

GÉNOME QUÉBEC ANNOUNCES AN INVESTMENT OF \$4.5 M IN A NEW PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM FOR GENOMICS SOLUTIONS IN HEALTH

A WINNING FORMULA FOR 12 RESEARCH TEAMS

Montréal, June 21, 2021 — Génome Québec is proud to announce today the 12 research teams from four Québec universities who have been awarded major funding in genomics. The funding is part of the new *Genomics Integration Program – Human Health*.

As a way of boosting the competitiveness of Québec SMEs and attracting new investment to the province, Génome Québec has recently introduced a powerful measure aimed at building new bridges between the private sector and researchers working on genomics health solutions. The program offers co-funding ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000, with equal or greater participation from partners. This first round focuses on partnerships between academic researchers and users capable of implementing or commercializing research results in order to bring technology to maturity. The initiative is also meant to serve as a lever to access larger-scale funding. The program is highly relevant given that many companies in the health sector (SMEs, start-ups) have difficulty obtaining seed funding, thus hindering their ability to develop proofs of concepts.

“The approach reflects our commitment to support key competencies that will propel the genomics sector, facilitate dialogue with industry and provide collaborative solutions to address Québec’s priority issues,” said Daniel Coderre, President and CEO of Génome Québec.

To ensure that as many projects as possible can be completed, Génome Québec has partnered with Oncopole, research, development and investment hub dedicated to accelerating the fight against cancer through research, to jointly fund five research projects on cancer.

“We are proud to be a partner in this promising new program. It aligns with our goal of positioning Québec and its scientists as key players in cancer genomics. Therefore we focus on strategic investments and partnerships that support innovation for the benefit of patients,” says Renaldo Battista, Executive Director of Oncopole.

According to Stéphanie Lord-Fontaine, Vice President, Scientific Affairs at Génome Québec, this partnership between researchers and the private sector “meets a real need of stakeholders that uptake genomics innovation, whether in terms of discovering new treatments or accelerating the integration of genomics into the clinical setting. I am delighted to see several promising partnership-based projects taking shape, particularly with Québec SMEs and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. Québec’s advanced expertise in artificial intelligence also plays a key role in the approaches proposed by the teams.”

The funds allocated will be used to develop proofs of concepts that will be leveraged to secure subsequent funding. In addition, this first round will provide public users, including the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and hospitals, with access to a funding vehicle to validate genomics tools and integrate them into patient care.

In addition to making a significant contribution to the development of innovation zones connected to Québec’s major research institutions – for instance, by stimulating the proliferation of innovations – these funds will help up-and-coming researchers position themselves favourably in major funding programs, including those of Genome Canada.

Congratulations to our funding recipients:

- Yves Brun - [Antibacterial drug discovery guided by Artificial Intelligence](#)
- Sonia Cellot and Vincent-Philippe Lavallée - [Delivering precision medicine in pediatric hemato-oncology by integrating clinical genomics into the care pathway](#)
- Arnaud Droit – [MICROB-AI, towards a new generation of diagnosis tests for urinary tract infections \(UTI\)](#)
- Emmanuelle Lemyre – [Detecting chromosome anomalies in pediatric leukemia using new DNA analysis technology](#)
- Maureen McKeague – [New software to screen antibiotics that act on RNA](#)
- Peter S. McPherson - [Antibody characterization through open science](#)
- John D. Rioux – [Developing an inexpensive blood-based diagnostic test for Crohn's disease](#)
- Peter Siegel – [Towards single-cell metabolomics: Discovering the metabolic heterogeneity and architecture of solid cancers](#)
- Lee-Hwa Tai – [Therapeutic bacteria programmed to eliminate tumours](#)
- Paul J. Thomassin – [Using whole genome sequencing to build a bridge between human exposure to antimicrobial resistant foodborne pathogens and the resulting burden of disease and associated healthcare costs](#)
- Jérôme Waldispühl – [Assembly of a massive data set to train a predictor of small molecules targeting RNAs](#)
- Brian Wilhelm – [Using chemogenomic data to improve drug predictions based on machine learning](#)

About Génome Québec

Génome Québec's mission is to catalyze the development and excellence of genomics research and promote its integration and democratization. It is a pillar of the Québec bioeconomy and contributes to Québec's influence and its social and sustainable development. The funds invested by Génome Québec are provided by the ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation du Québec (MEI), the Government of Canada, through Genome Canada, and private partners. To learn more, visit www.genomequebec.com

About Oncopole

Oncopole is a Quebec hub for research, development and investment to accelerate the fight against cancer. Created in February of 2017, it is the result of a unique joint initiative led by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQS) and made possible by an initial \$15M investment from Merck Canada. Oncopole's mission is to act as a catalyst leveraging actions made by key players in Québec's oncology and innovation research ecosystem. In doing so, it aims to position the province as a leader in the field. Its action priorities, which include research, entrepreneurship, commercialization, and the integration of innovation, as well as clinical relevance, are organized to facilitate the mobilization of stakeholders, the discovery of innovative approaches to fight cancer and, ultimately, a positive impact for the benefit of patients.

<https://oncopole.ca/en/>

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