



## MESSAGE FROM THE FLIGHT DECK AND CREW

Welcome to BioCanRx's first volume of a newsletter that will bring you important news about the network and highlights from the field of cancer biotherapeutics in Canada. Please share it freely, and do let us know if there are topics and items you want to see in this newsletter.

In late June, we co-hosted a very successful, well-attended inaugural annual scientific meeting — [Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy \(Summit4CI\)](#). Delegates participated in keynote addresses from [Dr. Ira Mellman](#) (Vice-President, Cancer Immunotherapy, Genentech) and [Dr. Elizabeth Jaffee](#) (Deputy Director, The Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins) and engaged in plenary discussions over four warm days in Halifax. The team extends our thanks to the Canadian Cancer Immunotherapy Consortium, who co-hosted the event with us. This newsletter contains more information about the event, some feedback we have received and plans for next year's Summit4CI!

As many of you know, work is well underway within our research program. BioCanRx is supporting [14 pan-Canadian multi-disciplinary projects](#) funding research across all of the biotherapeutic platforms touching on multiple types of cancer such as ovarian, brain cancer and melanoma. Through our [core facility support](#), these projects are being provided with the essential tools and technologies needed to

We have also invested in projects in the [Clinical, Social and Economic Impact Program](#) that will look at barriers facing biotherapeutic products and platforms as they progress through the translational pipeline. Our rolling, open call submission deadlines are organized around the meeting dates of our Research Management Committee. Our next submission deadline is **Nov. 9, 2016**. We are eager to see what projects the community will put forward. If you have any questions about an idea you want to propose, please contact [Kelley Parato](#). You can find [application details on our website](#).

We have made great progress in developing relationships with key stakeholders, partners and opinion leaders in the area of biotherapeutics. Although much work remains to be done, we are confident that our work is helping to create opportunities for researchers who face the challenging task of transforming promise in the lab to outcomes for cancer patients across Canada.

This month's newsletter includes: key dates around funding opportunities, upcoming events, updates for our trainees and HQP, the profile of an immunotherapy patient pioneer and a feature on [Dr. David Stojdl's Catalyst Project](#) — the first in a series that will focus on projects funded by BioCanRx.

We appreciate hearing from our stakeholder

move these therapeutics to clinic. If you are part of the network, and would like to learn more about the offerings of the BioCanRx core facilities, please visit [our website](#).

community members. Please do take the time to [reach out](#)!

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## | FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES |

We have launched our next round of funding through our rolling, open call process for our four research programs. BioCanRx is now accepting letters of intent (LOIs) for its:

- Clinical Trials Program
- Enabling Studies Program
- Catalyst Program
- Clinical, Social and Economic Impact Program

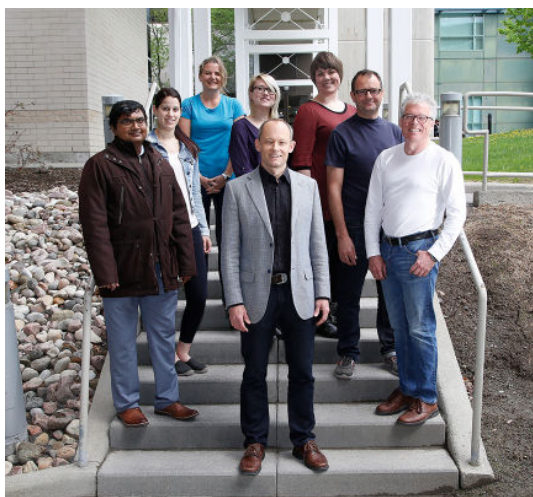
The review deadline for LOIs is **November 9, 2016, by 11:59 p.m. EDT.**

For more information, see the [Apply for Funding page](#) at the BioCanRx website.

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## | PROJECT PROFILE |

### Finding the sweet spot: A tricky job for the right virus to treat brain cancer



*David Stojdl (centre) and team (from left to right: Ananda Mookerjee, Melanie Labelle, Kristina Allan, Katelynn Rowe, Stephanie Swift, Charles Lefebvre, Stephen Baird)*

Defeating brain cancer requires a delicate balance. At least that's how Dr. David Stojdl sees it.

On the one hand, Dr. Stojdl is engineering viruses that seek out tumour cells in the brain, infect them and flag them as dangerous — yet don't infect healthy cells.

"Brain tissue is not very amenable to regeneration. So, if you are using a virus in the brain, you have to be sure it is only going to infect and destroy the cancer cells," says Dr. Stojdl, a [BioCanRx](#)-funded investigator who is a senior scientist at the [Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario \(CHEO\) Research Institute](#) and a professor at the University of Ottawa.

On the other hand, the virus needs to be potent enough to do its job: kick-starting the immune system and launching a deadly attack on cancer cells without causing too much inflammation, which can have serious consequences.

[Read more...](#)

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## INAUGURAL SUMMIT FOR CANCER IMMUNOTHERAPY (SUMMIT4CI) CO-HOSTED BY BIOCANRX AND CCIC

At the end of June, sunny Halifax weather welcomed more than 260 experts in cancer biotherapeutics from Canada and abroad to share scientific advancements and experiences, and to strengthen and create collaborations across disciplines.

The diverse and dynamic group of speakers

### HQP AWARDS AT SUMMIT4CI

The Summit was a fantastic time – both scientifically and socially! Training programs at the Summit were well attended and received great feedback from HQP.

Congratulations to the HQP below for being

and panellists from academia, industry, patient groups and government provided in-depth insight and highlighted the impact that this annual conference will play in strengthening the global response to cancer.

Below are a few highlights of the feedback received from delegates regarding the conference. If you attended Summit4CI and did not have the opportunity to provide feedback, please connect with [Amanda Devost](#). We are always looking to improve the experience for delegates! BioCanRx and CCIC (Canadian Cancer Immunotherapy Consortium) would like to thank organizers, sponsors and delegates for making the first conference a tremendous success.

## SUMMIT4CI 2017

BioCanRx will be hosting the next Summit4CI in Ottawa-Gatineau from June 25-28, 2017 — in the lead-up to the country's 150th Anniversary celebrations. Stay tuned to the [Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy website](#) for information on registration, sponsorship and trainee opportunities!

recognized in the following categories!

### Top Plenary Presentation by a HQP

Victor Naumenko, [Mahoney Lab](#),  
University of Calgary, Calgary, AB

### Top Speed Poster Presentations

Laïla-Aïcha Hanafi, [Turtle Lab](#),  
Fred Hutch Cancer Research Centre, Seattle,  
WA (Session #1)  
Sandy Pelletier, [Turcotte Lab](#),  
CRCHUM, Montréal, QC (Session #2)

### Top Poster Presentations by HQP

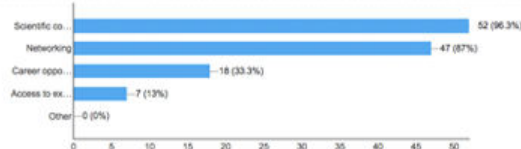
Andrew Nguyen, [Wan Lab](#),  
McMaster University, Hamilton, ON  
Carole Bonkougou, [Melichar Lab](#),  
HMR, Montréal, QC  
Kwame Twumasi-Boateng, [Nelson Lab](#),  
BCCA, Victoria, BC  
Larissa Pikor, [Bell Lab](#),  
OHRI, Ottawa, ON  
SeongJun Han, [Ohashi Lab](#),  
UHN, Toronto, ON  
Simon Gebremeskel, [Johnston Lab](#),  
Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

## Summit4CI Evaluation Summary

**85%** 85% of attendees were academic, while 13% were representatives from business/industry and the remaining were from government

**76%** 76% of delegates found the balance between Canadian and International speakers perfect

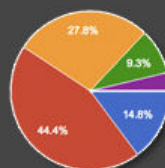
Scientific content and networking were highly valuable to attendees



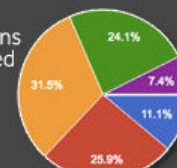
### JUNE 25-28, 2017

The 2nd annual Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy will be held in the National Capital Region!

Balance between talks, workshops & poster sessions was fair



Poster sessions were well received



## | TRAINING AND EDUCATION |

### [Career Opportunities](#)

This jobs board will list career opportunities from our network, core facilities and partners in cancer biotherapeutics sector on our website. There are currently job postings featured from Zymeworks and Caprion.

### [BioCanRx Lab Exchange Program](#)

Exchanges aim to establish partnerships focused on training, in particular skills development and technology transfer as well as strengthen connections between network members and/or industry.

### [Mitacs Accelerate Internships](#)

This program enables graduate students or

## | EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES |

Featured on the BioCanRx website is a collection of helpful educational online resources and in-person workshop opportunities related to professional development. We will continue to add resources to this section. [Check out](#) what we've compiled so far!

**You can find more information about training, education and career opportunities at the [BioCanRx Training website](#).**

**Engage with other HQP in the cancer**

post-doctoral fellows to bridge the gap between academia, industry and non-profit organizations by working on intersectoral research projects.

biotherapeutics sector on our online community. [Join now!](#)

## BioCanRx Quick Facts

14

BioCanRx is funding 14 projects involving 21 Network Investigators and over 50 HQP at 12 Member Institutions

66

66 cancer patients will be enrolled in one of the three BioCanRx Clinical Trials at sites across Canada

### Antibodies (noun | an-ti-body)

Proteins made by the immune system that recognize and bind to other proteins. When used to treat cancer, antibodies work in **one of three** basic ways:

- they tag the cancer cells for destruction by the immune system
- they interfere with the biological functions of the cancer cells
- they modify the immune system's response to the tumour

**NOVEMBER 9, 2016**

This date is the submission deadline for the next round of BioCanRx's rolling, open funding call!

BioCanRx is in year **2** of its first funding cycle



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## I PROFILE I

### From pioneer to pioneers: A patient view on research

***"I am so damn lucky and I know it every morning when I get out of bed."***

When Kathy Barnard says this, she means it.

Kathy Barnard founded and runs [Save Your Skin](#), a patient advocacy and support organization that has been on the front lines as immune-oncology has emerged.

Save Your Skin helps inform legislation (Federal Bill C-386 Tanning Bed Legislation for Youth), patient-care policies and guidelines, and provides individual financial, informational and emotional support to cancer patients.

She started the group in 2006 because she needed to fill a gap in information available to patients, to help answer questions she had as she tackled her own melanoma diagnosis. "What treatment options are there for me?" "How can I get that treatment?"

[Read more...](#)



Kathy Barnard, Founder of Save your Skin Foundation and cancer patient, addresses delegates at the Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy in Halifax, Nova Scotia (June 26, 2016)

(Photo: Michael Hoetzel DGPh)



## | IN THE NEWS |

### [Harnessing the immune system to fight cancer](#)

New York Times | July 30, 2016

### [Pfizer bags option on oncolytic virus, partners up to advance through PhI](#)

FierceBiotech | July 29, 2016

### [Investment to link business and researchers to move ideas to market](#)

CBC | July 26, 2016

### [Breakthroughs in cancer from experts behind the scenes](#)

MacLeans | July 2016

### [FDA lets cancer trial resume after three patient deaths](#)

StatNews | July 15, 2016

### [Cancer patients on immunotherapy trials react to emotional week](#)

StatNews | July 15, 2016

### [Surgery can prevent the immune system from attacking cancer](#)

OHRI | June 29, 2016

### [Opdivo gets breakthrough designation for bladder cancer](#)

FierceBiotech | June 27, 2016

### [World-renowned scientist, Dr. Ira Mellman, discusses cancer immunotherapy](#)

BioCanRx | June 26, 2016

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## | MEETINGS AND EVENTS |

### [International Conference on Replicating Oncolytic Virus Therapeutics](#)

Vancouver, BC | October 1 - 5, 2016

### [Cancer Research Institute's Immunotherapy Patient Summit](#)

New York, NY | September 24, 2016



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Be a part of the BioCanRx community! Please send news and information to:

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