



The Snow Vision Accelerator

February 2025

Fact Sheet

Key Points

- The Snow Medical Research Foundation (**Snow Medical**) is launching the Snow Vision Accelerator (the **Accelerator**) in partnership with the University of Sydney with a landmark \$50 million commitment from the Snow Family over 10 years to fight glaucoma, the world's leading cause of irreversible blindness.
- Through this partnership between philanthropy and the university sector, research at the Snow Vision Accelerator aims to develop innovative treatments that enhance optic nerve resilience, addressing a pressing unmet need for effective therapies and transform the treatment of glaucoma globally.
- Led by world leading ophthalmologist, **Professor Jonathan Crowston** and located at the world class Charles Perkins Centre, the Accelerator will bring together a team of leading Australian and international researchers.
- The Accelerator will commence operations in mid-2025, and is expected to employ more than 40 scientists, clinicians and staff within the first five years.
- This \$50 million commitment builds on the legacy of the late Terry Snow AM and his family which since 2019 through Snow Medical has invested over \$261 million in high-risk researched back by talented, expert and renowned researchers and their teams.
- lowering eye pressure, leaving age-related vulnerabilities and optic nerve resilience largely unaddressed.
- This \$50 million investment over 10-years is the largest philanthropic initiative of its kind in glaucoma, allowing researchers to focus on developing therapies to enhance optic nerve resilience. It addresses the unmet need for drugs that increase nerve resilience, a field where such treatments currently do not exist and allows researchers to pursue a bold and long-term research program beyond the predominately short-term research funding available in Australia.
- Through an integrated research and development pipeline, the Accelerator will bring together teams across different disciplines such as biological research, bioinformatics, drug development, and clinical trials, to work towards a common product-oriented goal. These teams will be supported through collaborations with leading global institutions ensuring access to the latest science, cutting-edge animal models and advanced validation methods.
- While the Accelerator will transform glaucoma research over the long-term, it will also leave a lasting legacy in supporting early-career researchers through leadership fellowships. These fellowships will promote diversity, mentorship, and excellence in Australian eye research. By doing so, they will help build the next generation of Australian eye researchers, enhancing both capacity and capability.

How is the Snow Vision Accelerator different? Its 'secret sauce' is focused, long-term investment which allows it to accelerate the translation of research into real world impact.

- Glaucoma affects over 80 million people globally, with 4.5 million completely blind in both eyes. Current treatments focus solely on

An innovative partnership between philanthropy and the university sector.

- At the heart of the Accelerator is an innovative partnership between Australia's fastest growing medical research philanthropy and Australia's first university, the University of Sydney.
- Both organisations are dedicated to doing things differently, focusing on accelerated research translation and impacts. This approach will be underpinned by agility and a sense of urgency to bring research impacts into the real world.
- This partnership is committed to excellence, and urgency. It leverages high-risk, high-reward science, the University of Sydney's capacity, and long-term Snow family investment to create transformative health and medical outcomes for patients.
- **Accelerated translation and impact:** by putting in place structures to support impact focussed research teams and accelerate transformation in glaucoma therapy.
- **Urgency:** Honouring the legacy and intent of the late Terry Snow AM, the Accelerator will operate at speed and will actively work to remove barriers to research and its translation.
- **Excellence:** The Accelerator will uphold the highest research standards, striving for world-class achievements in every aspect of our work.
- **Innovation and Risk:** The Accelerator embraces flexibility and change, with the science leading the direction, fostering a multidisciplinary, entrepreneurial environment that values calculated risk and bold solutions.
- **Openness and Collaboration:** The Accelerator will operate transparently, adhering to a "no surprises" policy, and recognise the value of each partner's contributions.
- **Integrity:** Commit to academic honesty and the highest ethical standards, the Accelerator will ensure that all research is reproducible, reliable, and of the highest quality.
- **Partnering:** The Accelerator will draw on the unique strengths of its partners and collaborators, including outstanding infrastructure, scientists and students.

Key People

- The Accelerator is led by a world class team of scientists predominantly from the Faculty of Medicine and Health at the University of Sydney, including:
 - Professor Jonathan Crowston
 - Dr Andrea Loreto
 - Associate Professor Ben Sivyver
 - Dr Katharina Bell
 - Professor Ridia Lim
 - Associate Professor Clare Fraser
 - Dr Volker Patzel
 - Professor Jean Yang
- The Accelerator will also be supported by an Independent Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (**ISTAC**) that will provide scientific advice and guidance to the Accelerator.
- The ISTAC will be led by Professor Ian Constable AO, an internationally renowned ophthalmologist and the founding director of the Lions Eye Institute in Perth, Western Australia.
- Also joining the ISTAC initially will be Professor Melanie Bahlo AM from WEHI, as well as Professor Nigel Turner from the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute. Professor Bahlo's expertise in bioinformatics and Professor Turner's expertise in cellular bioenergetics will provide valuable independent expertise to the Accelerator.