

Professor Nicholas Martin, Ph.D.

Head, Genetic Epidemiology Laboratory, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute & Co-Investigator, *Australian Genetics of Bipolar Disorder Study*, BRISBANE

Professor Nick Martin is Head of the Genetic Epidemiology Laboratory, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Brisbane and Co- Investigator for the *Australian Genetics of Bipolar Disorder Study* – a ground-breaking international collaboration exploring the genetic risk factors associated with the illness, and how genes influence one's response to treatment.



The scientist and Adjunct Professor in Psychology at the University of Queensland is a leader in behaviour genetics research using longitudinal twin studies, and a pioneer in the field of multivariate genetic modelling.

His more recent research focus has shifted into the field of genome-wide association studies to discover the particular genes which predispose people to depression, anxiety, eating disorders, alcoholism, melanoma and other common disorders.

Prof Martin is a Fellow of the Australian Academies of Science, Health and Medical Science, and Social Science, and has previously served as President of the Behaviour Genetics Association. He is also editor of *Twin Research and Human Genetics*, an associate editor of *Molecular Psychiatry*, has published more than 1,200 papers, and he has won international accolades.

As Co-Lead Investigator for the Australian arm of the *Genetics of Bipolar Study*, Prof Martin is aiming to identify the genes that predispose people to bipolar disorder, in order to develop new treatments, and ultimately find a cure for the illness.

“The new technique of Genome-wide association studies (GWAS) is enabling us to find the genes behind many complex traits and diseases. However bipolar disorder is lagging behind due to lack of sufficient volunteers.

“We want to recruit 5,000 Australians aged 18 and above who have been treated with bipolar disorder, so we can really crack this disease and find new treatments. All we need is a spit sample and about 30 minutes of each volunteer's time,” said Prof Martin.

“Please help us to make a difference.”

To volunteer for the study, head to www.geneticsofbipolar.org.au or email gbd@qimrberghofer.edu.au.

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To coordinate an interview with Prof Martin, please contact Kirsten Bruce or Holly Hamilton from VIVA! Communications on 0401 717 566 / 0434 799 839.