

Trials in Focus

BI offers \$146m venture capital

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Professor Andreas Barner
Support breakthroughs

Boehringer Ingelheim (BI) has established a 100 million euro (A\$146 million) venture capital fund which is open to Australian biotechs and start-up companies with ground-breaking therapeutic approaches and technologies.

Companies working with stem cells, and those developing new generation vaccines are among those encouraged to apply for funding under the new Boehringer Ingelheim Venture Fund (BIVF). Other areas of interest include RNA silencing, new generation protein or antibody technologies, new molecular targets, first-in-class lead compounds and disease-related biomarkers. The fund has no geographic focus and entrepreneurs worldwide are encouraged to apply for funding beginning later this year.

"Our investments will extend beyond the current therapeutic area focus of Boehringer Ingelheim and our existing therapeutic approaches and technologies." says Professor Andreas Barner, Chairman of the Board of Managing Directors at Boehringer Ingelheim.

"We have extensive drug discovery expertise and can take advantage of knowledge and experience available within our global organisation, but we are aware that there is an entire landscape of novel therapeutic ideas and potentially breakthrough technologies that need to be supported for future patients' benefit," he said.

Dr Anna Lavelle, CEO of AusBiotech is supportive of the fund which she says has the potential to benefit local biotechs.

"The announcement of Boehringer Ingelheim's Global Venture Fund is great news and offers Australian innovators another avenue for capital access," Dr Lavelle said.

BI intends to play an active role in the companies it supports, not only in a board or board observer capacity, but also through value-added expertise. They say however, that while they would welcome the opportunity to enter into strategic partnerships with portfolio companies later on, they would be happy for them to develop in their own right, or enter strategic partnerships with other pharmaceutical companies.

The opening investment will be up to two million euro per venture, and could total 10-15 million depending on the project's progress. The fund will be seeking to provide initial investments in Series A funding, and interested companies are directed to submit business plans through their [online form](#).

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