



**gairdner**  
LES PRIX CANADA GAIRDNER AWARDS

## 2024 Corporate Plan

November 2023

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**SECTION 1 – ABOUT THE GAIRDNER FOUNDATION**..... 3

    Mission & Operating Principles..... 4

    Governance & Operations ..... 5

    Awards Adjudication ..... 6

    Impact: Gairdner’s Achievements to Date ..... 6

    Impact: Gairdner’s Benefit to Society ..... 6

**SECTION 2 – 2023 PERFORMANCE RESULTS**..... 8

    Performance Goals and Results for 2023 ..... 8

    Detailed Performance Metrics of 2023 Events ..... 9

    2023 Gairdner Science Week Events..... 9

    2023 Quebec Programming..... 11

    2023 Ontario Programming..... 11

    2023 Alberta Programming ..... 11

    2023 Global Perspectives Panels ..... 12

    Additional Student and Trainee Events and Activities ..... 13

    Gairdner’s Digital Strategy..... 13

    Performance Goals and Expected Results for 2024..... 14

**SECTION 3 – FINANCIAL SUMMARY** ..... 15

    Planned Receipts and Disbursements for 2024..... 16

**SECTION 4 – MANAGING RISKS AND CHALLENGES**..... 17

**SECTION 5 – PERFORMANCE MONITORING**..... 17

## SECTION 1: ABOUT THE GAIRDNER FOUNDATION

### ABOUT THE GAIRDNER FOUNDATION

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The Gairdner Foundation was established by Toronto stockbroker, James Gairdner in 1957. The Foundation awards annual prizes to scientists from around the world whose discoveries have had a major impact on scientific progress and human health.

The Gairdner Foundation, whose headquarters are located in the heart of Toronto's MaRS Discovery District, was incorporated in December 1957 as a charitable corporation under the laws of the Province of Ontario, Canada. During 2013, the Foundation was continued as a federal corporation under the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act. Its funds were originally derived from the personal gifts of the founder and members of his family. In 2008, the Federal government, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, provided an endowment to the Foundation to ensure that the Awards continue to grow in international stature, and a new Canada Gairdner Global Health Award was established. CIHR has also provided funding annually since 2008. At that time, the name of the Awards was changed to the Canada Gairdner Awards. Today, the Governments of Alberta and Québec also generously support the Gairdner Foundation and its programming.

**Since 1959, 418 scientists have received a Canada Gairdner Award and to date, 98 have gone on to receive the Nobel Prize.**

The Canada Gairdner Awards raise the profile of Canada as a nation that fosters innovation and scientific excellence. The awards are Canada's only globally recognized international scientific prize. Gairdner stands out as the only national organization that consistently brings the best biomedical researchers from around the world to Canada, providing opportunities for new insights, shared projects, and collaborations. The Canada Gairdner alumni network is among the strongest in the world of major scientific awards. Each year, past laureates return to participate in the award adjudication processes, give lectures as part of outreach programming, contribute to discussions on key topics of the day with government and other stakeholders, and attend Gairdner events.

There are three types of Canada Gairdner Awards given annually:

**Five Canada Gairdner International Awards** are given to biomedical scientists who have made original contributions to biomedicine resulting in an increased understanding of human biology and disease.

**One John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award** is given to an individual(s) who has made seminal discoveries that have had significant impact on health outcomes in the developing world.

**Two Canada Gairdner Momentum Awards** are given to mid-career investigators in Canada who in their last 6 active years have produced exceptional scientific research contributions with continued potential for impact on human health. The first awards were made in 2023.

**The Foundation leverages the prestige of the prizes and laureates to promote the importance of scientific research to the public and next generation of scientists, researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs.**

The Foundation aims to address key issues of the day, such as pandemic responses, vaccine hesitancy, mental health and impact of environmental change with input from our outstanding network of international experts.

The National & Student Outreach programs bring laureates, current and past, to Canadian universities to speak virtually and in-person to faculty, trainees and postgraduate students about their work. Gairdner brings together high school students across Canada to hear laureates speak about their career inspirations, research, challenges, experiences, and promote a future in STEMM. Many laureates continue to cite the Student Outreach Program as their favourite part of the Canada Gairdner Awards experience.

Gairdner also promotes the understanding of scientific discovery to a wider audience through public lectures, Global Perspectives Panels, Science Literacy workshops and through its online presence. Gairdner

strives to make research accessible and easier to understand so that all Canadians are aware of its impact.

### **Gairdner is a reliable source for scientific information for Canadians and global partners.**

Gairdner's outreach extends beyond Canadian borders to showcase the country on the international stage. Gairdner seeks to develop programs that will recognize excellence in health research in low and middle-income countries and encourage sustainable scientific research. Gairdner also uses its awardees' expansive networks to help Canada build relationships with scientists around the world to promote Canadian research and innovation.

## **MISSION & OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

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### **Mission**

- **To celebrate international excellence in fundamental research that impacts human health**

*Gairdner's core mandate is to select and celebrate the annual Canada Gairdner Award laureates. Over the past 62 years, Gairdner has gained a superb international reputation for its early recognition of medical breakthroughs that have changed the way medicine is practiced.*

- 418 Canada Gairdner Awards have been bestowed on individuals from 40+ countries
- 56 Canadians have received the Canada Gairdner International Award
- 98 Canada Gairdner Award laureates have gone on to win Nobel Prizes in Medicine and Physiology or Chemistry, including Drs. Karikó and Weissman in 2023.

- **To inspire students to be the next generation of researchers, leaders and innovators**

*Our annual National Program is unique among major scientific prizes. Each October, Gairdner sends current and past laureates to universities across Canada, where they present virtual or in-person lectures on their work to scientists, trainees, and high school students. Through this educational program, we aim to inspire faculty, trainees and post graduate students to consider a career in science, technology, engineering, math and medicine (STEMM).*

- **To act as conveners with the public, policymakers and other stakeholders to demonstrate the impact of science on our everyday lives**

*Building on its international reputation for excellence, the Foundation uses its convening power and networks to bring together the world's best biomedical, clinical and public health leaders to address key strategic issues related to pandemics and other major health related issues of the day.*

*Gairdner's aim is not only to enhance Canada's stature in the international scientific community, but to facilitate linkages between leading international scientists, Canadian research institutions and government stakeholders and to inspire young Canadians to aspire to the highest levels of scientific excellence. Further, Gairdner uses its network to help combat misinformation through informative programming around increasing science literacy.*

### **Operating Principles**

1. Encourage and celebrate international excellence in health research.
2. Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in all of our activities.
3. Educate and inform the public about the impact of scientific research and the Canada Gairdner Awards.
4. Inspire Canadians to perform at a world-class level of scientific excellence.
5. Contribute to building the pipeline and strengthening the global profile of Canada

- and competitiveness of Canadian scientists in the research community.
- 6. Cultivate international relationships alongside the Canadian government sector.
- 7. Foster collaborative relationships with government, private sector and other non-governmental parties to further expand and augment the Canada Gairdner Awards.

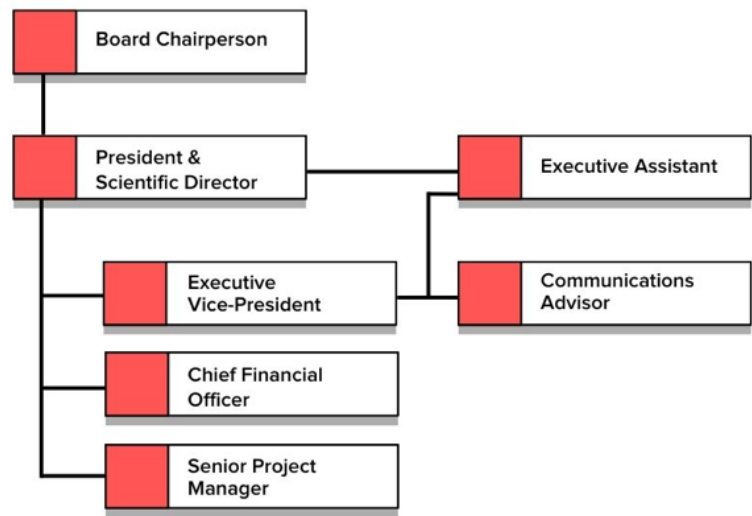
## GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

The Gairdner Foundation has five full-time employees and one part-time employee in addition to volunteers and consultants who provide expertise in the delivery of specialized services on an as-needed basis.

The Foundation is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors which is comprised of individuals who bring their expertise from the academic, private and public sectors. Board members are nominated and appointed for a term of three years, renewable up to two times. Directors are not compensated for their regular Board and Committee duties.

Gairdner’s mandate, governance, operations, and performance requirements are determined by the Board of Directors. While the Foundation receives funding from the Federal Government and from other funding partners, the Foundation has full independence in its governance and operations, as well as the nomination and selection process for the scientists on whom it confers its awards.

The Board is responsible for overseeing the management of the organization, and through committees, conducts detailed examinations of issues and opportunities. The Directors provide strategic insight and leadership, as well as effective governance and work diligently to maintain and extend the capacity for the Foundation to achieve its purpose and goals. The Board has established a number of committees to help discharge its duties, including Audit, Investment, Governance/Nominating and Fundraising.



**Investment Committee:** oversees the investment and management of funds according to a Board-approved Investment Policy Statement that outlines guidelines, standards and procedures for the prudent investment and management of funds.

Investment decisions are made with the principal objective being the preservation of the capital amount over the long-term, while providing sufficient annual funds to support the awards. The committee meets quarterly.

**Audit Committee:** oversees the Gairdner Foundation’s policies, processes and activities in the areas of accounting and internal controls, risk management, auditing and financial reporting. The committee meets semi-annually.

**Fundraising Committee:** supports Gairdner staff in strategic fundraising initiatives. The committee meets quarterly.

**Governance and Nominating Committee:** identifies the skillsets required for new Directors, manages the nomination of new candidates for the Board of Directors, and ensures effective oversight of the governance of the Foundation for approval by the Board. The committee is also responsible for oversight of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy of the Foundation. The committee meets semi-annually.

The committees report to the Board semi-annually on the outcome of their deliberations.

## AWARDS ADJUDICATION

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The Board of Directors appoints a President and Scientific Director, who has the responsibility for the adjudication panels that provide expertise on the selection of the annual Awards:

- **Medical Review Panel (MRP):** composed of a group of leading scientists from across Canada with specialties in various fields of health research, who provide a "first screening" of the nominations for the Canada Gairdner International Awards, submitting their selected list to the Medical Advisory Board.
- **Medical Advisory Board (MAB):** composed of eminent Canadian and international scientists. The MAB reviews the nominations submitted by the Medical Review Panel. After an in-depth study and lengthy discussion of each nominee, comparing their work with others in their respective field, secret ballots are cast and the annual awardees are chosen.
- **John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award Advisory Committee:** composed of international experts in the field of global health with a clear understanding of the basic, clinical, population and social science issues in developing countries.
- **Canada Gairdner Momentum Award Committee:** Composed of Canadian and international research scientific and institutional leaders. The committee has a two-stage process to reduce systemic barriers for candidacy (e.g. workloads, access to senior representatives, institutional support systems). Initial submissions focus on eligibility and the fundamental body of research and can be made by the nominee themselves or a nominator. The Momentum Committee members review the initial submissions for the Momentum Award and select the strongest nominees who move on to the second stage of the Award competition.

More objective evaluation of the accomplishments of the nominees and comparative analyses with others in the field of research are sought from external experts to help the committee delineate between candidates. Following a review of these enhanced nominee files and an in-depth discussion on their accomplishments, impact and trajectory, the full committee chooses two awardees each year by secret ballot.

## IMPACT – GAIRDNER'S ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

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- The Canada Gairdner Awards are recognized as one of the top international awards in biomedicine, on a par with the Lasker Award and only exceeded by the Nobel prize
- 418 Canada Gairdner Awards have been bestowed on individuals from 40 countries
- 56 Canadians have received the Canada Gairdner International Award
- 98 Canada Gairdner Award laureates have gone on to win Nobel Prizes in Medicine and Physiology or Chemistry, including Drs. Karikó and Weissman in 2023

## IMPACT – GAIRDNER'S BENEFIT TO SOCIETY

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The achievements of Gairdner Awardees have dramatically impacted global health and scientific advancement around the world. A few examples include:

**Drs. Pieter Cullis, Drew Weissman and Katalin Karikó (2022 Canada Gairdner International Award)  
2023 Nobel Prize in Medicine to Karikó and Weissman**

Pioneering work developing nucleoside-modified mRNA and lipid nanoparticle (LNP) drug delivery: the foundational technologies for the highly effective COVID-19 mRNA vaccines.

**David Julius (2017 Canada Gairdner International Award)  
2021 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**

Determining the molecular basis of somatosensation, giving new insight into how we sense heat, cold and pain and further facilitating research into novel treatments of pain.

**Jennifer Doudna, Emmanuelle Charpentier & Feng Zhang (2016 Canada Gairdner International Award)  
2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry to Doudna and Charpentier**

The development of CRISPR-CAS9 as a genome editing tool for eukaryotic cells, a technology that is transforming the fields of molecular genetics, genomics, agriculture and environmental biology.

**Anthony Fauci (2016 John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award)**

Defining research on the mechanisms of HIV disease and prevention modalities for patients living with HIV/AIDS. Well-known for his advisory role on the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.

**Peter Piot (2015 John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award)**

The co-discovery of the Ebola virus, its modes of transmission, and groundbreaking work on HIV/AIDS in Africa.

**Dr. William G. Kaelin, Jr., Sir Peter J. Ratcliffe and Dr. Gregg L. Semenza (2010 Canada Gairdner International Award)  
2019 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**

Their research identified how cells in the body monitor and respond to changes in oxygen levels. This paved the way to therapies that manipulate oxygen on a cellular level, for example, by improving the supply of oxygen in people with diseases of the heart and circulation, or cutting off the supply of oxygen that cancer needs to progress.

**Dr. Nubia Muñoz (2009 John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award)**

In proving that the human papilloma virus (HPV) causes cervical cancer, her epidemiological studies led directly to the development of the HPV vaccine, preventing these infections and possibly eliminating cervical cancer in the future.

**Dr. Cesar Victora (2017 John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award)**

Dr. Victora's career has focused on the factors affecting maternal and child health in low- and middle income countries. He has concentrated in the three main areas of child health and nutrition, health program monitoring and evaluation, and health equity.

**Drs. Michael Rosbash, Michael W. Young, Jeffery C. Hall (2012 Canada Gairdner International Award)  
2017 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**

Their discoveries concerning the biological clock responsible for circadian rhythms have ground-breaking applications for sleep and appetite disorders as well as organs such as the brain, liver lungs and skin.

**Dr. Connie Jean Eaves (2019 Canada Gairdner Wightman Award)**

Her pioneering work and leadership in the study of hematopoietic, mammary and cancer stem cells have advanced treatments in leukemia and breast cancers and established gold standards in research methodologies. Her dedicated advocacy for early-career investigators and women in science has included training more than 100 scientists globally, with some of her proudest career moments being watching successful defenses of her PhD students.

**Dr. Huda Zoghbi (2017 Canada Gairdner International Award)**

She has continued her legacy of the discovery of the genetic basis of Rett syndrome and its implications for autism spectrum disorders to pinpointing the underlying genetic causes of a pair of neurological diseases. This work also advanced the field's understanding of how gene expression can influence neurological health, even in non-inherited diseases.

**Dr. Brenda Milner (2005 Canada Gairdner International Award)**

Considered a founder of the field of clinical neuropsychology and cognitive neuroscience, she is featured in the second volume of "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls," books written to empowering and raising inspired and confident generation of girls by amplifying stories of inspiring women.

## SECTION 2: 2023 PERFORMANCE RESULTS

### PERFORMANCE GOALS AND RESULTS FOR 2023

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**1. Rebuild Gairdner website with new digital content as part of an overall enhanced digital strategy for Gairdner communication and outreach.**

Outcome: Gairdner launched its new website in March 2023. This involved a refresh of all content. New imagery was added with a focus on diversity, resulting in a clear, organized and impactful new website.

**2. Implement the EDI strategic plan to embed EDI principles in Gairdner governance, nomination pool, staff, Board of Directors, adjudication committees and outreach programs.**

Outcome: An EDI action plan was developed and progress against objectives monitored internally by the entire Gairdner team. Progress is reported every six months to the Governance and Nomination Committee and to the entire board once a year. Notable progress has been made against most objectives, as exemplified in other performance goals.

**3. Announce first Canada Gairdner Momentum award winners and develop approaches to engage Early Career Investigators (ECIs) and Momentum awardees in Gairdner activities and mission.**

Outcome: The first two Momentum Awardees were announced alongside the other awards in April. Media pickup for the two Canadian awardees was high- their diverse back stories resonated with the public and their science was remarkable. ECIs and Momentum awardees have already been engaged in high school programming and Global Perspective Panels.

**4. Develop more inclusive plans for Science communication workshops and training sessions.**

Outcome: The second Science Literacy workshop- *Are Facts Enough?*- was held in partnership with RCIScience and ScienceUpFirst, and featured speakers bringing insights from their own community work with a focus on different angles of inclusion and accessibility. The keynote speaker and moderator, astrophysicist and science communicator [Dr. Moiya McTier](#), opened with an overview of science literacy, and her use of folklore to build science culture. [Carrie Boyce](#) spoke on creating an inclusive space for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, [Ainsley Latour](#) challenged assumptions people may not know they have around persons with disabilities and their relationship with science and [Math'ieya Alatini](#) discussed how to be inclusive of Rural, Remote and Indigenous Communities. This interactive workshop ended with a panel discussion. Audiences felt that “the diverse panelists covered the topics from a variety of angles to paint a cohesive picture of the state of science communication” and wanted Gairdner to convene “more interdisciplinary topics” like this in future.

**5. Ensure that a Women in Science and/or Diverse voices in science event is part of Gairdner week.**

Outcome: Gairdner has entered into a multiyear agreement with Women's College Hospital to host a Gairdner Women in science event, featuring female Gairdner Laureates, every year in Gairdner Science week. The 2023 event featured Bonnie Bassler, Gelareh Zadeh and Lynne Maquat in front of an audience of diverse high school and undergraduates from across Toronto. Further, this year's event was live webcast to 10 high schools from the Greater Toronto area. Discussions are underway with additional schools and the Toronto Public Library to determine how we can continue to expand this program.

**6. Host 2-3 International receptions/seminars/symposia to be held in person in countries of Gairdner laureates to enhance Gairdner and Canada's international profile in science.**

Outcome: International receptions were held in Buenos Aires, Argentina and London, UK, as well as Seattle, Washington and Thunder Bay, Ontario. Events to celebrate Dr. José Belizán in Argentina took place at the Canadian Embassy in the presence of Ambassador Reid Sirrs, Dr. Belizán's family and colleagues, as well as representatives of science and industry in Argentina. In London, High Commissioner Ralph Goodale hosted a reception for Drs. Jumper and Hassabis. Their families and many Google Deep Mind team members were in attendance, along with previous Gairdner laureates and leaders of biomedical research and industry in the UK. Additional receptions celebrating Dr. Peter Greenberg in Seattle and Dr. Christopher Mushquash in Thunder Bay brought more local and US attention to the awards.



**7. Complete external performance review and use results to develop new programming that reflects needs of broad Canadian community.**

Outcome: The independent external performance review has been completed, submitted to CIHR for comments and management response provided. Recommendations will be taken up in the performance goals for next year.

**8. Continue in-person and virtual events, year-round, culminating in Gairdner Science Week.**

Outcome: A full program of events has been held across the country in 2023. Further details are provided below.

**9. Seek funding mechanisms to enhance the monetary value of the awards.**

Outcome: With the support of key board members, the Gairdner team has approached the Federal government with a request for an additional contribution to the Gairdner endowment to enable an increase in the value of the International awards to be competitive with other international prizes in the area. Discussions are ongoing. The fundraising committee of the board has embarked on a broad-based initiative to define the fundraising assets and goals of the Foundation, with the aim of attracting a cadre of new donors and sponsors to multiyear contracts.

## DETAILED PERFORMANCE METRICS OF 2023 EVENTS

### 2023 GAIRDNER SCIENCE WEEK EVENTS

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#### Cross Canada National and Student Outreach Program:

**This year's laureates and 7 laureates from prior years visited 15 Universities across the country, gave lectures to faculty and trainees and participated in high school outreach programming.**

1,697 attendees at National program events

1,606 attendees at high school events

#### **A New Era of Artificial Intelligence: Envisioning the Future of Health and Science**

October 24, 2023 / Hot Docs Theatre / Attendance: 436 registered / 300 attended / 350 views online

Presentation by Dr. Demis Hassabis on harnessing AI in health and science, where it's going and how to move forward in a responsible way, followed by a fireside chat with Dr. Hassabis and Shingai Manjengwa, Head of AI Education at ChainML. This interactive event allowed audience members to submit questions.

Full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ale6FxoO7zA>

#### **Gairdner International Symposium: The Future of AI in Science and Medicine**

October 25, 2023 / Attendance: 400 in-person / 700 registered, 100 waitlisted / 850 live views

Inspired by the work of 2023 Canada Gairdner International Award laureates Drs. Demis Hassabis and John Jumper, this symposium brought together top authorities in Artificial Intelligence (AI) to discuss the impact it has had and will continue to have on science and health equity, and possible issues it poses. Speakers included: Dr. Cheryl Arrowsmith (Chief Scientist, SGC Senior Scientist, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre; UHN Professor, Dept of Medical Biophysics, University of Toronto), Dr. Bo Wang (Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto; CIFAR AI Chair, Vector Institute Chief AI Scientist, University Health Network), Artem Babaian (Assistant Professor, Molecular Genetics, University of Toronto; Lead, The Laboratory for RNA-Based Lifeforms, Donnelly Centre for Cellular), and Elaine Okanyene Nsoesie (Associate Professor, Boston University School of Public Health)

Full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPUM-adhXd8>

#### **Gairdner Global Perspectives Panel: Engaging Global Communities in Child Health and Perinatal Research**

October 25, 2023 / Attendance: 387 registered / 80 in-person / 113 virtual

In partnership with IDRC, SickKids Centre for Global Child Health and the Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, Gairdner brought together emerging and established leaders in the perinatal and child health fields to discuss how communities can be engaged and involved in the research process. Speakers presented their own work, compared experiences in a roundtable, and networked with students, community partners and researchers interested in pursuing their own collaborations. Speakers included: Dr. José Belizán MD, MPH, 2023 Canada Gairdner Global Health Award; Senior Scientist, Department of Research in Maternal and Child Health, Institute for Clinical Effectiveness and Health Policy (IECS) Argentina; Superior Researcher at the National Scientific and Technical Research Council of Argentina (CONICET); Researcher, Bone Biology Laboratory, School of Medicine, University of Rosario, Argentina

Prof. Dena Zeraatkar, PhD, Assistant Professor, Departments of Anesthesia and Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact, McMaster University; 2023 Gairdner Early Career Investigator Competition Winner

Dr. Anne CC Lee, BSE, MD, MPH, FAAP, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School; Director of Global Pediatric Newborn Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA, USA

Dr. Zubia Mumtaz, MBBS, MPH, PhD, Professor of Global Health, School of Public Health, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada

Dr. Cesar Victora, MD, PhD, 2017 Canada Gairdner Global Health Award; Emeritus Professor, Federal University of Pelotas, Pelotas, Brazil

Full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKcOKJ4CauE>

### **Women of Gairdner Event**

October 25, 2023 / Attendance: 73 students in-person

In partnership with Women's College Hospital, Gairdner hosted the second annual Women of Gairdner event. Through panel discussion, storytelling and interactive dialogue, Canada Gairdner Award laureates Drs. Gelareh Zadeh, Bonnie L. Bassler and Lynne E. Maquat shared insights into their unique career paths, research, and the challenges they have faced, as well as the need for greater equity and inclusion within the health sciences fields. High school students attended the discussion and had the opportunity to take part in educational activities and a networking event to broaden their understanding of science and knowledge systems, build their networking skills, and connect with scientists, researchers, and other students.

### **Gairdner Laureate Lectures**

October 26, 2023 / Attendance: 500 in-person / 538 virtual

Lectures from the eight 2023 Canada Gairdner Award Laureates about their prize-winning research were interwoven with talks from two Early Career Investigators (ECI) from across Canada who won our ECI contest.

Distinguished speakers:

- 2023 Canada Gairdner International Award Laureates: Dr. Michael R. Silverman, Dr. E. Peter Greenberg, Dr. Bonnie L. Bassler, Dr. Demis Hassabis, Dr. John Jumper
- 2023 John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award Laureate: Dr. José Belizán
- 2023 Canada Gairdner Momentum Award Laureates: Dr. Gelareh Zadeh, Dr. Christopher Mushquash
- 2023 Gairdner Early Career Investigator Awardees: Dr. Abiola Olaitan, Dr. Elena Kuzmin

Full video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obaM6\\_nwtho&t=12s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obaM6_nwtho&t=12s)

### **2023 Gairdner Science Week Student Mentoring Sessions**

October 26, 2023 / Attendance: 85 students

A student networking lunch with 9 laureates and 3 ECIs took place after the Laureate Lectures. 85 Students from Lotus STEM, The Knowledge Society, Let's Talk Science, Canadian Association for Girls in Science and University of Toronto were invited to network with laureates and ask questions and gain advice. A

campus tour at University of Toronto was also held for 55 of the students involved, and a tour of the MaRS labs was held for 3 of the undergraduate students.

### **Canada Gairdner Awards Gala Celebration**

October 26, 2023 / Attendance: 410

The annual Gala celebration at the Royal Ontario Museum was noted as some guests as our "best Gala yet." More than 400 were in attendance including dignitaries from Canada, USA, Argentina, government representatives, members of the scientific & academic communities and tables of students invited by Visions of Science, The Knowledge Society and Canadian Association for Girls in Science (CAGIS).

### **2023 QUEBEC PROGRAMMING**

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Partnership with FRQ-S for the promotion of science culture and achievement in the province of Quebec.

- DNA workshops in partnership with Let's Talk Science at McGill, Fall 2023 with high school students/ Attendance: 60 students (ongoing), projected to reach 80 students in the coming weeks
- [RNA and the Future of Medicine Symposium](#), Montreal, June 1, 2023 / Attendance 140 in person
- [Soapbox Science](#) outdoor public science event, Quebec City, June 6, 2023 / Attendance 191 visitors, 15-18 min average duration of visit
- [Riboclub RNA event](#), Sherbrooke, September 18, 2023 / Attendance: 294 in person and 100 virtually

### **2023 ONTARIO PROGRAMMING**

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Partnership with the Krembil Foundation to promote excellence and involvement in science in the province of Ontario.

- [UofT Talks, Dig In: Our Health on a Platter](#), an interdisciplinary discussion workshop, June 5, 2023 / Attendance : 163 in person, 32 virtual Video: <https://uofttalks.com/event-recap/> <https://vimeo.com/834836588>
- [Spatial Biology: Neuroscience, Cancer and Beyond Symposium](#), SickKids Research Institute, July 14 2023 / Attendees: 188
- Lakehead Orillia Science Day, Keynote: Dr. Janet Rossant, March 27, 2023 / Attendance: 100 high school student / In the media: <https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/lakehead-hosts-unique-local-event-to-inspire-future-scientists-6764937>

### **2023 ALBERTA PROGRAMMING**

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Funded by an endowment from the Government of Alberta.

- [Science and Health Leadership outreach event](#), Change Health Alberta outreach program to indigenous student leaders to inspire and build capacity in driving improved health outcomes, April 17, 2023 / Attendance: 268
- [Successes in Neuroscience](#), a virtual symposium celebrating research and innovation in brain health, February 8, 2023 / Attendees: 137
- [Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare Symposium](#), University of Alberta, March 10 – 12, 2023 / Attendance: 500

## 2023 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PANELS – PRESENTED BY TELUS HEALTH

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### **Therapeutics for the Future**

May 9, 2023 / Science World BC / Attendance: 170

Keynote by Dr. Peter Cullis (Canada Gairdner international Laureate 2022) on what the future holds for gene therapies thanks to the power of lipid nanoparticles as a drug delivery system. This was followed by a panel discussion on the future of therapeutics. Panel speakers: Drs. James Taylor, Sherie Duncan and Thomas Madden, moderated by Tiffany Chiu.

Full video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT0gjc7lySU&list=PLRyTlygsQWzBDhSsDBLXrafnf8n8\\_v82G](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT0gjc7lySU&list=PLRyTlygsQWzBDhSsDBLXrafnf8n8_v82G)

### **Indigenous Impact: Mental Health x Indigenous Ingenuity**

August 2, 2023 / Discovery Centre, Halifax / Attendance: 50

Dr. Christopher Mushquash presented trailblazing mental health research that brings together Indigenous and western methodologies, and the process of how his work came about. A panel discussion followed, moderated by Paulina Meader, Health Director at Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. Dr. Mushquash was joined by Dr. Brent Young, an Anishinaabe family physician and Academic Director of Indigenous Health, Assistant Professor. The event was hosted by Connie Sugiyama, Gairdner Board of Directors.

### **The Brew Lab: Uncultured: Unlocking Duolingo for Bacteria**

August 9, 2023 / Burdock Brewery Ontario / Attendance: 55

Dr. Bonnie Bassler (Canada Gairdner international Award Laureate 2023), whose award-winning research helped uncover how bacteria communicate with each other, shared details of her discovery and its potential future impact. Journalist Hannah Hoag hosted a fireside conversation and Q&A with Dr. Bassler.

### **Annual Science Literacy Workshop: Are Facts Enough? The Power of Community**

September 21, 2023 / Toronto Metropolitan University / Attendance: 156 registered, 71 attendees, 78 viewers

In partnership with the Canadian Association of Science Centres ScienceUpFirst initiative and RCIScience, this workshop explored what science literacy is and its role in building science culture, the power of community, and how researchers and science communicators can work with and within communities to foster science culture from the ground up. Speakers came from various perspectives of inclusion and accessibility to spark discussion on how to build science culture within diverse communities.

Full video: <https://www.youtube.com/live/7upha0K3u5A?si=Mvk0l1a4lybmpclJ>

### **Mindsets: A Deep Dive into the Brain**

October 3, 2023 / Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, Toronto / Attendance: 200 registered / 65 attendees

Presentations from 2023 Canada Gairdner Momentum Award laureate Gelareh Zadeh, Jaideep Bains and Jiwon Oh on brain tumours, stress and anxiety, and multiple sclerosis, provided tools and resources to understand the brain on a deeper level. This was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Canadian broadcast journalist Mary Ito.

Full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4izlSbifDKo>

### **Engaging Global Communities in Child Health and Perinatal Research**

See Gairdner Week events

## ADDITIONAL STUDENT AND TRAINEE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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### High school on-line lectures with Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants (EBTSOYP), reaching high school students in Canada and worldwide

Attendance: 418 online

#### Events:

- [Young Minds Matter with Vikram Patel](#)
- [Understanding Bacterial Behaviour with Bonnie Bassler](#)
- [Vaccines and Beyond with Anna Blakney - YouTube](#)
- [Indigenous-led Mental Health Research with Christopher Musquash - YouTube](#)
- [Santé maternelle et infantile avec José Belizan - YouTube](#)
- [CRISPR, Gene Editing and Food Science with Rodolphe Barrangou](#)
- [Repairing the brain with Ed Boyden](#)
- [December 5: Artem Babaian, ECI winner](#)

### Canadian Student Health Research Forum (CSHRF) with the International Congress of Academic Medicine

April 14, 2023 / Quebec City / Attendance: 500 in-person + virtual attendance

The CSHRF is an annual event that showcases and recognizes Canada's top 5% of PhD trainees in the health sciences. This year the following laureates gave lectures and mentored students: Drs. Adrian Bird, Quairrasha Abdool Karim, Pieter Cullis, Rodolphe Barrangou and Janet Rossant

### Collaboration with Frontiers for Young Minds (FYM)

Gairdner collaborated with FYM the award-winning, open-access scientific journal for kids, to publish a new collection of articles on ground-breaking human health research performed by this year's laureates.

## GAIRDNER'S DIGITAL STRATEGY

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A strong digital presence is essential to the success of Gairdner's mission to inspire all generations and promote the prestige of the Canada Gairdner Awards. Throughout 2023 and continuing into 2024, Gairdner has elevated its digital presence with the following:

1. **New website** - Gairdner launched its new website in March, 2023 ahead of the 2023 awards announcement to create a hub that showcases the Gairdner brand. The new site has a sleek design, easy navigation and a highly improved event listing page. Google traffic to the website quadrupled during Gairdner Science Week. During the five-day week of October 23 to 27 (Gairdner Science Week), the website generated 2,451 clicks from Google searches. This represents a 300% increase above average. Further, overall our website has seen a 20% increase in Canadian users compared to last year and a 27% increase in overall pageviews from Canadians. As we aim to increase brand awareness, particularly amongst Canadians, this new site is proof that we are improving one click at a time.

Goal: To create an online space that clearly and effectively showcases the prestige of the Canada Gairdner Awards while bringing the many outreach programs, events and partnerships to the forefront.

2. **Investment in social media** - Gairdner has invested time and resources into social media marketing by creating more elevated graphics and video content, partnering with various social media influencers and providing packages for events to organizations/stakeholders.

Goal: To put the Gairdner brand on the world stage by amplifying events, highlighting the prestige, and connecting with a larger, global audience. We partnered with various influencers over the year resulting in strong success. Over the past year (November 2021-2022), Gairdner was mentioned over 4.2k times across social media, with 1.3k accounts feeling our content was worth posting directly. Gairdner content was seen by over 10M individuals and was displayed over 31M times.

3. **Events for the next generation** - As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gairdner Foundation has embraced new opportunities to reach larger, more diverse audiences. For example, we hosted our annual Gairdner Science Week events in a hybrid format, hired a professional organization to run virtual events, and hosted the inaugural Science Literacy Symposium, which aimed to provide attendees with tangible tools to become more science literate.

Goal: Excitement around a return to in-person Gairdner Science Week events was clear with an influx of attendees who were keen to network and collaborate in an in-person setting. Offering events virtually as well enabled us to extend the reach of our events across the globe and have a recording that can live on YouTube and be shared beyond the event. The broad topic of this year's Science Literacy Symposium, on leveraging social media for science, aimed to reach a diverse and larger group of researchers from various career levels, specialties, demographics, etc. to discuss an important and accessible topic. The resounding success of both events is evidenced in high attendance (see above) and heightened engagement on social media.

## PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EXPECTED RESULTS FOR 2024

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1. **Increase the quality and diversity of Canada Gairdner Award nominations while maintaining international excellence.**
  - a. In response to the External evaluation and our EDI plan, we will develop new outreach material, webinars and FAQs in multiple languages and engage new global partners in encouraging nominations of outstanding scientists from diverse geographies, research areas and backgrounds.
2. **Develop, recognize and retain Canadian scientific talent by honing a talent development program that is a true value add to Canadian science and innovation sectors.**
  - a. We will build on the success of the initial Momentum and Early Career investigator award competitions and engage with this demographic to provide mentorship and other value-add programming at their request.
3. **Strengthen Canadian science culture by hosting events in all Canadian provinces.**
  - a. We will seek to extend our provincial program competitions beyond Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, to include BC and Eastern Canada. New funding from provinces and other supporters will be sought.
4. **Build a hub of reliable online resources and accessible scientific materials.**
  - a. With the new website in place, we will respond to the recommendation of our external evaluation and develop a Gairdner-verified resource of reliable health-related science information to combat misinformation.
  - b. We will extend our partnership with Frontiers for Young Minds who produced accessible online articles about our laureates in 2023.
5. **Raise the profile of Canadian science on the world stage through international events and partnerships.**
  - a. We will continue to host receptions in the home countries of the 2024 laureates and attempt to host at least one science event associated with the receptions to highlight Canada-global partnerships.
6. **Build the Gairdner brand by increasing online presence and engaging a broader, more diverse audience.**
  - a. The social media environment is currently challenging and needs to be carefully navigated. Even Gairdner gets trolled. We will focus on respected forums and consult with other organizations to develop a safe but effective online strategy.
7. **Generate a sustainable funding model for the Foundation that includes an increased emphasis on fundraising, and new initiatives directed at government, institutions and individuals.**
  - a. The Fundraising committee is currently considering a new fundraising strategy with specific goals and timelines. We expect to launch a fundraising campaign in late 2024.

### SECTION 3: FINANCIAL SUMMARY

#### Financial Summary

The Gairdner Foundation maintains proper financial controls and sound management practices to ensure the best use of its public and private funds.

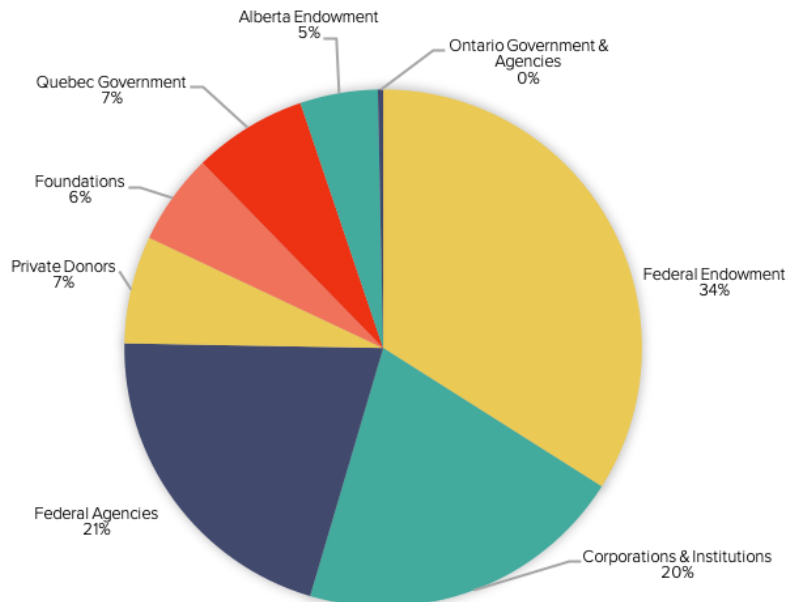
In 2008, the Federal Government, through CIHR, provided the Foundation with a \$20M endowment fund (the “Fund”), formalized through a Funding Agreement. The income from the Fund has been used to support and enhance the Awards. The Fund has been capitalized for the term of the Agreement, and only income from the Fund, including interest, dividends, and realized capital gains may be used until the Agreement terminates in 2028.

A grant of \$2 million was received from the Alberta government in 2008, for the purpose of expanding the Gairdner program in Alberta. This grant is also to be capitalized during the term of the agreement, and only the income from the Fund, including interest, dividends and realized capital gains may be used. This grant has an indeterminate term; however, the Agreement is to be reviewed at least every 5 years. The Foundation is able to draw upon the capital to a maximum of \$250,000 over the term of the Agreement, provided it uses best efforts to restore any capital withdrawn. Commitments made by the Foundation for the support of the Alberta Gairdner Outreach Program must not exceed the “Available Earnings”, and earnings from this fund are to be used to support the Alberta Gairdner Outreach Program. These funds have been invested together with the original family endowment under the guidance of the Investment Committee, and in accordance with the terms of these agreements and prudent governance.

The primary objectives of the investment policy are to preserve the capital, to generate sufficient income to pay for the administrative and award costs and to provide inflation protection to the fund.

The Foundation also receives operating funding from the Government of Canada, through CIHR, and the Québec Government, as well as a variety of sponsors and donors from both the public and private sector to support our annual programs. In 2023, estimated revenue of approximately \$3.05 million (excluding investment income) was allocated as indicated here.

#### ESTIMATED 2023 REVENUE BY SOURCE (TOTAL \$3.05M)



## Planned Receipts and Disbursements for 2024

The approved budget for 2024 calls for revenue of \$2.96 million and operating expenditures of \$2.96m million, resulting in a breakeven budget. Budgeted expenditures include \$0.70 million for awards, \$0.97 million for program costs, \$0.43 million for administrative and marketing costs, \$0.82 million for operational staff costs and \$0.04 million for adjudication costs. Revenue includes the Federal operating funding of \$0.55 million per year for 5 years. Funds from this grant are allocated to enhancing our Canadian outreach activities, promoting Canadian science at home and abroad and placing Canada on the International stage.

The following table provides the budgeted revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year 2024. The Foundation's share of realized and unrealized investment gains and losses is not included in this budget. The budget was presented and approved by the Board of Directors at its November 21, 2023 meeting.

### THE GAIRDNER FOUNDATION BUDGET 2024 (000s)

	ACTUAL 2022	Q3 FCST 2023	BUDGET 2024
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Sponsorships & Donations	1,130	964	976
Table Sales	86	63	63
Federal Operating Grant	577	622	550
Quebec Operating Grant	127	217	200
Federal Fund	986	1,037	978
Alberta Fund	35	148	148
Portfolio Revenue (net of fees)	(572)	45	45
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,368</b>	<b>3,096</b>	<b>2,960</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
Board	20	36	35
Administration	279	234	201
Operational staff costs	751	847	820
Events	812	1,021	966
Scientific Advisory Boards	19	23	23
Other Scientific Boards	15	23	18
Awards	700	700	700
Fundraising & Communications	222	235	197
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,817</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>2,960</b>
<b>NET (DEFICIT) / SURPLUS</b>	<b>(448)</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>(0)</b>



## SECTION 4: MANAGING RISKS AND CHALLENGES

### Managing Risks and Challenges

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Managing risk is the ongoing responsibility of management and the Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of management to update its assessment of risk semi-annually and present this risk management matrix assessment to the Board annually. The Gairdner Foundation monitors risks and events that have the potential to undermine achievement of its strategic objectives and priorities. Management has developed and implemented appropriate systems, policies and procedures to manage these risks. The Board and its committees are aware of risk management responsibilities and exercise appropriate governance practices with respect to policy approval and oversight.

Managing reputational risk: At the awards adjudication level, risk is managed and mitigated by a rigorous, two-tier adjudication process/peer review with votes being cast by secure, secret ballot. The ongoing success in the selection process is largely due to a rigorous recruitment process for new committee members.

Managing financial risk: Gairdner's Investment Policy has been structured to maximize revenue and preserve capital over the long term. However, the Foundation still needs to raise substantial annual funding to support its programs and to stabilize its infrastructure and operations.

For 2024, we are projecting a conservative 3.6% return on investment. The Investment Policy Statement amended in November 2023 calls for a long-term Asset Mix target allocation of 27% cash/fixed income, 41% equities and 32% alternative investments.

## SECTION 5: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

### Performance Monitoring

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#### Audit, Evaluation and Annual Reports

As a not-for-profit charitable organization, the Gairdner Foundation selects external auditors to undertake an annual audit of its financial statements. The external auditors for 2022 are Ernst & Young. The audit is undertaken on an annual basis, in accordance with generally accepted Canadian accounting principles. The objective is to express an opinion on whether the Gairdner Foundation's financial statements present fairly the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows of the corporation. Upon completion of the audit, the financial statements and a summary of audit findings are presented to the Audit Committee and the Board of Directors for approval.

Within 150 days of the end of each fiscal year, an Annual Report is produced. This report includes audited financial statements, an overview of activities undertaken by Gairdner for the previous fiscal year, and a brief synopsis of projected activities for the upcoming fiscal year. As well, the annual report includes the results of any performance or evaluation audits undertaken during the year, disclosure of the range of remuneration of its senior managers and officers, and an overview of the significant expected results to be achieved in the upcoming financial year.

By November 30 every year, the Gairdner Foundation is required to prepare an Annual Summary Corporate Plan, outlining our objectives, outcomes, details of the Fund management, planned activities and anticipated results of those activities, annual forecasted cash flow requirements, proposed expenditures as well as an assessment of risks and risk mitigation strategies. These reports are posted on the Gairdner Foundation website.

## **Additional Requirements**

The Gairdner Foundation is required to establish systems to monitor performance and report on achievement of results, beyond the annual report (although these are included when relevant). These include:

- Performance (value-for-money) audits as considered necessary to verify the representations of the Foundation as to its performance.
- Independent compliance audit to verify whether the Foundation is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Funding Agreement.
- Independent evaluation according to a framework and time to be approved by the Board but no less frequently than once every five years, in order to measure the Foundation's overall performance in achieving the outcomes as set out in the Funding Agreement.

An independent evaluation was performed in 2017. Key stakeholders consistently viewed the Gairdner Awards as being a "Canadian success story". The next Independent evaluation has been completed and is awaiting final review by CIHR. Three external consultants were approached for proposals and the Gairdner team conducted a thorough review of each company. An organization with a strong reputation and references from within the academic/scientific community performed the evaluation. Their work included a variety of data collection methods, including document and data review, as well as interviews and surveys with key stakeholders.

An independent compliance audit was performed in 2017. The results showed that the Foundation is compliant with all the terms of the funding agreement. The next independent compliance audit will take place in 2024.