



BEATRICE HUNTER Cancer Research Institute

Evolving Cancer Research in Atlantic Canada

Funding Opportunities, BHCRI Announcements, 24 June 2021

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What's Happening in BHCRI

As we are about to end this academic year, I am sure that we are all looking forward to seeing the unprecedented restrictions imposed by Covid-19 begin to be referred to in the past tense! I know that for most of you, this year has been stressful, and I thank you all for your ongoing support and involvement in BHCRI.

The past few months have also illustrated disturbing aspects of human behaviour that we must all confront. The entire country has been shocked and saddened by the deaths of indigenous children at the site of the former Kamloops, BC residential school. The recent attack on an innocent Muslim family in London, Ont. is equally appalling. These acts of indifference and racism are unacceptable and we all must consider how we can confront racism and hate in all its various forms to build a more inclusive, tolerant, and nurturing environment. BHCRI is working hard to ensure a supportive home for all those involved in cancer research. I welcome any comments about how we can better achieve this goal.

Over the past few months, BHCRI has been occupied by completing an external review and I believe that everyone now has received the report from our external reviewers. If you need a copy please get in touch with Carla Ross (input@bhcri.ca). Our oversight committees have been discussing the report in preparation for a more extensive planning process. There is much that BHCRI does well, but there are

opportunities to enhance our supports and involve a larger segment of the cancer research community. For example, we want to better support and engage our clinical colleagues and expand supports for clinical research. We need to expand and diversify our membership and we need to identify additional funding partners to ensure that we can provide appropriate support regardless of geographic location, institutional affiliation, or research discipline. We are counting on each of you to offer suggestions and input as we plan for the future of BHCRI.

Although funding is always a challenge, we are seeing some promising developments. We continue to be supported by the generosity of organizations such as the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation, New Brunswick Health Research Foundation, Saunders Matthey Foundation, GIVETOLIVE and Craig's Cause Pancreatic Cancer. We have received a generous gift through the Canadian Cancer Society with funds provided by J.D. Irving Limited to support our training program. Likewise, many generous individuals are also providing support. I hope that you will continue to be involved in, and help grow BHCRI and I also hope that you encourage your colleagues in cancer research who may not yet be members to join the BHCRI family. The next year promises to be exciting with opportunities to realize the full potential of the cancer community to work toward the common goal of controlling cancer and improving the lives of those dealing with the disease.

Gerald C. Johnston, PhD, FCAHS

Scientific Director, Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute

The Canadian Cancer Research Alliance (CCRA) Conference



The Canadian Cancer
Research Conference

La conférence canadienne
sur la recherche sur le cancer

The 2021 Canadian Cancer Research Conference is Going Virtual! Join Canada's cancer research community online for this year's conference!

Staying up to date on cancer research is key and the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance (CCRA) wants to make sure you don't miss anything. **Mark your calendars for the Canadian Cancer Research Conference taking place virtually November 8 to 11, 2021.** This four half-day virtual event brings together researchers, clinicians, decision-makers, and trainees at all stages of their career.

Don't miss the opportunity to learn from top leaders in Canadian cancer research who will share knowledge and address key challenges and opportunities for innovating cancer research in Canada.

The Canadian Cancer Research Alliance (CCRA) is now accepting abstracts for the [2021 Canadian Cancer Research Conference](#) to be held virtually November 8 to 11, 2021. Cancer researchers at all stages of their career are invited to submit an abstract for oral and poster presentations to be delivered at this year's conference to a house packed with cancer research professionals. **The abstract submission deadline is July 5, 2021 –don't miss it!**

Follow the link to [learn more](#)

The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) Challenge Grants



**Canadian
Cancer
Society**

The **Canadian Cancer Society (CCS)** is proud to launch a new funding program in support of cancer research across Canada. The [Challenge grant program](#) will support cancer research projects across the cancer continuum and across disciplines, with an ultimate goal of solving a problem (i.e. a 'challenge') in cancer that will be meaningful to people affected by or at risk of cancer.

Important dates:

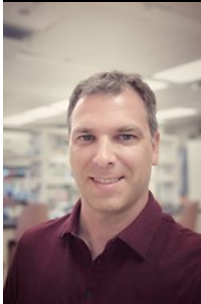
- **Abstract registrations due: July 28, 2021**
- **Full applications due: September 22, 2021**
- Results announcement: January 2022
- Anticipated start date: January 1, 2022

Applications for up to \$150,000 per year for 3 years will be accepted. The approximate funding envelope for this competition is \$5.25M per year, or enough to fund at least 35 grants. **Applications focused on breast cancer and prostate cancer are encouraged.**

CCS is committed to equity, diversity and inclusivity and strives to promote [inclusive excellence](#) in its research programs. We welcome eligible applicants of diverse backgrounds to apply for our funding opportunities.

View the full funding opportunity [here](#)

How Little Seeds Can Grow Into Something Grand



Dr. Denis Dupre

Department of Pharmacology,
Dalhousie University

BHCRI's Seed Grants provide investigators with modest funds to initiate new lines of investigation that position them to go after grant support from national funding organizations. These BHCRI Seed Grants provide investigators with the resource to produce the preliminary data that is so necessary to make applications competitive. Since 2009, BHCRI has invested over \$380,000 to support 43 projects. This investment has resulted in over \$800,000 in grant support, an impressive 210% return on investment.

The most recent success is Dr. Denis Dupre from Dalhousie's Department of Pharmacology. **Dr. Dupre received a \$10,000 seed grant in 2019, to investigate the effect of cannabis compounds in bladder cancer.** Despite setbacks caused by COVID, including closure of his lab for four months, the preliminary data gathered using resources from the seed grant led to new funding from Bladder Cancer Canada.

"Thanks to the seed grant, so far we have two manuscripts submitted and one successful proposal that resulted from that 10k investment you made in me", says Dr. Dupre.

Funding for seed grants is provided by the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and New Brunswick Health Research Foundation and is open to BHCRI members at Dalhousie and New Brunswick institutions. **To find out more information on BHCRI's Investigator Awards, including Seed Grants, please visit <https://bhcri.ca/investigator-awards>**

Meet Our CRTP Alumni

Since inception in 2009, BHCRI has awarded over \$6.9M in stipend support to 207 graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents pursuing cancer research careers within Atlantic Canada. CRTP provides trainees with opportunities to develop leadership skills, gain an appreciation of decision making processes such as peer review and contribute to the overall operation of BHCRI. The skills learned through CRTP provide the building blocks for success, regardless of career direction. **BHCRI has begun to reach out to our alumni, to find out where their careers have taken them. Here's an update from Craig Ayre, CRTP Alumni (2015 – 2018).**



D. Craig Ayre

"I'm from Grand Falls-Windsor, Newfoundland and Labrador, and despite some globe-hopping in my career, I've done all my training (Undergraduate through to PhD) at [Memorial University of Newfoundland](#), in St. John's. My science degrees are in Biochemistry, but my training has really been in the cell biology of immune cells, with a particular interest in [B cell leukemia](#). I was very fortunate to be supported by the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute through the Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP) during my doctoral studies at Memorial, and my post-doctoral fellowship with the [Atlantic Cancer Research Institute](#) in Moncton. One of the most important parts of effective research is establishing a reliable and inter-disciplinary network. None of us know it all or can be experts in everything. Our networks are what allow us to keep rigorously pushing the boundaries in science. While part of the CRTP, my research career started with a basic science research question on B cell survival, evolved into investigating the ways healthy and cancer cells communicate with their environments, and continued into how those messages might improve our ability to diagnose disease. The links CRTP helped me build opened doors for me to transition from an academic lab in Newfoundland, to a precision medicine specialist in Moncton, to being a professor of medicine in the Caribbean. Now I am a principal scientist in immunology for [CellCarta](#) in Montreal. My job is to be responsible for the overall conduct of immunology studies, from experimental design to formulating conclusions and recommendations. My studies range from assay development to regulated clinical trials. Beyond my scientific role, a significant part of my job is to be the communication link between our clients, and the various departments within CellCarta, which means I get to be involved in the science, business, and administrative aspects of our projects."

Share your Research News with the BHCRI Community

Send your information to: input@bhcri.ca and we will include it in an upcoming newsletter. BHCRI members are encouraged to include **@BHCRI** in social media postings so we can follow and share.

We are Social!

The link to the Institute's **Facebook page** is <https://www.facebook.com/BHCRI/> and the **Twitter handle** is [@BHCRI](#). We hope that you will "like" the page and share the information with your contacts. To contribute information about your research, please email socialmedia@bhcri.ca.



Please share this notice with those who may be interested.
To subscribe or become a BHCRI member, please contact admin@bhcri.ca

The BHCRI is an Atlantic Canadian research institute, supported by core funding from DMRF, that facilitates cancer research and training throughout the region with funds provided from a variety of supporting partners, shown here.



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