vision News

Lions Eye Institute

Autumn 2026

Championing women in science and medicine

Advancing sight-saving research

Protecting children's vision for life

Progress in childhood myopia and inherited retinal disease

Innovation beyond the Institute

AI powers screening of diabetic retinopathy

From the Managing Director

Welcome to the Autumn 2026 edition of Vision News.

2025 was a big year for the Lions Eye Institute, and as we move into 2026, we are excited for what the future holds. Through your continued support, we are empowered to further pursue our mission.

In celebration of International Women's Day, we are proud to spotlight the essential work being undertaken by the Institute's leading female researchers, clinicians and staff. Their work, spanning retinal biology, immunology, genomics, optometry, clinical care and more, demonstrates the transformative impact of women in science and medicine. This edition also shares powerful stories of female philanthropists whose vision and generosity are shaping the future of eye health, including donors who have chosen to empower the next generation of women in science.

Over the past few months, a number of our researchers attracted significant new funding that is already supporting sight saving research. One such project, supported by the WA Child Research Fund (WACRF), is being led by Professor Chandra Balaratnasingam, consultant ophthalmologist and Medical Director at the Institute. The groundbreaking project will seek to uncover whether the retina can reveal early warning signs of damage in other organs in children with diabetes.

Last year marked 50 years of Emeritus Professor Ian Constable AO's appointment as The University of Western Australia's inaugural Professor of Ophthalmology. In the same year, Professor Constable's enduring contribution to ophthalmic studies in Western Australia was further recognised by the university, designating him an Honorary Doctor of Science. As founder and patron of the Lions Eye Institute, his commitment continues to inspire our teams, and resonates strongly in the stories of philanthropists, like Ms Mandy Loton, who was moved by his leadership and vision.

Momentum continues to build on the redevelopment of our Nedlands theatre complex – the first major upgrade to our hospital facilities since 1996. The Level 2 Clinic refurbishment is on track for handover in March, with commissioning and relocation to follow shortly after, while significant infrastructure upgrades – including a new reverse osmosis water system and air handling units – have now been successfully installed. We are also nearing final regulatory approval to commence theatre construction, keeping us on schedule for the next phase in 2026. Together, these works represent a major investment in modern, future-ready facilities that will strengthen our ability to deliver exceptional care for years to come.

I am truly grateful for your continued support of the Lions Eye Institute. Your generosity enables us to deliver world-class clinical care across both metropolitan and regional communities in Western Australia. Most importantly, it fuels the research carried out by our talented teams, including the many women whose contributions are advancing treatments, driving innovation and laying the groundwork for tomorrow's breakthroughs.

Philanthropy remains one of the most powerful forces shaping the future of eye health, and we are deeply thankful to every supporter who chooses to invest in that future.

Best wishes

Dr Glen Power
Managing Director, Lions Eye Institute

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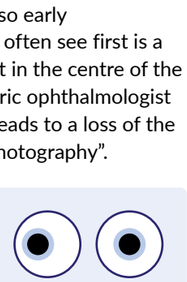
Access to intra-arterial chemotherapy for the first time in WA

Retinoblastoma is the most common paediatric eye cancer. It can be heritable, but often appears spontaneously, with 90 per cent of children diagnosed having no family history.

The disease is fatal if left untreated, so early identification is crucial. "The sign we often see first is a **whitening of the pupil**, the black part in the centre of the eye," says Dr Benjamin Host, paediatric ophthalmologist at the Lions Eye Institute, "this also leads to a loss of the red reflection that you see in flash photography".

Another common sign is something called **strabismus**, where the eye turns either inwards or outwards.



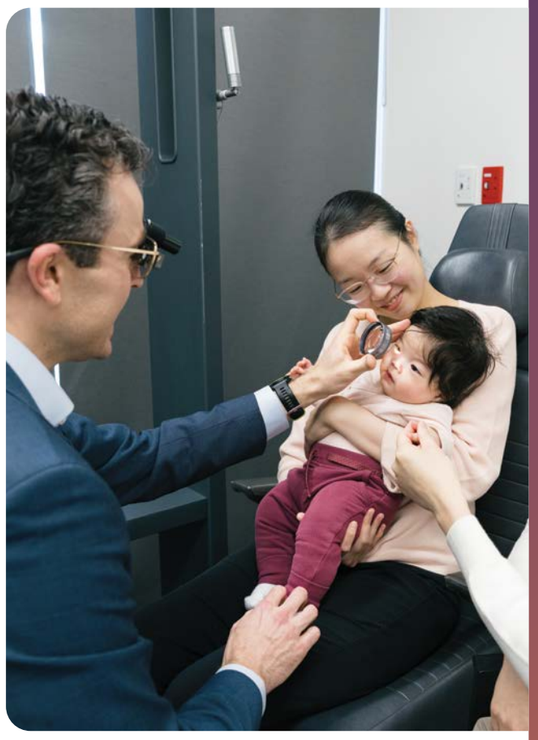
A leading treatment for retinoblastoma is intra-arterial chemotherapy (IAC), which involves delivering chemotherapy agents directly to the tissue at the site of the tumour.

Until recently, IAC was not available in Western Australia. Instead, children with retinoblastoma would have to travel across the Nullarbor to Sydney or Melbourne every three to four weeks for at least three or four months to access successful treatment.

"That is a huge treatment burden," says Dr Host, "so much so that there are many cases where families would instead elect for the enucleation or removal of the eye to cure the disease," rather than travel back and forth for the potentially sight-saving treatment.

But that all changed in April 2025, when Dr Host led the state's first instance of IAC at Perth Children's Hospital (PCH). Now, Western Australian families can access the treatment without leaving the state.

> "This is really an equity of access issue for the WA community, and I'm really pleased that we can now offer it to WA families," says Dr Host.



Dr Benjamin Host at the Lions Eye Institute with his patient, baby Zoe, and her family

This breakthrough service is being led by Dr Host, alongside a multidisciplinary team including Dr Geoff Lam, paediatric ophthalmologist, Dr Timothy Phillips, neurointerventional radiologist, Dr Hetal Dholaria, paediatric oncologist, and Dr Jessica Gillett, paediatric anaesthetist. Dr Host and his PCH team remain the sole providers of IAC treatment in Western Australia.

Recognising a legacy in vision

Professor Ian Constable made Honorary Doctor of Science by UWA

Professor Ian Constable AO. Photograph by the University of Western Australia

In December 2025, Emeritus Professor Ian Constable AO, esteemed Australian ophthalmologist and the visionary founder of the Lions Eye Institute, was made an Honorary Doctor of Science by The University of Western Australia (UWA).

Professor Constable's ongoing contribution to the field of ophthalmology has played a crucial role in establishing Perth as a hub for ophthalmic studies. He celebrated 50 years in ophthalmology in 2018 and 50 years at UWA in 2025.

In his Honorary Doctorate Address, Professor Constable invoked the Japanese concept of **ikigai** (motivating force), emphasising the importance of "**doing all the little things well**", rather than measuring one's self-worth against grand ambitions and major projects.

Professor Constable's words and work continue to inspire our community to pursue excellence with purpose, care and quiet determination.

Vision, Surgery and Optics: A Modern Miracle

Established in Professor Constable's honour, the Ian Constable Lecture marked its 26th year with a presentation by Emeritus Professor Graham Barrett AM on Wednesday, 11 March at the University Club of Western Australia.

Professor Barrett is a world-renowned ophthalmologist who trained in Western Australia and gained specialist experience in the USA. He has made outstanding national and international contributions to ophthalmology, including co-founding the Australian Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons and the Asia-Pacific Association of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons.

In his lecture, Professor Barrett explored the history and the evolution of the intraocular lens, a tiny invention that has transformed cataract surgery and restored vision to millions worldwide. Throughout his career, Professor Barrett has played a pivotal role in advancing intraocular lens design, surgical precision and innovation. Key to this was his development of a universal formula to calculate intraocular lens power. This formula is still used globally and has garnered Professor Barrett international acclaim.

Professor Barrett worked closely with Professor Constable in the early days at Royal Perth Hospital and went on to play a crucial role in the development and success of the Lions Eye Institute. This collaboration contributed to the implantation of one of the world's first soft foldable intraocular lenses for cataract surgery, an achievement that exemplifies the legacy celebrated by the lecture series.

Emeritus Professor Graham Barrett AM, presenter for the 26th annual Ian Constable Lecture and intraocular lenses

Children's health research receives critical funding boost

In 2025, researchers across Western Australia were awarded major medical research grants through the WA Child Research Fund (WACRF) to advance studies into childhood health and disease. Among the successful recipients were Professor Chandra Balaratnasingam and his co-investigators, Dr Antony Clark and Dr Benjamin Host.

Improved diabetes monitoring with zero discomfort

The team is investigating whether the retina can reveal early warning signs of damage in other organs in children with diabetes. Affected children face risks to multiple organs, including the eyes, kidneys, cardiovascular system and nerves, but much of the damage is often uncovered only after irreversible changes occur.

The specific aim of this research is to develop a non-invasive, child-friendly eye/retina imaging tool to detect multisystem complications in children with diabetes before symptoms or irreversible tissue damage develop. By identifying these early changes, Professor Balaratnasingam, medical director and consultant ophthalmologist at the Lions Eye Institute, and his team hope to reduce long-term complications, ease the burden on families, and help children with diabetes live healthier lives without the discomfort of invasive testing.

The study is being conducted in close collaboration with the Endocrinology and Diabetes Service team at Perth Children's Hospital.

Progress update and looking to the future

So far, the research team has developed customised, in-house software for detailed retinal layer segmentation from Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) scans, allowing for precise analysis of the inner retinal layers. In parallel, the team is developing objective criteria to quantify subtle retinal changes seen on OCT images, which may not yet be apparent through conventional clinical assessment.

The project has received ethics and governance approvals and has commenced participant recruitment and imaging. Additional imaging of healthy participants is planned early this year to establish a reference dataset.

In the longer term, the imaging platform and analytical tools developed through this work may have broader clinical applications beyond diabetes, extending to other paediatric and systemic conditions where early microvascular or neural changes occur.

The Lions Eye Institute is deeply grateful to the WA Government and the Channel 7 Telethon Trust for their ongoing commitment to sight-saving research. We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation in this study.

Professor Chandra Balaratnasingam

Celebrating the women who drive discovery at the Institute

Our cover page features a few of the exceptional women who shape the Lions Eye Institute. We also honour the many women not pictured, whose contributions are equally integral to our mission.

At the Lions Eye Institute (LEI), excellence in research, clinical care and innovation is driven by extraordinary people – and among them, the women of the LEI are making a profound impact on eye health and vision science. Whether they are advancing scientific discovery or providing world-class patient care, their contributions are shaping a healthier future for communities in Western Australia and beyond.

Across the global health and medical landscape, strong and diverse leadership remains essential for long-term excellence. At the LEI, women play a central role in this leadership – guiding influential research programs, driving innovation, and delivering compassionate clinical care that has earned the Institute its national and international reputation.

"What makes the Lions Eye Institute truly special is the depth of talent and collaboration across our teams, and the way we create space for people to thrive," says **Associate Professor Holly Chinnery**, Deputy Director of Research and Head of Cornea, Ocular Surface and Ocular Immunology. "I see every day how the dedication of our researchers and clinicians, supported by a culture of mentorship and the generosity of our supporters, is translating exceptional science into meaningful change for patients."

Dr Andrea Ang of Lions Laser Vision

Advancing discovery across vision science

From immunology and optometry to genetics, retinal biology, corneal and vascular research, the LEI's female scientists are deepening understanding and opening doors to new treatments. Their work spans the full spectrum of discovery: improving diagnostic precision, developing gene and RNA based therapies for inherited blindness, uncovering the drivers of myopia using zebrafish, and revealing how blood flow and metabolism influence vision loss. Recently, **Professor Mariapia Degli-Esposti**, a world-leading immunologist, elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, and Head of Experimental Immunology, led a landmark Nature-published study that uncovered a fundamental mechanism governing immune cell movement – reshaping our understanding of immune regulation and unlocking new possibilities for treating immune-related eye diseases.

While the women on our cover represent the strength and diversity of talent at the Institute, they are part of a much larger community of female researchers whose contributions are equally vital. Their leadership, expertise and innovation power the scientific advances that shape the future of eye health. Among the exceptional researchers contributing to this work are:

- **Professor Mariapia Degli-Esposti**, Head of Experimental Immunology and past Director of Research, LEI
- **Professor Allison McKendrick**, LEI UWA Chair in Optometry Research and Head of Visual Function
- **Professor Elizabeth Rakoczy**, Emerita Professor and past Director of Research, LEI
- **Dr Livia Carvalho**, Head of Retinal Genomics and Therapy
- **Dr Samantha Lee**, Senior Research Fellow, Genetics and Epidemiology

Dr Danuta Sampson, Dr Jessica Mountford, Associate Professor Holly Chinnery and Associate Professor Paula Yu

Translating research into patient care

These scientific advances sit alongside the expertise of the LEI's female clinicians, who ensure breakthroughs are translated into real benefits for patients. Ophthalmologists such as **Dr Andrea Ang**, **Associate Professor Mei-Ling Tay-Kearney** and **Dr Rhuju Mehta** deliver exceptional care across corneal disease, glaucoma, cataract surgery, laser refractive surgery, inflammatory conditions and tele-ophthalmology – ensuring patients across metropolitan, regional and remote Western Australia have access to life-changing expertise.

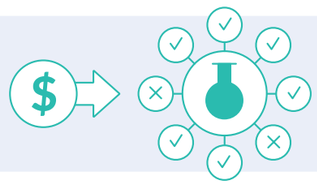
Together, these women form a vibrant ecosystem of leadership, talent and impact. Their achievements are strengthened by philanthropic support, which accelerates discovery, enables innovation and helps turn new knowledge into sight-saving outcomes.

A legacy empowering women in research

One particularly remarkable expression of generosity came in the form of a bequest directed specifically to empower female researchers (read more on pages 14 and 15). While the Institute's work spans both research and clinical care, this donor chose to focus their legacy on advancing the work of women in scientific research – supporting their ideas, leadership and potential to shape the future of eye health. This support ensures female researchers have the resources they need to pursue bold questions and drive progress.

By supporting women in research and clinical leadership, donors help remove barriers, unlock potential and create lasting impact for people living with vision loss and eye disease.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, we invite you to support their work. Your generosity today helps power the discoveries that will preserve sight tomorrow.



Celebrating a six-year commitment to regional work with Lions Outback Vision

After six wonderful years with Lions Outback Vision (LOV), Drs Yachana and Vaibhav Shah are moving back to Perth.

The husband-and-wife team first arrived in Perth in 2017, before moving to Broome in 2020 to join LOV. To commemorate their time at the Kimberley Hub, we spoke to Yachana about how the opportunity arose and what the experience has meant to them both.

The catalyst

"It began with a conversation with Angus (Turner, McCusker Director of LOV), who shared his vision for establishing an eye service hub in the Kimberley region. We were immediately interested, and that set everything in motion."

The size of Broome and its remote location were new to Yachana and her husband. "I realised early that working there was going to be different. In our first few days, we had optometrists calling for help with corneal foreign bodies or paediatric squints, and they were happy for us to drop by with ten minutes' notice to see patients together. That level of collaboration was new and refreshing."

Drs Vaibhav and Yachana Shah

Adjusting to new surroundings

There were also cultural differences they needed to adapt to. "We observed and listened carefully. Human expectations are universal, but the way they are expressed differs. We tried our best to understand the expectations of each community and deliver care in a way that felt right to them." This led to many memorable moments along the way. "One patient offered to take me spear fishing. Another said I looked like her grandmother."

Amongst all these experiences, one remains particularly vivid for Yachana. "My favourite memory is of a group of ladies from the Wangkatjungka community. They were holding hands while waiting for surgery, whispering to each other that they would be fine and that 'she (Yachana) won't hurt you'. Moments like that stay with you."

An enduring legacy

Yachana and Vaibhav's work has had a profound impact on the availability, reliability and quality of eye care across the state's north. During their time in Broome, the Kimberley Hub has become the go-to place for ophthalmic care in the region, reducing the need for patients to travel to Perth.

Dr Yachana Shah with Professor Angus Turner and their pilot

"It evolved into a true centre for all eye-related issues. We flew patients in and made sure they felt at home while we managed their conditions, whether it was surgery or intensive treatment." In many instances, this care extended beyond the clinic and hospital walls. "The team provided pick up and drop off support, took patients shopping, and often developed real relationships with them during their stay."

"It's been an honour to work alongside Yachana and Vaibhav over the past six years," reflects Professor Angus Turner.

> "Through their work with LOV, they've helped countless Western Australians access specialised eye care close to home in the regions. Their dedication and pioneering spirit have been instrumental in developing an accessible rural health service."

Emeritus Professor Ian Constable AO originally recruited Vaibhav to a two-year retinal fellowship while Yachana completed a similar fellowship in cornea and cataract surgery with Consultant Emeritus Professor Graham Barrett AM. They brought first-class specialist expertise to patients in the remote North West with complex eye conditions.

"I am very grateful for their extraordinary commitment over six years to the people of the North and for their pioneering support for LOV and Professor Angus Turner. I wish them well as they develop new ophthalmic services in the city," says Professor Constable.

Saying goodbye for now

The decision to leave the region has been a difficult one. "The transition is still ongoing, and it has been hectic. I miss my time in Broome, the short drives, the familiar faces, the lack of parking worries, and the sound of the waves at night. Cable Beach sunsets are hard to replace. The hospital doctors were welcoming, and the LOV staff were the absolute highlight of my time there. I miss the familiarity and rhythm of a small place, and I miss the LOV team deeply. It was a privilege to work with them. Opportunities like that do not come often."

While we're sad to see Drs Yachana and Vaibhav Shah go, we remain committed to our mission of providing excellent eye health care services across regional and remote Western Australia.

Top: Drs Yachana and Vaibhav Shah with a patient
Middle: Ceire Turner, Professor Angus Turner, Drs Vaibhav and Yachana Shah
Bottom: Professor Ian Constable, Elizabeth Constable, Drs Vaibhav and Yachana Shah and their son

For others thinking of relocating to regional Western Australia, Yachana had this to say:

"Embrace it fully. Do not think too hard about it. Regional life helps you belong in this country in a way that nothing else does."

Channel 7 Telethon Trust grants vital to advancing children's eye health

Proudly supported by telethon 7

The Lions Eye Institute is delighted to announce we are a beneficiary of the Channel 7 Telethon Trust, with four critical programs receiving significant funding in 2026.

Telethon grants enable researchers at the Lions Eye Institute to identify children at high risk of myopia and earlier detection in children with inherited retinal diseases.

Professor David Mackey AO

Myopia prevention – Tracking eye growth and early childhood myopia

Combatting the rising rates of childhood myopia is an urgent public health challenge, with half the world's population predicted to be affected by 2050. Early detection and intervention are key to preventing long-term vision loss and associated complications.

Building on the Raine Study Generation 3 and ORIGINS cohorts, Professor David Mackey AO, Dr Samantha Lee and Dr Gareth Lingham will conduct children's eye examinations to map eye growth and track early signs of myopia. By linking eye development with lifestyle factors such as outdoor activity and sports participation, the team aims to identify children at risk and inform simple, practical interventions – helping protect vision, promote healthy habits, and improve lifelong eye health.

Dr Jessica Mountford

Understanding and preventing childhood myopia in WA

Early-onset myopia affects thousands of Western Australian children and can lead to serious vision problems in adulthood if left untreated. With generous Telethon support, Dr Jessica Mountford and co-investigator Dr Antony Clark are using a cutting-edge genetic and zebrafish disease modelling platform to uncover how genes and environment drive myopia progression.

Their work identifies children at highest risk, enabling early intervention, prevention strategies, and the development of novel therapies. By translating these insights into practical approaches, they are helping protect children's vision, improve lifelong eye health, and reduce the growing social and economic burden of myopia.

Dr Danuta Sampson

Enabling treatment readiness for children with inherited retinal diseases

The RTX1 Retinal Camera enables imaging of individual photoreceptor cells, essential for vision, at the back of the eye. In children with inherited retinal diseases (IRDs), it detects early changes and treatment responses much sooner than other imaging methods, supporting earlier diagnosis, improved monitoring in clinical trials, and sight saving interventions.

With generous support from Telethon, Dr Danuta Sampson and Associate Professor Fred Chen will be able to purchase the next-generation RTX1, which offers faster imaging, a wider field of view, and functional photoreceptor assessment. They will also develop and validate imaging protocols tailored for paediatric populations. The new camera and protocols will significantly enhance WA's capacity to preserve vision and accelerate access to therapy for children in Western Australia with IRDs.

Professor Bill Morgan

Non-invasive monitoring of intracranial pressure in children

Children with hydrocephalus rely on shunts to manage intracranial pressure, but current monitoring methods are invasive, stressful and carry risks. The Lions Eye Institute team has invented a world-first portable, non-invasive system using photoplethysmography to measure intracranial pressure quickly and accurately, reducing the need for procedures like lumbar punctures or external drains. The project is now being extended to children over six years old, comparing device readings to standard clinical assessments and imaging, while collecting feedback from families and clinicians to refine usability and comfort.

This innovative approach promises to save lives, reduce anxiety, and support faster, more precise treatment decisions. By providing safer, timely monitoring, it improves quality of life, increases life expectancy, and could be adapted for children in rural and remote areas. With Telethon's support, this world-first technology is helping vulnerable children receive better care while advancing critical research in paediatric neurology.

Innovation and impact at the Lions Eye Institute

Ninox Vision launches to transform diabetic retinopathy screening

In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an essential tool for supporting fast and effective medical screening. These AI systems are trained on vast amounts of data, enabling them to screen for and identify relevant disease markers instantaneously.

Ninox Vision is a new social enterprise emerging from the Lions Eye Institute and led by Professor Angus Turner, founder and director of Lions Outback Vision. It officially launched in 2025 and is set to revolutionise diabetic retinopathy screening across Australia. Using Google AI technology, Ninox Vision delivers point-of-care retinal assessments in primary care, improving early detection, access, and health equity, particularly in regional and remote communities.

> “Preventable blindness due to diabetic retinopathy is a major public health challenge in Australia, causing personal and economic burdens related to vision loss," said Professor Angus Turner, leading the new venture.

Professor Angus Turner reviews an eye scan

"Ninox (Vision) is poised to dramatically improve screening rates by making advanced, AI-driven retinal assessment accessible, efficient, and financially viable for primary care settings nationwide. Our mission is clear: to prevent vision loss and improve health outcomes for all Australians, especially those in underserved communities.”

The Pilbara Challenge demonstrated the system’s effectiveness, achieving a 17-fold increase in screening uptake. Ninox Vision now aims to scale this innovative, clinically proven solution across WA, then facilitate the adoption of optimised automated cameras nationwide, significantly expanding reach and impact.

Professor Elizabeth Rakoczy

Wet age-related macular degeneration gene therapy reaches global stage

Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the most serious form of AMD and progresses at a rapid rate.

Emerita Professor Elizabeth Rakoczy has achieved a major milestone in her translational research of wet AMD treatment. Her pioneering concept of using gene therapy as a bio-factory to treat wet AMD, licensed by Avalanche Biotechnology (later Adverum), led to the development of Ixo-vec. Adverum Biotechnologies and its leading product, Ixo-vec, were recently acquired by Eli Lilly and Company, ranked 11th-largest biomedical firm globally and 100th on the Fortune 500.

Scientific work that translates laboratory discoveries into real outcomes for patients is the core of innovation. Professor Rakoczy’s research continues to reflect the calibre of scientific talent fostered at the Institute and demonstrates the real-world impact of vision research in improving patient outcomes.

Funding allocated for vital macular disease research projects

The Macular Disease Foundation Australia (MDFA) plays a crucial role in funding important medical research across the country, including projects from the Lions Eye Institute's Dr Danuta Sampson, senior researcher, and Dr Samuel McLenachan, senior scientist at the Ocular Tissue Engineering Laboratory.

Dr Danuta Sampson: Software standardisation to improve imaging processes

Standardising software in the medical field can have a profound impact on the quality and shareability of data, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

Dr Sampson, recipient of the MDFA’s 2025 Grant Family Fund Award, aims to discover new retinal disease patterns and improve patient health outcomes by standardising data analysis processes. Specifically, she and her team will endeavour to advance and validate software for OCT-A image analysis previously developed by her group. OCT-A – optical coherence tomography angiography, is a novel imaging camera that offers a transformative opportunity to detect vascular disease earlier.

In the long term, this will facilitate increasing the impact of OCT-A on earlier intervention, more accurate monitoring of disease progression, and improved patient management.

Dr Samuel McLenachan: Understanding PRPH2-associated retinal dystrophy

The PRPH2 gene helps the eye's light-sensing cells work properly. Changes in this gene can result in a condition called PRPH2-associated retinal dystrophy (PARD). PARD is the third most common inherited retinal disease in Western Australia and can lead to a range of vision impairments.

Through this research, Dr McLenachan aims to build a deeper understanding of PARD and how different gene variations and mutations influence the characteristics of the disease. To do this, Dr McLenachan and his team will study stem-cell models from participants with PARD.

Through this research, Dr McLenachan and his team aim to transform how the condition is diagnosed, enable more accurate prediction of disease progression, and pave the way for the development of targeted new therapies.

Dr Danuta Sampson (first row, third from left) and Dr Samuel McLenachan (third row, left) at the Macular Disease Foundation Australia's Research Awards at Admiralty House, Sydney. Credit: Macular Disease Foundation Australia

The power of philanthropy

The women whose legacy fuels discovery

Philanthropy is more than generosity – it is vision.

Ms Vivienne Stewart, Dr Glen Power, Managing Director of the Lions Eye Institute and Ms Mandy Loton

At the Lions Eye Institute (LEI), philanthropy is the driving force behind scientific breakthroughs, the rise of future leaders and the discoveries that will drive sight saving research for generations to come. Two remarkable women, **Mandy Loton** and **Joan "Odna" Borlaug**, have shaped that impact in profound and deeply personal ways.

> “Living with a macular condition made me realise just how precious our vision is. Supporting women in research felt like the most meaningful way I could help protect that gift for others. I want to be part of the breakthroughs I believe are coming – and I want the women leading them to have every opportunity to succeed.”
>
> *Mandy Loton*

Their stories, one still unfolding, one continuing beyond her lifetime, reveal the extraordinary effect of choosing to invest in research, in women, and in the future of sight.

Investing in the future of sight

For Mandy Loton, supporting research is not an abstract idea – it is personal. After receiving a diagnosis for macular disease, Mandy’s appreciation for eye research grew into a determination to play a role in shaping its future. She has shared with the LEI how this moment changed her perspective, inspiring her to support the work that could protect the sight of others.

Mandy has long believed in supporting people she admires – and few have earned her admiration more deeply than Professor Ian Constable AO, the founder and patron of the Institute. What began as respect developed into friendship, built on decades of shared conviction about the power of discovery and the importance of nurturing future leaders in eye health.

As a woman, Mandy felt strongly that female researchers deserved greater opportunity and recognition. Her commitment to empowering women in science led her to make a **transformative gift**, dedicated specifically to supporting female researchers at the LEI – ensuring that talented women have the resources and support to pursue bold questions and life-changing breakthroughs.

Her gift is not only an investment in women; it is an investment in progress, in hope, and in the discoveries she is determined to see flourish in her lifetime.

A legacy that endures

Joan "Odna" Borlaug was a trailblazer long before she ever became a supporter of medical research. Entering the finance industry in the 1950s, she went on to become Western Australia’s first female stockbroker – breaking barriers in a field dominated entirely by men.

Her career was marked by resilience and excellence, and she became known not only for her professional achievements, but also for her generosity as a philanthropist and community leader in Rockingham.

Odna forged her own path in life, and through her philanthropy, she continues to do the same: opening doors, elevating potential and investing in discovery.

A shared belief in women and discovery

What unites Mandy and Odna is not only their generosity, but their belief in women – women as leaders, innovators and catalysts of scientific change.

Their support lifts female researchers who are advancing breakthroughs in genetics, epidemiology, retinal disease, immunology and beyond. Their legacies strengthen the very pipeline of talent that will define the next era of eye health.

Your gift can **empower** the next generation of researchers, fuel the next **great discovery**, and **preserve sight** for generations to come.

Become a Sight Saver today

90% **of vision loss is preventable or treatable. Together we can be the solution.**

By becoming a Sight Saver, and donating to the Lions Eye Institute each month, you can help uncover research breakthroughs, transform lives and give hope to people facing blindness and eye disease.

Sight Saver members receive:

- research updates
- event invitations throughout the year
- a tax deductible receipt at the end of each financial year

Giving monthly allows the Lions Eye Institute to plan ahead for future sight saving research with the knowledge that your support is ongoing.

Setting up your regular donation is easy.

- You choose the donation amount.
- All donations are tax deductible and a receipt is sent automatically at the end of each financial year.
- You can opt out or change your donation amount at any time.

Please fill out the form below (indicating monthly payment) and return it to our reply paid address, or call Carolyn McAdam in fundraising on (08) 6382 0566 to set up your automatic monthly donation.

Yes I want to save sight

Please accept my donation of $ .....

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Please find enclosed my ☐ cheque ☐ money order OR, please debit my ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Visa

Card No: __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ Expiry Date: __ __ / __ __

Cardholder's Name: ..... Signature: .....

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☐ I would be interested to learn more about how I can include the Lions Eye Institute in my Will.

☐ I have already provided for the Lions Eye Institute in my Will.

☐ I would like to be included in donor recognition.
We recognise the generosity of donors in materials such as our annual report and recognition boards.

Be a sight saver

Your donation helps eradicate blindness

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