



A Look Back at 2017

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We hope 2017 was a prosperous year for you, our partners in health innovation. While FACIT had many successes this year, we also had it end in heartbreak. Everyone at FACIT was devastated by the passing of our President, Jeff Courtney on November 28. Jeff was a friend and this organization's visionary-in-chief. He was essential to FACIT's formation, influenced everything we have accomplished to date, and he will be deeply missed (a short tribute can be found [here](#)).

Jeff was proud of what we achieved over the course of 2017. I know he would have insisted on us spreading the word about our work to bridge the gap between research and patient impact and commercializing lifesaving oncology therapies.

Building at the centre of an ecosystem of innovators, funders, investors, government partners and healthcare providers, FACIT helps establish competitive, job-creating Ontario companies. FACIT connects those companies to seed capital and provides expert, hands-on interim management to get them on a firm footing. We continuously expand our innovator-industry network using "market pull", to meet healthcare system demands.

Three companies we seeded and/or co-created — Fusion Pharma, Turnstone Biologics and Triphase Accelerator — continue to grow on the international stage. They are leading examples of public-private partnerships that generate world-class innovations for the benefit of patients worldwide while contributing to Ontario's knowledge economy.

Fusion Pharma, which was founded using \$1.5 million in seed funding from FACIT, secured Series A financing of US \$46 million from eight top-tier healthcare investors. Fusion was spun out by our partners at the Centre for Probe Development and Commercialization (CPDC), a group initially supported by the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR). We're expecting big things ahead as this Hamilton-based company energizes Ontario's next-generation radiotherapeutics expertise and products.

FACIT-founded Turnstone Biologics reported a multinational Pharma partnership with AbbVie in October and continues to grow in the Ottawa area. The industry's highest valued oncolytic virus transaction to date will facilitate clinical development of potentially breakthrough cancer medicines and an exchange of world-class drug development expertise.

Celgene's acquisition of a potential brain cancer therapy helped Triphase Accelerator validate its unique, FACIT-conceived business model. We are now reinvesting these and other Trust returns into new patient-centred innovations through a range of vehicles, including our newly launched Prospects Oncology Fund. FACIT's investment funds enhance our ability to incubate the best technologies and foster other successful start-ups in the Ontario biotech ecosystem.

Companies and capital are not the only things FACIT brought to Ontario in 2017. Anil Amlani, a well-respected medical device serial entrepreneur, was attracted north of the border through our executive-in-residence program. In his view, we are on the right track as "very few places in the world combine

the translational model and commercial expertise as robustly as FACIT and OICR.” We are happy to report that Anil accepted the role of CEO at a local biotechnology company, illustrating the recent surge in entrepreneurial innovation in Ontario as well as the need for executives to fill a growing number of vacancies.

Using the same interim management model we employed with Turnstone Biologics and Novera Therapeutics in years past, in 2017 we provided corporate and operational support to Propellon Therapeutics. Propellon is making great progress on epigenetic cancer therapies and the company is positioned to deliver benefits to Ontario. For these and other FACIT spin-outs, we are actively managing strategies for financing, strategic partners and corporate growth.

We are grateful to our stakeholders and partners who have stood behind us, including the Ontario Ministry of Research, Innovation and Science and, of course, our valued strategic partnership with OICR. With Doug Squires concluding his term as Chair of the Board, I would like to acknowledge his invaluable contribution and guidance to FACIT throughout his tenure, and am pleased to welcome Kevin Empey, Cynthia Goh and Shana Kelley aboard as trustees.

It's thrilling to look back on the seeds we've planted — last year, and since FACIT's inception — and also to look ahead at all we have yet to do. Beyond nearly \$300 million in leveraged funding (roughly 10 times our investments) to date, we've created companies responsible for more than 250 new jobs in Ontario. We're just getting started. FACIT is fortunate to be on the leading edge of OICR innovation, and working alongside Ontario's top entrepreneurs and cancer research hospitals. By reinvesting our financial returns to meet the province's needs for seed capital, we will realize our vision even more fully in 2018. We look forward to collaborating with you and building on the vision that Jeff Courtney helped to form.

Best wishes to you and yours for a healthy and happy 2018.

Sincerely,

David O'Neill, PhD
President (Acting), FACIT