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Dear Members, Colleagues and Friends of CSMB,

As the year 2025 comes to a close, the Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences (CSMB) celebrates a year marked by vibrant scientific engagement, impactful advocacy efforts, and growing support for trainees and researchers across Canada. Throughout the past year, our Society has fostered an environment where researchers and members actively exchanged ideas, collaborated on innovative projects, and contributed to the advancement of molecular biosciences in Canada. Together, the community has strengthened the national voice for molecular biosciences at a pivotal and very crucial moment for research and innovation.

The overall mandate of our Society is to advance and promote molecular biosciences in Canada, and to serve the membership of CSMB. Trainees and Principal Investigators join our Society in order to find a scientific home but also to establish a network of peers that share common interests and common concerns. Being part of CSMB allows our members to serve the greater scientific community in Canada and also to influence the scientific discourse through advocacy and recognition. For example, during the Federal elections earlier this year, CSMB was very active in advocating for the life sciences and for science funding through various means.

Our Society has multiple committees, each dedicated to a certain specific goal. This year has been very busy for our committees working to achieve these goals. Since I became President one of my main goals has been to increase the Society's membership and further strengthen our Society's impact among its peer societies. Therefore, several initiatives were undertaken with these goals in mind. These initiatives included the creation of CSMB Fellows awards category to recognize the achievement of CSMB members who contributed significantly to our Society. We also initiated a Mentorship program for new PIs, which is led by Dr. Costin Antonescu, to pair senior researchers with junior researchers. In an effort to attract undergraduate students to our Society and serve their ambitions, an Education and Undergraduate Affairs Committee was established. The committee is tasked with enhancing undergraduate student engagement with the CSMB by organizing events and providing information pertinent to the students' academic and professional development. The Committee is chaired by Dr. Scott Covey and includes four teaching stream Professors and a trainee. The Trainee Committee initiated a CSMB Trainee Ambassadors program to further engage graduate students with our Society. Thanks to the efforts of the Communications and Publications Committee chaired by Dr. Mojgan Rastegar (Vice President of CSMB), we restarted our annual Bulletin which was published in mid 2025 with very positive feedback from our community.

Scientific events and meetings

In May 2025, CSMB held the 68th Annual Conference jointly with the 4th PRinCE meeting at the University of Ottawa with the theme "Protein Homeostasis – From Basic Science to Human Health". The meeting brought together about two hundred researchers to discuss topics ranging from protein folding and autophagy to neurodegeneration and cardiovascular health. Attendees benefited from keynote lectures, invited talks, trainee posters, outreach, and networking events that highlighted Canadian leadership in the molecular biosciences.



The CSMB 2025 conference in Ottawa.

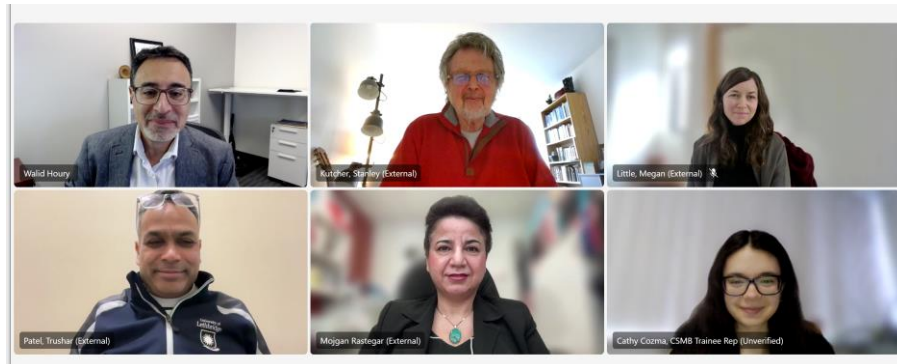
At the meeting, many of our researchers were recognized by prestigious awards from our Society. These include (1) the 2025 CSMB Fellow to Drs. Imogen Coe, John Orlowski, and Jan Rainey, (2) Canadian Science Publishing Senior Investigator Award to Dr. Aaron Schimmer, (3) CSMB Jeanne Manery Fisher Memorial Lecture Award to Dr. P. Lynne Howell, and (4) CSMB New Investigator Award to Dr. Heather McFarlane. In addition, travel awards, poster awards, and best talk awards were given. PRinCE also gave the Jason Young Graduate Student Award and Best Webinar Presentation Award. I thank Dr. Jyh-Yeuan (Eric) Lee, who also serves as CSMB Treasurer, for leading the organization of this excellent meeting.

In 2025, the Society provided financial support to ten graduate student activities and one undergraduate student activity. These student-related activities included workshops, student-focused research conferences, and career fairs. Our Trainee Committee organized a monthly Trainee research seminar series and also the highly attended seminars on “Fantastic Careers and Where to Find Them” and “AI in Publishing”. You can view the trainee seminars on the CSMB YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@CSMB-SCBM>. Finally, the Education and Undergraduate Affairs Committee held their first virtual event on applying to graduate school for undergraduates with the title “So You Want to Go to Graduate School, Eh?”. The event was widely successful with more than 240 registrants, highlighting the need for a national organization such as CSMB to provide an overall guidance and direction of our undergraduate trainees.

Advocacy efforts

CSMB continued to act as a strong advocate for robust and sustainable funding for fundamental research in Canada. During the elections period, we sent the costed party platforms to CSMB members. The Society made a pre-budget submission to Finance Canada’s consultation ahead of Budget in March and then in August. We also made a submission to the Department of Finance ahead of the 2025 Budget in August. In November, we sent out a statement to our members on the Government’s 2025 budget, welcoming new investments while raising concerns about remaining gaps in support for discovery science. In this regard, we published an article in The Hill Times (Sept 24, 2025) under the title “The Unsung Guardians of Canadian Dominion, Innovation, and Prosperity” (<https://www.hilltimes.com/story/2025/09/24/the-unsung-guardians-of-canadian-dominion-innovation-and-prosperity/474031/>) highlighting the importance of sustainable investment in basic research for Canada’s economy. It is a recommended read.

We worked closely with Research Canada and also met several MPs and senators during the year. Several CSMB Advocacy and Government Relations Committee members were in Ottawa the week of November 17-21 to attend events aimed at advocating for investments in Canadian science. These events included visits with MPs, the Science Meets Parliament event, the Canadian Society Policy Conference, and the Friends of CIHR meeting.



Meeting with Senator Stan Kutcher (Feb 5, 2025).



CSMB current and past leadership were in Ottawa November 17-21 (2025) to engage with policy and decision-making individuals during the Science Meets Parliament and the Canadian Society Policy Conference. Left to right: Drs. Trushar Patel, Kristin Baetz, Walid A. Houry, Reinhart Reithmeier, and Hans-Joachim Wieden.

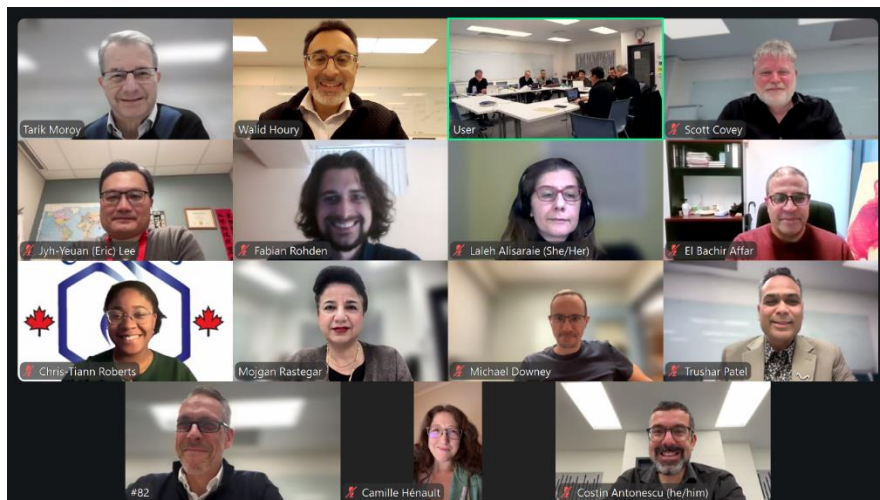


Dr. Hans-Joachim Wieden (Past President of CSMB) and Dr. Trushar Patel (CSMB Advocacy and Government Relations Committee co-chair) met with MP Salma Zahid (Liberal MP from ON; Chair of the Standing Committee on Science and Research) at her office in Ottawa (Nov 20, 2025).

Looking forward

In 2025, CSMB witnessed a notable increase in initiatives supporting trainees and early-career researchers nationwide. By empowering the next generation of scientists, the Society continues to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for molecular biosciences across the country.

Collectively, our community has succeeded in amplifying the national voice for molecular biosciences. We aim to continue to increase our activities in 2026 by launching new initiatives and hosting new events that our Committees are currently planning. These will also include collaborations with our sister societies ASBMB and PABMB.



Board meeting Dec 5 2025.

Finally, make sure to attend our 69th CSMB meeting on “Membrane Proteins in Health and Disease” in April 2026. The meeting is co-Chaired by Drs. Emmanuelle Cordat & Harley Kurata and will be held at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity located in Banff, at the heart of the Canadian Rockies.

On behalf of the CSMB Executive and Board members, thank you for your engagement, your science, and your support throughout 2025. Wishing you a restful holiday season and a productive, inspiring 2026.

Best regards,

Walid A. Houry
President, Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences