

Nephrogenix awarded Biotechnology Innovation Fund grant

Start-up biotech company Nephrogenix today received a \$250,000 grant from the Federal Government's Biotechnology Innovation Fund to further its ground-breaking work on renal disease and kidney regeneration.

Established by IMBcom and Monash Commercial, the commercialisation companies at the University of Queensland and Monash University respectively, Nephrogenix aims to translate basic research in kidney disease into applied and commercial outcomes.

Nephrogenix's Chief Scientific Advisor Associate Professor Melissa Little said the grant enabled further advances on stem cell markers and methods for generating cell types needed to develop cellular therapies and therapeutics for renal disease.

"The current treatment options for End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) are dialysis and kidney transplants, both of which have serious side effects," she said.

"Kidney disease and failure is increasing in Australia and this, along with the decline in organs available for transplant, has provided the impetus for our research into new therapies for ESRD."

Nephrogenix is developing technologies to enable the isolation of stem cells that give rise to new kidney tissue. The goal of Nephrogenix is to eventually administer these cells to patients with, or at risk of ESRD.

A number of markers aiding isolation of these cells have been identified, as well as novel growth factors assisting the growth of renal tissue.

Nephrogenix's Executive Officer Samantha Cobb, was delighted with the success of the grant and said the Biotechnology Industry Fund provides much needed funding for start up companies to redeploy management and complete required proof of concept experiments.

The leading scientists involved in the project funded by this award include Professor John Bertram and, Associate Professor Martin Pera from Monash University and the Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development respectively, as well as Associate Professor Andrew Perkins and Associate Professor Melissa Little from the University of Queensland's, Institute for Molecular Bioscience.

About Nephrogenix

Nephrogenix is a national initiative, commercialising the outcomes from the Renal Regeneration Consortium based at the University of Queensland's Institute for Molecular Bioscience and researchers located at Monash University in Melbourne.

(www.nephrogenix.com)

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