

ARVO International Advocacy Toolkit: Australia

1. Which organization(s) are significant sources of research funding? (e.g., national/local governments; private funding/foundations/charity groups; large non-governmental organizations (NGOs); industry/pharmaceutical companies)

National/Local Government

- [National Health and Medical Research Council \(NHMRC\)](#)
- [Medical Research Future Fund \(MRFF\)](#)
- [Australian Research Council \(ARC\)](#)

Private funding/Charity Groups/Foundations

- [Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia \(ORIA\)](#)
- [Retina Australia](#)
- [Macular Disease Foundation Australia](#)
- [Glaucoma Australia](#)

Industry/Pharmaceutical companies

- [Glaukos](#)
- [Bayer](#)
- [Roche](#)
- [Apellis](#)

2. What does the normal science funding/policy decision-making process look like?

The funding for major research projects comes from NHMRC and, to a lesser extent, the ARC. These are extremely competitive and are based on the scientific quality of the project, its feasibility and the track record of the team. The decisions are made by expert panels that have broader bases than larger countries - there are no pure ophthalmic/vision science panels. Applications are by invitation only and are once a year.

3. Which patient advocacy groups, if any, are active in the area?

National

- [The Australian Society for Medical Research](#)
- [Macular Disease Foundation Australia](#)

- [Glaucoma Australia](#)
- [Retina Australia](#)
- [Diabetes Australia](#)

4. Are there existing national/regional organizations that work towards improving research funding/policy?

Organizations that advocate for medical research include:

- [Science and Technology Australia](#)
- [Australasian Neuroscience Society](#)
- [Macular Disease Foundation](#)
- [Australian Vision Research](#)

5. How do scientists currently contribute to the existing funding/policymaking/advocacy process, if at all?

- Through membership of the above-mentioned societies.
- Vision 2020 organizes an annual Parliamentary Friends Group for Eye Health and Vision Care dinner.
- Scientists can contact their own members of parliament.

6. When are science funding/policy decisions made?

Generally, these are made annually.

7. What kinds of opportunities exist for scientists to interact with funders and policymakers?

Can scientists invite decision makers to their lab/institution to see their work firsthand?

Yes.

Do the funding/policy organizations hold open meetings or solicit comments from the public that researchers can participate in?

The NHMRC has a 15-member Community and Consumer Advisory Group of consumer and community leaders in Australia.



The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology

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