

The Novartis Oncology Young Canadian Investigator Awards (NOYCIA) returns for its 21st year at ASCO 2024

Jun 11, 2024

- *NOYCIA recognizes excellence in Canadian oncology research as part of Novartis Canada's commitment to reimagining medicine*

Montreal, QC, June 11, 2024 – Novartis Canada is pleased to announce the winners of the 2024 Novartis Oncology Young Canadian Investigator Awards (NOYCIA), an annual national competition dedicated to advancing oncology through the promotion of research by supporting Canadian oncology researchers. This year marks the 21st year of the awards which took place on Sunday, June 2nd at the 2024 American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

Each year, NOYCIA celebrates the innovative work of ten Canadian researchers who have had their abstracts accepted at ASCO and demonstrate excellence in their area of study. Following extensive and objective deliberation by a dedicated Scientific Panel, ten Canadian oncology researchers were selected based on the merit of their research to be the 2024 winners and receive a grant to support their ongoing work.

“At Novartis, we harness the innovation of our world-class scientists, strategic partnerships, and one of the industry’s most competitive pipelines to make the promise of next-generation medicines a reality,” said Sophia Kajla, Chief Scientific Officer and Vice-President, Medical Affairs, Novartis Canada. “Since NOYCIA’s inaugural year in 2004, winners have gone on to become medical experts and pay it forward by sharing their talent to help nurture and grow the next generation of emerging Canadian leaders in oncology.”

The NOYCIA 2024 recipients are:

- **Arkhjamil Angeles, Resident, B.C. Cancer Agency:** Delayed immune-related adverse events in patients with advanced melanoma treated with immune checkpoint inhibitors
- **Matthew Dankner, Resident, McGill University:** Cold-inducible RNA-binding protein is a context-specific functional mediator of breast cancer metastasis
- **Mitchell Elliott, Resident, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** Evaluating metrics of circulating tumor DNA response and progression using a high sensitivity tumor-agnostic assay in metastatic HR+/HER2-breast cancer receiving endocrine therapy and a CDK4/6-inhibitor
- **Mercedes Herrera, Fellow, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** Endogenous retrotransposable elements as a novel predictive biomarker of response to immunotherapy
- **Sameena Khan, Fellow, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** ctDNA Lung DETECT
- **Ronan McLaughlin, Fellow, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** GATA6 expression in advanced pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) as a prognostic and predictive biomarker in the Canadian COMPASS trial and the Comprehensive Cancer Center, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario Agostino Gemelli IRCCS
- **Erick Saldanha, Post Doctoral Fellow, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** Circulating metabolic profiling as a biomarker for immune checkpoint blockade efficacy
- **Xin (Kevin) Wang, Fellow, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre:** A phase II trial of olaparib and

durvalumab in patients with recurrent IDH-mutated gliomas

- **Matt Warkentin, Post Doctoral Associate, University of Calgary:** Risk of developing a subsequent primary cancer among adult cancer survivors
- **Martin Zarba, Fellow, University of Calgary:** Systemic treatments in favorable and very favorable risk metastatic renal cell carcinoma (mRCC): Real world evidence from the international mRCC Database Consortium (IMDC)

“I am honoured to serve as the Chair on this Scientific Panel, dedicated to recognizing the expertise of emerging oncology researchers in Canadian institutions,” said Dr. Paul Wheatley-Price, NOYCIA Chair and medical oncologist, The Ottawa Hospital. “For over two decades, NOYCIA has been, and continues to be, outstanding in propelling oncology forward through the endorsement of research, and it's deeply rewarding to be part of such a terrific initiative.”

NOYCIA's 2024 itinerary includes the [Mentorship Matters Program](#) which offers mentorship opportunities to trainees who attend the NOYCIA awards dinner.

The program provides trainees with the opportunity to network with key figures at Canadian cancer centres. Canadian oncology colleagues co-host a table during the NOYCIA awards dinner and trainees from across Canada have the opportunity to hear from mentors about career paths, programs and opportunities that their centres provide and to ask questions. Mentors have the opportunity to pay it forward by sharing their career and research wisdom to the future generation of medical oncologists, to inspire and meet candidates seeking employment and to have fun.

About the Novartis Oncology Young Investigators Award (NOYCIA)

With a mission to support Canadian oncology researchers, NOYCIA provides funding, support, and recognition to 10 researchers that demonstrate excellence in their specialist field of study. Eligible applicants include Post-Doctorate Students, Residents, Fellows, Graduate Students, Medical Students, PhD Candidates and Undergraduates who are affiliated with a Canadian institution and are the first author of an abstract accepted for the annual ASCO meeting. For more information about NOYCIA, please visit www.noycia.ca.

About Novartis

Novartis is a focused innovative medicines company. Every day, we work to reimagine medicine to improve and extend people's lives so that patients, healthcare professionals and societies are empowered in the face of serious disease. Our medicines reach more than 250 million people worldwide.

Reimagine medicine with us: Visit us at <https://www.novartis.com> and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X/Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

In Canada, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. employs approximately 600 people to serve the evolving needs of patients and the healthcare system and invests over \$30 million in R&D yearly in the country. For more information visit www.novartis.ca.

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2. <https://www.noycia.ca/en-ca/winners>
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