CANadian Conference in Organoid Research
Conférence Canadienne sur la Recherche Organoïde

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Lamplighter Inn & Conference Centre
London, ON, Canada
November 5 – 6, 2025

PROGRAM AGENDA

Wednesday November 5, 2025 at Lamplighter Inn

7:30 – 8:30 AM Registration and Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 AM Meeting Kick-off with Christopher Pin (Western University)
Welcome Remarks by Alison Allan, Associate Vice-President (Research), Western University & Chris McIntyre, Vice-President Research & Scientific Director, London Health Sciences Centre Research Institute

Session 1: Organoids in Gastrointestinal Development and Disease
Moderators: Samuel Asfaha and Frederikke Larsen (Western University)

8:45 – 9:10 AM Van Lu, *Assistant Professor, Western University*
"Generating novel human intestinal organoid models to investigate human-specific enteroendocrine cell populations"

9:10 – 9:35 AM Simon Hirota, *Professor, University of Calgary*
"Bugs, drugs and inflammation - beyond cell lines"

9:35 – 9:50 AM Katherine Walton, *Assistant Professor, University of Michigan*
"A novel model for inducing damage in human intestinal organoids in vivo using imaging to guide directed irradiation"

9:50 – 10:15 AM Bruce Vallance, *Professor, University of British Columbia*
"Modelling microbe-host interactions at the colonic mucosal surface"

10:15 – 10:30 AM Coffee Break

10:30 – 10:45 AM **Rapid Fire Talks Session I, Moderator:** Trevor Shepherd (Western University)
Britney Tian, *University Health Network*
Chaitali Chitnis, *University of Michigan*
Fatemeh Behjati, *Western University*
Haseeb Mahmood, *Western University*
Michelle Sue, *University Health Network*

10:45 – 12:00 PM **Keynote Address**: Hans Clevers, *Hubrecht Institute, Institute of Human Biology*
"Organoids in 2D and 3D to model human disease"
Introduction by Van Lu and Samuel Asfaha (Western University)

12:00 – 12:30 PM Group photo

12:30 – 2:30 PM Lunch and **Poster Session I**

Session 2: Organoids for Cancer Research
Moderators: Jim Petrik and Leslie Jeffries (University of Guelph)

2:30 – 2:55 PM Véronique Giroux, *Associate Professor, Université de Sherbrooke*
"Building coculture organoid models to study the interaction between cancer stem cells and the tumor microenvironment"

2:55 – 3:20 PM Franco Vizeacoumar, *Professor, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency*
"Organoid-Based Therapeutic Discovery and Precision Oncology"

3:20 – 3:35 PM Eugenia Flores-Figueroa, *Scientific Associate, University Health Network*
"Dissecting Morphological Heterogeneity in Pancreatic Cancer Identifies Distinct Basal Cell States via Multi-Omic and PDO Analysis"

3:35 – 4:00 PM François Boudreau, *Professor, Université de Sherbrooke*
"Modelling Colon Cancer using Patient-Derived Colonoids and Components of the Tumour Microenvironment"

4:00 – 4:15 PM Coffee Break

Session 3: Technological Advances in Organoid Research
Moderators: John Ronald and Emily Tomas (Western University)

4:15 – 4:40 PM Darcy Wagner, *Professor, McGill University*
"The importance of the extracellular niche in regulating lung and airway organoid phenotypes"

4:40 – 4:55 PM Fatemeh Ahmadi, *Post-doctoral Fellow, University of Toronto*
"Millimeter-Scale Tumoroids Recapitulate In Vivo Tumor Architecture and Enhance Prediction of Complex Drug Responses"

4:55 – 5:20 PM Boyang Zhang, *Associate Professor, McMaster University*
"Scalable and Automated Culture Platforms for Enhanced Organoid and Tissue Modeling of Human Disease"

5:20 – 5:45 PM Jacob Shelley, *Associate Professor, Western University*
"Navigating the Legal and Ethical Challenges of Personalized Medicine and Organoid Technologies"

5:45 – 7:00 PM Networking mixer courtesy of Millipore-Sigma
Photo booth

Thursday November 6, 2025 at Lamplighter Inn

7:30 – 8:30AM Registration and Breakfast (Meet the Speaker)

Session 4: Organoid Development from iPSCs
Moderators: Dean Betts and Karly Masse (Western University)

8:30 – 8:55 AM Amy Wong, *Scientist, Sick Kids*
"Modeling human lung development and disease using induced pluripotent stem cell-derived organoids"

8:55 – 9:20 AM Jessica Esseltine, *Associate Professor, Memorial University*
"Apically localized PANX1 impacts neuroepithelial expansion in human cerebral organoids"

9:20 – 9:35 AM Ali Mousavi, *Post-doctoral Fellow, University of Montréal*
"Development of a 3D beating heart-on-a-chip for modeling dilated cardiomyopathy using patient-specific stem cells"

9:35 – 10:00 AM Kalina Kamenova, *Research Director, Genomics4S*
"Ethical Issues in Organoid Research: Towards a Public Consensus"

Panel Discussion: Organoid Resources in Canada
Moderator: Christopher Pin (Western University)

10:00 – 10:10 AM Nikolina Radulovich, *Staff Scientist, University Health Network*
"The Princess Margaret Living Biobank: A Resource for Translational Cancer Research"

10:10 – 10:20 AM Hyunjae Chung, *Senior Stem Cell Scientist, Human Organoid Innovation Hub, University of Calgary*
"Advancing Organoid Research through Shared Resources and Biobanking"

10:20 – 10:40 AM Panel Discussion

10:40 – 10:55 AM Coffee Break

10:55 – 11:10 AM **Rapid Fire Talks Session I, Moderator:** Trevor Shepherd (Western University)
Abbie Lo, *University Health Network*
Frances Sutherland, *Western University*
Jonathan Villanueva, *University of Michigan*
Leslie Jeffries, *University of Guelph*
Petra Samardzija, *Western University*

Session 5: Organoids for Studying Chronic Disease
Moderators: François Boudreau (Université de Sherbrooke) and Nick Philbin (University of Windsor)

11:10 – 11:35 AM Justin Chun, *Associate Professor, University of Calgary*
"Kidney Organoids in Disease Modelling: Progress and Emerging Opportunities"

11:35 – 12:00 PM Shinichiro Ogawa, *Assistant Professor, University Health Network*
"Developing Stem Cell-Derived Liver Organoids to Study and Treat Liver Disease"

12:00 – 12:15 PM Darasimi Kola-Ilesanmi, *MSc candidate, University of Calgary*
"Partial EMT drives collective epithelial cell migration during Crohn's disease fistula formation: A human intestinal organoid model"

12:15 – 2:15 PM Lunch and **Poster Session II**

Session 6: Organoids for Studying Neuronal Disease
Moderators: Julio Martinez-Trujillo (Western University) and Ian Tobias (University of Guelph)

2:15 – 2:40 PM Liliana Attisano, *Professor, University of Toronto*
"Developing more complex models of cerebral organoids"

2:40 – 2:55 PM Brandon Iturralde, *MSc candidate, University of Guelph*
"Modeling Early Human Cerebellar Fate Specification in hiPSC-Derived Organoids"

2:55 – 3:20 PM Marcelo Vazquez, *Radiobiology Section Head, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories*
"Brain Organoids Supporting Space Radiation Research"

3:20 – 3:45 PM Yun Li, *Scientist, Sick Kids*
"Investigating mTOR hyperactivation related neurodevelopmental disorders in human brain cells and organoids"

3:45 – 4:30 PM Award Presentations & Closing Remarks