



VICTORIAN HEALTH  
ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

# PROSPECTUS



MELBOURNE HEALTH

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# About us

## Bendigo Health Accelerator

Bendigo Health is proud of being a trailblazer and has a proven track record in regional health leadership.

We were the first to conduct the only regional health sector-specific Accelerator program and create an Innovation Space within the hospital designed to foster collaboration and co-design with clinicians, innovators and entrepreneurs.

Our formalised health partnership joint venture agreement with 15 rural and regional health services provides access to an almost 10,000 strong health workforce.

Our continued collaboration with Melbourne Health provides access to approximately 8,000 additional health workers. The potential for immersion in 16 health services supported by 18,000 health care workers is a unique offering that ensures Founders and Startups are guaranteed the real world of health experience.



# Introduction

The Victorian Health Network Accelerator (VHNx) Project is a successful collaboration between Melbourne Health and Bendigo Health.

The VHNx supported two Startup cohorts to accelerate their journey through the Melbourne Health Accelerator (MHx) and the Bendigo Health Accelerator (BHx) programs.

The BHx is based on the highly successful MHx model, recently cited by Startup Genome in their “The Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2021 – Life Sciences Edition” as one of the top accelerators in the Oceania region.

Eighteen Startups graduated from the VHNx and are already reaping the benefits. The seven MedTech and medical device startups (including three from regional Victoria, three female founders and two from the Loddon Mallee region) who graduated from the inaugural BHx program have already created an additional 60 direct jobs. Five of these startups are developing research or service agreements with local health services.

“Over \$3 million in capital has been raised by the Bendigo Health Accelerator Startups post-program. After only one program, we demonstrated that the BHx hospital immersion component services a niche market need by facilitating access to the real world of the health system. Our sector is evidence-based, and we are breaking down a critical barrier for Startups to commercialise with our program.”

Peter Faulkner  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bendigo Health





# Our mission

To foster entrepreneurship and help generate Startups that can act as a supply chain in the future to help improve our health system by providing timely, quality and accessible care. Startups are the engine room of the economy. Health Startups are a major competitive advantage for Victoria but need support to grow.

Collaboration and investment in this program now will reap social and economic benefits in the future for Victoria and all Australians.

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The real-time digitally enabled Bendigo Hospital, capable of harnessing the untapped global opportunities created by Digital Health, makes it the perfect place to host MedTech Startups and help them grow.

Bruce Winzar  
Chief Information Officer  
Bendigo Health &  
Loddon Mallee



Creating jobs and opportunities for our youth and women to make a genuine difference in their lives and the lives of future generations.



Leveraging Bendigo Health's regional leadership role by harnessing the united power of health services across the Loddon Mallee region of Victoria, geographically comprising 25% of Victoria's landmass.



Provide Startups real-world access to 16 hospitals, networks and relationships, including a highly skilled, 18,000 strong, talented workforce.



Develop mentoring services, skills training and knowledge sharing to support Startups and Scaleups, transforming the sector into a net exporter and economic contributor for the state.

# Consumer demand

In a sector such as health, where resources are being stretched by a ballooning ageing population and increasingly empowered health consumers with radically changing needs and expectations, community needs are going unmet. It makes sense to tap into the existing consumer demand and accelerate solutions that transform health care organisations and global systems to meet our community's needs.

One way to help is to foster the translation of ideas and research into commercial companies and build a much-needed supply chain to meet our global community's current and future health needs.

## **Reciprocal benefits:**



Health Services will benefit by providing an opportunity for Startups and clinical entrepreneurs to access the health system via the hospital immersion component of the program. This 'living lab' experience helps health services foster an innovation culture, build our digital health capability and shape solutions that translate into practice.

Startups are provided access to a multi-disciplinary pool of stakeholders called Innovation Leaders. The purpose and value of providing such access are for Founders to validate their solution design with clinicians and health professionals, helping them on their commercialisation journey.

This is an imperative component in helping craft their commercial offering so that it not only solves a real-world health problem, but also has a global reach and works within system structures and funding models.



# Market need

The BHx is the only Health industry-led Accelerator providing real-world access to our health and hospital system. We are also the only pre-accelerator and accelerator program in regional Victoria, servicing the health sector in a real-time digitally enabled hospital.

This provides a unique opportunity for Startups to address health problems in smaller hospitals. These leadership teams are smaller and, by design, have to be closer to clinicians and consumers, which can inherently provide greater value. Products trialled are scalable to larger hospitals and global markets.

"The program exceeded expectations in terms of the range of content and access to different aspects of the healthcare and health purchasing setting."



Over 30 regional, national and international Startups have contacted the BHx team seeking a pilot trial partner to help gain that essential evidence base.

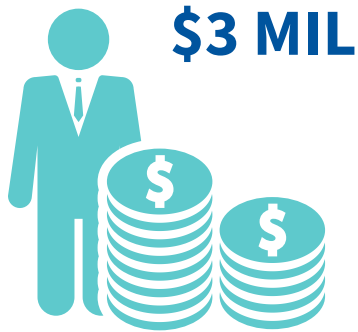
"Presenting to a cohort of internal health leaders (both administrators and clinicians) was a phenomenally positive experience. They provided robust yet concise feedback about how each innovation could be applied in the practical setting. The opportunity to present to them was fantastic. Their feedback proved to be invaluable in the development of the product."

"The Roundtables sessions were very valuable - giving us an opportunity to demonstrate the solution to clinical people, potential key stakeholders involved in the decision process of our product, getting clinical feedback and 1:1 conversation. Innovation Roundtables gave us an end-user clinical perspective on our technology which was important."

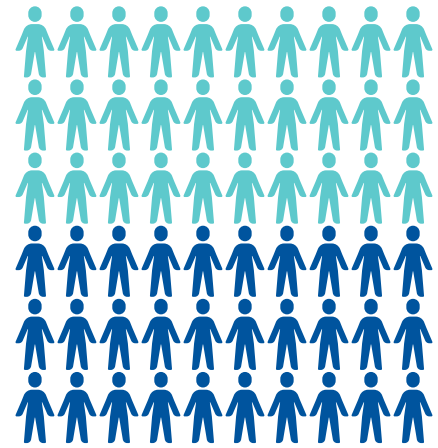
"I thought being a MedTech Startup and this being a focused health accelerator absolutely amazing. Every session answered some of my questions, and some informed me of questions I should have been asking."

# BHx Impact

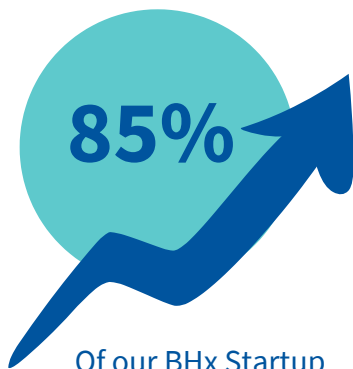
At a glance



In capital was raised by  
Startups post-BHx



**60** additional jobs were  
created; developers, marketers,  
management, finance, allied  
health and compliance roles\*



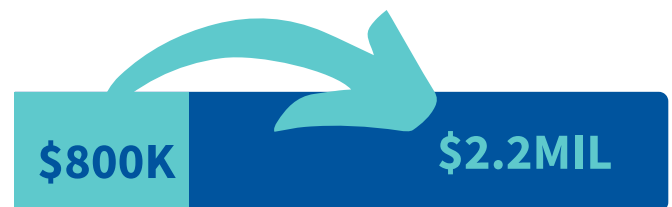
Of our BHx Startup  
graduates see growth  
potential in regional  
Victoria\*



Of the BHx cohort stated that  
the program was extremely  
helpful for their Startup journey



Of the Startups progressed to  
the trial stage to gain the  
essential evidence base for  
commercialisation



One BHx participant rapidly scaled with a turnover  
increase of \$1.4MIL\*

# Success stories

## Startup

Megan Gomez credits the MHx with helping develop and test the program to ensure it was market-ready. The MHx and BHx give healthcare-related Startups access to clinicians in a hospital setting to refine, test and re-evaluate their ideas. Megan's idea became a reality with the successful launch of Rural Health Connect in September 2019.

In her role as Startup in Residence, Megan mentored the BHx cohort. Megan found that she could also develop further her own business through her relationships built through the BHx team. A win-win situation for Bendigo Health, Rural Health Connect and Victoria.



Megan Gomez  
Founder and Director  
Rural Health Connect  
BHx Startup in Residence

"I had the idea of creating a secure online video conferencing platform that linked people to psychologists from their own homes. I had been working in remote Queensland and was just surrounded by grief, isolation and hardship, and felt I needed to help."

"An evidence base is critical to achieving commercialisation in the healthcare sector. Participating in the MHx created an incredible opportunity to connect with the BHx team and Bendigo Health clinicians. It led us to choose Bendigo Health as a pilot site, the world's first location for us to trial our pressure injury prevention device."



Ajit Ravindran  
CEO and Co-Founder  
Lenexa Medical

# Success stories

## Health service



Dr Dan Douglass, CEO at Heathcote Health, is part of the Innovation Leader group that provided Startups with feedback during roundtables on their commercial offering, supporting all the Startups during the BHx.

"What excited me most about being an innovation leader was the opportunity to contribute practical industry experience and knowledge to new Startups in the health sector while being exposed to innovative thinking and ideas."

"As a CEO, the most positive benefit of programs like the BHx is how it brings health services and entrepreneurs together in creating and promoting innovative solutions to health-related problems."

"We really valued the opportunity to share our product with the network of hospital CEOs and to canvas the opportunity to pilot with Heathcote Health during the BHx. We have since established a pilot program which continues to be a great opportunity to develop and target the product for a new service type."

"Smaller services innovate by necessity and they are great partners to pilot digital health innovation."

## Collaboration

"We gained access not only to procurement decision makers and influencers but importantly also the clinicians and health workers who are often one of the main users of the products and services. "



**Lexi Randall-L'Estrange**  
Founder and Director  
Social Impact Software

# Success stories

## Program participant

Age Up Health has secured investment from the Alice Anderson Fund, LaunchVic's \$10 million VC fund for female entrepreneurs.

LaunchVic CEO Dr Kate Cornick praised Age Up Health as a Victorian startup on the rise. "The Alice Anderson Fund was developed by LaunchVic to drive investment to women-led startups," she said.

"We are really thrilled to back founders like Grace who are challenging conventional pathways in the aged care industry to build a product that is making a genuine impact."

Extract courtesy of the Startup Daily

Grace Petherick  
CEO and Founder  
Age Up Health



"Regional Australia presents a huge opportunity in health and care services for businesses with particularly high demand in this sector. Tech-enabled businesses serving this large population well, are presented with huge growth potential. I would encourage Startups to consider the market potential in the regions and look at the value of a program like the BHx, which I found valuable for my own business."

"Every healthcare Startup that sees hospitals as customers should consider applying to the program."

Michael Wang  
CEO and Founder  
Telecare



"Kylie and the Bendigo Health Accelerator team were of exceptional help during the program and we have continued to stay in contact and receive help long after the program has concluded. We are really appreciative of the support that the BHx program has provided us."



# Innovation leaders

We are fortunate to engage such brilliant and knowledgeable Innovation Leaders with deep experience in healthcare. Our Innovation Leaders will be there to provide our Startups with real world hospital immersion through roundtable sessions. These sessions are where our Startups will be able to test and validate their ideas in one of our 16 health laboratories. The Innovation Leader roundtable sessions were identified by our previous Startups as one of the best aspects of our program. The Innovation Leaders and Roundtables add unique value to the VHx with no other Startup program providing such an offering.

## Dr Cameron Knott, Lead Innovation Leader



Cameron works clinically as an Intensive Care Medicine specialist. His Bendigo Health role is the Deputy Clinical Unit Head of the Bendigo Health Intensive Care Unit (ICU). He also maintains links with the Austin Health ICU in Melbourne. Cameron works for Monash University as a Senior Lecturer and Academic Lead of the Clinical Skills and Simulation Centre, Monash Rural Health Bendigo. This role supports the Bendigo-based Monash University and University of Melbourne medical student programs for learning safe clinical skills for working doctors-in-training.

Cameron holds a Master of Clinical Education with a thesis in clinical simulation education faculty development. Cameron carries honorary appointments at the University of Melbourne, with the Rural Clinical School and the Centre for Integrated Critical Care. His interests focus on person-centred healthcare system co-design, improved workplace inter-professional team capability development, safe patient-centred healthcare, and data-informed system improvement underpinned by digital health integration.



# Innovation leaders



Dr Rodney Wilson

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Dr Rodney Wilson is a practicing consultant anaesthetist with experience across multiple sub-specialties and jurisdictions, both publicly and privately, in several countries. He has a proven commitment to regional health with his main interests including perioperative service development and improving the perioperative journey for the patient. To this end, Rob has completed a Masters of Medicine at Monash University, which includes a thesis concentrating on human factors in the design and implementation of a perioperative anaemia pathway. Excellence in clinical teaching remains a priority for Rod, with an emphasis on non-technical skills and team dynamics, in roles as a qualified Advanced Life Support Instructor and a co-facilitator of clinical workshops in Mongolia and Myanmar on behalf of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA).



Dr Buddhika Mudugamu

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Dr Buddhika “Buddy” Mudugamu is a Consultant in Palliative Medicine with Bendigo Health. He believes in equal access to palliative care for rural and regional people and believes this can be achieved through the use of technology. Buddy enjoys finding creative ways to make technology work for him to make his home life easier.

# Mentors & Program Associates

"BHx supported PwC and other program associates by promoting our involvement to program participants and other stakeholders and has continued to make introductions to relevant stakeholders long after the formal end of the program."



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## Ben Landsberg

Ben Landsberg is a Director in PwC Australia's R&D Tax Incentive practice. He joined PwC Australia in 2013, having previously worked as Assistant State Manager in the R&D Tax Incentive team at AusIndustry. Having worked with clients in many different industries, from startups to large corporates, Ben has extensive and deep experience and knowledge concerning the application of the R&D program. Ben will deliver a workshop on R&D Tax Incentive and Government Support Programs.

"BHx provided the initial impetus for a number of enduring relationships, and we understand that all stakeholders have had a similar, positive experience."

# Mentors & Program Associates



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## Dr Jayne Foster

Dr Jayne Foster is Assistant Director of the SME Assist team at the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Canberra. TGA regulates and monitors all therapeutic goods in Australia to ensure that they are safe to use and fulfil their intended purpose. SME Assist is a tailored service that TGA provides to support small to medium enterprises, startups and those new to therapeutic goods regulation to understand their regulatory requirements.

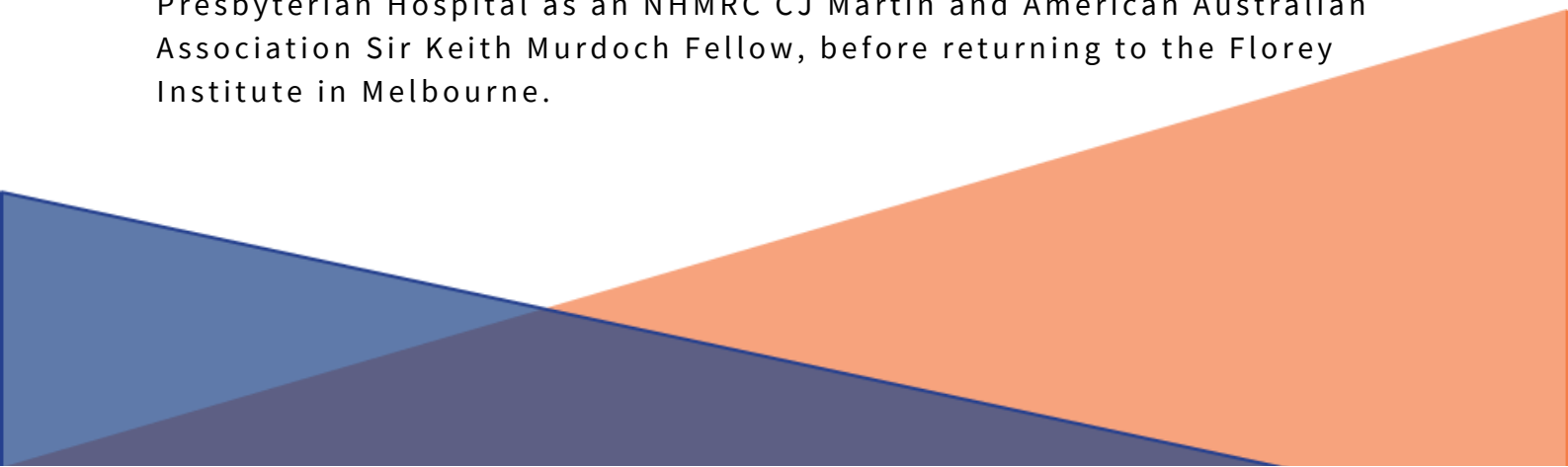
Jayne joined TGA in 2015 as a scientific evaluator and has previous experience within the pharmaceutical industry as a medical writer. She has a PhD in Medicine from The University of New South Wales where she investigated a potential transplantation therapy for Type 1 diabetes. Jayne enjoys sharing her knowledge and insight to support startup companies trying to navigate the regulatory pathway.



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## Dr Katherine Jackman

Dr Katherine Jackman is an Investment Associate with life science venture capital firm Brandon Capital Partners. Prior to joining, Katherine was based in academia working in the field of experimental stroke. She spent five years at Weill Cornell Medicine New York-Presbyterian Hospital as an NHMRC CJ Martin and American Australian Association Sir Keith Murdoch Fellow, before returning to the Florey Institute in Melbourne.





## Further information

### Contacts

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