

Professor Jane Ellen Visvader FAA FRS FAHMS

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you an outstanding candidate for admission to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (honoris causa): Professor Jane Ellen Visvader.

An esteemed molecular and cellular biologist, Professor Jane Visvader is a world leader in the field of mammary gland biology and breast cancer research. She has been instrumental in many important discoveries that underpin our understanding of mammary stem cell biology, and the mechanisms that lead to the development of breast cancer. Jane's exceptional leadership and research excellence over four decades have played a transformative role in society in Australia and internationally.

Jane graduated from the University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Science with first-class Honours in 1982, and a PhD in 1986. As a postdoctoral researcher at the Salk Institute in San Diego, and then Harvard Medical School in Boston, Professor Visvader originally focused her research on cancer-causing genes and blood cancer and how this can trigger leukaemia. A change in career direction in 1998 saw Jane return to Australia to establish a Breast Cancer Laboratory at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. Along with her husband and clinician-scientist, Professor Geoff Lindeman, Jane has led the Stem Cells and Cancer Division for the last 25 years.

Jane's research team have made landmark contributions to breast cancer research, prevention, and treatment to international acclaim. Under her leadership, her team have identified the stem cell that generates the entire breast and defined the cellular hierarchy within the breast. They have identified master regulators and discovered that certain types of breast cancer originate from specific progenitor cells. This landmark discovery of breast stem cells has changed the course of our understanding of breast cancer and led to clinical trials of promising new treatments.

Professor Visvader has held positions on multiple national and international Advisory Committees including service with the National Breast Cancer Foundation and American Association of Cancer Research. She currently holds committee positions with the Australian Government Department of Health and the Cancer Council Victoria. Her leadership has extended to Chair positions on Grant and Award Selection Review Panels spanning two decades, including Review Panels for the National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Academy of Science, and the Singapore Ministry of Education Expert Panel for Life Sciences.

Professor Visvader's international standing has been recognised through election as a Fellow of the Royal Society for contributions to science and as a Fellow of the American

Association for Cancer Research. She is also a Fellow of the Australian Academies of Science and of Health and Medical Sciences.

Her significant contributions have been acknowledged with national and international awards including the National Breast Cancer Foundation Patron's Award; the Royal Society of Victoria Medal for Scientific Excellence in the Biomedical and Health Sciences; The Lemberg Medal; the NHMRC Elizabeth Blackburn Fellowship Biomedical Award; the GlaxoSmithKline Award for Research Excellence; the Victoria Prize in Life Sciences; the Brinker Award for Scientific Excellence; and the ANZ Society for Cell and Developmental Biology 2023 President's medal. Beyond the scientific world, Westpac named Professor Visvader in the inaugural 100 Women of Influence awards in 2012.

Professor Visvader's dedication to research and leadership excellence is demonstrated across science, education, and government sectors. Over her stellar career she has produced more than 200 research publications that have accumulated more than 42,000 citations and is a named inventor on seven patents relating to cancer research and stem cells. Jane's scientific influence is reflected in the many former PhD students and postdoctoral scientists who now have become independent investigators and leaders in their own right. Her research continues to inspire future generations of scientists and researchers in this field.

Today we extend that recognition, in awarding the highest honour the University can bestow. Chancellor, I am delighted to present Professor Jane Visvader – Bachelor of Science (Honours), Doctor of Philosophy, Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences – for admission to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*).

Chancellor, it is with great pleasure I present to you, Professor Jane Visvader, for admission to the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*).