

From: AusBiotech <events@ausbiotech.org>
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Categories: For newsletter



Professor Andrew Wilks to deliver the 2026 Millis Oration



The Millis Oration, sponsored by [CSL](#), honours the legacy of Emeritus Professor Nancy Millis, whose pioneering contributions helped establish the foundations of Australia's biotechnology sector.

Each year, the Oration recognises a leader whose career reflects her spirit of scientific ambition, innovation and leadership. In 2026, that leader is **Professor Andrew Wilks.**

Professor Wilks' story begins at Melbourne's Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, where his pioneering work in cytokine signalling and cancer biology led him to discover and name the Janus kinase family and contribute to defining the JAK/STAT signalling pathway.

From fundamental discovery to global patient impact.

Professor Andrew Wilks' research now underpins targeted therapies used to treat autoimmune diseases, inflammatory conditions and cancers around the world.

Professor Wilks is also co-inventor of a number of clinically trialled drug candidates, including the JAK inhibitor momelotinib, now known as Omjjara, which has received FDA and TGA approval for myelofibrosis.

But his contribution extends far beyond discovery.

Professor Wilks founded Cytopia in 1997, one of Australia's earliest ASX listed drug discovery companies, and has since founded and co-founded fifteen companies spanning drug discovery and drug discovery services. Today, he is Founder and Managing Director of SYNthesis Bioventures and an Honorary Enterprise Professor at the University of Melbourne.

A career that is recognised at the highest levels.

Professor Wilks' contribution has been recognised with the **Prime Minister's Prize for Innovation**, awarded with Dr Chris Burns, the **ATSE Clunies Ross Medal**, the **Johnson & Johnson and AusBiotech Industry Leadership Award**, the **Australian BioBusiness Award** and the **Lackmann Award of the CSTI**.

He is also an elected Fellow of the **Australian Academy of Science**, the **Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering** and the **Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences**.

Join us at Australia's Biggest Week in Biotech to hear from an Australian biotech pioneer whose career spans scientific discovery, drug development and company creation.

One registration provides access to the International Conference, the AusMedtech Conference and the BioInnovation Hall. Save up to \$550 with early-bird pricing.

The Millis Oration is proudly sponsored by:



Early-Stage innovators: Be considered for ESIF 2026

The Early-Stage Innovation Forum (ESIF), sponsored by [West Pharmaceutical Services](#), provides emerging life sciences companies with the opportunity to present their innovation to an expert advisory panel and receive valuable feedback.

To be considered for ESIF at Australia's Biggest Week in Biotech 2026, submit your innovation through AusBiotech's Investment Readiness Panel (IRP) by **Friday, 21 August 2026**.

The IRP accepts submissions year round. However, this deadline applies to companies seeking consideration for ESIF 2026.

The Early-Stage Innovation Forum is proudly sponsored by:



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