

2026 OICR Research Impact Conference March 24-25, 2026 Old Mill Toronto

Day 1 – Tuesday, March 24, 2026

Welcome and Registration Time	
Registration (outside Brûlé Rooms A & B)	7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Breakfast (Dining Room) Poster and exhibit set-up (Brûlé Room C)	7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Transition to opening remarks	8:30 - 8:50 a.m.
Alyssa Vito <i>Master of Ceremonies - Opening remarks</i> (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	8:50 - 9:00 a.m.
Deepak Anand , Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security <i>Parliamentary Assistant's remarks</i> (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	9:00 - 9:10 a.m.
Christine Williams , OICR <i>Highlight of OICR successes and future strategic plan</i> (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	9:10 - 9:30 a.m.
Keynote address (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Heidi Rehm , Massachusetts General Hospital <i>Global Strategies to Decipher Rare Disease</i>	9:30 - 10:15 a.m.
Audience Q&A	10:15 - 10:25 a.m.
Break	10:25 - 10:35 a.m.
Plenary Session #1: The impact of targeted therapies (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Robert Rottapel , University Health Network <i>Chair: Session introduction</i>	10:35 - 10:45 a.m.
Talk #1: Robert Rottapel , University Health Network <i>Targeting Adaptation Pathways in Cancer</i>	10:45 - 11:00 a.m.

Talk #2: Linda Z. Penn , University Health Network <i>Inhibiting MYC Oncogenic Activity by Blocking Interactions with Key Partner Proteins</i>	11:00 - 11:15 a.m.
Talk #3: Micheline Piquette-Miller , University of Toronto <i>Disrupting MYC-Driven Transcription; Preclinical Evaluation of a Novel Protein Targeting Myc/Max/E-box binding</i>	11:15 - 11:30 a.m.
Panel discussion and Q&A	11:30 - 11:45 a.m.
Break and transition to interactive sessions	11:45 - 11:55 a.m.
Interactive Session A: Translating discovery to impact through partnerships and collaborations (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	11:55 a.m.-12:40 p.m.
David Cescon , University Health Network <i>Session Chair</i> Scott Bratman , University Health Network <i>Talk title: Partnerships for Translation: Lessons from an MRD-Focused Trial</i> Amit Oza , University Health Network <i>Talk title: Team science for accelerating clinical research: it takes a village</i> Sara Kuruvilla , London Health Sciences Centre/Western University <i>Talk title: When Collaboration Slows Translation: Lessons from a Window-of-Opportunity Trial</i>	
Interactive Session B: The impact of novel therapeutic modalities: PROTACs, CAM, and molecular glues (Victoria Room)	11:55 a.m.-12:40 p.m.
Anthony F. Rullo , McMaster University <i>Session Chair</i> <i>Talk title: Covalent Proximity Inducing Strategies To Advance Immune Engager Therapeutics in Immuno-oncology</i> David Sabatino , Carleton University <i>Talk title: Cancer Immunotherapy Based on Synthetic Peptide Multivalent Engagers of Natural Killer Cells</i>	
Interactive Session C: Mapping Health: Clinical Opportunities in the Era of Spatial Data (Garret Room)	11:55 a.m.-12:40 p.m.
Melanie Spears , OICR <i>Session Chair</i> <i>Talk title: Clinical Opportunities in Spatial Biology: GeoMx and CosMx in Translational Trials</i> Hartland Jackson , Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute <i>Talk title: Parsing Human Cancers using Spatial Proteomics</i>	
Lunch (Dining Room)	12:40 - 1:40 p.m.

Transition to plenary session	1:40 - 1:50 p.m.
Plenary Session #2: Evolving Patient Partnership at OICR: Lessons, Successes, and the Road Ahead (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Justin Noble , OICR, and Leigh-Ann Van Strijp , Ontario Molecular Pathology Research Network/Queen's University <i>Co-Chairs: Session introduction</i>	1:50 - 2:00 p.m.
Talk #1: Terry Hawrysh , OICR, and Justin Noble , OICR <i>Adapting the OICR Model of Patient Partnership</i>	2:00 - 2:15 p.m.
Talk #2: Leigh-Ann Van Strijp , Ontario Molecular Pathology Research Network/Queen's University, and Karen Haas , Ontario Molecular Pathology Research Network <i>Listening as Leadership: OMPRN's Path to Patient-Led Insight</i>	2:15 - 2:30 p.m.
Talk #3: Tamara Braid , OICR, and Christopher Deutschman , University Health Network <i>Patient and Community Partners: The Bedrock of OHCRN</i>	2:30 - 2:45 p.m.
Panel discussion and Q&A	2:45 - 3:00 p.m.
Break and transition to poster lightning talks	3:00 - 3:10 p.m.
Poster Lightning Talks (Brûlé Rooms A & B) Rob Campos , OICR, and Stephanie Willing , Kingston Health Sciences Research Institute <i>Session moderators</i>	3:10 - 3:45 p.m.
OICR Patient and Family Advisory Council <i>Closing remarks/end-of-day reflections (Brûlé Rooms A & B)</i>	3:45 - 4:00 p.m.
Transition to poster session	4:00 - 4:05 p.m.
Poster Session and Reception (Brûlé Room C)	Odd: 4:05-5:05 p.m. Even: 5:05-6:05 p.m.
Poster take-down (Brûlé Room C) <i>Posters must be taken down by 8:00 p.m.</i>	6:05 - 8:00 p.m.
Dinner (Dining Room)	6:05 - 7:25 p.m.
Transition to karaoke event	7:25 - 7:30 p.m.

Karaoke (Mill Room)	7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
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Day 2 – Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Breakfast (Dining Room)	7:45 - 8:45 a.m.
Transition to opening remarks	8:45 - 9:00 a.m.
Alyssa Vito <i>Master of Ceremonies - Opening remarks (Brûlé Rooms A & B)</i>	9:00 - 9:05 a.m.
Lincoln Stein, OICR <i>Cancer Research in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (Brûlé Rooms A & B)</i>	9:05 - 9:25 a.m.
Peter Goodhand, FACIT <i>President's remarks (Brûlé Rooms A & B)</i>	9:25 - 9:45 a.m.
Keynote address (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Edwin Cuppen, Hartwig Medical Foundation <i>Cancer Whole Genome Sequencing for Research and Care</i>	9:45 - 10:30 a.m.
Audience Q&A	10:30 - 10:40 a.m.
Break	10:40 - 10:50 a.m.
Plenary Session #3: Leveraging AI/ML and Big Data to Transform Oncology (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Mélanie Courtot, OICR, and Vicki Kirsh, OICR <i>Co-Chairs: Session introduction</i>	10:50 - 11:00 a.m.
Talk #1: Anne Martel, University of Toronto/Sunnybrook Research Institute <i>Multi-Modal AI Models for Cancer Detection and Prediction</i>	11:00 - 11:15 a.m.

Talk #2: Parisa Shooshtari , Western University <i>Multi-omics integration using deep learning for gene regulatory discovery and target identification in pancreatic cancer</i>	11:15 - 11:30 a.m.
Talk #3: Amol Verma , St. Michael's Hospital <i>Harnessing hospital data for research, innovation, and improving healthcare</i>	11:30 - 11:45 a.m.
Panel discussion and Q&A	11:45 - 12:00 p.m.
Break and transition to interactive sessions	12:00 - 12:10 p.m.
Interactive Session D: The impact of geography on cancer research equity (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	12:10 - 12:55 p.m.
Carla Bossart-Pletzer , Northern Health Equity Consulting Inc. <i>Session Chair, Presenter</i>	
Interactive Session E: Launch your innovation on a commercialization path to accelerate research impact (Brûlé Room C)	12:10 - 12:55 p.m.
Ricky Chan , FACIT <i>Session Chair, Presenter</i> Nicole Baryla , FACIT <i>Presenter</i> Connie Chen , FACIT <i>Presenter</i>	
Lunch (Dining Room)	12:55 - 1:55 p.m.
Transition to plenary session	1:55 - 2:05 p.m.
Plenary Session #4: The impact of biomarkers: successes and challenges for pre-clinical and clinical translation (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	
Alison Cheung , Sunnybrook Research Institute, and Kevin Wang , University Health Network <i>Co-Chairs: Session introduction</i>	2:05 - 2:15 p.m.
Talk #1: Glenn Bauman , London Health Sciences Centre <i>Now you see it! Molecular imaging for prostate cancer in Ontario</i>	2:15 - 2:30 p.m.
Talk #2: Kieran Campbell , Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute <i>HLA loss shapes sex-specific spatial tumour-immune evasion in pancreatic cancer</i>	2:30 - 2:45 p.m.

Talk #3: Harriet Feilotter , University Health Network <i>Pan-Canadian approaches to biomarker assessment and adoption</i>	2:45 - 3:00 p.m.
Panel discussion and Q&A	3:00 - 3:15 p.m.
Break and transition to alternate dialogue session	3:15 - 3:25 p.m.
Emerging Technologies and Platforms (Brûlé Rooms A & B)	3:25 - 4:05 p.m.
Cassandra Bergwerff, OICR <i>Session Moderator</i> Farzan Taj, University of Toronto/OICR <i>Talk title: OmniPert: Towards Virtual Cancer Cells for Predicting Single-Cell Responses to Genetic and Chemical Perturbations</i> Zoe Klein, University of Toronto/OICR <i>Talk title: Directional P-Value Merging for Multi-Omics Data Fusion with ActivePathways 2.0</i> Hugo Bohórquez, OICR <i>Talk title: Accelerating Protein–Ligand Interaction Screening with a Quantum-Integrated Platform</i> Michelle Brazas, OICR <i>Panel member</i> David Cescon, University Health Network <i>Panel member</i> David Uehling, OICR <i>Panel member</i>	
Christine Williams, OICR, and OICR Patient and Family Advisory Council <i>Closing remarks/end-of-day reflections and Poster Awards Presentation (Brûlé Rooms A & B)</i>	4:05 - 4:30 p.m.
Adjournment	4:30 p.m.