


2023 BIOMELBOURNE NETWORK Women in Leadership AWARDS CEREMONY

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BIOMELBOURNE NETWORK



ABOUT THE AWARDS

Shining a light on women in the healthtech industry

The BioMelbourne Network Women in Leadership Awards, which were launched in 2015, recognise and champion women who are making outstanding contributions in biotechnology, medical technology, pharmaceuticals and other healthtech innovation areas. These leaders are also inspiring more women to pursue leadership roles.

Today's awardees join an esteemed group of women who are driving change in the healthtech industry as executives, managers, R&D practitioners, suppliers, service providers and other roles.

BioMelbourne Network is the peak body in the Victorian healthtech industry, driving engagement and growth in research, innovation, commercialisation and manufacturing through local and international networks. Since 2001, we are actively fostering and growing an innovative, globally competitive sector and transforming our Network as well as the broader Victorian ecosystem.



Today's awardees join an esteemed group of women who are driving change in the healthtech industry."

DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARD

2022 – Emma Ball
2021 – Jenny Petering
2020 – Andrea Douglas
2019 – Anna Lavelle
2018 – Kathy Connell
2017 – Sue MacLeman
2016 – Jackie Fairley
2015 – Elaine Saunders

INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AWARD

2022 – George Kenley
2021 – Jennifer Herz
2020 – Bronwyn Le Grice
2019 – Clara Gaff
2018 – Amanda Caples
2017 – Kerry Hegarty
2016 – Sally McArthur

EMERGING LEADERSHIP AWARD

2022 – Lauren Ayton
2021 – Hannah Kirk
2020 – Ewa Douroux
2019 – Evelyn Chan
2018 – Grace Lethlean
2017 – Elizabeth Williams
2016 – Jacqueline Savage
2015 – Megan Baldwin



We are volcanoes. When we women offer our experience as truth, as human truth, all the maps change. There are new mountains.”

– Ursula K. Le Guin (American Author)

I was recently listening to a talk by Nina Simons, founder of Bioneers, who seek to address how we can live in ways that honour our relationship to ourselves, each other and the earth with an indigenous world view at its heart. In her speech, Nina discussed “full spectrum leadership”, which requires synchronicity between the body, heart, mind and spirit, or intuition.

Great leadership in today’s world requires much more than data, analytics and “good people skills”. It requires a full spectrum leadership approach underpinned by heart and intuition, which is more personable.

Today, BioMelbourne Network is honoured to celebrate three extraordinary leaders from across the healthtech industry. We hope their compelling stories will inspire, motivate and empower all of you embarking on your personal leadership journeys.

Perhaps by listening to our Awardees’ experiences, their truths, we can create new “mountains”, and in some small way, help change the map.

This year, BioMelbourne Network was honoured to receive so many impressive nominations from women across all stages of their careers.

Our 2023 Awardees are not only leaders in their respective fields, but also role models for progressive leadership, equity and equality. I wish to thank everyone who nominated this year. You have raised the profile of many exceptional women and we look forward to following their achievements in the coming years.

These Awards would not be possible without the support of our judges and pre-screening committee. We thank them for dedicating their valuable time to reviewing and selecting the final Awardees from so many worthy candidates.

Our sincere thanks to The Honourable Ben Carroll, Minister for Industry and Innovation, Manufacturing Sovereignty, Employment and Public Transport for presenting the Awards and being part of today’s celebrations. This event would not be possible without the continued support of the State Government of Victoria. We are grateful for their commitment to the sector and women in healthtech today, and into the future.

Jeff Malone

CEO, BioMelbourne Network



IMPACT FOR INDUSTRY

This Award celebrates a leader who:

- has held a senior position of leadership (C-level executive, GM, Board Director, Chair)
- has significant experience within the health industry sector, 10–15+ years
- has shown leadership and vision, resulting in meaningful industry impact
- demonstrates outstanding leadership qualities, such as integrity and initiative, mentoring and giving back, dedication and determination, resilience and risk taking, and passion for innovation that has impact.

Our 2023 recipient is Professor Sharon Lewin AO



Professor Sharon Lewin AO is the Director of the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, a joint venture between The University of Melbourne and Royal Melbourne Hospital; Director of the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics; and Melbourne Laureate Professor at The University of Melbourne.

Sharon is an infectious diseases physician and basic scientist. She trained at Monash University, completing her medical degree in 1986 and PhD in virology in 1997. She went on to a highly productive post-doctoral fellowship with Dr David Ho, Time Magazine's Man of the Year 1996, at Rockefeller University, New York and returned to Melbourne in 1999. Her research focuses on understanding why HIV persists on treatment and developing clinical trials aimed at ultimately finding a cure for HIV infection. Sharon is recognised as a leading global expert in HIV science and is currently President of the International AIDS Society, a global organisation with over 17,000 members.

She played a pivotal role in Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through her leadership of the Doherty Institute, the Australian Partnership for Preparedness Research on Infectious Disease Emergencies (APPRISE) and as Co-chair of the National COVID-19 Health and

Research Advisory Committee. She is widely recognised for her broad expertise in infectious diseases and is currently President of the Scientific Advisory Board to the ANRS-MIE in France.

She has received numerous national and international awards. Highlights include Melburnian of the Year from the City of Melbourne in 2014 and Outstanding Female Researcher Medal from the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Science in 2022.

Sharon is passionate about science communication and community engagement, and provides objective and rational insights on both HIV and COVID-19 to government, national and international media, civil society and the business community.

"What a time to be a Melburnian and immersed in science and infectious diseases! I am honoured to receive this award, but want to highlight that science is always a team effort. I thank my mentors, my students, colleagues and collaborators. I hope our shared work will continue to advance knowledge, improve health and inspire the next generation of talented scientists. Thank you BioMelbourne Network for acknowledging my contribution to this sector."

– Professor Sharon Lewin AO

 @TheDohertyInst



MAKING IT HAPPEN

This Award celebrates a leader who:

- has played a pivotal leadership role in delivering a project, partnership, or collaborative initiative within the last 5-10 years
- through this project or initiative has delivered meaningful outcomes and positive change in the health industry
- has demonstrated valuable leadership skills such as collaboration, communication, team building, transformation, innovation, change management, dedication and passion for innovation that has impact.

Our 2023 recipient is Professor Susie Nilsson



Professor Susie Nilsson is the Research Director for the Biomedical Manufacturing program at CSIRO, Australia's national science agency. She oversees the production of new products and processes for the biomedical sector across regulated biomanufacturing, biologics research and development, chemical biology, diagnostics

and devices, and bioactive small molecules and polymers.

Susie has an extensive history in biologics and specifically haematopoietic stem cell research. She completed her PhD at University of Melbourne and post-doctoral studies at the University of Massachusetts prior to taking up a position at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, then the Australian Stem Cell Centre. Susie moved to CSIRO in 2009 and was appointed as an Australian Research Council Future Fellow. She became a group leader at the Australian Regenerative Medicine Institute at Monash University in 2013 and a CSIRO Science Leader in 2014.

Some of her notable achievements at CSIRO include overseeing the production of biologics for Phase I clinical trials (including two COVID-19 vaccine candidates and a bioconjugated cancer vaccine), the building of a new cGMP facility for producing products in mammalian systems for

Phase I, II and III clinical trials and the secondment of staff to CSL to assist with the national vaccine production effort to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Susie is also a renowned speaker in Australia and internationally, has a strong track record of publishing in high impact journals, with over 8130 lifetime citations. She also mentors early-career scientists.

Susie prides herself on seeing her team achieve and enables and supports them to achieve excellent outcomes for industry partners, and accolades for CSIRO research and development.

"Working with exceptional minds and forging partnerships across the Australian biomedical sector drives me to achieve and support others to do the same. It's an honour to be recognised with the Inspiring Leadership Award. I would like to thank everyone I work with, as well as BioMelbourne Network for recognising the wonderful work of women in our industry."

– Professor Susie Nilsson

 @CSIRO



MOVER AND SHAKER

This Award celebrates a leader who:

- has taken on a career challenge, career move or career change within the last 2-4 years that has high potential for industry impact
- exhibits leadership qualities such as strategic risk-taking, embracing innovation, entrepreneurship, and an appetite for driving change
- is a rising star, who, regardless of age, is seen as a mover and shaker with high potential for future success in the industry.

Our 2023 recipient is Rima Darwiche



Rima Darwiche is the CEO and Founder of Central Pharmacy Logistics Australia (CPL), and a registered pharmacist. She has a Bachelor of Medical Science (Immunology) and Bachelor of Pharmacy, with extensive experience collaborating with pharmaceutical companies and medical researchers across Asia-Pacific, US, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Leveraging her skills, Rima embarked on an entrepreneurial journey to found CPL, a TGA and Pharmacy Authority licensed service to give all patients access to life-saving investigational therapies, regardless of geographical location in regional or rural communities – a first of its kind in Australia.

Rima worked with Australian and State Government regulators to establish CPL and place Australia on the international stage for global companies to invest here. CPL's current pipeline includes global companies: Thermo Fisher, Marken UPS and biotechnology companies listed on the NASDAQ and ASX.

Rima serves on several clinical trial advisory committees locally and globally, and represents the Asia-Pacific region for a US clinical regulatory group. Before joining the pharmaceutical industry, she was a medical researcher with over 25 publications in high-impact journals, including

Lancet, Cell and Science. Rima has also advised WEHI on the implementation of clinical trials to translate their research into life-saving therapies. In 2020, she joined the Data Safety Monitoring Board for Orygen Youth Health, which provides specialist mental health services to young people aged 15 to 24 years.

As a child of Lebanese immigrants facing language barriers, financial hardship and limited prospects, Rima wants her story shared with others. She appreciates the second chance to return to Australia after five years abroad during a civil war, resume her education and thrive in a country which is safe and full of opportunity. Rima feels duty bound to help others fulfill their potential.

"I'm honoured and humbled to receive the Emerging Leadership Award, and I share it with everyone who has supported me on my journey. Thank you for recognising my service to Australian patients who otherwise could not get access to life saving treatments. I also wish to acknowledge all nominees who are equally deserving of these awards."

– Rima Darwiche

 @RimaDarwiche1
@Cplaut



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Supporting Women = Supporting Health Innovators

Women are building innovative solutions and technologies that shape the future of the world.

Through the BioMelbourne Network Women in Leadership Awards, the Victorian Government celebrates women and future leaders across the health technology sector – including those delivering innovative solutions and converting Victoria’s best ideas into products used around the world.

We are committed to supporting our local talent, because supporting them means keeping Victoria at the forefront of health innovation.

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