

# Pharmaceutical start up named WA Innovator of the Year 2021

Thursday, 4 November 2021



Hon Don Punch BPsych  
BSocwk MBA MLA  
Minister for Disability  
Services; Fisheries; Seniors  
and Ageing; Small Business

- WA Innovator of the Year 2021 Vision Pharma Pty Ltd receives \$70,000 prize
- Pharmaceutical start up recognised for its breakthrough in treating inherited retinal disease
- Awards supported by the Western Australian Government's New Industries Fund, which will receive an additional \$16.7 million over the next four years

Some of Western Australia's most cutting-edge companies have been recognised at the 2021 WA Innovator of the Year awards.

The awards were presented last night by Innovation and ICT Minister Don Punch, who announced the New Industries Fund (NIF) will receive an additional \$16.7 million over the next four years.

Established in 2017, the NIF will continue to support and accelerate new and emerging businesses with the aim of diversifying the Western Australian economy and creating new jobs.

Forming part of the McGowan Government's larger \$100 million Investment Attraction and New Industries Fund, the \$16.7 million NIF will be used to fund successful programs such as the Innovator of the Year awards over the next four years.

First launched in 2006, the WA Innovator of the Year awards showcase the State's brightest innovators and entrepreneurs, helping them realise the full potential of their innovation.

Vision Pharma Pty Ltd was named the WA Innovator of the Year 2021 and was awarded \$70,000.

The RNA therapeutics start up received the award for developing the world's first precision medicine to treat the blinding eye disease Retinitis Pigmentosa type 11.

Winners were named in five other categories and shared in prizes totalling \$70,000:

- Rio Tinto Growth Category - Roofus Tools Pty Ltd for their multi-purpose angle square;
- Rio Tinto Emerging Category - Navier Medical for their advanced coronary artery assessment project;
- Business News 'Great for the State' - VeinTech for their VeinWave project;
- Wesfarmers Wellbeing - VitalTrace Pty Ltd for their novel device for monitoring babies during childbirth; and
- Woodside Oil & Gas - Sapien Cyber Ltd for their building management systems cyber security project.

More information on the successful recipients can be found [here](#).

### **Comments attributed to Innovation and ICT Minister Don Punch:**

"The winners and the finalists of this year's awards are first class examples of the world-leading innovation and technology being developed right here in Western Australia.

"Through initiatives like the Innovator of the Year program, the WA Government is helping the State's emerging businesses commercialise their technologies.

"The continuation of the \$16.7 million New Industries Fund will continue accelerating our emerging local WA innovators, with a renewed focus on equity and diversity, supporting regional enterprises and creating more jobs.

"Thank you to everyone involved in the WA Innovator of the Year 2021, including primary sponsor Rio Tinto and platinum award sponsors Business News, Wesfarmers and Woodside."

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