



NATA's biobanking accreditation set to expand

The National Association of Testing Authorities has been working closely with Biobanking Victoria at Monash University in the new and exciting area of biobanking.

April 4, Melbourne – The National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) believes Australia's fledgling biobanking industry is set for rapid expansion after it granted accreditation to the country's first facility for the internationally recognised biobanking standard ISO 20387.

Biobanking Victoria, part of Monash University, this week celebrated becoming Australia's first accredited biobanking facility, paving the way for other organisations to follow suit.

Biobanking involves sourcing human biological, DNA/RNA, serum/plasma, animal, viruses or agricultural samples before storing for the purpose of research and improvement of our understanding of health and disease. These samples can include blood, bacteria, seeds, saliva, tissue or even whole organs.

Accreditation in biobanking is crucial, as results are heavily dependent on having the process right. Without a steadfast procedure and the right steps or processes in place, samples can be spoiled or even not recognised as being usable. This can result in massive impacts on time, resources and costs for biobanking projects. **One estimate had irreproducible results costing over \$28 billion in wasted research efforts in one year in the US alone.** Biobanking is vital solution in being able to reproduce results.

Jennifer Evans, NATA CEO, said: "We've seen globally that biobanks are now a critical resource underpinning robust, reproducible medical and scientific research. Accreditation provides assurance that biobanking processes are performed to international standards and that researchers can rely on materials stored in biobanks.

"Biobanking Victoria, through Monash University, now represents one of the very few accredited biobanks anywhere in the world under the internationally recognised ISO 20387 standard.

"There is no question we will now see other Australian companies follow their lead and we look forward to the program growing over the next 24-36 months with more biobanks gaining NATA accreditation for their services in areas such as human pathology and the natural world of seeds, plants, animals and even fungi."

Biobanking has already played a large role in the efforts to find a vaccine against COVID-19 as samples have needed to be kept unspoiled for research and testing. It's a burgeoning industry because of the potential it offers in research efforts.

The Chair of Precision Medicine and Director of Biobanking Victoria, Professor Melissa C. Southey OAM believes that accredited biobanking provides the platform to further our understanding of life and our environment in ways we are unable to quantify today.

Professor Southey said: "Biobanking at these standards is the next step in advancing medical research into human health and diseases and its rapid translation into routine clinical care. We understand the value of accreditation on our own shores and positioning Australia as a global leader and we're already looking to expand our accreditation credentials in this area."

There are currently over 200 biobanks in the world that are operational in this area. To date, biobanking has made leaps forward in how we treat and develop personalised and precision medicines.

www.nata.com.au

Sydney (Head Office): P.O. Box 7507, Silverwater, NSW 2128 | **Contact us:** 1800 621 666 (free call)

National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia

Limited by guarantee | ABN 59 004 379 748



It's an emerging field of medical development and Australia is well positioned to help grow and lead in this pioneering space. NATA, with a suite of complementary accreditation programs, is the world's oldest accreditation body, and this year celebrates its 75th anniversary year, the future of accreditation in this country is bright and globally it has never been more important.

Ends

Notes to editors

For further information please contact: Brendon.Moo@nata.com.au or liam.fitzpatrick@nata.com.au

About NATA

National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) provides accreditation for laboratories to ensure testing results can be relied on and trusted. As Australia's sole internationally recognised accreditation authority, NATA's role is to uphold the national standards of technical competence for those delivering products or services to the general public. Through its extensive network, NATA provides assessment, accreditation and training services to laboratories and technical facilities.

www.nata.com.au

Sydney (Head Office): P.O. Box 7507, Silverwater, NSW 2128 | **Contact us:** 1800 621 666 (free call)

National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia

Limited by guarantee | ABN 59 004 379 748