

## MEDIA RELEASE

### MTPConnect appoints executive team to kick-start growth remit

**Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> August: Melbourne, Australia**—MTPConnect are delighted to announce the appointment of three General Managers today.

Timed with the call for feedback on its draft Sector Competitiveness Plan, the three new GMs will play a significant role in kick-starting the growth agenda for the sector.

CEO Sue MacLeman said she was excited to have attracted such an experienced and enthusiastic executive team to bring the MTPConnect mandate to life.

“Dr Alfredo Martinez-Coll has been appointed General Manager, Stakeholder Engagement and will be based in our Sydney hub. Dr Sandhya Tewari will take on the role of General Manager, International and Government, while Dr Melanie Thomson is the new General Manager, Education, Skills and Events, both based in the MTPConnect Head Office in Melbourne.

“These roles form the pillars of what we seek to achieve at MTPConnect - facilitating collaboration through new initiatives, driving education and up-skilling the sector, developing the right environment for growth and commercial outcomes,” Ms MacLeman said.

The General Managers will commence in their roles on 5 September 2016. Short profiles of the General Managers:

#### **Dr Alfredo Martinez-Coll - General Manager, Stakeholder Engagement**

Dr Martinez-Coll is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Registered Technology Transfer Professional and a member of the NSW AusMedTech (Medical Devices) Committee of AusBiotech. With a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering from Louisiana Tech University (USA), a PhD and post-doctoral training in biomedical sciences from University of Technology, Sydney, Alfredo brings more than 16 years of research experience in the areas of artificial organs, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular physiology, membrane transport, and oxygen transport to tissue.

Alfredo has been working as a Business Development Manager in technology transfer/commercialisation for the past 13 years at public hospitals and in academia. His main areas of interest are sustainable funding for science, entrepreneurship and innovation, project management in science and business development. Alfredo is passionate about engaging with researchers and industry specialists in the Life Sciences arena to translate research discoveries

into social impact. He has most recently held the position of Senior Business Development Manager at UNSW Innovations.

### **Dr Sandhya Tewari - General Manager, International and Government**

Dr Sandhya Tewari has been leading Victoria's investment attraction, trade and business development activities in biotechnology since 2009, as the Senior Manager of Medtech & Pharma at the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, the Victorian Government's lead agency for the promotion and facilitation of the state's economic development. She has more than 17 years of international experience in trade development and investment attraction, including in India where she worked as Director - Biotechnology at Confederation of Indian Industry for nine years. Before joining the Victorian Government, Dr Tewari worked at the Donor Tissue Bank of Victoria managing their portfolio of biotechnology projects. She holds a PhD in Molecular Biology from University of Manitoba, Canada. She is also the President of Business Talk Toastmasters Australia.

### **Dr Melanie Thomson - General Manager, Education, Skills and Events**

Dr Mel Thomson completed her Honours degree in microbiology and immunology at the University of Melbourne in 1998. She then migrated to the UK where she worked on various projects as diverse as allergy and cancer before undertaking further studies. She completed a Masters of Research then a PhD in microbial genetic regulation in *Neisseria* species, both at University of York, UK. After the award of her PhD in 2009, she became interested the host-pathogen interactions at the Leeds Institute of Molecular Medicine, UK.

Dr Thomson returned to Australia in 2011 to start her own research group at Deakin Medical School and the Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases. A passionate science communicator, she has recently become a national 'torch bearer' for the concept of crowd funding academic research, which a track record of three successful 'Pozible' crowd funding campaigns, 'Mighty Maggots', 'Hips 4 Hipsters' and 'No more Poo Taboo'. She is involved with advocacy as a steering committee member for Women in Science Australia. Mel is very active on twitter with over 9000 people following her at @DrMel\_T

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