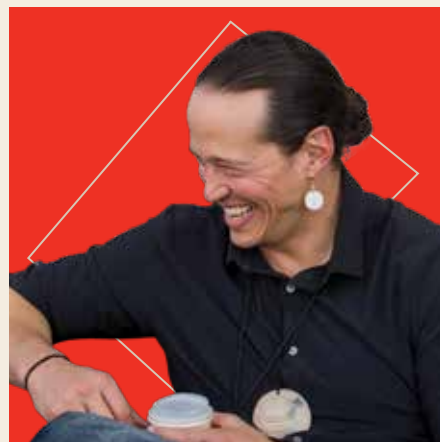


CIFAR

TOGETHER WE
EXPAND
WHAT'S POSSIBLE



IMPACT REPORT 2025-26

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land on which CIFAR operates has been the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples for thousands of years and it is still home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We wish to pay respect to Turtle Island and to the Indigenous history of this land. We acknowledge that the area is covered by Treaty 13, signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit. As an organization, we are committed to respectful and collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities. We will continue to find ways to ensure that we are engaging in meaningful action to move reconciliation forward.

On the cover, from left to right:

*Top row: **Blessing Ogbuokiri**, Solution Network Co-Director, Canadian AI Safety Institute Research Program at CIFAR; **Candice Odgers**, Co-Director, Child & Brain Development; **Bianca Dumitrascu**, CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar 2024-2026, CIFAR MacMillan Multiscale Human.*

*Bottom row: **Hugo Larochelle**, Advisor, Learning in Machines & Brains, Canada CIFAR AI Chair at Mila; **Asiya Gusa**, CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar 2023-2025, Fungal Kingdom: Threats & Opportunities; **Steven Davis**, Montana State University, was among participants at CIFAR's Radical Interdisciplinarity forum on Indigenous Knowledges.*

CIFAR

In 2025–2026, CIFAR’s global research community continued to drive extraordinary progress and impact, including historic Nobel Prize and Turing Award recognition that brought our totals to 26 Nobel laureates and 6 ACM A.M. Turing Award winners. This past fiscal year, CIFAR continued to play a prominent role in Canada’s AI leadership and also expanded foresight work to identify the challenges and opportunities that will shape the future.

This report covers the period between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.



cifarimpact.ca

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JOINT MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CHAIR

At CIFAR, we believe in backing ideas that challenge convention, long before their impact is fully visible. Over time, through interdisciplinary collaboration and sustained support, these ideas have the power to reshape fields and futures. The accomplishments highlighted throughout this report demonstrate what sustained investment in interdisciplinary collaboration can achieve.

In our 2025-2026 Impact Report, we show how we've advanced our renewed Strategy, helped strengthen Canada's AI leadership, deepened global partnerships, expanded opportunities for the next generation of research leaders, and launched new foresight initiatives to identify the challenges and opportunities that will shape the decades ahead.

The recognition of CIFAR researchers illustrated throughout underscores how sustained investment in fundamental research can advance science, nurture talent and drive innovation over time. This year, researchers Gilles Brassard and Charles H. Bennett received the ACM A.M.

Turing Award for their foundational contributions to quantum information science – a field of research CIFAR has supported for decades, long before quantum computing became a booming global industry.

This is also the second consecutive year that we celebrated new Nobel laureates within our research community. Philippe Aghion, Joel Mokyr and Peter Howitt, members of CIFAR's former economics programs, received the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel for their work on innovation-driven economic growth. With their recognition, CIFAR's community now includes 26 Nobel laureates and 6 ACM A.M. Turing Award winners throughout our history.

This past year, CIFAR launched several strategic initiatives to enhance our foresight and build the research pathways needed to address complex global challenges. Highlights included our Radical Interdisciplinarity forums on Indigenous Knowledges and the Future of the Arctic.

Additionally, we published the Future of Food Report and hosted seven workshops through the CIFAR Arrell Future of Food Initiative, helping to identify emerging challenges around food security and shape meaningful solutions.

We are equally proud of our expanding, increasingly diverse research community, which strengthens cross-border collaboration and supports the next generation of research leaders. This past year, CIFAR marked 10 years of the CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholars program, as well as the launch of new opportunities with our valued partners, including the Swiss National Science Foundation, Jacobs Foundation and Mitacs.

None of this work would be possible without the support of our community. We are deeply grateful to the Government of Canada, our provincial partners – the Governments of Alberta and Québec – research partners, donors and collaborators around the world.

We hope you enjoy learning about the power of collaboration, curiosity and foresight – because that's where the next leap begins.



Stephen J. Toope
OC, FRSC, LL.D.
President & CEO

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.



Irfhan Rawji
Chair
CIFAR Board of Directors

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



HIGH-IMPACT RESEARCH

2,957

publications from
430 researchers



\$317M

in additional funding for
research shaped through CIFAR's
research programs



1.85x

the rate at which CIFAR
researchers publish top 1%
most-cited papers, compared
with academics at the world's
top 20 research universities

*Bobby Maher, Australian National
University, was among the participants at
CIFAR's Radical Interdisciplinarity forum on
Indigenous Knowledges*



*Aviâja Lyberth Hauptmann, Fellow,
Healthy Microbiomes in a Changing
World; University of Greenland*



1,087

research outputs in the top 1% of
most-cited papers in the world
(2021-2025)



TRUSTED PARTNERS

77

CIFAR's research is enabled by dedicated support from 77 formal partnerships with governments, foundations, industry and research organizations across 9 countries



CIFAR'S GLOBAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY

548*

researchers across 26 countries and 198 institutions, spanning 6 continents (62 Advisors, 263 Fellows, 22 CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholars, 37 Jacobs CIFAR Research Fellows, 11 CIFAR AI Safety Trainees, 7 Research Trainees, 135 Canada CIFAR AI Chairs, 24 Solution Network members)

** A number of these researchers have appointments to multiple CIFAR programs and have only been counted once here.*



Louis Taillefer, Fellow, Quantum Materials; Université de Sherbrooke



CATALYZING BOLD IDEAS

\$3.39M

in Catalyst Funds committed to projects that will accelerate discovery



59

Catalyst Fund projects awarded to bold, transformative research

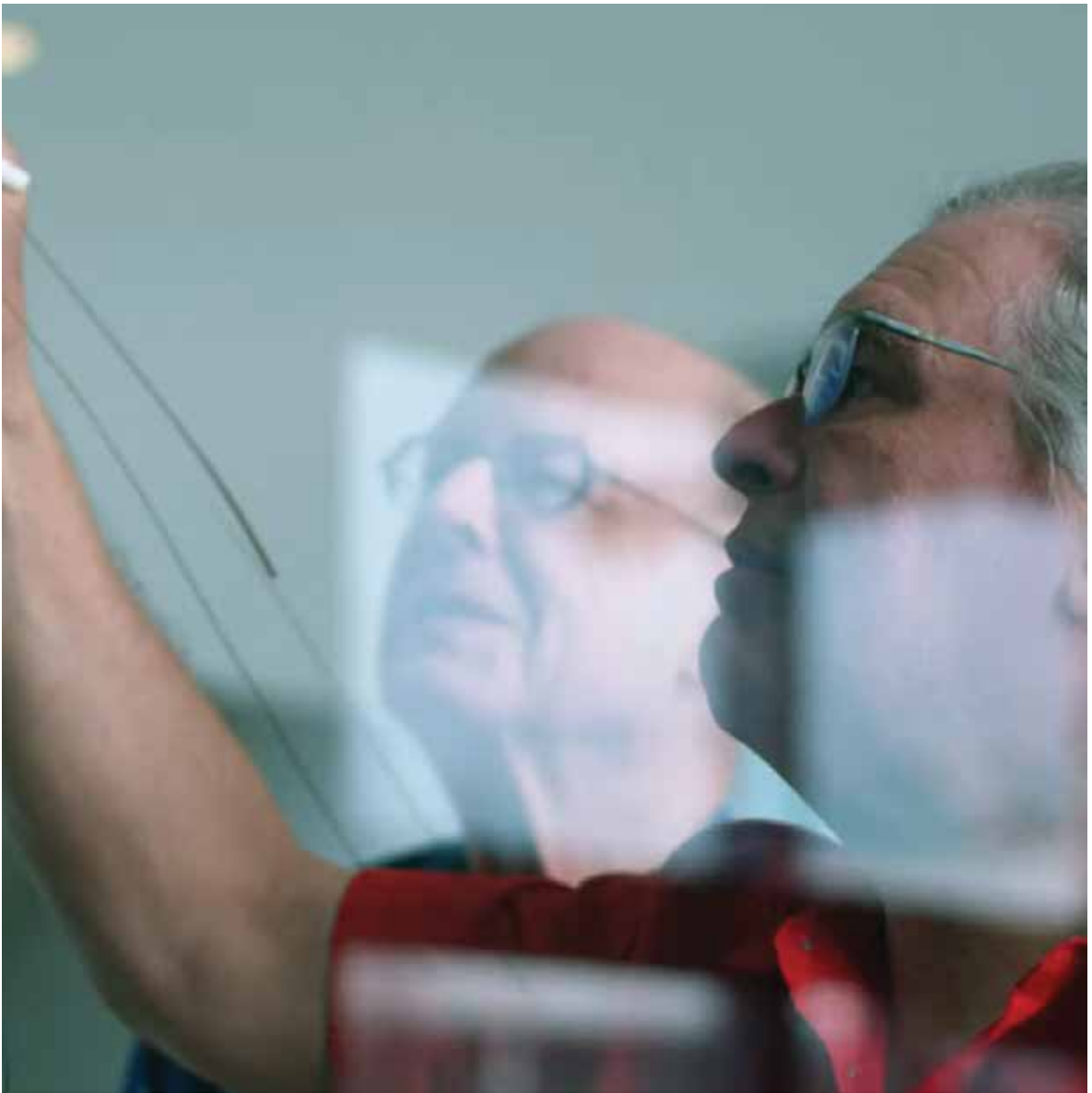


SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE

108

major awards and honours received by CIFAR researchers and Canada CIFAR AI Chairs

CIFAR RESEARCHERS EARN SCIENCE'S HIGHEST HONOURS



Charles H. Bennett (left) and Gilles Brassard (right), recipients of the 2025 ACM A.M. Turing Award.

This year, CIFAR researchers once again received some of science's highest honours, underscoring the lasting impact of supporting long-term funding across CIFAR's history.

Understanding sustained economic growth

Over the past two centuries, technological innovation has transformed economic progress.

Through their work, **Philippe Aghion** (Fellow, *Institutions, Organizations & Growth*¹; Collège de France), **Joel Mokyr** (Advisory Committee Chair, *Institutions, Organizations & Growth*; Northwestern University and Tel Aviv University) and **Peter Howitt** (Associate Fellow, *Economic Growth & Policy*; Brown University) helped explain how that transformation happens and what makes it endure. Their work was recognized with the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2025.

¹ The CIFAR Program in *Institutions, Organizations & Growth* (2004-2019) evolved out of an earlier CIFAR program in *Economic Growth & Policy* (1989-2002).



Each scholar has deep ties to CIFAR's research community. As a long-time member and Advisory Committee Chair for *Institutions, Organizations & Growth*, Mokyr provided guidance and advice on the program. Meanwhile, Aghion and Howitt had served as CIFAR Fellows, collaborating extensively to analyze innovation-based growth theory and investigate how competition can enhance growth.

In 2001, Howitt credited his involvement in CIFAR's *Economic Growth & Policy* program as a key motivator for his work. "There is no other forum in the world where presenting my work on growth theory leads to more useful feedback," he said. "From what I have learned in this program, I feel more confident than before that I am able to identify theoretical problems that are really important not just in purely intellectual terms but also from the point of view of history, public policy and the state of econometric knowledge."

SPOTLIGHT

"Having led CIFAR, I know firsthand that true scientific revolutions don't happen overnight; they are seeded by collaborative freedom and sustained by a dedicated community. The recent Nobel laureates are brilliant proof of what happens when we give the world's finest minds the time and space to pursue unconventional ideas. My gift honouring them is both a celebration of that extraordinary legacy and an investment in the next generation of global breakthroughs."

CHAVIVA HOŠEK

President Emerita and donor, CIFAR



Gilles Brassard (left) and Charles H. Bennett (right) at a Quantum Information Science program meeting in Banff.

Pioneering quantum information science

CIFAR's long-standing leadership in quantum information was recognized with the 2025 ACM A.M. Turing Award, given to researchers **Gilles Brassard** (Advisor, Fellow, *Quantum Information Processing, Quantum Information Science*; Université de Montréal) and **Charles H. Bennett** (Advisor, *Quantum Information Processing, Quantum Information Science*; IBM Fellow).

They are globally credited as the founders of quantum information science for their role in establishing the foundations of quantum encryption and communication. Their research bridges the gap between physics and computer science by using quantum-mechanical phenomena to process and transmit information, rather than treating them merely as properties of matter.

Brassard has been an active member of CIFAR's research community since 2002. He was initially appointed as a Fellow to the *Quantum Information Processing* program, which later became the *Quantum Information Science* program. Most recently, he has served as an Advisor to the program. Bennett served as an Advisor to both programs from 2007 to 2013.

"Since 2002, and until this program was eventually sunset in 2026, CIFAR's *Quantum Information Science* program has played a formative role in shaping the field in Canada and globally," says Kate Geddie, Executive Director of Research at CIFAR. "Gilles and Charles' work has been central to forwarding quantum research, and created a strong, connected ecosystem that continues to thrive today."

CIFAR'S FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE



A busy year of bringing the CIFAR community together to collaborate and explore opportunities to amplify the impact of their research.

Through our research programs, CIFAR convenes and mobilizes the world's most brilliant people across disciplines and at all career stages to advance knowledge and address humanity's biggest challenges, together.



Accelerated
Decarboniza-
tion ▶



Boundaries,
Membership
& Belonging ▶



Brain, Mind
& Conscious-
ness ▶



Child & Brain
Develop-
ment ▶



CIFAR MacMillan
Multiscale
Human ▶



Earth 4D:
Subsurface
Science &
Exploration ▶



Fungal King-
dom: Threats &
Opportunities ▶



Future
Flourishing ▶



Gravity &
the Extreme
Universe ▶



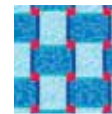
Humanity's
Urban Future ▶



Healthy
Microbiomes
in a Changing
World ▶



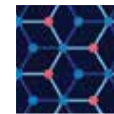
Innovation,
Equity & the
Future of
Prosperity ▶



Learning in
Machines &
Brains ▶



Quantum
Information
Science ▶



Quantum
Materials ▶

To learn more about CIFAR's Research Programs,
visit cifar.ca/research-programs.

ACCELERATED DECARBONIZATION

Innovative ways to capture and store carbon are a key focus of the program. Researchers are exploring how common minerals, even waste like mine tailings, can help lock carbon away. Program members are also exploring how captured carbon can be used for low-emission cement and crop-boosting fertilizers. *The program was founded in 2014 (originally as Bio-Inspired Solar Energy) and sunsets in March 2027.*

BOUNDARIES, MEMBERSHIP & BELONGING

The program explores how global crises, such as climate change, inequality, rising authoritarianism and mass migration, reshape our sense of belonging in societies. From “polycrisis” to “permacrisis,” these overlapping global challenges are putting pressure on the ways communities draw boundaries and define membership. To address contemporary crises of polarization and democratic strain, the program investigates interventions to break cycles of hate, examines migrant claims-making, and analyzes nested local and Indigenous governance models. *Active since 2019.*

BRAIN, MIND & CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness is one of the fundamental features of our existence, and the most intimately familiar. Yet its nature remains mysterious. The program brings together neuroscientists, philosophers, and psychologists to advance our understanding, focusing on 3 key questions: the distribution of consciousness (what organisms/systems are, or can be, conscious), the functions of consciousness (what is it for, and why did it evolve) and the character of consciousness (how it differs between people and cultures, and how it changes throughout the lifespan).

Active since 2014.

CHILD & BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The program examines how early environment shapes the trajectory of our lives, from the prenatal period through infancy and into adulthood. Recently, program members have been using interdisciplinary approaches to investigate modes of human and animal memory through the lenses of mental health, innovation, biological sex and evolution, as part of a New Frontiers in Research Fund exploratory grant.

Active since 2003.

CIFAR MACMILLAN MULTISCALE HUMAN

The program aims to revolutionize how we predict, treat and understand major diseases to support healthier, happier and longer lives. Using AI, genomics and advanced imaging, the team is working towards an unprecedented understanding of the human body across global populations. This ongoing work directly addresses the fundamental, unresolved challenge of how to map and connect biological mechanisms across highly disparate spatial and temporal scales, from molecules to whole organs. *Active since 2023.*

EARTH 4D: SUBSURFACE SCIENCE & EXPLORATION

The program explores big, interconnected questions about life, energy, water and time, both on Earth and beyond. This year, a powerful new theme emerged: habitability and energy. Researchers are studying how life survives in extreme environments deep underground, as well as novel energy sources that could address the current and future challenges of energy consumption and climate change. *Active since 2019.*

FUNGAL KINGDOM: THREATS & OPPORTUNITIES

The program seeks to decipher how fungi adapt and evolve in a warming world. To mitigate escalating threats to global health, biodiversity and food security, the program leverages artificial intelligence, functional genomics and cross-kingdom RNA interference to develop innovative vaccines and resistance-evading therapeutics. Their agenda harnesses fungal biodiversity to maximize planetary carbon capture and pioneer sustainable biotechnology solutions, including mycelium-based biomaterials and alternative foods. *Active since 2019.*

FUTURE FLOURISHING

The program explores what it means to live well without human exceptionalism, the idea that humans are separate from their environment, other organisms or the tools they use. “The House that Pigs Built,” an immersive exhibition curated by program members in Copenhagen’s Museum for Art in Public Spaces, exemplifies the program’s objective by showcasing how pigs shape modern environments, inviting new ways of thinking about how multispecies relationships are shaping our world.

Active since 2023.

GRAVITY & THE EXTREME UNIVERSE

The program's researchers play leading roles in detecting and analyzing gravitational waves and in supporting the development of CHIME/Fast Radio Burst Outriggers and the CHORD (Canadian Hydrogen Observatory and Radio-transient Detector) project. These efforts have produced important advances in our understanding of fast radio bursts, cosmology and transient phenomena, while also demonstrating the power of coordinated, interdisciplinary collaboration. *The program was founded in 1986 and sunsets in March 2028.*

HUMANITY'S URBAN FUTURE

Bringing together urban planners, anthropologists, geographers, sociologists, and environmental studies scholars, the program is asking, what makes a good city of the future? Through the immersive and collaborative study of six global cities (Kolkata, Toronto, Shanghai, Naples, Mexico City and Kinshasa), program members are making a transformative impact on how planners, regulators, political actors and everyday citizens can imagine better urban futures, and how the next generation of

urban scholars can understand cities in increasingly pluralistic ways.

Active since 2023.

HEALTHY MICROBIOMES IN A CHANGING WORLD

The program brings together anthropologists, biologists and other scholars to understand the features of healthy microbiomes. The focus is on interconnected microbial networks and the proposed sensory modality of "microbioception" to develop new approaches for repairing microbial systems that influence individual, societal and environmental health. *Active since 2014.*

INNOVATION, EQUITY & THE FUTURE OF PROSPERITY

The engineers and social scientists in the program are trying to understand and develop innovations that ameliorate rather than intensify inequality in advanced industrial countries. The program is particularly interested in artificial intelligence, care and housing, three interdependent activities that loom increasingly large in the twenty-first century. *Active since 2019.*

LEARNING IN MACHINES & BRAINS

Studying neuro- and computer science, the program members are using artificial intelligence to advance understanding of the brain through workshops and research that draw on recent developments in the field to better understand the brain and connect current machine-learning techniques with human intelligence.

Active since 2004.

QUANTUM INFORMATION SCIENCE

The program merges physics and computer science by using quantum-mechanical phenomena to process and transmit information, rather than treating them merely as properties of matter. Program members are exploring quantum technology in order to best harness it, solve pressing computational problems, and further advance fundamental research in the fields of physics and information. *The program was founded in 2002 and sunsetted in March 2026.*

QUANTUM MATERIALS

The program is entering an exciting new chapter, focused on designing and exploring “new quantum worlds.” Researchers are advancing next-generation materials while expanding efforts in custom material design. These discoveries aim to unlock new possibilities in quantum technologies and uncover principles of fundamental physics. *Active since 2012.*

DRIVING FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH & IMPACT



Students sample an oil and gas well in Utah's Lisbon Valley as part of research supported by CIFAR's Earth 4D: Subsurface Science and Exploration program.

Some of the most important breakthroughs happen when researchers are given the time and space to look beyond established boundaries. This year, CIFAR researchers continued to advance bold work driving real-world impact: from developing new frameworks to understand and interrupt cycles of hate, to challenging long-standing assumptions about ancient groundwater, to uncovering how breast milk antibodies help shape the infant gut microbiome. These stories show the power of fundamental research.

Researchers discover link between ancient groundwater and climate change

What began as a CIFAR-funded workshop among members of *Earth 4D: Subsurface Science & Exploration* became a high-profile paper in *Nature Geoscience*, offering a new way to understand “fossil groundwater” and its role in a changing climate.

The work challenges a long-standing assumption that groundwater stored in an aquifer for thousands of years is non-renewable. The researchers found that some aquifers containing very old water can



CIFAR Fellow Victoria Esses speaks at a CBC Radio IDEAS event exploring the Cycle of Hate.

still respond relatively quickly to modern climate conditions, including changes in recharge from rainfall or snowmelt.

This means groundwater sustainability depends not only on the age of the water, but also on how quickly the aquifer system responds to present-day environmental change. As communities face growing pressure on freshwater resources, this research offers a more precise way to assess when and how fossil groundwater can be used sustainably.

This work was led by **Michael Manga** (Fellow; University of California, Berkeley), **Jeffrey McDonnell** (Advisor; University of Saskatchewan), **Jennifer McIntosh** (Fellow; University of Arizona), **Barbara Sherwood Lollar** (Co-Director; University of Toronto) and **Richard Taylor** (Fellow; University College London).

Understanding and stopping cycles of hate

Boundaries, Membership & Belonging program members have developed an actionable framework that explains how intergroup hate takes hold, and how to stop it before it escalates.

Their *Detecting – and Stopping – the Cycle of Hate* challenges the idea that hate is simply an irrational emotion. Instead, it shows how historical narratives, political mobilization, social conditions and moral justifications reinforce one another, creating self-perpetuating cycles of animosity. The framework also identifies coordinated interventions – from early-warning systems to inoculation strategies – that can interrupt these cycles before hate becomes legitimized.

The group's work is gaining international traction, with a World Bank Policy Research Working Paper in 2026, presentations to the World Bank and the Pathways to

Prosperity National Conference, and a forthcoming Sage Handbook chapter. They are now developing a “cycle of peacemaking” grounded in restorative justice and Anishnabeg conflict resolution.

This work is led by **Victoria Esses** (Fellow; Western University), **Allison Harell** (Fellow; Université du Québec à Montréal), **Matt Lowe** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2023-2025; University of British Columbia), **Hazel Markus** (Advisor; Stanford University), **Aaron Mills** (Fellow; McGill University), **Vijayendra Rao** (Advisor; World Bank), **Stephen Reicher** (Fellow; University of St. Andrews) and **Perna Singh** (Fellow; Brown University).

Putting workers at the centre of AI's future

As AI systems enter more workplaces, researchers in CIFAR's *Innovation, Equity & the Future of Prosperity* program are examining how these technologies are changing jobs, in some cases by increasing monitoring, reducing autonomy or shifting workers into supporting roles for automated systems.

With support from a CIFAR Catalyst grant made possible through CIFAR's partnership with the British Academy, **Andrew Schrank** (Co-Director; Brown University), **Susan Helper** (Advisor; Case Western Reserve University; National Bureau of Economic



SPOTLIGHT

Future Flourishing program members **Alejandra Echeverri** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2024-2026; University of California Berkeley) and **Kulbhushansingh Suryawanshi** (Fellow; Nature Conservation Foundation) are working with farmers in India's Spiti Valley to understand how traditional crops can support climate-resilient food systems. Their study found that black peas, a nearly extinct crop cultivated for generations in the Indian Trans-Himalaya, outperformed cash crops under drought-like conditions. The work also produced the first whole-genome sequencing data for black peas, revealing strong genetic diversity and high protein content. This work underscores how traditional crops and Indigenous knowledge can offer solutions to future food security in a warming world.

Research) and **Serena Booth** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2025-2027; Brown University) organized a worker-centred AI workshop in Ohio with workers, labour leaders, economists and policymakers. Participants heard directly from workers about how AI systems are reshaping their daily work.

The workshop is helping to inform policy conversations. The conversations at the workshop inspired the organizers to publish an article in *Brookings*, a leading U.S. public policy think tank. The piece drew the attention of state and federal legislators, and program members are now engaging directly in state-level policy writing.

How breast milk antibodies shape the infant gut microbiome

Research out of the *Healthy Microbiomes in a Changing World* program is deepening our understanding of how breast milk affects infant health. The study focuses on sIgA, an antibody found in breast milk, and its role in shaping a baby's gut microbiome and immune system.

Researchers **Katherine Donald** (Cornell University), alongside **Meghan Azad** (Fellow; University of Manitoba) and **Brett Finlay** (Fellow; University of British Columbia) found that sIgA helps regulate gut bacteria in early life, including a microbe called *Erysipelatoclostridium*

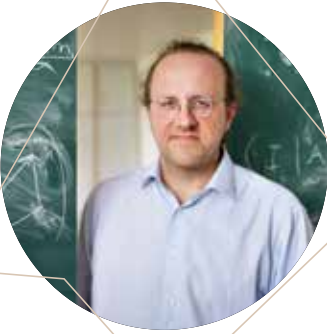
ramosum. By keeping this microbe in check, sIgA may help prevent immune overstimulation during a critical window of development.

The findings show that breast milk contains immune factors that help shape the relationship between a baby's microbiome and its immune system. This work could inform better approaches to supporting infant health, including for babies who are not breastfed or who need additional nutritional support.

Finding new ways to fight fungal infections

Fungal infections are an urgent and growing health threat, yet the world has far fewer antifungal drugs than antibiotics. As drug resistance increases, researchers are developing new treatments to stop dangerous infections before they become harder to control.

Work led by *Fungal Kingdom: Threats & Opportunities* program members **Leah Cowen** (Co-Director; University of Toronto), **Joseph Heitman** (Co-Director; Duke University), **Gerard Wright** (Fellow; McMaster University) and **James Kronstad** (Power Corporation Fellow; University of British Columbia) has identified new compounds that can enhance the potency of existing antifungal drugs, uncovering promising new drug candidates and revealing how disease-causing fungi grow and survive.



*Bernhard Schölkopf, Advisor,
Learning in Machines & Brains*

This work will strengthen the next generation of antifungal treatments, advancing drug discoveries that could better protect people from life-threatening fungal infections.

Rethinking how AI understands the world

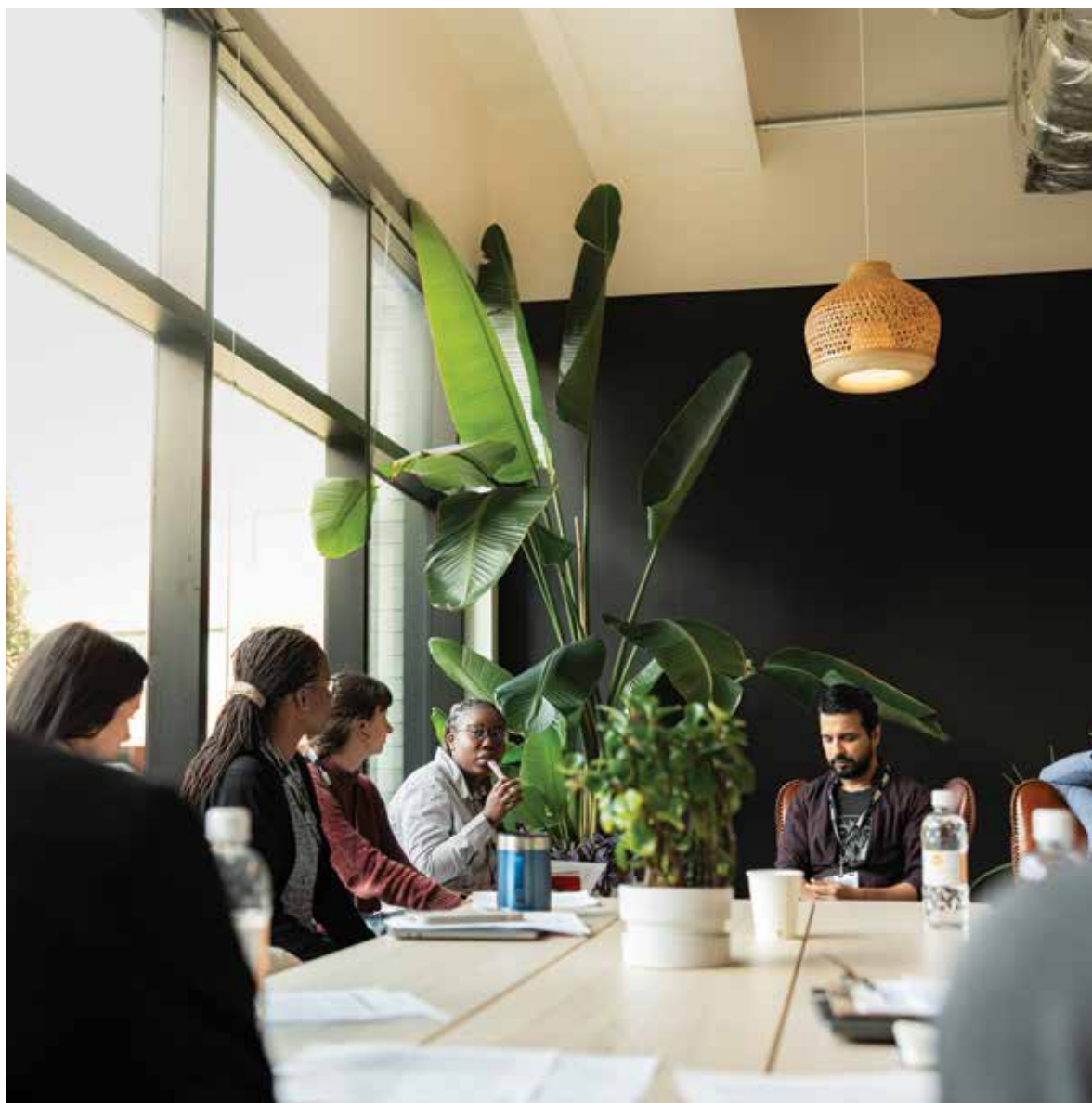
For years, much of the AI field focused on the idea that bigger models, more data and more computing power would lead to better intelligence. Researchers in CIFAR's *Learning in Machines & Brains* program have long challenged this "scaling-only" hypothesis. Instead, they argued that true intelligence requires world models — internal systems that represent how reality works, allowing an AI to predict cause-and-effect, reason through counterfactuals, and plan beyond simple text prediction.

That question is reshaping the field. This year, researchers in the program advanced work showing the limits of scaling alone and exploring new ways to build AI systems that can reason more flexibly. Fellow

Kyunghyun Cho's (New York University) seminal paper, "Scaling Laws Are Unreliable for Downstream Tasks," demonstrates that merely expanding model size does not automatically guarantee competence in complex, real-world applications. At the same time, **Yoshua Bengio** (Advisory Committee Chair, Canada CIFAR AI Chair at Mila; Université de Montréal) and colleagues introduced Recursive Self-Aggregation, a new approach to building systems that can reason dynamically. Meanwhile, work by Advisor **Bernhard Schölkopf** (ETH Zürich, Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems) advanced research on causal representation learning, helping AI systems better understand why things happen, not just what is likely to happen next.

Together, these complementary breakthroughs — incubated and refined through sustained CIFAR convenings — are helping lay the groundwork for a new era of AI systems capable of genuine reasoning and world understanding.

CIFAR'S AI LEADERSHIP: ADVANCING RESEARCH, TALENT AND IMPACT



Participants take part in a group discussion at the 21st annual CIFAR Deep Learning + Reinforcement Learning Summer School, a 10-day AI training program hosted by Amii in Edmonton.

For nearly a decade, the Canada CIFAR AI Chairs program has served as the foundation for Canada's leadership in AI. Today, the Canada CIFAR AI Chairs are ranked as the third-highest-impact AI research group in the world, alongside Google and the Max Planck Institute for Informatics. By anchoring world-class talent, the Canada CIFAR AI Chairs program empowers researchers to drive nationwide societal impact across critical sectors, including health, energy, AI safety and fundamental AI science.

Securing Canada's AI talent advantage

This year marked a historic milestone for the *Pan-Canadian AI Strategy*. The Canada CIFAR AI Chairs program reached a peak of 135 active Chairs, solidifying Canada's status as a global talent magnet.

As the lead of the strategy's research and talent pillar since 2017, CIFAR worked closely with federal partners and the three national AI Institutes – Amii, Mila and Vector Institute – to showcase the

impact of Canada's AI research community and to inform the development of the new federal AI strategy. Together, we demonstrated that sustained investment in research and talent is the foundation of Canada's AI ecosystem. With the refreshed federal strategy, AI for All, this renewed investment will grow the Canada CIFAR AI Chairs program from 135 Chairs today to nearly 200 — the largest expansion in the program's history. By bridging world-class scientific excellence with a unified strategic vision, CIFAR and the three national AI institutes are strengthening Canada's long-term success in developing and deploying safe and trustworthy AI that delivers social and economic benefits for Canadians.

Navigating AI and society

As AI reshapes society, CIFAR researchers are connecting cutting-edge science and actionable public policy to ensure technology serves the public good.

Over the past year, CIFAR's **AI for Health Solution Networks** brought together experts across sectors and disciplines to ensure AI tools are shaped by real-world needs. The **CIFAR AI for Diabetes Prediction & Prevention Solution Network** integrated socioeconomic data with input from community advisors to improve risk

prediction systems for Type 2 diabetes. This approach provides policymakers with a humanized blueprint for targeted resource allocation, enabling a transition from reactive care to proactive, equitable strategies that reduce strain on public healthcare systems.

Similarly, the CIFAR **Integrated AI for Health Imaging Solution Network** developed custom software to help clinicians address a critical bottleneck in Canadian healthcare by seamlessly and responsibly integrating AI models into hospital workflows. The Solution Network provides a blueprint for regulating safe, collaborative human-AI clinical environments.

CIFAR's impact extends to developing sustainable, ecosystem-wide capacity-building. The **AI Insights for Policymakers Program**, a joint collaboration between CIFAR and Mila, provides a platform for decision-makers and AI experts to share ideas on critical AI policy issues. This engagement is a two-way street: during program "office hours," AI experts learn to translate complex science into actionable governance, while gaining insights into policy friction points that reshape academic research trajectories and spark new collaborations.

CANADIAN AI BY THE NUMBERS



EXPANDING CANADA'S AI TALENT

135 world-class Canada CIFAR AI Chairs

73 researchers funded by the CAISI Research Program at CIFAR

250 AI professionals trained by Canada CIFAR AI Chairs enter the workforce each year



Zhijing Jin, Canada CIFAR AI Chair at the Vector Institute



RESEARCH & TALENT RANKINGS

3rd highest impact research cluster in the world (Canada CIFAR AI Chairs)²

31,450+ authors and inventors in AI (5th highest number in the world)³

5th in the world for responsible AI research⁴



SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION

249 participants in CIFAR-partnered training programs

73 CIFAR Inclusive AI Scholarships for Black and Indigenous students



STARTUPS & INVESTMENT

4th in the world with 560 new AI startups created⁵

5th in the world for global private investment in Canadian AI companies⁶

² Measured by Average Relative Citation (ARC). Proprietary analysis conducted by Elsevier.

³ <https://hai.stanford.edu/ai-index/2026-ai-index-report> Fig. 1.8.1

⁴ <https://hai.stanford.edu/ai-index/global-vibrancy-tool>

⁵ <https://hai.stanford.edu/research/ai-index-report> Fig. 4.2.13

⁶ <https://hai.stanford.edu/research/ai-index-report> Fig. 4.2.8



SPOTLIGHT

"I've witnessed firsthand how the program leads to the growth and flourishing of science-policy networks. [The program helps create] a better understanding of the real-world issues policymakers grapple with, which has enabled me to adjust my own research trajectory toward higher-impact outputs. Several of our 'office hours' sessions have led to research publications and new project collaborations."

ALISSA CENTIVANY

Co-Chair, AI Insights for
Policymakers, Western University

Mobilizing cutting-edge AI safety research

Public trust is one of the primary drivers of successful technological innovation. Recognizing this, the CAISI Research Program at CIFAR has successfully mobilized a national network of over 70 multidisciplinary experts to confront the urgent sociotechnical risks of advanced AI systems. More than \$3.6M was invested to launch 24 high-impact research projects designed to ensure AI systems are robust, safe and aligned with Canadian values.

The program is funding innovative solutions that are already delivering tangible public safety impacts:

- » **Protecting Mental Health:** To safeguard vulnerable populations, researchers at Mila's AI Safety Studio developed a first-of-its-kind mental health benchmark as a guardrail to detect and block chatbot content that encourages self-harm.

*Yoshua Bengio
Canada CIFAR AI Chair and 2018 ACM
A.M. Turing Award winner*



*Elissa Strome
CIFAR's Executive Director,
Pan-Canadian AI Strategy, delivers
a plenary address at ALL IN 2025,
Canada's largest AI event.*

- » **Defending Democracy:** The CIPHER project at Amii is building an advanced human-in-the-loop AI system to empower civil society to identify and combat sophisticated, state-backed foreign disinformation campaigns.
- » **Ensuring Truthful AI:** To counter unverified AI outputs, researchers at the Vector Institute developed an AI Debate Framework that trains language models to construct reliable justifications using valid evidence.
- » **Evaluating Frontier AI:** The Vector Institute conducted a revolutionary benchmark study, independently evaluating 11 global frontier models for safety, and open-sourced tools to enable secure AI adoption across businesses and public services.

The CAISI Research Program at CIFAR funded two new AI Safety Solution Networks:

- » **Safeguarding Courts from Synthetic AI Content:** This network develops open-source verification tools to protect the integrity of the justice system from AI-generated deepfakes, falsified digital evidence and large language model (LLM) hallucinations.
- » **Mitigating Dialect Bias:** Co-funded by the International Development Research Centre, this network designs culturally representative AI models to eliminate linguistic inequality, ensuring that LLMs do not misinterpret or penalize marginalized dialects like Nigerian Pidgin English.



SPOTLIGHT

Bo Wang (Canada CIFAR AI Chair, Vector Institute; University of Toronto) is leading the creation of the world's first virtual human cell using generative AI. His team at Xaira recently launched X-Cell, a massive AI model that acts as a digital testing ground for biology. Instead of relying on slow laboratory trial-and-error, X-Cell uses a novel AI architecture trained on millions of data points to simulate cellular reactions. It accurately predicts how cells respond to new drugs and genetic mutations before a physical experiment even begins, transforming drug discovery into a faster, more predictable discipline.



SPOTLIGHT

Ross Mitchell (Canada CIFAR AI Chair, Amii; University of Alberta) is using AI to tackle the serious issue of physician burnout. Together with a group of clinical researchers, he helped create Jenkins, an AI-driven scribe that automatically generates medical notes by securely capturing patient-physician conversations. After a successful trial in Alberta emergency departments, where early users applied it in up to 85 per cent of patient visits, the tool is now accessible to all acute care doctors in Alberta.

**SPOTLIGHT**

By mid-July 2026, more than 1,300 physicians across 12 medical specialties had signed up to use Jenkins. It has been utilized in 120,000 patient visits, with 1,100 new ones added every day. By reducing paperwork, this locally developed tool is significantly easing documentation tasks, improving hospital patient flow, and allowing doctors to spend more time directly caring for patients.

Tal Arbel (Canada CIFAR AI Chair, Mila; McGill University) is revolutionizing personalized medicine for neurological diseases. Brain imaging algorithms developed by her team are already used globally to analyze clinical trials for nearly all new multiple sclerosis drugs. In a recent collaboration with Mila and Microsoft Research, Arbel's team introduced a groundbreaking AI framework that uses neural equations to predict individualized, continuous disease trajectories. By analyzing medical images and clinical data, this system forecasts patient disability progression with state-of-the-art accuracy, offering doctors a powerful new tool for precision treatment planning and targeted clinical trials.

EXPLORING CHALLENGES ON THE HORIZON



How can food systems be better integrated into cities to support ecosystem health? This question guided CIFAR's Urban Future of Food workshop, part of the CIFAR Arrell Future of Food Initiative.

As the world faces increasingly complex and interconnected challenges, CIFAR is building new ways to look ahead. Complementing our existing approaches to identifying areas where CIFAR can have the greatest impact, the CIFAR Ralph M. Barford Discovery Initiative is growing our capacity to surface critical uncertainties and interdisciplinary opportunities. We're applying these skills to explore new programs and ensure our existing programs remain on the frontier of knowledge creation.

Building Our Foresight Capacity

Looking on the horizon is core to how CIFAR works. We supported neural networks long before the modern AI revolution, and *Quantum Information Science* before quantum computing became a global field, backing emerging areas many years and decades before their influence was widely recognized.

In 2025-2026, CIFAR strengthened its Challenges on the Horizon capability to help research programs identify emerging signals,

questions and challenges that could shape society in the years ahead. This work also helps CIFAR determine where its unique model of long-term, interdisciplinary collaboration can make the greatest difference. That work led to:

- » 164 CIFAR community members, including Fellows, Scholars and global partners taking part in structured foresight exercises.
- » The development and application of nine foresight tools and approaches to help researchers test emerging ideas and explore how their fields may evolve.
- » The tools being used across nine meetings and events, including seven workshops through the CIFAR Arrell Future of Food Initiative, focused on global food security.

The Future of Food Takes Shape

As part of CIFAR's foresight work, CIFAR launched the **CIFAR Arrell Future of Food Initiative** in 2025. Designed as an idea-to-program pipeline, the initiative uses a multi-stage discovery framework to thoroughly investigate high-risk, high-potential research fields before elevating them into long-term research programs.

CIFAR first convened a global panel of experts to identify the challenges and opportunities facing the future of global food systems. Their insights culminated in

the Future of Food Report, released in July 2025, which identified emerging research questions around sustainable food production, nutrition and health, and the relationship between local practices and global food systems. The report shaped a call for Discovery Workshops that drew 58 submissions from interdisciplinary teams representing 41 countries. Seven standout teams were selected to bring their work to the Discovery Workshop phase to test hypotheses and shape potential pathways for future transformative research.

Across the workshops, participants examined how future food systems can become more resilient, equitable and sustainable, and explored how finance, policy and technology can better support systems-level change. Through targeted interactions, the workshops also brought some researchers into dialogue with farmers, policymakers and practitioners, helping to ground the research in the realities of who will ultimately turn that research into real-world impact.

The next phase of this process is already underway. Select workshops will evolve into comprehensive Discovery Programs, beginning in Fall 2026. Through this deliberate evolution, CIFAR is successfully translating early-stage foresight into structured, actionable research trajectories.



SPOTLIGHT

Since 2007, the Metcalf Foundation has been a visionary partner in helping CIFAR look beyond the horizon towards tomorrow's defining challenges. Their long-term philanthropy has provided foundational support for early-career researchers, first through the Global Academy (the precursor to the CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholars program), and later by driving bold sustainability research through the *Bio-Inspired Solar Energy / Accelerated Decarbonization* program. Today, the Metcalf Foundation continues this vital work through its support of CIFAR's Nurturing a Resilient Earth impact

cluster, empowering global, interdisciplinary teams to navigate the realities of an evolving world and create scalable solutions for a sustainable planet.

"The Metcalf Foundation is immensely proud of our 20-year partnership with CIFAR. As a fellow Canadian organization dedicated to tackling complex societal challenges, we champion this extraordinary global network, whose boundary-pushing, interdisciplinary research is delivering breakthrough insights the world urgently needs."

JAMISON STEEVE

President & CEO, Metcalf Foundation



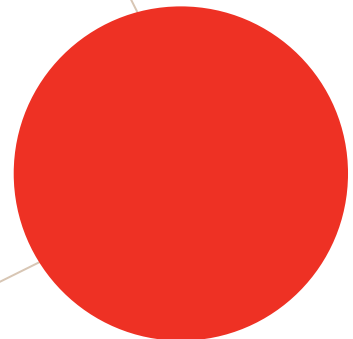
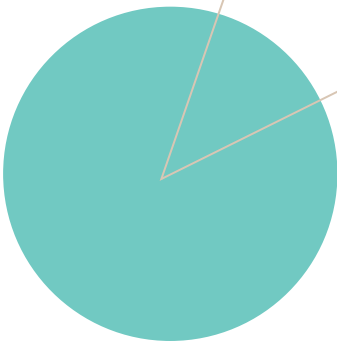
Charting bold research directions for the Future of the Arctic

As the Arctic warms nearly four times faster than the rest of the planet, changes in the region are offering an early view of the environmental, political and social pressures that will shape the future.

In February 2026, CIFAR convened in Switzerland for a Discovery Panel on the Future of the Arctic to explore potential research directions for the region.

Using CIFAR's unique convening model, 14 interdisciplinary experts based in Canada, Finland, France, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom used foresight exercises, including building 2050 Arctic scenarios, to explore future research needs in the region.

Findings from the Discovery Panel subsequently culminated in The CIFAR Panel on the Future of the Arctic Report, which was released in June 2026. The report outlines a series of critical tensions and research directions designed to empower scholars to ask more profound questions that can shape the future of the Arctic for decades to come, particularly related to governance, sustainability and resource extraction. CIFAR is considering next steps for advancing work on this theme, recognizing the Arctic as both a defining Canadian challenge and an increasingly urgent global one. The panel was developed in partnership with the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and made possible through the CIFAR Ralph M. Barford Discovery Initiative.



Through seven CIFAR Arrell Future of Food workshops and the Discovery Panel on the Future of the Arctic, CIFAR brought researchers and partners together to examine emerging challenges.

BUILDING DIVERSE GLOBAL NETWORKS



At the Canadian Space Agency, CIFAR and IVADO brought together researchers and innovators from AI, data science, health and space for Aim4 the Moon: Innovation at the Edge of Space, AI, and Health.

CIFAR's global networks move ideas across borders, institutions, disciplines and sectors. By creating sustained opportunities for collaboration, CIFAR helps researchers and partners build the momentum needed to pursue questions no single country, field or institution can address alone. In 2025-2026, our active partnerships with governments, research organizations, industries and foundations totalled 77, representing 9 countries around the world.

These strong relationships with like-minded, innovative organizations allow us to expand and diversify the opportunities available to our research community and invest in bold ideas with the highest potential impact.

Expanding opportunities for cross-border collaboration and impact

CIFAR's partnership with the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) continues to expand opportunities for collaboration and scientific impact across CIFAR's programs. This past year, CIFAR held three program meetings in Switzerland, as well as a Rare Diseases Workshop and the Quantum Materials School.

Those meetings are already translating into action. The partnership generated 22 Catalyst Grant applications involving CIFAR and Swiss



SPOTLIGHT

The CIFAR Canada-Taiwan Frontiers of Science Symposium marked the first joint activity between CIFAR and Taiwan's National Science and Technology Council as part of our new partnership. Hosted in Banff, the event convened a diverse group of researchers from Taiwan and CIFAR's research community to explore the intersection of responsible AI, democracy, governance and social trust. The event created space for early-career researchers to consider how democratic states with relatively small populations, such as Canada and Taiwan can advance technological innovation while strengthening democratic resilience. Over the course of three days, participants exemplified how meaningful interdisciplinary exchange can spark fresh perspectives and open new frontiers in research through thoughtful discussion.

researchers, resulting in four funded projects, highlighting how our partnership has seeded high-impact collaborations across borders.

One recently funded project examines how urban growth is reshaping customary and collective lands across Sub-Saharan Africa, South America and India. By studying how shifting land systems are creating emerging "rural metropolises" and alternative urban futures, the project aims to inform local and regional planning, mentor early-career scholars, produce a joint comparative publication and lay the groundwork for larger international grant applications.

Data-Driven Solutions for a Changing World

Together with the Helmholtz Information & Data Science Academy (HIDA), CIFAR co-hosted a summer school in Berlin focused on data science for climate. This collaborative learning opportunity was the result of our deepening partnership with the Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft / Helmholtz



Association, intended to build on our existing collaboration and foster closer cooperation to drive innovative research. CIFAR and HIDA's immersive summer school trained 30 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows eager to tackle global climate challenges using interdisciplinary and innovative data-driven approaches at the intersection of data science, AI, climate research and remote sensing.

CIFAR speakers included **Stefan Bauer** (Fellow and CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2020-2022, *Learning in Machines & Brains*; Technical University of Munich), who discussed causality in AI, **Ariel Furst** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2022-2024, *Accelerated Decarbonization*; Massachusetts Institute of Technology), who spoke about data standardization for clean tech, and **Ann Gregory** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2024-2026, *CIFAR MacMillan Multiscale Human*; University of Calgary), who led a session on how genomics and data science can help uncover the role of viruses in climate-related processes.

SPOTLIGHT

In Quebec, CIFAR and IVADO convened a group of Canada CIFAR AI Chairs and experts from the Canadian Space Agency for the Aim4theMoon workshop. Discussions focused on how AI can support health applications in space and on Earth, specifically addressing the unique challenges faced by extreme and under-served environments, such as remote communities and the Arctic. The event featured diverse, interdisciplinary researchers from across AI and aerospace engineering, representing Canada from coast to coast.

EXPANDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESEARCH LEADERS

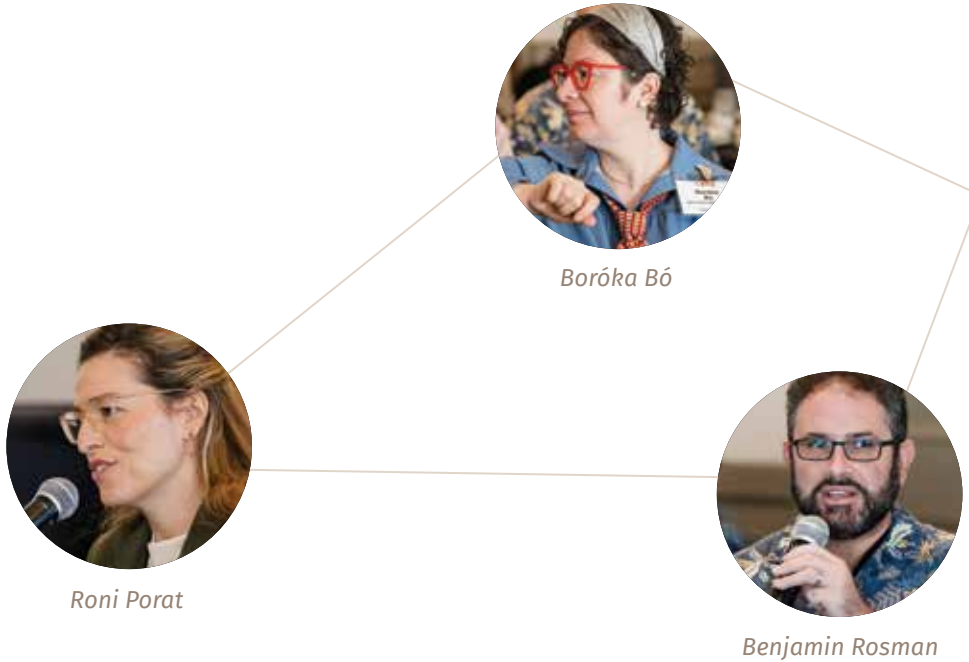


Jenny Yun-Chen Chan, 2026-2028 Jacobs CIFAR Research Fellow, speaks at the 2026 All Cohorts Meeting in France, celebrating 10 years of the Jacobs Fellowship.

CIFAR's Next-Generation Initiatives give early-career researchers the support, networks and freedom to pursue bold, interdisciplinary research. At a challenging time for science and research funding globally, CIFAR is helping emerging research leaders take risks, build lasting collaborations and gain access to opportunities that are often difficult to find within academic norms. By investing early, CIFAR aims to shape a more connected, globally engaged research community ready to define the next frontiers of discovery.

Advancing the Future of Child Development and Learning

CIFAR and the Swiss-based Jacobs Foundation have partnered to support interdisciplinary early-career research on how children and youth learn and develop, enabling the effective scaling of education policies and practices worldwide. The newly named **Jacobs CIFAR Research Fellowship** harmonizes the complementary mandates of CIFAR and the Jacobs Foundation to extend opportunities for early-career researchers to advance their work towards societal impact. Twelve exceptional researchers were named as the first Jacobs CIFAR Research Fellows for the 2026-2028 cohort. The inaugural cohort spans a highly diverse and cutting-edge spectrum of specialties, whose interdisciplinary research addresses important research areas, including the effect of climate extremes on schooling, refugee education in crisis zones and the effects of AI and screen time on children's mental health.



SPOTLIGHT

In 2025-2026, CIFAR welcomed its 10th cohort of **CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholars**. In June 2025, Scholars from across every cohort gathered in Halifax for a two-day All-Cohorts Meeting celebrating the program's 10th anniversary. The meeting brought together more than 50 Scholars from the 2016-2025 cohorts to lead discussions on shared global challenges, hear from guest speakers and build new collaborations. The gathering culminated in 12 new Catalyst Fund projects, including a cross-programmatic project led by researchers **Boróka Bó** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2025-2027, *Innovation, Equity & the Future of Prosperity*; University College

Dublin), **Serena Booth** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar 2025-2027, *Innovation, Equity & the Future of Prosperity*; Brown University), **Roni Porat** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar 2025-2027, *Boundaries, Membership & Belonging*; The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and **Benjamin Rosman** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2022-2024, *Learning in Machines & Brains*; University of the Witwatersrand), that will leverage global interviews and AI-enhanced survey methods to investigate how venture capital funding reinforces gender inequality in artificial intelligence, aiming to provide actionable, evidence-based strategies for a more inclusive technology economy.

From Emerging Scholar to AI Leader: Alona Fyshe's CIFAR Journey

Alona Fyshe's trajectory within the CIFAR ecosystem is a powerful testament to the long-term impact of backing early-career researchers. Selected in 2016 for the inaugural cohort of the CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholars program within the *Brain, Mind & Consciousness* program, Fyshe began her journey by exploring the deeper mechanisms of human cognition. A decade later, she is a leading global voice in her field, a full Fellow in CIFAR's *Learning in Machines & Brains* program, and a Canada CIFAR AI Chair at Amii, where she was recently appointed as Director of Scientific Operations. Her path illustrates how early support, mentorship and sustained connection can propel next-generation thinkers into positions of leadership.

Now an Associate Professor with a joint appointment in Computing Science and Psychology at the University of Alberta, Fyshe is merging biological and artificial minds. By applying machine learning to analyze brain images of people reading, her lab investigates how humans represent and combine words to process higher-order meaning. Beyond her core research, she is a champion for public AI literacy, having recently launched the capstone course for the university's AI Everywhere undergraduate certificate.

Fyshe's enduring connection to the CIFAR network continues to spark vital, cross-disciplinary breakthroughs. She recently



co-launched a collaborative Catalyst project with **Natalie Brito** (CIFAR Azrieli Global Scholar, 2022-2024, *Child & Brain Development*; New York University) titled "Characteristics of Infant Learning and their Utility in AI." By cross-pollinating insights from early childhood development with advanced machine learning, this initiative exemplifies the boundary-pushing science that CIFAR was built to sustain.

"The Global Scholars program absolutely changed my career trajectory, and was the reason (I believe) I was able to make the connections I did, start the collaborations I did, and make the university move I did. CIFAR expanded my horizons, and I'm sure my research career is better for it, and I hope will be more impactful because of it."

CIFAR proudly acknowledges the Azrieli Foundation, whose generous and visionary support was instrumental to the launch and nurturing of the Global Scholars program. As Founding Partner, the Foundation's profound commitment lit the way for the first 10 cohorts of the program (2016 to 2025).



RI: Indigenous Knowledges brought together nearly 50 Indigenous researchers from 17 countries to explore solutions beyond traditional Western disciplines.

Radical Interdisciplinarity: Seeding Global Collaborations

CIFAR's **Radical Interdisciplinarity (RI)** serves as a collaborative sandbox, designed to break down traditional academic silos and seed new global networks. In 2025-2026, this model came to life through two landmark international gatherings.

In Banff, Alberta, CIFAR partnered with Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga Centre for Māori Research Excellence in Aotearoa New Zealand to host the inaugural

RI: Indigenous Knowledges, uniting nearly 50 Indigenous researchers from 17 countries to explore solutions that transcend traditional Western disciplines – a milestone event that serves as a foundational launchpad for CIFAR's long-term commitment to expanding capacity and ensuring Indigenous methodologies shape future global research.

For many participants, the forum was a unique opportunity to gather in an Indigenous academic space to share stories and connect across distinct communities, disciplines and geographies. Those connections are continuing through seed-funded projects, including a collaboration between researchers **Jabulile Mzimela** (University of Zululand) and **Lesedi Mashumba** (University of Botswana) on how conservation systems in Botswana and South Africa continue to reproduce colonial forms of exclusion, militarization and Indigenous dispossession.

Meanwhile, in Geneva, Switzerland, CIFAR and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) convened the **RI: Arctic Horizons** forum, bringing together nearly 40 early-career researchers from Canada and Switzerland to share research priorities and build community among scholars exploring the interconnected

RI: Arctic Horizons united nearly 40 early-career researchers from Canada and Switzerland to explore challenges facing the Arctic.



geopolitical and ecological challenges facing the polar regions. This event was held in parallel with the **Discovery Panel on the Future of the Arctic**. Following the forum, all participants had met new potential research collaborators, and six collaborative seed-funded projects were launched on themes ranging from Arctic aerosols and solar reliability to Indigenous food systems and research integrity under geopolitical fragmentation.

“The Radical Interdisciplinarity Forum on Arctic Horizons was like a mini-sabbatical. You put away the distractions and immerse yourself in different perspectives, different thought processes and, of course, different fields. The awareness of these itself is transformative to research, but the connections made are valuable for careers and the field, but also much needed for the future of the Arctic.”

- Srijak Bhatnagar, Athabasca University

Training the next generation of AI talent

CIFAR is ensuring Canada’s AI leadership is built on equity, diversity and inclusion. Together with partners across the country, we are driving next-generation training initiatives that are actively dismantling systemic barriers. Over the past year, these collaborative efforts empowered nearly 250 students. Central to this mission was the CIFAR Inclusive AI Scholarship program, which funded 44 self-identified Black and 29 self-identified Indigenous trainees, helping to diversify the pipeline of future leaders.

A prime example of this ecosystem-wide impact was the 21st annual **CIFAR Deep Learning + Reinforcement Learning Summer School** in Edmonton. This 10-day intensive AI training program for advanced students was made possible



by host partner Amii, and our partners and sponsors, including the Government of Alberta, Cohere and RBC. Their investments continue to fuel Canada's legacy as an inclusive, responsible global AI powerhouse.

"One of the key things that I want to take from this summer school is bridging the gap between the academic community and the industry side of things because AI and machine learning techniques are still a little foreign in space sciences. Adoption of these newer techniques [...] would be a gamechanger for any project." - Agnit Mukhopadhyay, Research Fellow, University of Alberta

SPOTLIGHT

"My co-founders, our technical staff in Canada and around the world, and I have all benefited from the many ways CIFAR has supported Canada's AI ecosystem. CIFAR has helped create a community where researchers, talent and companies like ours can grow and contribute on the global stage. We are deeply grateful for that work, and proud to support CIFAR's continued leadership in advancing Canadian AI."

IVAN ZHANG

Co-founder, Cohere



Connecting emerging researchers to Canada's innovation ecosystem

In our ongoing efforts to continually strengthen industry-academic collaboration among the next generation of researchers, CIFAR partnered with Mitacs in March 2026 to support up to 10 **Mitacs-CIFAR Global Excellence Award** recipients. The new awards, under the Mitacs Accelerate Global Excellence Award program, will attract outstanding international postdoctoral fellows and PhD graduates to Canada by enabling recipients to gain access to Mitacs' industry-research partners and CIFAR's global research networks and next-gen programming. Selection is underway and will be announced in 2027.

SPOTLIGHT

True validation of an organization's impact comes from the inside. At CIFAR, our researchers don't just contribute their intellect: they actively fuel our future through personal philanthropy. Our Fellows and Advisors are increasingly giving back to support both discovery research and the next generation of research leaders, creating new pathways and opportunities for emerging talent worldwide. We are deeply grateful to our researcher-donors who lead by example.

"As a scientist whose work has been focused almost entirely on cognitive neuroscience, being part of the Brain, Mind & Consciousness program for more than 10 years now, has been a mind-bending experience. I've had opportunities to interact with researchers from many different disciplines, from philosophy to anthropology to developmental psychology. I am so grateful to be part of the CIFAR community."

MELVYN GOODALE

CIFAR donor and Advisory Committee Chair, Brain, Mind & Consciousness; Western University

CIFAR SUPPORTERS

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our supporters for your generosity and inspiring commitment to our mission. You empower CIFAR to address the most pressing questions facing science and humanity.

DONORS

Lifetime Giving

We proudly celebrate the exceptional generosity of donors whose lifetime giving has helped shape CIFAR's story. Discover the supporters whose cumulative giving of \$1 million+ reflects a profound commitment to CIFAR's mission at: cifar.ca/supporters.

2025-2026 Giving

Every gift fuels CIFAR's groundbreaking discoveries. Thank you to all who supported our mission this year, including these champions who made multi-year commitments (*in italics*) and gifts of \$100,000 or greater between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.

Anonymous

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We are profoundly grateful to the generous individuals who have made CIFAR part of their legacy through a meaningful bequest.

Lesley Evans

Elizabeth Gerrits

Richard Ivey

Lawrence Tanenbaum

To explore how you can further your impact or for any questions, please reach out to jennifer.marczak@cifar.ca, Manager, Donor Relations.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

With deep gratitude, we acknowledge the essential support of our government partners in advancing CIFAR's mission:

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)

The Ministry of Technology and Innovation of Alberta

Le Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ)

RESEARCH PARTNERS

Thank you to our research partners for advancing CIFAR's bold ideas and catalyzing our global impact through collaboration, insight and shared commitment.

The British Academy

European Laboratory for Learning and Intelligent Systems (ELLIS)

Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA)

Genome British Columbia

Helmholtz Association (Germany)

Inria (France)

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

IVADO (Canada)

International Research Center for Neurointelligence (IRCN) (Japan)

Jacobs Foundation (Switzerland)

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) (Taiwan)

Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

CIFAR FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

(In thousands of dollars)

March 31, 2026, with comparative information for 2025

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2026	2025
ASSETS		
Current assets (cash, accounts receivable and prepaid expenses)	\$18,504	\$13,163
Investments	37,193	31,654
Other assets	260	486
	\$55,957	\$45,303
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities	21,899	16,745
Deferred contributions	0	534
Net assets	34,058	28,024
	\$55,957	\$45,303
SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	2026	2025
REVENUE		
Government & Public Sector Partnerships		
Federal: Pan-Canadian AI Strategy	27,456	29,668
Federal: CAISI Research Program at CIFAR	6,805	1,645
Federal: Research Programs	11,600	11,200
Provincial	1,576	1,031
Private Sector		
Philanthropy	10,765	10,213
Partnerships	5,194	3,748
Investment income	2,722	1,876
	\$66,118	\$59,381
RESEARCH PROGRAM EXPENSES		
Program expenses		
Fundamental Research	15,329	14,004
Next Generation Research Leaders	5,695	4,757
Challenges on the Horizon	1,391	578
Diverse Global Network	1,325	1,760
Non-program expenses		
Advancement	2,540	2,490
Governance & Administration	811	967
Support activities & Cost recovery for AI Secretariat (PCAIS only)	1,930	2,811
	\$29,021	\$27,367
PAN-CANADIAN AI STRATEGY EXPENSES		
Talent funding to AI Institutes (Amii, Mila, Vector)	17,808	20,686
Operational Funding to AI Institutes (Amii, Mila, Vector)	5,996	6,000
Research & ecosystem funding to CIFAR	4,229	3,612
	\$28,033	\$30,298
CAISI RESEARCH PROGRAM AT CIFAR EXPENSES		
AI Safety - Research, Capacity Building & Translation	3,476	355
AI Safety - Priority Research	3,072	1,111
AI Safety - Operational Costs	332	144
AI Safety - Engagement & Networking	173	35
	\$7,053	\$1,645
Excess of revenue over expenses before the undernoted	2,011	71
Unrealized gain on investments	4,023	2,395
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$6,034	\$2,466

TOTAL CIFAR REVENUE

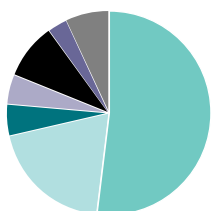


RESEARCH PROGRAMS REVENUE



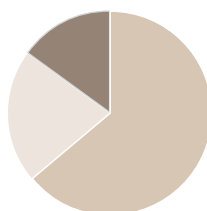
- 36% Government (Federal)
- 5% Government (Provincial)
- 34% Philanthropy
- 16% Partnerships
- 9% Investment income

TOTAL EXPENSES



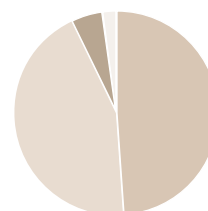
RESEARCH PROGRAM EXPENSES

- 53% Fundamental Research
- 20% Next Generation Research Leaders
- 5% Challenges on the Horizon
- 5% Diverse Global Network
- 8% Advancement
- 3% Governance & Administration
- 6% Support Activities & Cost Recovery for AI Secretariat (PCAIS only)



PAN-CANADIAN AI STRATEGY EXPENSES

- 64% Talent funding to AI Institutes (Amii, Mila, Vector)
- 21% Operational funding to AI Institutes (Amii, Mila, Vector)
- 15% Research & ecosystem funding to CIFAR



CAISI RESEARCH PROGRAM AT CIFAR EXPENSES

- 49% AI Safety - Research, Capacity Building & Translation
- 44% AI Safety - Priority Research
- 5% AI Safety - Operational Costs
- 2% AI Safety - Engagement & Networking

This financial information is drawn from CIFAR's full audited financial statements, available at cifar.ca/publications-reports.

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