



Fernyhough/Zahradka receive CFI Grant

Congratulations to Division of Neurodegenerative Disorders (DND) Director Paul Fernyhough, PhD, and Canadian Centre for Agri-Food Research in Health and Medicine (CCARM) Team Leader Peter Zahradka, PhD, who received a Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) grant of \$379,388. The grant was provided for equipment, an automated microscope and image analysis platform, that will enable small amounts of primary tissue from animal models of diabetes – and also human biopsy material – to be assessed at high resolution and high throughput, as well as an imaging microscope that can monitor changes to the cornea and retina that are caused by diseases such as diabetes.

The equipment will permit further collaborative efforts between DND and CCARM and will enhance translational research at St Boniface Hospital and University of Manitoba. To date, the ability to screen large numbers of drugs has been restrained by low cell numbers, preventing a range of experiments and holding back research. The high throughput and high content nature of the machine will allow 1000s of putative drugs to be rapidly screened for therapeutic effects

on a range of degenerative diseases.

This unique and innovative infrastructure will also accelerate progress in the understanding of the etiology of degenerative diseases, such as diabetic complications. These data will be complemented by the ocular microscope which will enable monitoring of human disease progression as it relates to both neural and vascular tissues well before symptoms would normally become apparent, and thus at a stage that remains amenable to intervention.

The grant was provided under the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Leaders Opportunity Fund, which supports infrastructure at Canadian institutions to attract and retain leading researchers. The CFI is an independent corporation created by the Government of Canada to fund research infrastructure. Its mandate is to strengthen the capacity of Canadian universities, colleges, research hospitals and non-profit research institutions to carry out world-class research and technology development that benefits Canadians.

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[For more information on CCARM, click here.](#)

[For information on the Canada Foundation for Innovation, click here.](#)