



CAN-ACN

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR NEUROSCIENCE
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

Report on Advocacy Activities
June 1st, 2017 – May 31st, 2018

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Message from Drs. Lynn Raymond and Katalin Toth

Dear Mr. Heintz,

We are pleased to present you a report on our advocacy activities for 2017-2018. This report shows the work we have done to reach the objectives outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding we have with SfN.

The focus of our advocacy efforts for the past year has been to build relationships with members of the Parliament of Canada to be able to positively influence the federal budget to gain a stronger support for basic research from the government of Canada. We have reached out to members of Parliament, to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finances, the Science Minister, the Chief Science Advisor of Canada and local Members of Parliament through in person meetings in Ottawa, and letters sent to advise the government on important issues including the budget, and we have encouraged our members to do the same.

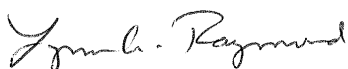
We have also built relationships with other scientific societies, research institutes and universities to join forces to advocate for increased funding for fundamental research in Canada. Through these multiple relationships, and by working together with partners, policy makers and our members, we have been instrumental in bringing about a historical investment in fundamental research, announced in the February 2018 budget.

The new investments in the three major granting councils of Canada will have a major impact on the health of Canada's research ecosystem. Though these investments have demonstrated the government's openness to listen to scientists, universities and stakeholders, we still have work to do bring about the full implementation of the recommendations of Canada's Fundamental Science Review.

As you witnessed, four members of Parliament participated in a special Science Policy Session at our annual meeting in Vancouver. This open discussion has helped us identify new advocacy opportunities for the coming year. In the coming months, we aim to develop a new strategy to reach out to the public and elected officials based on the knowledge we have gained through our advocacy activities of the previous years and making full use of the relationships we have built.

We are truly grateful for the support SfN has provided over the last years, which has been of critical importance to the development of our advocacy team and expertise.

With regards,



Lynn Raymond, President



Katalin Toth, Advocacy Committee Chair



2018 CAN Advocacy Committee

Chair:

Katalin Toth, Université Laval

Members:

Charles Bourque, McGill University

Liisa Galea, U of British Columbia

Kurt Haas, U of British Columbia

Michael Hendricks, McGill University

David Kaplan, U of Toronto

Beverley Orser, U of Toronto

Doug Zochodne, U of Alberta

Nafisa Jadavji, Carleton U, Liaison to [the Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences](#)

Administrative Support:

Julie Poupart, Chief Operating Officer & Advocacy Officer

Events at the 2018 Canadian Neuroscience Meeting

Science policy session at the CAN2018 meeting

On May 14th, 2018, CAN welcomed elected members of Parliament from the four main Canadian political parties to participate in a conversation about science policy at the CAN2018 meeting.

- **Matt Jeneroux**, member of Parliament for Edmonton Riverbend, and Conservative Shadow Minister for Science
- **Joyce Murray**, member of Parliament for Vancouver Quadra, Liberal Party
- **Elizabeth May**, member of Parliament for Saanich – Gulf Islands, and Leader of the Green Party
- **Fin Donnelly**, member of Parliament for Port Moody – Coquitlam, New Democratic Party

This event was an opportunity to build bridges between politicians and scientists, and to initiate a constructive relationship that will ensure that all Canadians reap the benefits that supporting fundamental research brings. Members of all major political parties were invited to make a presentation about their vision for Canada’s role in promoting and supporting scientific research. This was followed by a lively discussion panel with the audience.



Left to right: Melanie Woodin (incoming chair of the CAN advocacy committee), Joyce Murray, liberal MP, Matt Jeneroux, Conservative MP, Lynn Raymond, CAN President, Fin Donnelly, New Democratic Party MP, Elizabeth May, Green Party MP, Katalin Toth, Chair of the CAN Advocacy Committee, Jaideep Bains, CAN Vice-President.

The science policy session opened with the official announcement that a team from the Neuroscience Graduate Student Association at the University of British Columbia (UBC) who developed the “Neuroscience Through the Ages” project won the **CAN 2018 Neuroscience Outreach & Advocacy Award**.

The Canadian Association for Neuroscience Advocacy Committee was impressed with the originality of this project, and its novel approach to public outreach. We are very happy to support this student-led initiative.



Neurohistory Team Top (left to right): Armin Mortazavi (cartoon), Jordan Shimell, Luis Bolanos, Brett Hathaway, Eli York, and David Cheng Bottom (left to right): Susan Lin, Asma Bashir, Samantha Baglot, Amy Smith, and Anne Liu Missing from the photo: Aarthi Gobinath, Jill Dosso, Katelyn Hudak, Ellen Koch, Samantha Feldman, Naila Kuhlmann, Blair Jovellar, and Matt Sacheli

Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity in Neuroscience Workshop

Judy Illes led the interactive Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity in Neuroscience (EDI-Neuro) lunch workshop on May 14th, 2018 at our annual meeting in Vancouver, BC. This workshop was used to inform actions that CAN, as an association, will put into place to address these important issues in 2018-2019. Our members were surveyed to learn from

them what the most important issues are for them, and how our association can help address these issues.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity in neuroscience workshop panel: Judy Illes (standing), and members of the CAN Board of Directors and Executive Committee: Katalin Toth, Jaideep Bains, Lynn Raymond, Stephanie Borgland, Shernaz Bamji.

Public lectures at the 2018 Canadian Neuroscience Meeting



Hosted by Dr. Liisa Galea, Director of the Graduate Program in Neuroscience at UBC, the CAN 2018 Public lectures at World of Science brought together two leading Canadian experts on the topic of addiction. Dr. Catharine Winstanley, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of British Columbia, gave a presentation titled “Against the odds: insights into the nature of addiction from studying decision making in rats”, in which she explained how she uses a “rat casino” to find the basis of addictive behaviour in the brain. Dr Luke Clark, Director, Centre for Gambling Research at UBC, gave a presentation titled “Deconstructing the modern slot machine: gambling, game features and addiction” in which he identified the key elements in the process of addiction in

humans. The public lectures were very well attended and were a great opportunity to showcase the relevance of neuroscience research to the public.

Meeting of Canadian SfN Chapter representatives at CAN2018

To maintain and strengthen the links CAN has built with Canadian SfN Chapter at our previous meeting, CAN invited the leaders of all Canadian SfN Chapters to a breakfast meeting during the CAN2018 meeting.

This meeting was an opportunity to discuss how the outreach and advocacy activities from across Canada could be shared, and the role CAN could play as a facilitator for exchange between Chapters.

Meeting of the CAN advocacy committee & CAN Board meeting

The CAN Advocacy committee held a meeting in Vancouver to discuss and define the advocacy priorities of our Association. This was also discussed at the CAN Board meeting.

Despite the progress made through historic investments in Basic research announced in Canada's 2018 budget, the CAN Advocacy committee and CAN Board of Directors must continue to work for the full implementation of the recommendations of Canada's Fundamental Science Review (Naylor report).

View an overview of the Naylor report, prepared by CAN, here:

<https://supportthereport.ca/support-the-report-talking-points/>

The Naylor report recommendations closely parallel the concerns our members have expressed in surveys CAN has conducted in the last years:

- Need for increased investment in the three major Governmental Science Funding Agencies (Canadian Institutes of Health Research - CIHR, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council - NSERC, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council – SSHRC)
- Need for increased support and investment in fundamental research
- Need for increased support and investment in investigator-initiated projects

The Naylor report has received unanimous support in the Canadian scientific community.

The investments announced by the federal government in the February 2018 budget represent only a partial implementation of the Naylor report. CAN will continue to advocate for the full implementation of the Naylor Report, together with other scientific and research association, and university representatives, and to promote the Naylor report to the public and to elected officials.

CAN representation on Parliament Hill and in Ottawa

October 2017 – Biotechnology in Health Research Reception on Parliament Hill

CAN Advocacy Committee Chair **Katalin Toth** participated in the Biotechnology in Health Research Reception of the Health Research Caucus on Parliament Hill on October 16th, 2017. This event was an opportunity to highlight the importance of investment in fundamental research that can lead to breakthroughs in biotechnology. Events on Parliament are also opportunities to meet and build relations with elected officials in attendance.

December 2017 – Stem Cell Research Event on Parliament Hill

CAN Advocacy Committee Chair **Katalin Toth** participated meeting on Stem Cell Research held at the Parliament on December 6th, 2017.

This event was another opportunity to meet and network with elected officials and other advocacy groups working to promote health research in Canada.

January 2018 – Participation in the PAGSE council meeting and meeting with Canada’s Chief Science Advisor, Dr. Mona Nemer

Katalin Toth and **Jean-Claude Béique** participated in the council meeting of Partnership Group for Science and Engineering (PAGSE) where they had a chance to meet Canada’s new Chief Science Advisor, and to learn more about her role in government and the ways scientists can help her advise the government on scientific matters. Dr. Nemer emphasized the importance for neuroscientists of building bridges with politicians and to set the table for real and constructive dialogue between the two groups.

February 2018 – Research and industry solutions to the Opioid crisis

CAN Advocacy Committee Member **Jean-Claude Béique** participated in a special luncheon on “Research and industry solutions to the Opioid crisis”, organized by the Health Research Caucus on February 14, 2018 on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa. CAN was a bronze level sponsor for this event.

May 2018 – Reshaping Health Research and Innovation: Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

CAN Advocacy Committee Chair **Katalin Toth** participated in the “Reshaping Health Research and Innovation: Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning” Health Research Caucus reception, May 1, 2018 on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa. CAN was a bronze level sponsor for this event.

June 2018 - Innovations in Healthy Aging & Research Canada AGM

Incoming CAN Advocacy Committee Chair **Melanie Woodin**, and outgoing chair **Katalin Toth** will participate in the “Innovations in Healthy Aging” Health Research Caucus luncheon, June 13, 2018 on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa. CAN will be a bronze level sponsor for this event.

On the same day, Drs. Woodin and Toth will also participate in **Research Canada’s 2018 Annual General Meeting** in Ottawa.

CAN Actions in Support of Canada’s Fundamental Science Review

Meeting with other scientific associations to define a common and effective lobbying strategy.

Advocacy committee chair **Katalin Toth** attended Research Canada’s 2017 Annual General Meeting in Toronto on June 6th, 2017. This was an opportunity to meet with other neuroscience advocates to discuss and share, to develop common and impactful messaging strategies.

To this end, CAN has joined forces with other Canadian science promotion societies and associations:

- Association of Canadian Early Career Health Researchers
- Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences
- Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology
- Partnership Group for Science and Engineering (CAN is a member)
- Research Canada (CAN is a member)
- Neurological health charities of Canada

CAN publishes and shares Talking points about the Naylor Report

The Naylor report is a very complete, 280-page report. An executive summary version was also published, which is 25 pages long. CAN recognized the need for a two-page summary, distilling the most important points of the report and its context, to make this document easier to share and present to the public or elected officials. The document prepared by CAN is available online here:

<https://supportthereport.ca/support-the-report-talking-points/>

CAN Launches the SupportTheReport.ca website

Many initiatives were launched by different organisations to support the report. While the #supportthereport hashtag was shared by all, there was a need to have an easy to remember URL so that interested individuals could find the relevant information easily. CAN put up a simple website on the supportthereport.ca url, on which we share resources that are useful for members and partners who wish to act to support the report.

This website is here: <https://supportthereport.ca/>

Participation in Social Media Campaigns to #SupportTheReport

A very active social media campaign around the hashtag #supportthereport has been launched by multiple Canadian organisations, to share news and information to support the implementation. Strategic discussions have also taken place on twitter. CAN has participated in sharing these important resources with our members.

#SummerofScienceCAN - Invitation to our members to write to their elected officials

CAN sent an invitation to our members to write to their member of Parliament to raise awareness about the Naylor report with elected officials during the summer. This shared initiative, launched by the Association of Canadian Early Career Health Researchers, has led to many meetings and letters to Canadian members of Parliament.

Invitation sent to trainees to participate in the #studentsforthereport campaign

A letter writing and social media campaign was launched by the Science & Policy Exchange. CAN members were invited to participate in these campaigns.

CAN Advocacy committee members actively #supportthereport

- David Kaplan attended the event: A researcher's response to Canada's fundamental science review. This one-day summit was organised to constructively discuss moving forward and implementing the recommendations of the Naylor report. Dr. David Naylor, Chair of the Expert Review Panel, was one of the speakers at this event. <http://sciencereview.lunenfeld.ca/>
- Liisa Galea went to Ottawa with a delegation from the University of British Columbia to meet with Canadian Science Minister and to support the implementation of the Fundamental Science Review <http://psych.ubc.ca/ubc-researchers-promote-the-fundamental-science-review-on-parliament-hill>

Participation in 2018 Budget consultations

CAN participates in Canada's Standing Committee on Finance pre-budget consultations

The Canadian Association for Neuroscience participated in pre-budget consultations held in person in many cities across Canada. These meetings were an opportunity to meet the chair and members of the Standing Committee on Finances of Canada (FINA), a multi-party consultation body which submits recommendations to the Minister of Finances, in advance of the budget. CAN Chief Operating Officer **Julie Poupart** participated in the consultations in Montreal on October 18th 2017; and CAN Advocacy Committee member Dr. **Melanie Woodin** and CAN Advocacy officer **Jason Tetro** participated in the consultations in Toronto on October 20th. These consultations were an opportunity for us to once again highlight the importance of governmental support of fundamental research for all Canadians.

A copy of the statements of CAN representatives can be found on the CAN website:

<http://can-acn.org/can-participates-in-canadas-standing-committee-on-finance-pre-budget-consultations>

The FINA committee released its report on these consultations in December 2017, and one of the recommendations of the report was the implementation of the recommendations of the Naylor report (recommendation 50). The report is available on the Canadian House of Commons website.

<http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/FINA/report-21>

CAN invites its members to participate in online consultations launched by the Minister of Finance in advance of Budget 2018

A call to action for Budget 2018 was sent to all our members, urging them to participate in consultations launched by the Minister of Finance of Canada, the honourable Bill Morneau. CAN provided resources and information sources for our members, to help them make the case for increasing governmental investment in research.

<http://can-acn.org/budget-2018>

CAN invites its members to thank the government for Health research funding received.

As the results of the latest CIHR projects grants were announced in January 2018, CAN reached out to all the winners to ask them to write to the Ministers of Finance, Science and

Health, their local Member of Parliament, and to the Chief Science Advisor and Prime Minister, to thank them for this funding. CAN also invited its members to share the positive outcomes of this funding, in terms of jobs created, and impact of research by regular mail, email and on social media. This is a way to show that the success of scientists is also a success for the politicians that invest in health research.

Other activities

Continuing support of the Convergence initiative

CAN is proud to support the continuing work of the Convergence Initiative. In the fall season, the group hosted talks by **Trevor Butterworth**, Executive Director of Sense about Science USA, and **Chloe Soutar**, a PhD candidate at Queen's University and founder the non-profit research skills education program RISE: Research and Information Science Education. Both full-length conferences are available on the convergence initiative website.

The online interactive catalog of the first Convergence exhibition, organized in conjunction with the CAN2017 public lectures in May is now available on their website.

www.convergenceinitiative.org/season-2017-2018

CAN Participates in the SfN17 Advocacy reception and as an exhibitor

CAN presented a poster at the SfN17 Advocacy reception, where we had the chance to meet many other advocates and network with important partners. It was a great opportunity to learn from other the winning strategies they have used to advocate for neuroscience research around the world.

CAN once again had a booth in the non-profit section of the SfN meeting. Many neuroscientists, from Canada or abroad, were very interested in learning more about our advocacy initiatives. We also had the chance to network with other non-profit organizations with similar interests.



CAN news: highlighting neuroscience research achievements targeted to a general audience

CAN continues to promote Canadian neuroscience research on the can-acn.org website, with the public in mind. These reports provide perspective on the implications of the research on the lives of Canadians. The articles have been enjoyed both by the neuroscience community as well as the public.