

MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT

NEWSLETTER Issue #3 - 2026



OUR HISTORY

In 2015, Sam and PDG Sandy Doumany attended a Rotary Against Malaria Conference, with Associate Professor Danielle Stanisc from the Institute for Glycomics as the Guest Speaker. Danielle spoke about Malaria Vaccine research led by herself and Professor Michael Good AO at the Institute. She mentioned that their Laboratory needed a Separator which would cost \$8000.

Sam took that on board and approached PDG Graham Jones to see if the money required could be raised. Within a week, Graham, Sam and other Rotarians had raised the funds.

The Griffith Rotary Satellite Club was in the formation period, and the cheque was presented to Dr Danielle Stanisc (a prospective member) at the next meeting. The Rotarians felt this sent a message to new members:

“This is the power of Rotary”

After learning more about Professor Michael Good and Dr Danielle Stanisc’s research journey, a core of Rotarians developed a passion to be part of the quest to save the lives of so many men, women and children and eliminate Malaria from the world.

In 2016 Gerard Brennan had discussions with the Governor General’s Office in Canberra which led to the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, launching the Malaria Vaccine Project at a function in the Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics on 27 March 2017.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

PDG Sandy Doumany OAM

COMMITTEE

Neil Jones (Treasurer)

Donna Gillett-Shaw (Secretary)

Hon Sam Doumany AM

Teresa Dawson

Karin Kolenko

Alan Guignon

PDG Ross Smith

PDG Dai Mason

Bruce Howlett

PDG Harry Bolton

PDG Jeff Egan

NATIONAL AMBASSADOR

The Honourable Anna Bligh AC

HONORARY MEMBERS

Laraine Brennan OAM

Gerard Brennan OAM

MALARIA VACCINE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE



PDG Sandy Doumany
OAM Committee Chair



Hon Sam Doumany AM
Committee Member



Donna Gillett-Shaw
Committee Member



James Endelman, Advancement Manager
Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics

MALARIA IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S DEADLIEST DISEASES AND REMAINS A MAJOR GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUE



Malaria causes fatigue, fever, seizures and, if untreated, coma and death.



Malaria is spread easily by the bite from an infected *Anopheles* mosquito and is endemic in tropical countries and regions such as Latin America, Asia and the sub-Saharan Africa.



One person dies from malaria every minute.



Over the past 5 years, it is estimated there have been over **1 billion** cases of malaria worldwide.

An estimated **2.9 million** people died from the disease.

76% of those deaths were **children under 5 years of age**.



Malaria has a devastating impact on the economies of some of our closest neighbours. It is our responsibility as part of the global community to help end malaria.

IMAGINE BY 2028 WE HAVE A GAME CHANGING, PROVEN VACCINE, AND THAT BY 2033 IT CAN BE ROLLED OUT TO THE COUNTRIES THAT NEED IT MOST.

For the past 10 years Griffith University, in partnership with Rotary, has been developing a vaccine candidate that could make this a reality.

Our team at the Institute for Glycomics is about to embark on a clinical trial for this game changing vaccine and we are now seeking philanthropic partners to support the vaccine manufacture, ahead of Phase II trials.

Will you join us in this vital journey to end malaria – for good.



CHAIR MESSAGE

PDG Sandy Doumany OAM
Chair, Malaria Vaccine Project

We are very proud of the Rotarians featured in the front cover of this edition of the Newsletter. That is the Rotary Committee that is the fundraising arm of the Malaria Vaccine Project.

Sir Peter Cosgrove the former Governor General launched our Project nearly 10 years ago and has remained very supportive with communication through our Chair. The Committee is inspired by Emeritus Professor Michael Good AO and Associate Professor Danielle Staniscic with their passion and commitment to bringing a Malaria Vaccine to fruition.

PDG Graham Jones AM was the first Chair of the Committee before passing over to PDG Sandra Doumany OAM. Their Leadership can proudly announce with the Committee raising approximately \$3.3 million over nearly 10 years.

Rotary Clubs in District 9640, Australia, and overseas as well as private supporters have all contributed financially to our Malaria Vaccine Project. Rotary Clubs organise specific Fundraising Functions or make a direct donation.

This year we were very fortunate to have a substantial article in the American Rotary Newsletter which brought our Project to many more Rotarians. Griffith University on our own Gold Coast are very proud and supportive of this Project, and the partnership with Rotary.

We welcome any offers of support and if any Club would like an update we have our own Ambassadors very happy to set a date with you as a Guest Speaker.

Any queries
PDG Sandy Doumany OAM
srmd@bigpond.net.au
0418 150 240

CONTINUING OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS A NEW MALARIA VACCINE



Associate Professor Danielle Staniscic, PhD
Research Leader and Principal Research Fellow,
Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics, Griffith University

The past several months have been an exciting and productive period for our Malaria Vaccine Research Program, and I am delighted to share an update with the many Rotary supporters who continue to stand alongside us on this journey. Every step we take towards developing a safe and effective malaria vaccine is made possible through the generosity, belief, and commitment of our donor community. on

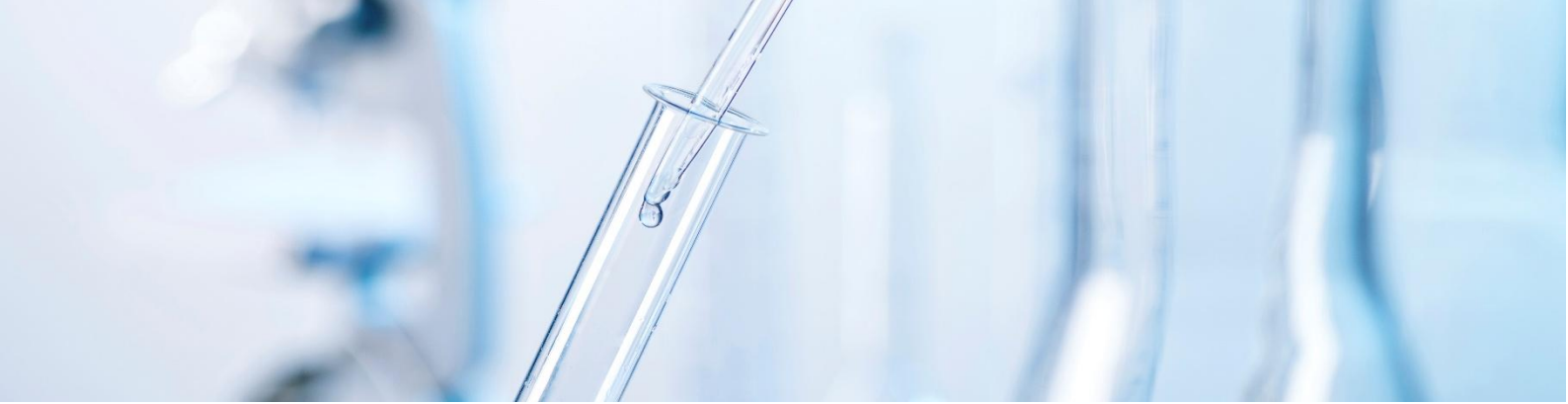
behalf of our entire research team, thank you for continuing to propel this work forward.

Our research program has continued to make progress as we work towards first-in-human testing of our vaccine candidate. Behind every scientific milestone sits an enormous amount of laboratory research, planning, regulatory preparation and international collaboration. While much of this work occurs behind the scenes, each achievement brings us closer to our ultimate goal of reducing the devastating burden of malaria in communities that need it most.

One particularly significant milestone was achieved in the last month, with the progression of an agreement between Griffith University and our adjuvant partner in Denmark. This agreement represents an important step in advancing the vaccine towards clinical testing and reflects the strength of the international partnerships that underpin this project. Bringing together expertise from across the globe is essential in vaccine development, and we are excited about what this collaboration will help us achieve in the years ahead.

At the same time, we are continuing to finalise the regulatory and administrative paperwork required for our planned phase I clinical trial at the Doherty Institute. While these processes can be complex, they are a vital part of ensuring that every aspect of the trial is conducted to the highest scientific and ethical standards. The team remains focused on moving through these final stages and preparing for what will be a major milestone for our program.

Importantly, we are already looking beyond phase I. Even as we complete preparations for the Australian trial, we have begun exploring opportunities for future studies in malaria-endemic countries, where the vaccine's effectiveness can



ultimately be evaluated in populations most affected by the disease. There are several exciting conversations underway with potential partners and collaborators. While these discussions remain confidential at this stage, we are highly encouraged by the opportunities emerging and look forward to sharing more details when the time is right.

Developing a new vaccine is never a short journey, but progress is built through persistence, collaboration and the support of people who believe in the mission. Rotary supporters continue to be an indispensable part of that mission. Your generosity provides not only the resources needed to advance the science, but also the confidence and encouragement that inspire our team every day.

Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment to this work. Together, we are taking meaningful steps towards a future where malaria no longer threatens the lives of millions of people around the world. We look forward to sharing further milestones with you in the months ahead.



CLUB SPOTLIGHT: GOLD COAST

I have been attending the Rotary Surfers Paradise race days for a number of years, both as a member and president of Rotary Runaway Bay and now as a member of Rotary Gold Coast.

I support Rotary Surfers Paradise's commitment to support the gold coast hospital foundation and the malaria vaccine project. Both are extremely important causes, and I am happy to support these.

Not only does the race day support these causes but it is also fun and a way to meet and socialise with members from other Rotary clubs. As a participant of the Rotary Surfer's race days, I have been able to grow my network of Rotary relationships.

I will be attending this year's race day and I am looking forward to seeing many members there.

Anita Whiteford

Gold Coast Rotary





BEHIND THE MICROSCOPE LENS

Hamidreza Sadegh

Research Fellow,

Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics, Griffith University



What inspired you to become involved in malaria vaccine research?

Malaria has fascinated me since my undergraduate studies. I remember thinking, “How can a brainless parasite be so clever?” It is an incredibly complex organism that has evolved remarkable ways to survive and evade the human immune system. Developing vaccines and understanding immunology have always been major interests of mine, so when I had the opportunity to join Danielle's group and work on malaria vaccine research, I saw it as a perfect opportunity to combine these interests. It also gave me the chance to finally investigate my long-standing question: which one is actually cleverer, the parasite or the immune system?

What gives you hope that malaria can one day be eliminated?

The rapid advancement of immunology, molecular biology and vaccine technology gives me great hope for the future. We now understand much more about how malaria interacts with the human immune system and have access to increasingly sophisticated tools to design and develop vaccines. By bringing together these advances with innovative vaccine platforms and continued research, I believe we can develop more effective and durable malaria vaccines. With sustained scientific progress and global collaboration, malaria elimination could happen sooner than we might expect.

What would you like the members of Rotary to understand about malaria and the importance of vaccine research?

The people who suffer most from malaria are often the most vulnerable, particularly young children and communities with limited access to healthcare, effective prevention strategies and treatment. For me, malaria vaccine research is therefore not simply about developing another vaccine, it is about giving vulnerable communities another powerful tool to prevent disease and save lives. As researchers, we have a responsibility to communicate the importance of this work to people such as Rotary members who care deeply about improving human lives. A successful malaria vaccine could make a profound difference to millions of people and, most importantly, help protect children from a disease that remains a major global health challenge.



For Rotary members who are passionate about improving lives, what message would you like to leave with them today?

You may never meet the children whose lives you help change, and they may never know your name, but you can still be their anonymous superhero. Every contribution that supports malaria research brings us one step closer to a future where children can grow up without the constant fear and burden of malaria. Your support helps scientists turn ideas into discoveries, and discoveries into interventions that can ultimately save lives. That is an incredibly meaningful form of service.

Rotary's motto is “Service Above Self”. How do you see scientific research contributing to that same spirit of service to humanity?

In my opinion, to be a good and responsible scientist, you need to genuinely love science while also recognising that the ultimate purpose of much of our research is to improve the lives of others. Scientific research can require years of hard work, patience and sacrifice, often without seeing an immediate benefit. However, the knowledge and discoveries we generate today can become the treatments, vaccines and technologies that benefit people in the future. To me, dedicating yourself to that purpose, working today so that others can have a better and healthier tomorrow, is a very close reflection of the Rotary motto, “Service Above Self”.

Pathway to success

2013

THE FIRST PRE-CLINICAL STUDIES evaluating PlasProtectT were published. These studies demonstrated that PlasProtectT was broadly protective against different malaria parasite strains.

2014-2015

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY CONDUCTED a world-first pilot study to evaluate PlasProtectT in malaria-naïve human volunteers demonstrating that it was safe and could stimulate a parasite-specific immune response.

2018 – 2020

A WORLD-FIRST PILOT CLINICAL STUDY CONDUCTED BY GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY to evaluate whether PlasProtectT could stop malaria-naïve individuals from developing malaria infection. The majority were completely protected from developing a malaria infection.

2024

The clinical-grade PlasProtectT vaccine has successfully passed mandatory toxicology assessment and will now proceed to a full Human Research Ethics submission to enable commencement of the clinical trial.

2028 – onwards

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY WILL FORM part of a global consortium to roll out and evaluate PlasProtectT across multiple sites in malaria endemic countries.

2015

THE RESEARCHERS PUBLISHED details of the first cultured malaria cell banks that would be used to manufacture PlasProtectT for use in clinical studies.

2017

THE MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT was launched as a fundraising partnership between Rotary District 9640 and Griffith University to support further development of the malaria vaccine.

2021

THE GRIFFITH RESEARCHERS PUBLISHED pre-clinical studies demonstrating the efficacy of the field deployable form of their whole parasite blood-stage malaria vaccine in the prestigious journal mBio.

2025

WITH THE SUPPORT OF KEY PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS Griffith University will conduct a Phase I clinical study to evaluate a field-deployable version of PlasProtectT in malaria-naïve human volunteers **COMMENCING JUNE 2025 WITH A DURATION OF 12 MONTHS.**

2026 – 2028

OUR CORNERSTONE PARTNERS AND A LEADING GLOBAL PARTNER WILL CONDUCT a Phase II clinical trial to evaluate PlasProtectT in a malaria endemic country.
FUNDING REQUIRED: \$29M



FINANCIAL REPORT

Donations to the Malaria Vaccine Project as at 31 August 2026 total \$3,263,620 of which \$163,394 was contributed in the 2025/26 financial year. Of the total funds raised to date, Rotary Clubs, Rotarians and related Rotary entities have contributed \$1.487m or 45.6%. A broad breakdown of source shows:

	\$000'S	%
Rotary Clubs/Rotary related entities	827	25.4
Individual Rotarians	660	20.2
Total Rotary and Rotary related	1487	45.6
Australian Government Medical Future Fund	500	15.3
Griffith University Matching Funds	522	16.0
Private Trust 3	260	8.0
GC2018 Legacy Fund	50	1.5
All other donors	445	13.6
Total Donations	\$3264	100.0

District 9640, the host district of the project, has contributed \$502k or 60.7% of the Rotary and Rotary related total.

In total 115 Rotary Clubs across Australia have made donations to the project. The current top ten contributing clubs are:

Hope Island	\$175,566
Hornsby	\$50,393
Gold Coast	\$42,771
Surfers Paradise	\$38,697
Mermaid Beach	\$23,000
Goolwa	\$22,218
Engadine	\$20,000
Broadbeach	\$18,000
Mackay West	\$15,000
Murwillumbah	\$15,000

We thank, not only these clubs (which have contributed \$420,645), but every single donor, large and small, for supporting our project which we believe is on the cusp of achieving another major milestone in Malaria Vaccine development.



COMMITTEE MEMBER: KARIN KOLENKO



I was born and educated in England and moved to Australia to live in 1992. I became a Rotarian in 1996 and a President in 1999. I have a special reason and strong desire to help support the Malaria Vaccine Project, having had Malaria on two occasions and understand that a vaccine will save millions of children.

I am a member of the Rotary Club of Hope Island and support where possible any fundraising for the Malaria Vaccine Project.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL MVP ARTICLE



The Malaria Vaccine Project was the cover story of the April 2026 edition of the Rotary International Magazine. The article and accompanying photos stretched to 10 pages in the magazine, with the production team having visited Professor Michael Good and Associate Professor Danielle Stanisic in January to photograph their lab inside Griffith's Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics.

Access the article here: <https://www.rotary.org/en/articles/2026/04/to-catch-a-killer-parasite> if you haven't caught up with it yet.



ROTARY RACE DAY DELIVERS A WINNING RESULT FOR THE MALARIA VACCINE PROJECT



The 23rd Charity Race Day hosted by the Rotary Club of Surfers Paradise on Saturday, 5 September, was a tremendous success and a wonderful day of fellowship, fun and fundraising. This year, through the tireless efforts and machinations of Alan Guignon, the Rotary Malaria Vaccine Project was honoured to be selected as one of the beneficiaries of funds raised at the event.

Held at the beautiful Glasshouse venue at the Gold Coast Turf Club, the day brought together Rotarians, friends and supporters from across the district to enjoy great racing, excellent company and a shared commitment to making a difference. The atmosphere was vibrant, with guests enthusiastically supporting raffles, auctions and prize draws throughout the day, all contributing to the fundraising effort for this vital research project.

A highlight of the day was seeing the MVP Committee's very own Teresa Dawson take home the award for Best Dressed Lady, adding an extra touch of celebration to an already memorable occasion. It was also wonderful to see members of the Rotary Club of Cleveland, long-time supporters of the Malaria Vaccine Project, whose attendance was greatly appreciated and further demonstrated the strong Rotary commitment to helping eradicate one of the world's most devastating diseases.

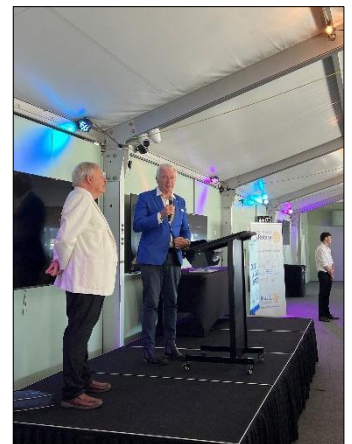
A very special thank you must go to the Rotary Club of Surfers Paradise, Sam and Sandy Doumany, Graham Jones and the many dedicated Rotarians whose hard work, organisation and enthusiasm make this event such a standout occasion each year. We





also extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who attended, purchased tickets, bought raffle tickets, bid on auction items and supported the various fundraising activities. Every contribution helps drive forward the important research being undertaken through the Rotary Malaria Vaccine Project.

Together, Rotary members continue to demonstrate that when we combine fellowship with purpose, we can make a meaningful impact on improving health outcomes for communities around the world. The Race Day was a winning result both on and off the track.

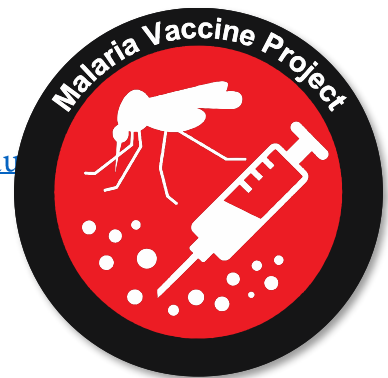




WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Come and visit our malaria lab at Griffith University.

Contact Jamie Endelman, Advancement Manager at j.endelman@griffith.edu.au



OUR PARTNERS



INSTITUTE FOR
BIOMEDICINE
AND GLYCOMICS

