



Open Letter of Support for the Breakthrough T1D Network for Canada

May 2026

As leaders from Canada's health, research, patient, and innovation communities, we write to express our strong support for the establishment of the **Breakthrough T1D Network for Canada (BTNC)** and for its inclusion in the Government of Canada's **2026 federal budget**.

Canada has a time-limited opportunity to translate its globally recognized strengths in **type 1 diabetes (T1D) research and regenerative medicine** into therapies that durably restore glucose regulation by addressing both autoimmunity and beta cell loss, fundamentally changing the lives of people living with T1D. Scientific advances are rapidly moving from discovery into clinical application. Without coordinated national action, Canada risks losing talent, intellectual property, clinical trials, and commercialization opportunities to better-coordinated jurisdictions.

The BTNC is a **federally anchored, public-private partnership** designed to address this challenge. Rather than creating a new institute, it would coordinate and accelerate late-stage, high-impact research across Canada, linking academic excellence, clinical trial capacity, manufacturing readiness, and private-sector participation. Its initial focus on T1D reflects Canada's unique concentration of expertise and offers a credible, near-term opportunity to demonstrate leadership in regenerative medicine.

In addition to its health impact, the BTNC represents a strong economic opportunity for Canada. Advancing Canadian discoveries toward clinical validation and commercialization would help anchor high-value jobs, strengthen domestic biomanufacturing, attract follow-on private investment, and contribute an estimated **\$575 million to Canada's GDP over five years**. Without this coordination, these economic benefits and the underlying intellectual property are likely to be realized outside Canada.

We support a federal investment of **\$62 million over five years in research funding**, to be matched at least **1:1 by private and philanthropic partners for federally supported research activities**. This matching model would maximize the impact of public research dollars, de-risk private investment, and accelerate the translation of Canadian innovation into patient benefit and economic value.

As organizations and researchers committed to improving health outcomes, advancing science, and strengthening Canada's innovation ecosystem, we urge the Government of Canada to support the BTNC in Budget 2026. This is a practical, targeted opportunity to secure Canada's leadership in curative medicine and ensure that Canadians benefit from breakthroughs that are within reach.



Sincerely,

1. Maria Antonakos, Co-Founder, Allarta Life Sciences
2. Harald Stover, Co-Founder, Allarta Life Sciences
3. Benoit Larose, President & CEO, BioQuébec
4. Rob Henderson, President & CEO, BioTalent Canada
5. Penny Walsh-McGuire, Chief Executive Officer, CASTL
6. Michael May, President & CEO, CCRM
7. Alison Orth, Director, Clinical Trials British Columbia
8. Susan Marlin, President & CEO, Clinical Trials Ontario
9. Véronique Dugas, CEO, CQDM
10. Fanny Guimont-Desrochers, Senior Director, Scientific Affairs, CQDM
11. Grace Wei, Chief Operating Officer, Encellin
12. Jason Field, President & CEO, Life Sciences Ontario
13. Yasaman Aghazadeh, Adjunct Professor, McGill University
14. Steven Paraskevas, Professor, McGill University
15. Melissa-Rosina Pasqua, Assistant Professor, McGill University
16. Hertzal Gerstein, Professor, McMaster University & Hamilton Health Sciences
17. Jeffrey Doering, Person with lived experience
18. Monica Seger, Person with lived experience
19. Gary Meininger, EVP, Chief Medical Officer, Sana Biotechnology
20. Amanda MacGillivray, Director, Clinical Development, Sernova Biotherapeutics
21. Robert Screatton, Senior Scientist, Sunnybrook Research Institute
22. Marya Ahmed, Associate Professor, University of Alberta
23. Patrick MacDonald, Professor, University of Alberta
24. Andrew Pepper, Associate Professor, University of Alberta
25. Peter Senior, Professor, University of Alberta
26. Ahsen Chaudry, Fellow, University of British Columbia
27. James D. Johnston, Professor, University of British Columbia
28. Timothy Kieffer, Professor, University of British Columbia
29. Megan Levings, Professor, University of British Columbia
30. Francis Lynn, Professor, University of British Columbia
31. Hongshen Ma, Professor, University of British Columbia
32. Elizabeth Rideout, Associate Professor, University of British Columbia
33. Bruce Verchere, Professor, University of British Columbia
34. Ashish Marwaha, Clinical Associate Professor, University of Calgary
35. Peter Thompson, Associate Professor, University of Manitoba
36. Sylvie Lesage, Professor, University of Montreal
37. Rémi Rabasa-Lhoret, Professor, University of Montreal
38. Denis-Claude Roy, Professor, University of Montreal
39. Guy Rutter, Professor, University of Montreal
40. Yi-Chun Chen, Assistant Professor, University of Saskatchewan
41. Cristina Nostro, Associate Professor, University of Toronto
42. Bruce Perkins, Professor, University of Toronto
43. Trevor Reichman, Associate Professor, University of Toronto
44. Michael Sefton, Professor, University of Toronto
45. Dianne Wherrett, Professor, University of Toronto



46. Shirley Wu, Director, Advanced Pharmaceuticals & Drug Delivery Laboratory, University of Toronto
47. Patrick Bedford, Founder & Managing Director, weCANreg

DRAFT