

NerView Surgical wins Falcons' Fortunes 2026 for its precise nerve visualization technology making cancer surgeries safer for patients

Ontario start-ups attribute early successes to FACIT's continuum of commercialization capital and support

TORONTO, ON (April 24, 2026) – The winner of the \$100,000 Ernsting Entrepreneurship award at FACIT's Falcons' Fortunes 2026 pitch competition was awarded to Mann Parikh, Founder and CEO of NerView Surgical. Pitching in front of a live audience at last week's sold-out event, Mr. Parikh articulated the value and benefits of NerveSense™, the real-time nerve visualization system his team is developing at the Hamilton, Ontario-based medtech start-up. The safe, non-invasive, dye-free technology provides surgeons with precise localization of nerves to minimize unnecessary nerve damage during cancer surgeries. For patients, this means retaining function and an easier and faster road to recovery.

The premier annual event, now in its thirteenth year, brings together ecosystem partners and attracts entrepreneurs from across the province with a variety of innovative cancer solution poised to improve the care and lives of patients. In addition to the judges' selection, event attendees had the opportunity to vote for their favourite pitch of the six finalists. In a tight race, the 2026 Audience Choice Award went to Dr. Agata Kieliszek, Co-founder and Head of Biology & Operations at Hamilton, Ontario's Block Biosciences. Block Biosciences is developing a brain cancer therapeutic that mitigates brain metastasis by intercepting cancer cells before they can colonize the brain.

Prior to the competition, opening remarks by Jeff Butler, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security highlighted Ontario's focus on its life sciences strategy. This was followed by earnest testaments from three entrepreneurs, Zaid Atto (Founder & CEO, Xpan), Dr. Saumik Biswas (Founder & CEO, Tenomix), and Dr. Yvonne Bombard (Founder & CEO, Genetics Adviser) in a panel discussion titled *Cancer Start-ups Take Off - Navigating the flight path to innovation successes*.

The panelists shared insights from their experiences building a start-up and commercializing their oncology innovation in Ontario, expressing gratitude for the valuable resources available for entrepreneurs. They stressed the importance of having access to a structured, cooperative, and efficient oncology commercialization network to enable them to build and scale their start-ups locally. As previous finalists themselves, Mr. Atto and Dr. Saumik reflected on how their Falcons' Fortunes experience was highly influential in their early successes, recognizing the value of this initial connection with FACIT in providing access to vital resources such as expertise, network, and investment capital. Collectively, the panel highlighted that FACIT's continuum of commercialization support programs, including the Compass Rose Oncology Fund that helps fill the \$2-10M seed gap, are critical for entrepreneurs, and that government's support for these resources needs to be sustained.

"Congratulations to the entrepreneurs from NerView Surgical and Block Biosciences, and to all the finalists in this highly competitive field," remarked Dr. Nicole Baryla, FACIT's Senior Director of Corporate Affairs. "For these early-stage ventures preparing to embark on their entrepreneurial journey, FACIT looks forward to working with you on opportunities to leverage our commercialization programs and synergize with Ontario's ecosystem partners."

About FACIT

FACIT is an award-winning commercialization venture firm that builds companies with entrepreneurs to accelerate oncology innovation, with a portfolio that has attracted more than \$1.7 billion in investment to Ontario. Blending industry experience, capital and the unsurpassed clinician-scientist network of its strategic partner the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR), FACIT capitalizes on the province's investment in research and healthcare to the benefit of the local economy and patients worldwide. *Cancer Breakthroughs. Realized.* [facit.ca](https://www.facit.ca)

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