



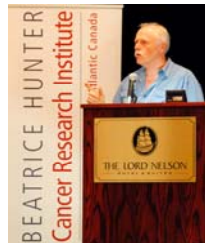
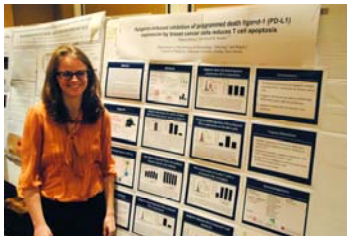
BEATRICE HUNTER  
Cancer Research Institute

Evolving Cancer Research in Atlantic Canada



**crtip** | cancer  
research  
training  
program

Biomedical • Clinical • Health Systems & Services  
Social, Cultural, Environmental & Population Health



# ■ Cancer Research Training Program HANDBOOK

**The Cancer Research Training Program is supported by:**

The Terry Fox Foundation Strategic Health Research Training Program  
in Cancer Research at CIHR

and

Cancer Care Nova Scotia  
Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation - Atlantic Region  
Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation  
Canadian Cancer Society Nova Scotia Division  
Dalhousie University

**Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP) Management Committee:**

Dr. Gerry Johnston, Co-Chair  
Dr. Graham Dellaire, Co-Chair  
To be appointed (ex officio)  
Dr. Jason Berman  
Dr. Gail Dechman  
Ms. FuiBoon Kai (Grad Student rep)  
Dr. Karen Mann  
Dr. Jean Marshall  
Dr. Ryan Noyce (PDF rep)  
Dr. Catherine Too

**Staff, Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute (BHCRI):**

Dr. Jonathan Blay, Scientific Director  
director@bhcri.ca

Cindy Pettipas, Administrative Director  
902-494-4513, input@bhcri.ca

Shannon Donovan, Administrative Assistant  
902-494-8970, admin@bhcri.ca

## **Cancer Research Training Program**

The Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP) is an integrated cancer research training initiative and a program of the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute (BHCRI). The CRTP was developed to address the need for a transdisciplinary approach to cancer research in which researchers from all areas of research are included. These research areas span the basic (fundamental) sciences, clinical research, behavioral and population-based studies, health policy and health services. Encompassing all aspects of cancer research means that the training program can realistically present the broad range of perspectives and expertise needed to manage cancer, and will provide all of our trainees with a better understanding of this disease. Ultimately, we hope that exposure to the full spectrum of issues that affect cancer will create the next generation of cancer researchers who are equipped to advance knowledge and translate findings for more effective and safer treatments, better prevention strategies and improved quality of life.

In addition to the CRTP Trainees and Cancer Research Faculty currently undertaking many different facets of cancer research, CRTP is comprised of a Management Committee that provides direction for the Program and guides the curriculum ensuring that the Program's mandate is met.

The CRTP provides approximately \$700,000 each year in salary support to approximately 25 graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, medical residents and clinical research fellows. These individuals are working under the supervision of experienced cancer researchers at an academic institution within Atlantic Canada.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, The Terry Fox Foundation, Cancer Care Nova Scotia, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation - Atlantic Region, the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society Nova Scotia Division all provide funds to the CRTP.

In addition to salary support, the CRTP offers training workshops in such important areas as writing grants and communicating research, integrated learning sessions that focus on different aspects of the cancer problem, and work-in-progress sessions that allow Trainees to present ongoing research and obtain feedback from the diverse cancer research community.

Trainees also have opportunities to participate in the activities of various not for profit organizations, to understand the role of community based support for cancer research.

Faculty Supervisors place a high value on the program. They report that it allows them to conduct more and larger research studies and that their Trainees' efforts are crucial to the success and productivity of their research programs.

Many of the more than 90 graduate students who have taken part in the CRTP to date have chosen to pursue cancer research as a career.

The CRTP strives to develop highly skilled researchers in the multifaceted and interrelated disciplines of cancer control while they acquire skills and strategies for working, supporting and learning together with fellow professionals, patients and the public to address complex problems and issues related to cancer research and care.

Trainees of the CRTP are exposed to broad issues of cancer research ranging from fundamental discovery and clinical research to social and population issues, informatics and ethics. This curriculum is designed to enhance Trainees' interactions with one another on a routine basis and better equip Trainees for future cancer research activities involving different types of approaches and expertise.

**Eligibility:**

The Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP) has a curriculum that provides training and funding to graduate students, medical residents, postdoctoral fellows and clinical research fellows involved in cancer research at academic institutions in Atlantic Canada. A limited number of Traineeship Awards will be offered to outstanding applicants with an interest in cancer research.

Support is restricted to individuals who are undertaking research that is broadly applicable to cancer. PhD candidates may apply for postdoctoral funding, but must have successfully defended their thesis prior to the start date of funding in order to qualify. Postdoctoral fellows may only receive funding while in their first 6 years of postdoctoral study.

Successful applicants who have accepted other funding will still be considered a CRTP Trainee and will be encouraged to attend CRTP events. Since capacity-building is a priority of CRTP, a maximum of \$54,600.00 will be awarded per supervisor per year to assist as many research locations as possible and ensure a breadth of trainees. This amount would normally fund 1 grad student and 1 postdoctoral fellow (pdf), but could be divided between 2 pdfs. In any competition, the number of applications from each lab is limited to two if the lab does not have any CRTP-funded trainees or one if there is already a CRTP-funded trainee in the lab. A Trainee may not receive more than two CRTP awards.

**Tenure:**

Awards generally have duration of two years, subject to available funding. The starting date for Traineeship Awards will normally be January 1<sup>st</sup> or September 1<sup>st</sup>, whichever date immediately follows receipt of the award. Note: The starting date for Traineeship Awards may not be deferred unless approved by both the CRTP Management Committee and any other funding agency involved in supporting the Trainee. Deferrals will only be considered in extenuating circumstances.

**Monetary Value of the Traineeship Award:**

The present maximum award for graduate students (including medical residents enrolled in a graduate program) is \$17,850 per annum as a contribution to the graduate student stipend. For postdoctoral fellows, medical residents and clinical research fellows, the maximum award is \$36,750 per annum as a contribution to salary. A supervisor may supplement the value of the Traineeship Award from his/her general grant support but a trainee must not hold another award while receiving CRTP funding.

**Other Awards:**

If a CRTP Trainee receives funding from another agency during his or her Traineeship, he or she may be eligible for up to \$10,000 of his or her current CRTP funding for salary supplementation, not to exceed current CRTP granting standards of \$17850.00 for Graduate Students and \$36750.00 for Postdoctoral Fellows. Trainees who gain another award that is shorter in length than the BHCRI award and overlaps with any part of the BHCRI award period remain eligible for the amount of funding remaining in the BHCRI award, provided that:

- The trainee has fully satisfied the requirements of the BHCRI program while funded by the alternate source.
- The trainee remains in good standing within their academic program and their supervisor confirms good research performance.
- Funds remain available through the training program.

Trainees who are 'reserving' subsequent CRTP support while holding another award are regarded as CRTP trainees, are required to fulfill the ongoing expectations of CRTP and are deemed to be part of the lab cap of 2 trainees. Failure to satisfy the stated expectations of the CRTP program will result in loss of the residual award. The trainee must continue to apply for other funding to replace the CRTP award, as specified in the regulations for the CRTP program.

A BHCRI traineeship award allows for an external award to be 'topped up' to the stipend set by BHCRI but may not be combined with other awards to a higher overall amount. A supervisor may however supplement a BHCRI trainee award from his/her general grant support.

## **Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP) Travel Awards:**

CRTP-funded Trainees as well as non-CRTP-funded Trainees who participate in CRTP activities may apply for travel awards. These awards reimburse travel expenses incurred in attending cancer research conferences and seminars, at which the applicant is presenting, to a maximum amount of \$1500.00 (CAD). Recipients are required to share details of their learning experience with their colleagues at a CRTP work-in-progress session. With limited funding, priority for these awards is given to CRTP-funded trainees and it is expected that trainees try to minimize expenses by sharing travel costs and accommodation, if applicable.

A limited number of travel bursaries, to a maximum of \$500.00 (CAD) are available for Cancer Research Trainees attending The BHCRI Annual Cancer Research Conference and annual Cancer Workshop from outside the Halifax area. It is expected that trainees try to minimize expenses by sharing travel costs and accommodation, if applicable.

**The Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) has mandated The Strategic Health Research Training Program in Cancer Research at CIHR, also known as the Cancer Research Training Program (CRTP), to develop highly skilled cancer researchers. In order for CRTP to operate in accordance with our mandate we have developed the following guidelines for Trainees and their Supervisors.**

### **Trainee Responsibilities:**

Throughout the Award tenure, Trainees are required to attend at least 80% of CRTP curriculum activities. If attendance drops below 80%, the Trainee and Supervisor will be advised that the Trainee is being placed on 3 months' probation. Should the attendance record not increase to 80% or greater at the end of 3 months, funding will be cancelled. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration. Trainees are required to participate in one cancer-related experiential training opportunity of their choice per year. Examples are: Membership on CRTP-related committees and assisting not-for-profit organizations that support cancer research by fundraising or speaking on their behalf. Contact the CRTP office to determine whether the experiential training that you wish to undertake qualifies. Failure of the Trainee to meet these obligations will cause the Supervisor to be ineligible to apply for CRTP funding for the next 12 months.

Individuals supported by a Traineeship Award are expected to devote full-time to research and the CRTP curriculum during tenure of the Award (excluding normal vacation time). Limited teaching and/or clinical duties are permitted as long as they do not normally exceed an average of 10 hours per week.

A detailed progress report that emphasizes the linkage of the Trainee's research to cancer must be submitted to the CRTP Administrative Office one month prior to completion of the first year of the Award. Failure to submit by the due date will cause suspension of the award. It is required that Cancer-related publications and/or conference presentations be listed. The CRTP Management Committee will then decide if funding will be continued for a second year. Following the completion of the Award, it is required that Trainees submit a brief report outlining research activities undertaken during the tenure of the Traineeship. Note: It is expected that the CRTP and its funding partners be acknowledged in all published abstracts and articles in scientific journals, with appropriate wording as specified in the notice of the award, which will be forwarded to all successful applicants. It is extremely beneficial for the future research careers of applicants to obtain funding from national and/or international granting agencies. For this reason, CRTP-funded Trainees must seek alternative funding throughout their Traineeship tenure.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities:**

Supervisors are encouraged to attend the BHCRI Seminar Series sessions (SS), Integrated Learning Sessions (ILS), Work-in-progress sessions (WIP), Cancer Workshop (CW) and the BHCRI Annual Cancer Research Conference (CRC). Feedback from current and past Trainees shows that participants in the program wish to have Supervisors attend the CRTP sessions both to show support and to ask questions and give advice relating to their research. This will further enhance the Trainees' learning experience. Supervisors are also asked to support attendance of their CRTP-funded Trainee(s) at all SS, ILS, WIP, CW, CRC and experiential

learning opportunities. Supervisors are encouraged to serve on the CRTP Scientific Review Committee and are expected to confirm and comment on the progress of the Trainee in the detailed progress report that is to be submitted to the CRTP Administrative Office one month prior to the completion of the first year of the award.

The total time commitment, per year, for participation in the CRTP curriculum is less than one hour per week. We expect that all Supervisors and Trainees will show support for this program, which has been recognized by past Trainees and Supervisors, as well as by external peer review, as being valuable to the development of Cancer Research Trainees. From time to time we will request program evaluation information from you. This information will assist us in ensuring that this program continues to meet the needs of the Trainees while meeting the mandate of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, which has provided the majority of the funding for this program. We encourage potential Supervisors to become associated with the BHCRI to help us further strengthen these programs: but membership of the BHCRI will not be part of the decision process by which awards are made.

## **Curriculum:**

### **Seminar Series Sessions (SS):**

Held approximately 9 times per year, these one hour sessions are broadcast throughout the Atlantic region and normally consist of two 30-min presentations, one of which is bench research with the other being clinical/health related. The aim of these talks is to showcase and raise interest in those research areas to show the overall project/trial/initiative in an interesting way.

### **Integrated Learning Sessions (ILS):**

Held approximately four times a year, these one to two hour sessions bring Trainees together to learn from and interact with each other, a variety of researchers, investigators, cancer organizations, survivors and others from across the cancer community. The format includes a presentation on a current topic in cancer, usually involving an expert speaker and a small group problem or case-based learning component designed to involve active discussion and articulation of ideas, which are broadened by the input of a variety of perspectives. Past ILS have included topics such as: 'Who Gets Cancer?', 'The Role of Clinical Trials', 'Science and Media Perceptions', 'Biomarkers and the Future of Cancer Control', 'Long Term Consequences of Treatment: When is the Cost Too High?', 'How Cancer Researchers and Cancer Charities Can Work Together to Control Cancer' and 'Commercialization of University Based Discoveries'.

### **Work-in-Progress Sessions (WIP):**

The objective of the monthly work-in-progress sessions is to provide a comfortable and interactive learning environment for Trainees to present research findings and scientific interests in the field of cancer research. These sessions provide an informal setting where Trainees can inform colleagues and peers about their work, practise presenting their work to their colleagues and Supervisors and receive constructive feedback.

### **Annual Cancer Research Conference:**

The BHCRI Annual Cancer Research Conference is held each November. This is a two-day event that offers Trainees the opportunity to present their research via poster or platform presentations. Guest speakers include faculty from local universities as well as National experts in various aspects of cancer care and research.

### **Cancer Workshop:**

A one day Cancer Workshop to be held each May. The main focus of this day will be skill sessions. These are similar in format to the Integrated Learning Sessions and are designed to develop specific skills often required by cancer researchers.

### **Maternity Benefits/Parental Leave:**

All applications for maternity benefits and parental leave must be forwarded through the CRTP office to CIHR for approval.

**Sick Leave/Vacation Entitlement:**

Guidelines for sick leave and vacation entitlement will follow those of the CRTP Trainee's Institution. Should a Trainee be absent without notifying CRTP or their supervisor, pay will be suspended until the Trainee returns. Should there be a valid reason for the absence, the Trainee could be reinstated and reimbursed retroactively.

**Contact Information:****Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute**

Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University  
Suite 2L-A2, Tupper Link, 5850 College Street  
PO BOX 15000, Halifax, NS B3H 4R2

Tel: 902.494.8970, Fax: 902.494.8472  
[admin@bhcri.ca](mailto:admin@bhcri.ca), [www.bhcri.ca](http://www.bhcri.ca)