. The 40+ organisations based here include three hospitals and several medical research institutes. While headquartered at QEIIMC, WALSIH seeks to support and accelerate HMLS innovation across all of WA.

The impact of WALSIH on the state's HMLS sector is due to activities delivered by the collaborative efforts of the [MTPConnect](#) and [UWA](#) team members, with UWA-led activities including [Perth Biodesign](#) offerings. The below graphic highlights how these are synergistically building the State's ecosystem.

How WALSIH's activities support HMLS innovation and commercialisation

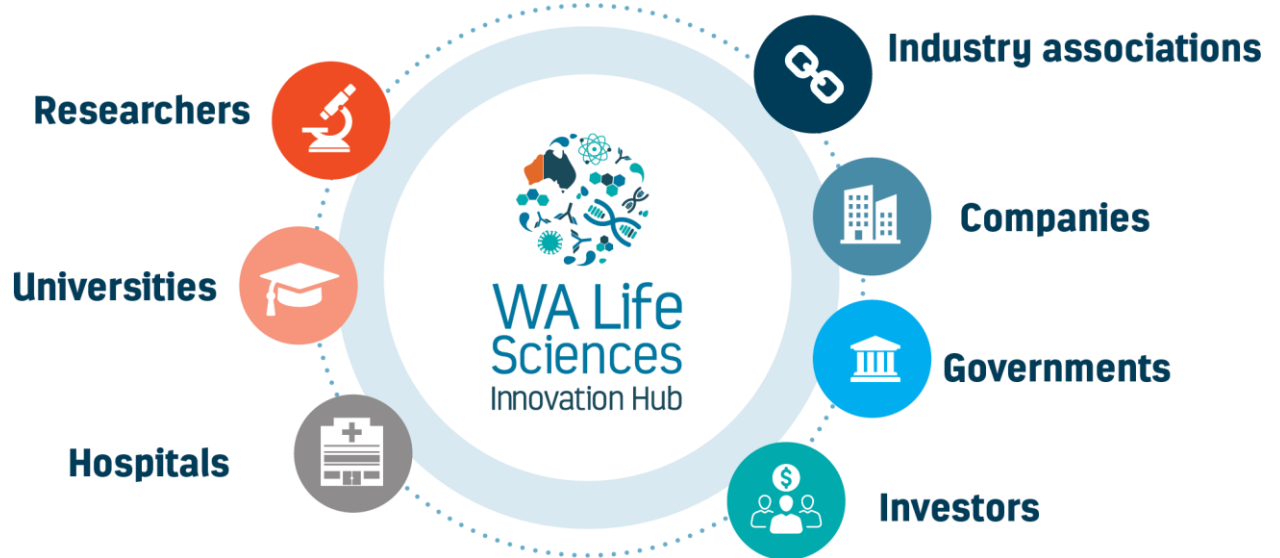
UWA-led, MTPConnect-led and activities by both



Timeline

- July 2018: WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub established.
- January 2019: Commenced operations with A/Prof Kevin Pflieger as inaugural Director.
- August 2019: Dr Kate Brooks appointed Director Stakeholder Engagement WA (MTPConnect) and Prof Pflieger became Director Biomedical Innovation (UWA).
- January 2020: Rebekah Hinton (then Craggs) joined as Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator (MTPConnect).
- August 2020: Dr Tracey Wilkinson replaced Dr Brooks as Director Stakeholder Engagement WA (MTPConnect).
- September 2022 to September 2023: Dean Nedelkos joined as Manager Stakeholder Engagement WA (MTPConnect).
- From 2023: Perth Biodesign Flagship Program (founded in 2016) joined the folio of WALSIH-funded activities, directed by Oliver Bazzani (UWA) and Chloe Goodred (UWA), with Ruth Seeber as Senior Project Officer (UWA) until June 2025.
- November 2023: Dr David Morrison joined as Biomedical Engineering Lead (UWA).
- July 2024: Dr Roop Judge joined as Head of Commercialisation WA (MTPConnect).
- From 2025: iPREP joined portfolio of WALSIH-funded activities, managed by Dr Sandra Medic (UWA).
- February 2025: Nellie Valentine joined as Operations Coordinator WA (MTPConnect).

WA Life Sciences Innovation Hub stakeholders



The HMLS value chain encompasses a diverse range of participants, each playing a critical role in the sector's growth and success. This value chain includes consumers and patients, researchers and innovators, universities, medical research institutes, other research organisations, small and large local and multinational companies, investors, service providers, industry organisations, infrastructure providers, governments, regulators, policymakers, funders, clinicians and others involved in healthcare delivery, such as state health departments and private medical practice.

WALSIH interacts with and supports all stakeholders across the HMLS sector in WA, engaging at the state, national and international levels through the connections of MTPConnect and UWA. Their roles are briefly outlined below:

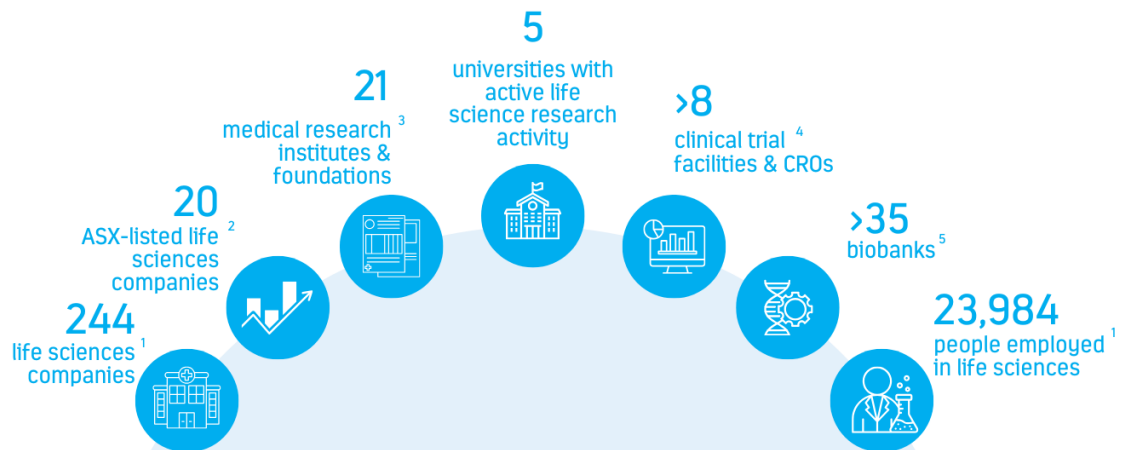
- **Researchers and innovators**, as well as their teams, who generate research and innovation outcomes that can be translated and commercialised into novel HMLS products or services or support the development of these products.
- **Universities and Medical Research Institutes** where most researchers undertake their research. These organisations generally own the resulting intellectual property (IP), particularly if funded through research grants. They also take responsibility for initial commercialisation activities, such as patenting or market validation, before commercialisation is advanced through formation of a start-up company or licensing to an existing company.
- **Companies** who are developing and commercialising HMLS products. These include start-ups, SMEs and large medtech and pharma companies.

- **Funders** who provide capital to companies, from angel investors and venture capital to philanthropy and governments through the [MRFF](#), [NHMRC](#) and [ARC](#).
- **Service providers** who offer specialised services that contribute to the development of medical products (i.e., IP lawyers, incubators, designers, regulatory consultants and manufacturers).
- **Industry Organisations** who support and represent their member organisations.
- **Clinician groups** that represent the professional interests of the clinical workforce who are often the end-users of HMLS products through their roles in healthcare delivery.
- **Consumer groups** who represent and advocate on behalf of patients who are often the end-users of HMLS products.

Western Australia's health and medical life sciences sector

Western Australia has a world-class HMLS sector, with a rich history of research excellence that has been successfully translated into medical products. Key ingredients for WA's thriving and expanding ecosystem include a highly skilled and growing workforce, access to world-class research and health infrastructure and a collaborative entrepreneurial spirit. The ecosystem has also witnessed a significant increase in government support and prioritisation along with the development and implementation of the [HMLS Industry Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#) and the establishment of the [Future Health Research and Innovation Fund](#) and the [WA Venture Capital Initiative](#).

WA sector by the numbers



A report commissioned by [Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes \(AAMRI\)](#) [WA](#)¹, found that every dollar invested in WA medical research returns \$2.61 in benefits to the Australian population.

These benefits extend far beyond Australia, positively impacting people all over the world, with the global return estimated at \$7.58 for every dollar invested.



¹ [Australia's Life Sciences Sector Snapshot 2022](#), AusBiotech

² [ASX-listed biotech companies - AusBiotech Ltd and ASX.com.au](#) (searched on 11 Oct, 2025)

³ [WA Government Health and Medical Life Sciences industry: prospectus](#)

⁴ Government of Western Australia, Health and Medical Research website, [Medical Research - Clinical trials](#)

⁵ Government of Western Australia, Health and Medical Research website, [Medical Research - Cohort studies](#)

⁶ [Report: Economic value of the health and medical research sector in Western Australia - AAMRI](#)

Connect

Today, WA has a vibrant, connected and growing health and medical life sciences (HMLS) ecosystem and WALSIH has been a key driver of this growth and success.

A seven-year partnership between government, academia and a not-for-profit industry growth centre, WALSIH occupies a unique position in the HMLS innovation ecosystem. WALSIH operates at the interface of research, industry and government, working across the full ecosystem and reaching across silos to enhance coordination, collaboration and diversity of participation to supercharge innovation and accelerate translation.

A connected WA ecosystem

Events that strengthen the WA ecosystem

WALSIH regularly hosts, sponsors and supports events to help build connectivity. While networking events are of inherent value as they allow stakeholders to build connections and meet potential collaborators and partners, WALSIH's events are also designed to share knowledge and experiences.

WALSIH has hosted a diverse and significant number of events since inception. The MTPConnect WA team have led coordination of targeted workshops and roundtables around specific themes and a monthly 'Spotlight' series (see *case study*). Perth Biodesign hosts an annual showcase event that brings together the HMLS innovation ecosystem to see the next generation of innovators pitch their novel solutions. Timed to coincide with Australia's largest and longest running technology conference, [West Tech Fest](#), this showcase has grown into a must-attend event for anyone interested in medtech innovation.

To enhance growth of the ecosystem, financial sponsorship and in-kind support has been provided to assist externally-run events, including representation on national conference program committees to ensure the state is represented on national stages.

CASE STUDY: The WA Spotlight Series

Launched in 2020, the Spotlight Series was established to fill a critical gap in WA's HMLS sector: a regular forum for stakeholders to connect, share insights and explore pathways for translation and commercialisation. The series began as engaging, intimate fireside-style conversations with WA HMLS C-suite leaders, offering attendees a valuable opportunity to hear directly from decision-makers shaping the sector.

Over the past five years, the monthly Spotlight Series has evolved into a cornerstone event within WA's innovation ecosystem. It has expanded beyond company-focused fireside chats to include discussions around emerging trends like metabolic health, important topics like cyber security and insights from government representatives such as Director General of WA Department of Health Dr Shirley Bowen and WA Chief Scientist Professor Sharath Sriram. The format remains intentionally conversational, prioritising audience interaction through Q&A and fostering genuine dialogue rather than one-way presentations.

Each session offers a platform for thought leadership, knowledge exchange, and visibility, both locally and nationally, through amplification via the MTPConnect network and its communications channels. The inclusion of international speakers has further enriched the series, leveraging their visits to WA to bring global perspectives and maximise value for the local community.

Today, the Spotlight Series stands as a vital connector that brings together industry, academia, government and investors to strengthen WA's HMLS ecosystem.



Image: John Wright (CEO, Metabolic Health Solutions) and Dr Julie Manasseh (General Practitioner and Founder of Weight Journey) joined our Director of Stakeholder Engagement Dr Tracey Wilkinson at our Spotlight on Metabolic Health.



35
Spotlight events

37
WA organisations
featured

12
topics/themes
covered

5
international
guests

"This is the best EVER MTP [medtech & pharma] initiative in WA. Gets the whole ecosystem together [in] an open forum spirit of co-operation.

"This is an extremely worthwhile initiative. Result for effort is a far greater level of co-operation within the WA MTP space supporting terrific cross pollination of skills and knowledge. Please keep these going for the betterment of human science outcomes."

Commercialisation advisor



Image: US-based entrepreneur and venture investor Dr Leighton Read MD shared his insights in a Spotlight event delivered in partnership with RSM and Brandon Capital.

"[What I liked most about the event was] the opportunity to hear real-life experiences and being able to ask open questions. Everyone's willingness to help in this society is wonderful."

Start-up Co-Founder

Communicating news and opportunities to promote awareness and uptake

Building effective and efficient communication channels and using these to promote awareness of local, national and global opportunities across the WA ecosystem, is a vital function of WALSIH. Increasing attention on the importance of the HMLS sector has generated a myriad of opportunities, and WALSIH has focused efforts on reaching across the sector so that start-ups and innovators are aware of these. A dedicated [LinkedIn account](#), [website](#), podcast episodes and regular electronic direct mail (EDM) are all utilised to share information across the innovation community.



Recognising access to funding as a constant challenge for innovators and start-ups, WALSIH has developed a regular EDM of grant opportunities to help readers stay informed. The volume of information and news relevant and of interest to the sector has grown so significantly that the original simple email listing open grants has been separated into two publications: the 'WALSIH Funding Brief' and 'Sector Snapshot'. With a focus on communicating opportunities clearly and concisely, our EDMs have been designed to be scanned by the reader to easily identify relevant information. These publications are well received by the sector - evidenced by a 44% open rate (well above the 17-28% considered a good rate¹), with readers consistently providing positive feedback on these communications.

Building a strong LinkedIn presence has been another key pillar of WALSIH's communication strategy. Originally utilising MTPConnect social channels, since 2023 this has been delivered through a dedicated WALSIH account which now has a growing following and very strong engagement². It is used to promote funding opportunities and upcoming events, share details about WALSIH activities, showcase WA successes and disseminate news of interest such as career opportunities.

The popular [MTPConnect Podcast](#) series is another channel used to showcase WA companies and innovators - 30 podcast episodes featuring WA participants have been downloaded almost 12,000 times, with a global audience.

"I have to say these snapshots, link to current funding announcement etc. they are comprehensive, informative and particularly useful. I look forward to seeing this information each time. Thank you so much for providing this!"

Feedback from an
academic and start-up
founder

¹ [Campaign Monitor](#)

² [Social Insider](#)

A stand-alone WALSIH website was launched in February 2025 to provide a dynamic resource for WA stakeholders. It showcases upcoming WALSIH events as well as news, case studies and funding opportunities, while promoting WALSIH's services and highlighting the strength and achievements of WA's HMLS ecosystem.



Advising government to improve collaboration and communication with industry

WALSIH's position at the nexus in the HMLS ecosystem has allowed it to play a key advisory role to local, state and federal governments. Being an independent, non-member-based partnership has allowed it to represent the breadth of perspectives from across the WA sector through committee representation to consultations to inform policy development.

The importance of this role was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic through unlocking the value of cross-sector collaboration and establishing business-government relationships. WALSIH was active in supporting companies who flooded to assist the COVID response, notably with direction on regulatory requirements for the development and manufacture of medical products such as personal protective equipment, diagnostics and ventilators. WALSIH brought industry and government together in a COVID-19 Rapid Response virtual roundtable which featured discussion with invited WA business leads and government agencies including [Austrade](#), [AusIndustry](#), JTSI and [WA Department of Health](#), and contributed to a number of community-driven COVID-19 action groups, including the Rapid Response WA COVID-19 Taskforce and the RETOOL taskforce.

See Appendix B for a list of enabling and consultation activities that WALSIH has contributed to.

"The growth of the WA startup sector over the past few years has been remarkable. We're seeing a real shift: stronger collaboration between government, investors, and founders, and a shared belief that world-class innovation can come from right here in Western Australia. With the state government and our fund aligned in supporting these startups, it's created a ripple effect that's energising the whole ecosystem and giving founders the confidence to think globally."

Glenn Butcher,
CEO and Managing Director, Fund WA

Perth Biodesign: training and innovation in action

Perth Biodesign brings the internationally recognised [Stanford Biodesign](#) methodology to Western Australia, training researchers, clinicians, engineers and business professionals to solve real-world healthcare problems through needs-driven innovation. Working hand in hand with WA health service providers and industry, the team delivers a comprehensive suite of capacity-building programs.

The [Flagship](#) and [iPREP](#) programs, funded via WALSIH, form the heart of Perth Biodesign's training offerings – the Flagship provides a 7-month intensive experiential training program for innovators, while iPREP embeds PhD researchers in industry placements to connect academic expertise with real-world application. These are complemented by Bootcamp programs offering rapid introductions to Biodesign principles, and specialised programs like Biodesign NEXT that support commercialisation.

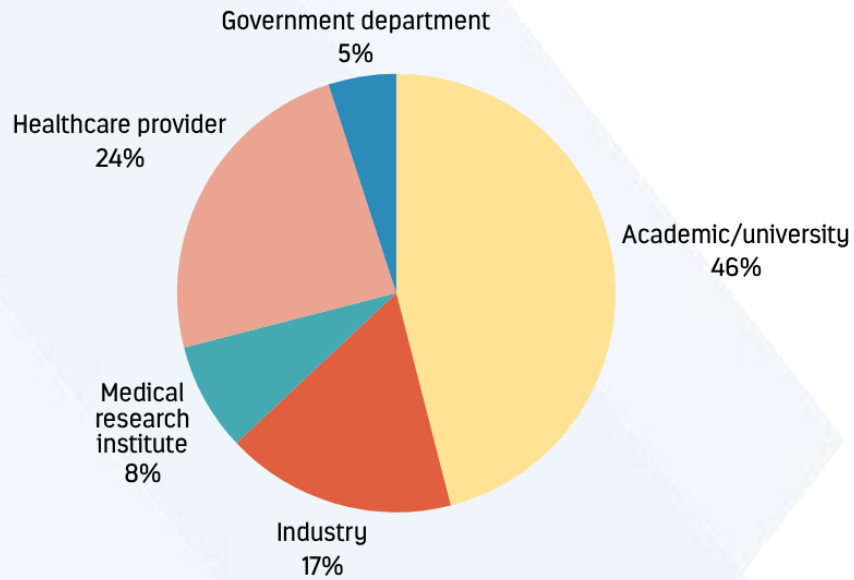
This integrated approach creates a powerful multiplier effect that drives both health outcomes and economic prosperity: trained innovators become successful entrepreneurs who create high-quality jobs; successful companies strengthen the ecosystem and attract global investment; and a stronger ecosystem enhances WA's reputation, which in turn attracts more top talent and investment - inspiring confidence in early-to-mid-career researchers, clinicians, and technologists to stay and thrive in WA.

Diversity of expertise, experience and thinking is key

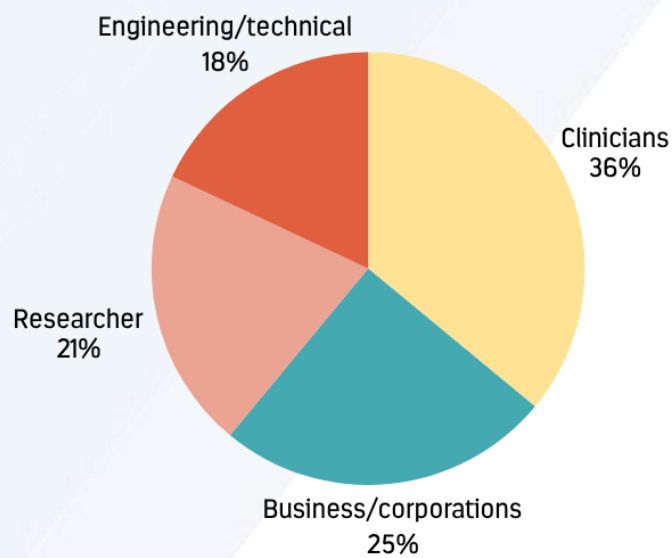
Perth Biodesign's strength lies not just in the quality of its programs, but in the diversity of the innovators it convenes. The intentional mixing of clinicians, engineers, researchers, and business professionals across programs creates multidisciplinary teams essential for translating complex healthcare challenges and research into viable commercial solutions.



Perth Biodesign attracts participants from across the sector



Disciplinary diversity in Perth Biodesign participants fuels breakthrough thinking



Driving connection and collaboration across silos

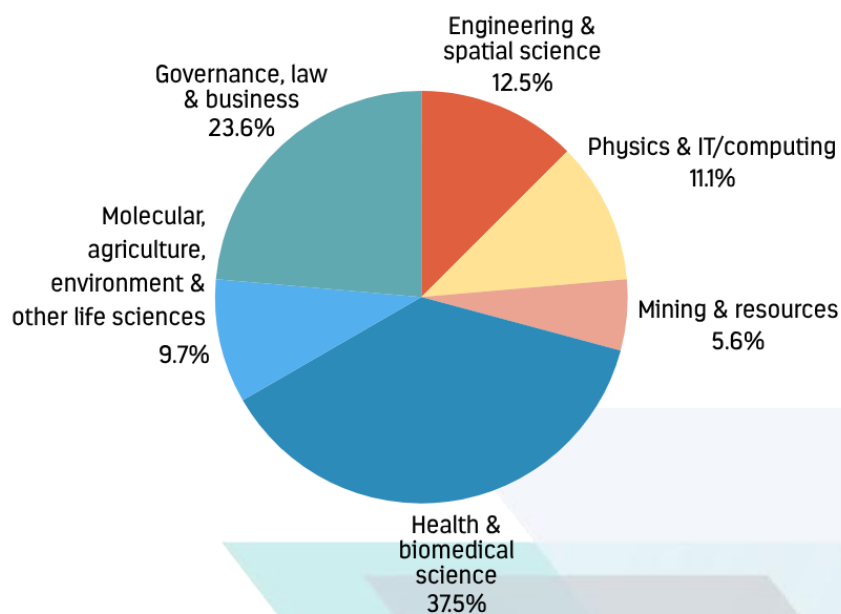
iPREP Biodesign: connecting industry with researchers to bridge skill and resource gaps

iPREP provides PhD candidates with a 3-month industry engagement opportunity whilst providing industry with access to research and diverse technical expertise to stimulate growth and innovation. It is the only program in Australia with the unique attributes of using multidisciplinary teams of PhD students to work on industry-defined problems with proven benefits to universities, students and industry. It attracts high calibre PhD candidates with a vision to create impact through the translation of research.

Through collaboration with 11 universities and counting across Australia, iPREP places highly skilled PhD students into industry placements where they apply the Biodesign methodology to real-world R&D challenges.

The model creates mutual value: industry partners gain access to world-class research talent to accelerate product development, advance prototyping, and drive research. Students develop career-defining industry experience while contributing to meaningful innovation outcomes. 95 students have completed 38 projects across 22 industry partners since iPREP joined WALSIH in 2022.

iPREP Participant Research Disciplines



95

iPREP students

38

projects

22

industry partners
36% repeat partners

iPREP participant capability outcomes (2022 – 2025)

“Students consistently delivered high-quality, relevant outputs that added measurable value to company projects—translating research and Biodesign principles into practical, real-world outcomes.”

iPREP Industry Partner (2025)

“This program helped me build confidence in applying my technical and research skills to solve real industry problems. It strengthened my ability to turn data insights into commercial recommendations, which is directly relevant to my career goals”.

iPREP Student (2025)

Building bridges across healthcare services and HMLS innovators

Working hand in hand with WA health service providers, Perth Biodesign is unique in how it embeds participants directly in clinical environments where they observe care delivery, engage with patients and clinicians, and identify authentic unmet needs. This deep collaboration with hospitals and healthcare facilities ensures that innovations emerging from the program are grounded in real clinical contexts and are designed to address genuine challenges facing WA's health system - from remote health delivery to conditions disproportionately affecting under-represented groups.

Over 75 clinical mentors have hosted observation placements for the Flagship Program across diverse healthcare settings, ensuring participants understand needs across the full spectrum of patient care. More than 200 guest speakers and mentors have contributed expertise spanning medical specialties, regulatory pathways, manufacturing, business development, and investment, exposing participants to the breadth of perspectives required for healthcare innovation success.

This approach closes an important loop: participants identify needs through clinical immersion, develop solutions, and eventually return to similar clinical environments as researchers, partners or vendors – better equipped to navigate the health system because they have trained within it and learnt directly from innovators and experts working across the complex HMLS sector.

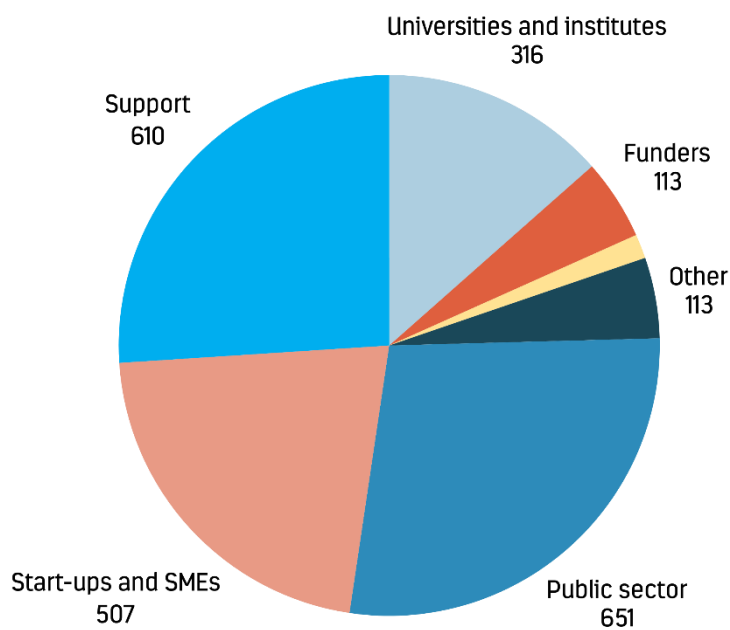
The diversity of this ecosystem – spanning genders, disciplines, institutions and career stages – ensures that WA's innovation pipeline reflects the breadth of perspectives needed to solve complex healthcare challenges and create solutions that truly serve all patients.

*Read more about Perth Biodesign programs and their impact in **Transform** (from p.27).*

WALSIH operates at the nexus of industry, government and research

The WALSIH MTPConnect team are embedded in MTPConnect’s national stakeholder engagement and communications team. This structure has enabled WA to be directly connected into national activities both internal and external to MTPConnect. The resulting increased visibility across silos has generated match-making opportunities (as illustrated by published case studies [Mari-One Meets Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health](#) & [East meets West – The Chemistry of a Perfect Match for SpeedX and SynGenis](#)).

Number of engagements by MTPConnect WA staff with stakeholders across the ecosystem since 2019



NOTE: 'Other' category includes organisations from other sectors and individuals looking to connect with the WA HMLS sector.

Bringing WA innovation to the world and the world to WA

Delegations

To be a successful centre of health innovation and commercialisation, WA needs to be connected nationally and internationally. To deliver on this ambition, WALSIH has supported the coordination of tailored visits to WA by groups and individuals from around Australia and across the world. These have included large in-bound delegations, international biotech companies, national facilities and representatives of the Australian government. WALSIH has led coordination directly and supported the state government to organise activities focused on showcasing local infrastructure and capabilities as well as attracting business to the state.

WA companies have been supported to build national and global connections by joining delegations to significant domestic ([AusMedTech](#) and [AusBiotech](#)) and international conferences ([BIO International Convention](#), [BIO Korea](#), [The MedTech Conference](#), [London Tech Week](#), [HLTH USA](#) and [HLTH Europe](#)). AusBiotech 2022 was a particular highlight, when the conference came to Perth for the first time in 15 years and WALSIH collaborated closely with the state government and [Life Sciences WA](#) to showcase 22 companies on a joint booth in the pavilion and highlight capabilities of 18 WA organisations in a pre-conference site tour.



Image: WA delegates were part of the Team Australia delegation to San Diego for BIO2024.



131
organisations
on 30 out-bound
delegations



22
in-bound
delegations
and site tours

**Global Partnerships
Amplify Impact**

Through Perth Biodesign
Texas Medical Center, New England Medical Innovation Center, AstraZeneca, Biodesign programs across Australia, APAC & USA

.....

Through MTPConnect
Blocom California, Korean Health Industry Development Institute, Medical Alley, The Ministry of Health of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

CASE STUDY: Western Australian Biotech Goes Global at Bio

The value of face-to-face engagement is powerful when building long-term strategic relationships with partners, investors and potential customers. Delegations to international partnering events like the [BIO International Convention](#) are an important vehicle for the WA biotech sector to connect in person with the world and ensure that our companies are well positioned to grow globally from WA.

BIO is the biggest biotech partnering event in the world bringing together 10,000-15,000 representatives from global pharmaceutical and biotech industries. BIO also has a coordinated Australian delegation and pavilion which businesses can leverage to access additional business-building opportunities before and during the conference as part of the substantial "Team Australia" presence. Over 500 Australian delegates have attended BIO in the last two years. The Australian delegation has been led and coordinated by MTPConnect since 2024.

"WALSIH provided me with wrap around support to ensure that I was fully prepared to get the most out of the BIO24 meeting. I found the in-person pitch prep event very useful, as well as all the tips from people who had previously attended...it truly did take 15min to walk from one end of the conference centre to the other! I also benefited from introduction to key players that helped me navigate investor conversations during BIO24. Most importantly this pre-meeting prep and support during the meeting buoyed my confidence and made me feel part of Team WA. Connections made here have endured and continue to benefit myself and my team as we develop a nasal therapy to prevent childhood ear infections."

Prof Lea-Ann Kirkham, The Kids Research Institute and Founder of Spritz-OM

Since 2019¹, a WA delegation to BIO has been supported by the state government, through JTSI/[DEED](#). WALSIH has been instrumental in organising the WA presence at BIO working closely with the state government to highlight and connect our biotech sector to the world, including organisation of ministerial missions in 2019 and 2022. WALSIH Directors also attend the conference, connecting directly with international visitors to the Australian pavilion – literally operating as a concierge service in real-time!

Support for WA delegates has grown over time to include pre-conference programming such as information sessions, 1-1 consultations, delegate networking opportunities, webinars and face-to-face workshops. All activities were designed so that delegates are ready to maximize their BIO experience by being well-prepared to navigate partnering meetings and pitch their value proposition effectively.

¹ Except for 2020 and 2021 when there was no in person Australian delegation due to COVID-19 pandemic

International partnerships amplify impact

WALSIH's impact is amplified through strategic international partnerships that bring world-leading expertise to WA while creating pathways for local innovators to access global opportunities.

Perth Biodesign has systematically built bridges to premier innovation ecosystems worldwide, ensuring WA innovations meet international best-practice while addressing distinctly local challenges. Perth Biodesign is proud to hold partnerships with the world's leading health and medical innovation hubs, including [Texas Medical Center \(TMC\)](#) (the world's largest medical complex), [New England Medical Innovation Center \(NEMIC\)](#), [AstraZeneca's A.Catalyst Network](#), and Biodesign programs across the globe.

These partnerships raise WA's profile as a recognised leader on the world stage, helping attract top talent, secure investment, and encourage collaboration with leading institutions, companies, and manufacturers. The program's BioBridge initiatives enable WA innovators to access specialised prototyping facilities, regulatory expertise, and international markets while remaining based in WA, contributing to the local economy, and maintaining connections to WA's health system.

MTPConnect relationships with leading organisations in key markets are also leveraged to connect WA with the world. These are currently with the US through [BioCom California](#) and Minnesota (the largest medtech cluster in the world) through [Medical Alley Association](#), Korea through [Korean Health Industry Development Institute](#) and most recently The Ministry of Health of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prioritising the forging and fostering of partnerships is a key way that WALSIH helps WA compete globally while building local prosperity, attracting international investment and collaboration without losing talent or economic benefits offshore.

Read more on p.40 in the case study: [From Perth to Providence: VeinTech's Journey from Local Innovation to Global Expansion](#)

Transform

As a high-tech, knowledge intensive industry, growth of the HMLS sector relies on a highly skilled, agile workforce that can translate research into commercial outcomes, manufacture advanced medical products, meet global quality and regulatory standards, run clinical trials and navigate international approval and reimbursement pathways. WALSIH's activities to develop the local workforce have been driven by Perth Biodesign's entrepreneurial and innovation programs and supported by utilising MTPConnect's national targeted workforce development initiatives ([Researcher Exchange & Development within Industry \(REDI\)](#)).

Building the future workforce

Perth Biodesign programs: creating the next generation of HMLS leaders

For a decade, Perth Biodesign has been building the foundation for Western Australia's emergence as a global leader in health and medical innovation. As WA positions the health and medical research sector to become a major contributor to the state's future prosperity, Perth Biodesign stands at the critical intersection of three interconnected strategic objectives:

- improving the health and wellbeing of Western Australians through innovations that help people live longer, healthier lives
- contributing to WA's economic prosperity by creating high-quality jobs, attracting global investment and developing new industries beyond mining and resources
- advancing WA's position as a national and international leader in health innovation.

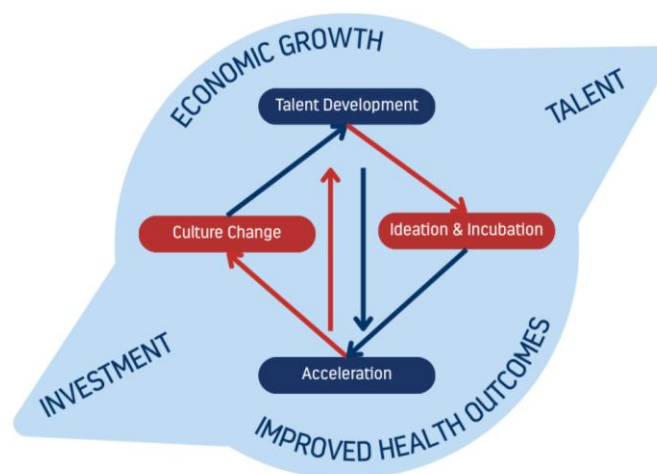
Many of Perth Biodesign's 800 strong alumni community have moved into influential positions across industry, academia, healthcare and government - roles where they shape policy, drive innovation initiatives and build the capabilities WA needs for long-term competitiveness. These leaders bring Biodesign's needs-driven, human-centred methodology into established organisations, transforming how institutions approach healthcare innovation.

Alumni now lead commercialisation programs at major research institutions, direct innovation portfolios within healthcare systems, guide regulatory strategy at emerging biotechnology companies, and advise government on health technology policy. Several have taken on senior roles in large medtech corporations, bringing their WA-developed expertise to multinational environments while maintaining connections that benefit the local

ecosystem. Others have assumed clinical leadership positions where they champion innovation within healthcare delivery, bridging the persistent gap between clinical practice and technology adoption.

Through Perth Biodesign, participants build commercial capability while simultaneously catalysing the diverse collaborations and partnerships essential to accelerating health technology innovation – connecting clinicians with engineers, researchers with industry, and local expertise with international opportunities that position WA as a national and international leader.

Building the flywheel – the Perth Biodesign ecosystem



Programs’ impact compounds

Since WALSIH partnered with Perth Biodesign in 2023 to fund the Flagship Program, over 170 people have participated across all programs, with 111 engaged in Flagship and iPREP initiatives directly supported through the partnership. This reach, combined with consistently world-class satisfaction scores and tangible innovation outcomes, demonstrates the critical role of Perth Biodesign programs in building WA’s HMLS capability – training not just for today’s challenges, but for the sector’s long-term growth and global competitiveness.

**Building WA’s
innovation workforce**

Perth Biodesign Flagship program

Average
NPS
86

30%

increase in healthtech innovation
capability pre – post program

800 -strong
alumni
community

Multiple start-ups have emerged directly from Perth Biodesign training, collectively raising millions of dollars in funding. But the economic impact extends further – other alumni who did not found companies during the program subsequently applied their Biodesign skills to launch ventures addressing needs they encountered in their professional practice.

“Perth Biodesign (Flagship) is an incredible program that pushes you out of your comfort zone, fostering immense personal and professional growth through open-minded, needs-driven innovation. The exceptional mentoring and impactful sessions ... have fundamentally transformed the way I think and approach problem-solving in my career.”

Perth Flagship participant (2024)

“Biodesign has completely transformed my understanding of how to innovate. The support and knowledge from the Biodesign team along with the mentor network has been second to none. Highly recommended!”

Perth Flagship participant (2025)

These alumni-founded companies create highly skilled jobs in biomedical engineering and production, build local manufacturing capacity – a critical infrastructure gap in WA's ecosystem – and attract investment.

*Read more about how Perth Biodesign sets up founders for success in **Propel**, from p.34.*

Critically, successful alumni companies actively reinvest in the ecosystem, strengthening the ecosystem as a whole – raising funds, creating new jobs and forging partnerships that make WA's ecosystem more robust and connected. They collaborate with universities on research projects, bringing commercial perspective to academic investigations. They partner with hospitals to conduct clinical validation studies, building the evidence base required for regulatory approval and market adoption. They work with manufacturing partners to develop local production capability, reducing WA's dependence on interstate and international suppliers.

Perth Biodesign alumni snapshot



Richard Macliver Hazel Hudson Dr Intan Oldakowska Dr Daphne Lakhiani
Dr Martina Mariano Dr Nikhilesh Bappoo Dr Nipanjana Patra Cettina Raccuia
Dr Nicholas Buckley Dr Arjun Kaushik Anna Gee Dr Francesco De Toni

Perhaps the most powerful ecosystem contribution is how generously the WA HMLS network support emerging innovators through Perth Biodesign programs. Since 2023, more than 100 mentors, guest presenters, and panelists have contributed to Perth Biodesign programs – and a significant proportion are program alumni.

Importantly, alumni return to share current experiences navigating regulatory approvals, closing funding rounds, managing clinical trials, building commercial partnerships and surviving the inevitable setbacks that accompany innovation. They also increase access to clinical and industry settings by hosting the placements and internships so essential to developing new talent.

This connected mentoring system/community creates a compounding knowledge effect. Each cohort benefits not just from the core faculty and established industry mentors, but from recent alumni whose experiences remain fresh and relevant. Current participants see tangible proof that the pathway works – that clinicians from WA hospitals can found successful companies, engineers without business backgrounds can learn to pitch to

investors, and that early-career researchers can contribute meaningfully to established ventures.

When a new founder needs regulatory guidance, manufacturing connections, or clinical validation partnerships, Perth Biodesign alumni often provide the critical introductions and insights that accelerate progress, making the ecosystem more accessible and navigable.

Boosting product development and commercialisation skills

National upskilling initiatives led by MTPConnect targeting key capability and capacity gaps in product development and commercialisation have been leveraged to benefit WA. This support for local workforce development has allowed start-ups and SMEs, who often struggle to attract experienced, industry professionals, to recruit and upskill high-quality local talent with less, or a different, industry experience.

Based on the [Skills Gap Analysis](#) for the national HMLS industry conducted as part of MTPConnect's REDI Initiative, WALSIH has built capability in WA across:

- advanced manufacturing of medical devices and therapeutics
- regulatory requirements
- product development and commercialisation



1072

participants upskilled

143

capability building events

CASE STUDY: Dr Martina Mariano – Career Growth and Industry Impact

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 2025- | Singular Health* - Chief Operating Officer |
| 2024- | Nexsen BioTech - Non-Exec Director |
| 2024-2025 | Singular Health - Chief Commercial Officer |
| 2023-2024 | Singular 3DP - Director |
| 2022-2024 | Singular Health - Global Partnerships Manager |
| 2021-2022 | Singular Health - Project Officer |
| 2021 | iPREP participant - placed at Singular Health |
| 2017-2019 | Co-Founder - Biacor Pty Ltd (directly from Flagship) |
| 2017 | SPARK Co-Lab participant (Perth Biodesign Flagship) |
| 2016-2020 | PhD in Medicine and Pharmacology from UWA |
| 2009-2017 | Researcher - various institutions |



Dr Martina Mariano

*Singular Health Listed on ASX in 2021 and has market cap listed as >\$84M at time of writing

"The WA Life Science Innovation Hub's programs were truly catalytic for my career. Perth Biodesign (SPARK Co-Lab) taught me to start with real unmet clinical needs, work in multidisciplinary teams, and design solutions with a clear path to adoption. It also directly led my team and me to found Biacor, a medical startup where we put that learning into practice. iPREP then gave me the crucial translation step into industry through Singular Health, where I could apply those capabilities in a fast-growing corporate environment.

"Looking back, that mix of world-class training, entrepreneurship, and embedded industry experience was a real turning point for me, and it's exactly the kind of model WA needs to build lasting capability and impact."

– Dr Martina Mariano, COO, Singular Health

CASE STUDY: Matilda Health's Journey Through Perth Biodesign

Matilda Health's story demonstrates how Perth Biodesign can transform clinicians into entrepreneurs and catalyse solutions for unmet clinical needs. Founded by physiotherapists Joanna Morris and Dr Kevin Wernli, Matilda Health emerged from the 2022 Perth Biodesign flagship program with a mission to improve care for endometriosis patients worldwide.

Kevin's path began with iPREP, where he had the opportunity to explore the technology industry while completing his PhD. Joanna and Kevin then entered the Flagship program in 2022, won it, and founded their company later that year. Matilda now engages iPREP students to support the team's research and development, strengthening the ecosystem while advancing the company's capabilities and contributing to WA's workforce development.

Before Biodesign, neither founder had considered entrepreneurship. "I didn't even know this ecosystem existed," Joanna reflects. The program introduced them to needs-led innovation, equipping them with frameworks for intellectual property, regulation and product development. "*Falling in love with the problem, not the solution – that was foundational,*" she says. Through rigorous stakeholder engagement, they ensured their platform addressed real-world challenges rather than assumptions.

Since completing Biodesign, Matilda Health has secured over \$421,000 in grants, attracted angel investment, and partnered with more than 50 gynaecologists across Australia, New Zealand and beyond. Their platform now supports over 250 patients undergoing endometriosis surgery. In 2025, Matilda was named a WA Innovators of the Year finalist.

For Joanna and Kevin, Perth Biodesign was the catalyst. "*We would not have even started without it,*" Kevin emphasises. Today, Matilda Health continues to grow, leveraging the Biodesign methodology and ecosystem connections that first enabled them to dream bigger and deliver impact globally.

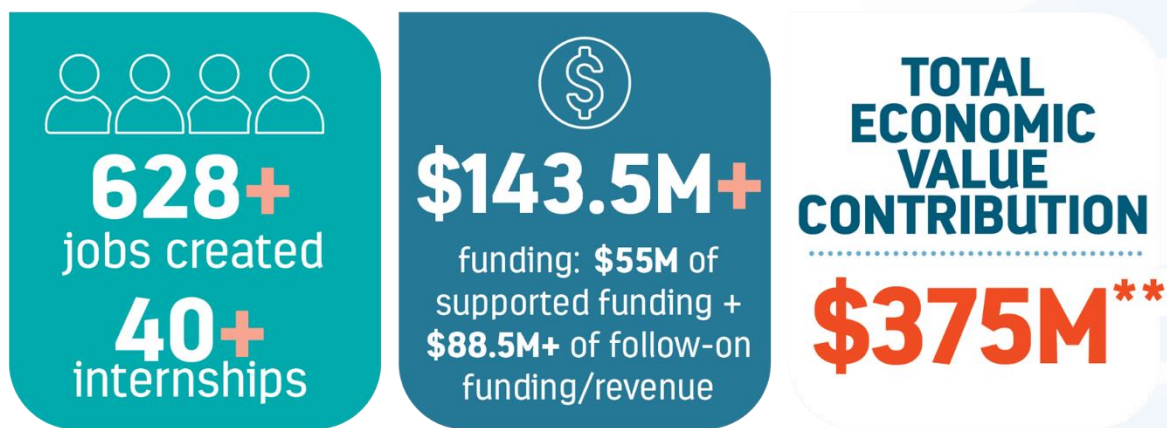


Image: Some of the Matilda Health team at the 2025 WA Innovators of the Year awards, where they were finalists in the Wesfarmers Wellbeing Category.

Propel

The collective actions of WALSIH's UWA/Perth Biodesign and MTPConnect teams have been a powerful catalyst accelerating growth of the WA HMLS ecosystem through improving the investment readiness of companies. Creating, supporting, advising and funding WA start-ups and SMEs has helped create hundreds of jobs, attract significant investment into WA and retain HMLS companies in the state.

Supporting the creation and growth of WA start-ups and SMEs results in investment and job creation



Funding success after support from WALSIH: companies¹ have raised over \$88.5M of follow-on funding, created over 628 new jobs and 43 internships.

¹ Company-reported job creation and funding outcomes collected every six months from 40 companies directly and tangibly supported by WALSIH since inception.

**“[Economic value of the health and medical research sector in Western Australia](#)”, delivered by Deloitte Access Economics for AAMRI WA Chapter demonstrates an economic return of \$2.61 for every \$1 invested in WA medical research.

Supporting the investment readiness of WA start-ups

MTPConnect-led concierge and UWA advisory service

By providing direct support and advice to innovators, start-ups and SMEs, WALSIH facilitates the development and commercialisation of WA medical research and innovation into novel medical products. WALSIH provides start-ups with tailored 1-1 advisory through MTPConnect's concierge service, UWA's mentoring activities, and supported workshops and masterclasses that help improve their investment readiness. Targeted direct introductions to investors are also provided, in line with the investor's mandate. Acknowledged as a key success factor for growth of the sector, these activities have increased substantially with the recent creation of an additional position in the WALSIH team: Head, Commercialisation. As well as directly supporting start-ups, this role has also strengthened relationships with investors with a 245 per cent increase in investor engagements since the role commenced in Q3 2024.

"There is no doubt that MTPConnect/WALSIH has sparked a real step change in the local health and medical life sciences sector. When I first arrived in Perth nearly a decade ago and searched online, there was all but radio silence. Today, the same search brings up a thriving ecosystem of companies, resources, and regular events that make it easy for newcomers to navigate and contribute. This is in no small part thanks to the strong communication channels and regular activities led by Tracey and her team.

WALSIH has helped build a culture that connects entrepreneurs, researchers and investors with a shared goal of creating successful ventures. Their educational activities (including Perth Biodesign) have both raised the baseline level of entrepreneurial knowledge across the state and amplified existing initiatives that support early-stage founders. This progress is clearly reflected in the quality of our own pipeline, as well as that of CUREator, where WA is emerging as a genuine force within the national sector."

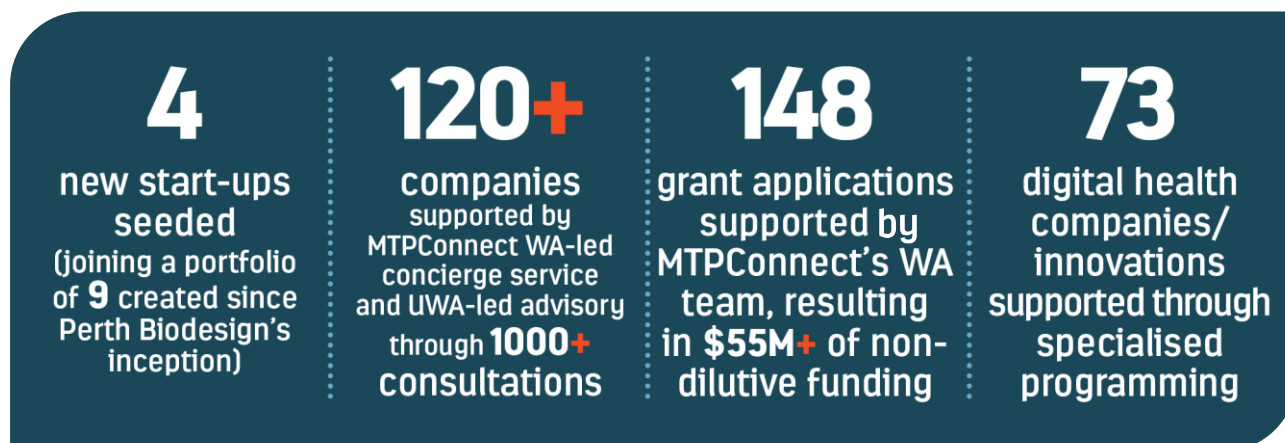
Dr Helga Mikkelsen - Investment Manager, Perth, Brandon Capital

"As you can see from our portfolio, we're heavily weighted toward health and medical life sciences, and that's no coincidence. Western Australia has a deep pool of world-class research and scientific talent. Historically, that research hasn't always been well commercialised, but we're now seeing an incredible wave of founders turning cutting-edge science into scalable, investable businesses. The quality and volume of opportunities in this space continue to impress us."

Glenn Butcher, CEO and Managing Director, Fund WA

Support for funding

Access to funding to support development and commercialisation remains the biggest barrier to HMLS innovation and WALSIH has directed significant efforts to assist WA innovators, start-ups and SMEs to be competitive for state and federal grant opportunities.



Strategic initiatives

Funding to boost local medical product manufacturing capability

The [WA Medical Manufacturing Voucher Program](#) directly strengthened WA's advanced manufacturing workforce and infrastructure, clearly demonstrating the potential for economic diversification through the HMLS industry.

In total, \$450,000 was awarded to five innovative companies (including two Perth Biodesign alumni), matched with \$600,000 in company co-contributions to inject over \$1 million into the local medtech sector.

The development of innovative medical products from [OncoRes Medical](#), [VeinTech](#), [VitalTrace](#), [Syngenis](#) and [Proteomics International](#) were accelerated. Most significantly, 15 new jobs were directly created and three companies moved manufacturing processes back to WA from offshore, which has had a multiplying effect on sovereign manufacturing capability in WA.

Targeted support for the emerging digital health sector

Digital evolution is the over-arching megatrend driving the healthcare sector now and into the future. While innovative digital health companies have high-growth potential, they face unique commercialisation challenges. To support the growth and success of WA digital

health companies, WALSIH partnered with [ANDHealth](#), Australia’s national digital health accelerator, to deliver the [WA Connected Health Commercialisation Initiative](#) as a 12-month pilot. This leveraged national programming and increased access to WA participants. Targeted support was provided to WA-based digital and connected health companies through 1-1 office hours, coaching sessions and six workshops.

Notably, during this period WA company [Metabolic Health Solutions](#) was selected for cohort 3 of the national [ANDHealth+](#) accelerator program, accessing a share in non-dilutive funding.



- WA evidence-based digital health pipeline grew by 47% from 60 to 88.
- 4 expert workshops, featuring international speakers with average NPS of 81.
- 100% of attendees rated 2 development workshops as excellent or very good

Springboard Medical Manufacturing Alliance: building sovereign capability

Western Australia's capacity to manufacture medical products locally has historically forced innovators offshore for prototyping and production. The [Springboard Medical Manufacturing Alliance](#), established by UWA in 2023 under the leadership of WALSIH’s Director Biomedical and Health Innovation, directly addresses this gap.

Supported by \$2.7 million from the WA Government’s Investment Attraction Fund (matched dollar-for-dollar by the founding members of UWA, [Adarsh Australia](#), [Alcolizer Technology](#), [Atamo Innovations](#), [Metabolic Health Solutions](#) and [VeinTech](#)), Springboard has expanded rapidly to 23 members with the addition of [ArthroLase](#), [Epichem](#), [Glide](#), [Marine Biomedical](#), [Neurotologix](#), [BioCina](#), [Prectect Devices](#), [Proteomics International](#), [Syngenis](#), [AT&M](#), [Avicena Systems](#), [Biotome](#), [Cortical Dynamics](#), [Materia Health](#), [Orthocell](#), [VariVac](#) and the [Australian National Fabrication Facility](#). The Alliance connects innovators with manufacturers while training the workforce of the future through structured internships and hands-on learning.

Springboard's funding contribution enabled UWA to deliver iPREP Biodesign in 2023-2024, providing participants with direct exposure to manufacturing challenges. This alliance strengthens the pathways from prototype to scaled manufacturing; demonstrating that world-class medtech products can be developed and manufactured in WA.

The power of Biodesign: training to traction

While Perth Biodesign's primary mission is developing Western Australia's biomedical innovation workforce, the program's focus on rigorous needs-finding, evidence-based problem-solving and commercial capability has yielded an impressive track record of successful company formation.

Over the past decade, Perth Biodesign alumni have founded at least 10 companies. Together, these ventures have secured millions of dollars in grants and investment funding, creating new jobs, attracting international partnerships, and demonstrating the state's capacity to produce globally competitive medical innovations.

72

jobs created

8

technologies
created

14

partnerships

4

international
markets entered

Perth Biodesign alumni companies

- [DiagNose.io](#)
- [Earflo](#)
- [Inova Medical](#)
- [LubDub](#)
- [Matilda Health](#)
- [Pretect Devices](#)
- [Supanova Health](#)
- [VeinTech](#)
- [VitalTrace](#)

National and international recognition for WA companies

Perth Biodesign's impact extends far beyond Western Australia. The program and its alumni have garnered significant national and international attention, showcasing WA's growing reputation as a serious medtech innovation hub and demonstrating the calibre of companies and entrepreneurs emerging from the state's HMLS ecosystem.

- [Earflo \(PB'16 alum\)](#). [Time Magazine: 'Best Inventions'](#) and CES Best of Innovation in Digital Health
- [Eldin Rostom \(PB '18 alum\)](#). [Startup Daily: 'Respiratory disease startups score \\$3 million to develop AI-powered treatment analysis'](#)
- [Nik Bappoo \(PB '19 alum\)](#). [ABC Radio National Breakfast: 'WA innovator recognised at PM's Prizes for Science'](#)
- [VeinTech \(PB '19 alum\)](#). [Business News: 'Medtech VeinTech plans US expansion with \\$1m grant'](#)
- [VitalTrace \(PB '16 alum\)](#). [ABC News: 'VitalTrace fetal monitoring device touted as 'absolute revolution' in childbirth'](#)
- [Pretect \(PB'21 alum\) in Singapore at MedTech Innovator](#)
- Perth Biodesign innovators (Flagship and NEXT) have won 4 West Tech Fest Golden Tickets (2020, 2022, 2023, 2024) at Australia's largest and longest running tech festival, West Tech Fest.



Image: SoundAsleep wins the Golden Ticket at West Tech Fest 2023.



Image: Materia Health wins the Golden Ticket at West Tech Fest 2024.

CASE STUDY: From Perth to Providence: Veintech's Journey from Local Innovation to Global Expansion

[VeinTech's](#) story is a testament to how WA's innovation ecosystem, supported by WALSIH, can propel local medtech ideas onto the global stage. VeinTech was founded in 2020 out of the 2019 Perth Biodesign Flagship program by Dr Katherine Arenson, Dr Nick Buckley, and Dr Nikhilesh Bappoo, who developed an ultrasound-based device designed to make cannulation safer and more reliable.

Beyond its Biodesign origins, VeinTech has received ongoing support from WALSIH, integral to their development and expansion. From early mentorship by Professor Kevin Pflieger, to receiving funding from WALSIH to build manufacturing capability ([read more on p.36](#)), support on national funding applications and strategic introductions that built the company's network, WALSIH has provided both the scaffolding and momentum for growth. This has enabled VeinTech to develop in-house expertise, secure over \$2 million in investment, and expand its partnerships across WA. The company has also hosted over 35 interns through iPREP Biodesign and directly with UWA, contributing to workforce development and also benefiting from access to key talent.

In 2025, WALSIH's international connections helped VeinTech become the first beneficiary of the [Perth Biodesign–NEMIC BioBridge](#), unlocking USD \$750,000 in non-dilutive funding to establish its US base in Rhode Island. Through initiatives like the BioBridge, WALSIH continues to strengthen global pathways for WA innovators, connecting local capability with international opportunity. As VeinTech sets up its US operations and continues to grow, WALSIH's role as a connector, mentor and enabler stands as a clear example of how targeted support can translate local innovation into global impact.

"Biodesign didn't just teach us how to innovate – it taught us how to listen, how to validate a need, and how to build something that actually mattered. WALSIH's support helped us transform a promising prototype into a credible company – connecting us with mentors, clinicians, IP experts, and investors who actually understood what it takes to go from concept to clinic."

Dr Nikhilesh Bappoo – CEO and Co-Founder, VeinTech



Image: VeinTech co-founders Dr Katherine Arenson, Dr Nick Buckley and Dr Nikhilesh Bappoo, finding the right vein, first time with an early-stage prototype of the VeinWave.

Appendix A: Shortlist of WA companies that have received tangible and direct support from WALSIH since inception and progress tracked to collect data on outcomes of WALSIH support

| | |
|--|--|
| Adarsh Australia | Marine Biomedical Pty Ltd |
| Advanced Genetic Diagnostics Pty Ltd | Matilda Health Pty Ltd* |
| Agili8 Pty Ltd | Metabolic Health Solutions Pty Ltd |
| AIQ Solutions Pty Ltd^ | Navier Medical Pty Ltd |
| Argenica Therapeutics Ltd | Neurotologix Pty Ltd |
| ArthroLase Pty Ltd | BioCina (Perth) |
| Artrya Ltd | OncoRes Medical Pty Ltd |
| Atherid Therapeutics Pty Ltd | Orthocell Ltd |
| Avicena Systems Ltd | Prelect Devices Pty Ltd* |
| Biotome Pty Ltd | Progenis Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd |
| ClearDrum Pty Ltd | Proteomics International Ltd |
| Cortical Dynamics Ltd | Resonance Health Ltd |
| Cytophenix Pty Ltd | Rex Ortho Pty Ltd* |
| Earbuddy Pty Ltd* | Singular Health Pty Ltd |
| Epichem Pty Ltd | Still Me and Tempo Care |
| Gene S Pty Ltd | Syngenis Pty Ltd |
| Inspiring Holdings Pty Ltd | Triphasic Cardiac Pump Pty Ltd |
| Linear Clinical Research Ltd | VeinTech Pty Ltd* |
| Lixa Pty Ltd | Vitaltrace Pty Ltd* |
| Lubdub Technologies Pty Ltd* | What the Doctor Said Pty Ltd |

*Companies founded as a result of the Perth Biodesign flagship program or by Biodesign alumni

^US headquartered with WA office established.

Appendix B: Enabling activities through representation on committees and consultations on strategies, development plans, sector initiatives

- Contributed to development of government strategies
 - WA Health and Medical Life Sciences Industry Strategy
 - WA Health and Medical Research Strategy 2023-2033
 - Future Health Research and Innovation Fund Strategy 2025-2030
 - WA 10 Year Science and Technology Plan 2025-2035
 - QEII Medical Centre precinct plans
 - Digital Industries Acceleration Strategy
 - Australia's RNA Blueprint
 - COVID-19 Rapid Response Virtual Roundtable
- Committee membership
 - Accelerating Australia Executive Committee
 - AusBiotech 2022 Program Committee
 - AusBiotech WA State Committee
 - AusMedtech 2026 Program Committee
 - Edith Cowan University Consultative committee – Medical and Biomedical Science
 - FHRI Fund Innovation Expert Committee
 - Joondalup Medical Precinct Taskforce
 - Life Sciences WA
 - REDI Steering Committee
 - Science on the Swan 2022 Organising Committee
 - The Bridge Program Steering Committee
 - The BridgeTech Program Steering Committee
 - WA Government Digital Consultative Forum
 - WA Government Innovation Advisory Board
 - WA Government Productivity Commission Roundtable
 - WA Health and Medical Life Sciences Industry Advisory Group
 - WA Health and Medical Research Strategy Sector Advisory Panel
 - WA Health Service Provider Innovation Leads group
 - WAHTN Management Committee
 - Westside Project Steering Committee, Project Control Group and Advisory Group

Read more news and case studies at walsih.au and perthbiodesign.au



WA Life Sciences
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