

# Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism  
Minister for the Hunter  
Minister for Small Business  
Minister for Science and Medical Research  
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



December 17, 2008

## APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR \$75,000 STEM CELL SCHOLARSHIP

The NSW Government today opened applications for a new scholarship to support cutting-edge stem cell research, Minister for Science and Medical Research Jodi McKay said.

Ms McKay said the *Dr Paul Brock Stem Cell Scholarship* will provide up to \$75,000 funding over three years to support PhD research in the emerging field of Induced Pluripotent Stem (iPS) cells.

The scholarship is provided by the NSW Government's Office for Science and Medical Research (part of the Department of State and Regional Development).

"Induced Pluripotent Stem cells (iPS cells) show similar properties to embryonic stem cells and hold potential for use in a range of therapeutic areas," Ms McKay said.

"This could include replacement cells and tissues to treat diseases like Motor Neurone Disease, Type 1 Diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, spinal cord injury, heart disease, stroke, burns, and arthritis.

"The *Dr Paul Brock Stem Cell Scholarship* aims to help build NSW capacity in the use of iPS cell techniques in stem cell science.

Ms McKay said the scholarship has been named in recognition of Dr Paul Brock AM for his significant contributions to public debate on stem cell sciences.

"Dr Brock is the Director of Learning and Development Research in the NSW Department of Education and Training, an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Sydney, and Vice Patron of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, NSW," Ms McKay said.

"Dr Brock has Motor Neurone Disease, a still incurable and terminal condition for which the average period of survival between diagnosis and death is between 2-3 years. While some people survive for less than this, others like Dr Brock do survive for longer periods."

Dr Brock said he is deeply honoured and humbled by Minister McKay's announcement.

"I hope that iPS cell research, along with other avenues of scientific research, will lead eventually to cures for a whole range of diseases and conditions for which there are, as yet, no cures," Dr Brock said.

Ms McKay said one scholarship will be awarded to a NSW-based PhD researcher and that person will receive up to \$25,000 funding each year over three years to support their iPS-related research project.

"The scholarship winner will be chosen by an independent panel which will assess the strength of PhD research proposals and their potential to strengthen NSW capabilities in iPS stem cell techniques," Ms McKay said.

"The Government's aim is to support iPS research efforts that will eventually translate into health, economic, environmental and social benefits for our community.

"I strongly encourage researchers in NSW wishing to undertake a PhD in stem cell research to apply for this scholarship."

Applications for the Dr Paul Brock Stem Cell Scholarship open today and close on 13 February 2009 with the inaugural scholarship winner to be named in March 2009.

For further information on the Dr Paul Brock Stem Cell Scholarship and to download application forms visit [www.osmr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.osmr.nsw.gov.au) or email [info@osmr.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@osmr.nsw.gov.au).

**Media contact: Hayley Thomas 0427 299 446**