

Sir Gustav Nossal AC, CBE, FRS, FAA

Sir Gustav Nossal is an internationally renowned scientist and has been a significant figure in Australia's medical and scientific community. His research accomplishments are world-renowned, with his work confirming Burnet's theory of antibody formation a watershed in understanding the immune system.



Gustav Nossal was born in Bad Ischl, in Austria, on the 4th June, 1931. The Nossal family left their home town of Vienna for Australia when he was eight years old. When he attended his first Australian school, Nossal spoke no English but graduated from St Aloysius' College in 1947 as the dux of the College. In 1948, he entered Sydney University's Medical School, graduating later with first class honours. At the age of 26, he left his job in Sydney and moved to Melbourne to work with Macfarlane Burnet in Medical Science. Nossal gained his PhD degree in 1960 at the age of 29.

As researcher and director of The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research from 1965 to 1996, he helped build the foundations of modern immunology and define the field for more than 30 years. Sir Gustav has been directly involved with the World Health Organisation since 1967, most recently as chairman of the Global Programme for Vaccines and Immunization and has helped shape the scientific affairs of Australia for decades. As president of the Australian Academy of Science he provided valuable input to government policy-making, and has been an influential public commentator on scientific and medical issues. His many lectures and radio and television appearances have inspired ongoing popular and political interest in science and its applications.

He has been listed in annual Australia Day Honours four times, including as Companion of the Order of Australia in 1989 "For services to medicine, to science and to the community" and a Centenary Medal Winner "For distinguished service to the study of antibody formation and immunological tolerance" in 2000, when he was also named Australian of the Year.

Sir Gustav was chairman of the Strategic Advisory Council for the Bill and Melinda Gates Children's Vaccine Program, which works to ensure children in developing countries are immunised. He was also deputy chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and was chairman of the Advisory Council of The Global Foundation.

He is a fellow of the Royal Society of London, a foreign associate of the US National Academy of Sciences and a member of the Académie des Sciences, France.

The Nossal Institute for Global Health (NIGH) at the University of Melbourne is named in his honour. NIGH is committed to making a difference to global health practice, learning and research. The institute has a combined focus on development assistance, research and

teaching. Through capacity building and partnership, the NIGH works internationally across South and South East Asia, the Mekong, Southern Africa and the Pacific to address global health challenges in regions where public health needs are greatest.

Awards and Recognition

- 1970 – Appointed a Civil Commander of the Order of the British Empire for his contribution to medical research
- 1977 – Knighted for his ground-breaking work in immunology
- 1982 – Awarded the ANZAAS Medal
- 1989 – Appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia for his service to medicine, to science and to the community
- 1990 – Awarded the Albert Einstein World Award of Science, the award given to researchers working in areas that *"have brought true benefit and well being to mankind"*
- 1996 – Won the Koch Gold Medal, the prize being awarded for prizes for major advances in biomedical sciences, particularly in the fields of microbiology and immunology.
- 1997 – Listed as one of the 100 Australians identified as Australia's Living National Treasures
- 2000 – Named as Australian of the Year
- 2001 – Recipient of the Centenary Medal for distinguished service to the study of antibody formation and immunological tolerance
- 2002 – Nossal was featured on an Australian postage stamp
- 2006 – Inducted as an honorary member of the Monash University Golden Key Society
- 2007 – The Nossal Institute for Global Health at the University of Melbourne was named in honour of Nossal
- 2009 – The Nossal High School, located at the Berwick campus of Monash University, is named in honour of Nossal
- 2012 – Monash University Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences Lifetime Achievement Award