

Document 1:

Girl to be fitted with 3D printed ear in Australia

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Two-year old Maia was born with only one ear due to a congenital deformity called microtia, and currently wears a headband that transmits sound to her brain using her skull as a bone conductor.

5 But new 3D technology being developed at Queensland University of Technology in Australia means Maia could soon receive a prosthetic ear that would cost less than a pair of glasses. This promising technology is far less expensive than common prosthetic solutions. The whole procedure could cost as little as two hundred dollars per child. If successful, its inventors hope to eventually use it to print other body parts.

10 The project comes in two stages. The first is a short-term 'cosmetic' solution: a 3D prosthetic ear is made in medical silicone and attached magnetically or with surgical glue.

The long-term stage is far more ambitious and revolves around a complex bioengineering solution. The goal is to develop a procedure for growing a 3D ear from the patient's own cells using a special bioreactor. After a few weeks of growing, it could then be surgically implanted along with a custom bionic construction.

15 Researchers believe that the 3D printed ears could be available within two years.

Though the project is still in its infancy, Maia's parents are hoping it could deeply change their daughter's life.

Document 2:



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