

Advancements in Cancer Research and Therapeutics

ACRT 2026

March 25-27, 2026

DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Boston Cambridge
400 Soldiers Field Road, Allston, MA, 02134

Program Outline

Day 1, March 25

Morning

Registrations
Welcome Remarks
Plenary & Keynote Session
Q&A
Conference Photo
Lunch & Networking

Afternoon

Scientific Session I
Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy

Evening

Networking & Drinks

Day 2, March 26

Morning

Scientific Session II
Metastasis and Tumor Progression

Lunch & Networking

Afternoon

Scientific Session III
Drug Discovery and Preclinical Models

Day 3, March 27

Morning

Scientific Session IV

Cancer Biology, Targeted Therapies & Tumor Microenvironment

Lunch

Closing Remarks of In-person Conference and Announcement of 2027 Edition

Afternoon

Scientific Session (Virtual)

Evening

Full Conference Scientific Sessions Closing

Day 1- March 25, 2026	
PLENARY & KEYNOTE SESSION	
<i>Moderator</i>	
William Gmeiner, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, NC	
PLENARY SESSION I- 8:30-13:00	
8:30 Rakesh K Jain Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital Boston	Improving Immunotherapy of Glioblastoma by Reprogramming the Tumor Microenvironment: Emerging Insights and Strategies
9:05 Tyler Jacks, MIT, Boston	Probing Tumor-Immune Interactions using Genetically Engineered Mouse Models
BREAK AND NETWORKING	
9:55 John Quackenbush Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, MA	Network Transitions as Drivers of Disease
10:30 Khalid Shah Harvard Medical School, MA	The Concept of Innovation and Orchestration: Translating Cell Based Immunotherapies from Bench to Bedside
11:05 Ellen Pure University of Pennsylvania, PA	Strategies to Overcoming Multiple Challenges to CAR T Cell Therapy for the Treatment of Desmoplastic Tumors
11:40 Douglas Green, St Jude Children's Research Hospital TN	Paradigm Shifts in Cell Death Research
12:15 GROUP PICTURE 12:20 LUNCH & NETWORKING Exhibitor Visit	

<p>Session I Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy 13:15-18:00 <i>Chairs</i> Geetha Upadhayay, Uniformed Services University, MD Lucas Ferrari de Andrade, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY</p>	
<p>13:15 Plenary Talk Kai Wucherpennig, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School, MA Therapeutic Targeting of the Cancer – Immunity Cycle</p>	
<p>13:50 Keynote Talk Xingxing Zhang, Albert Einstein College of Medicine NY New Immune Pathways: from Fundamental Discoveries to Novel Drugs to New Clinical Trials</p>	
<p>14:20 Alexander Barrow Doherty Institute, Australia</p>	<p>NK Cell Receptor Signaling in Cancer Immunotherapy: Mechanistic Insights and Therapeutic Potential</p>
<p>14:40 Lucas Ferrari de Andrade Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY</p>	<p>Selective Inhibition of Fc Receptor Shedding to Promote Antibody-Dependent Cellular Cytotoxicity against Tumors</p>
<p>BREAK AND NETWORKING</p>	
<p>15:10 Rizwan Romee, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Boston MA</p>	<p>Novel NK Cell Immunotherapeutic Approaches to Cancer</p>
<p>15:30 Jessica Thaxton, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC</p>	<p>Manipulating the Integrated Stress Response to Fuel Tumor Immunotherapy</p>
<p>15:50 Geetha Upadhayay Uniformed Services University, MD</p>	<p>Emerging Biomarkers for Solid Cancer- Immunotherapies</p>
<p>16:10 Megan L. Burger Knight Cancer Institute, OR</p>	<p>Therapeutic Vaccination to Remodel Antigen Hierarchies</p>
<p>16:30 Yina H Huang, Geisel School of Medicine, NH</p>	<p>Contrasting CAR T and Nanoparticle Delivery of Cytokine Immunotherapies</p>
<p>16:50 Yufei Wang Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, MA</p>	<p>Engineering the Next Generation of CAR T Cells for Solid Tumors</p>
<p>17:10 Liya Ding Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, NY</p>	<p>Preclinical Models and Therapeutic Approaches Targeting Tumor Cells and Immune Suppression in Prostate Cancer</p>
<p>17:30 Scott H Olejniczak, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, NY</p>	<p>CD28 drives CAR T cell responses in myeloma and lymphoma models</p>
<p>18:00 DRINKS</p>	

Day 2 March 26, 2026

SCIENTIFIC SESSION II- 8:30-12:50

Metastasis and Tumor Progression

Chairs

William Gmeiner, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, NC
Kaifu Chen, Harvard Medical School, MA

8:30 Plenary Talk

Channing J Der, UNC School of Medicine, NC
 Targeting KRAS for Cancer Treatment

9:05 Plenary Talk

A Thomas Look, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School, MA
 Enhancing the Response to GD2 Targeted Immunotherapy of Childhood Neuroblastoma by Inhibiting KAT6A/B Histone Acetylases

9:35 Keynote Talk

Ying-Chih Chang, AcroCyte Therapeutics Inc., Taiwan
 Cultivating the Future: 3D Cell Cultures and the Path to Personalized Medicine

10:05 Keynote Talk

Joyce Slingerland, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, DC
 High local estrone impairs antitumor immunity to drive obesity-associated breast cancer progression

Break

10:50 Rizwan Haq

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, MA

New Models of Metastatic Uveal Melanoma to Uncover Therapeutic Targets

11:10 Blake R. Wilde

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, NY

Metabolic Determinants of Kidney Cancer Initiation

11:30 Hyungshin Yim

Hanyang University, South Korea

PLK1 Signaling Network as a Driver of Metastasis in NSCLC

11:50 Christina M. Ferrer

University of Maryland Marlene & Stewart Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center

Slow-Cycling, Glutathione-Sensing GSTT1⁺ Cells Mediate Therapy Resistance and Metastasis in Pancreatic Cancer

12:10 William Gmeiner

Wake Forest University School of Medicine, NC

Improving Efficacy and Overcoming Resistance in Treatment of Liver-Metastatic Colorectal Cancer with CF10

12:30 Angus Gordon

Imperial College Healthcare Trust, London

Tumour Volume Analysis Applied to Breast Cancer

12:50 Kaifu Chen

Harvard Medical School, MA

Nanopore sequencing reveals alternative polyadenylation regulated by RNA modification in prostate cancer

13:10 -14:00 LUNCH

14:10 Oliver Bogler

Coaching and Consulting, VT

NIH Grants Update and How to Compete in 2026?

SCIENTIFIC SESSION III – 14:40-18:00 Drug Discovery and Novel Therapeutics <i>Chair</i> Lee Graves, University of North Carolina, NC	
14:40 Lee Graves, University of North Carolina, NC	Application of Novel ClpP Agonists for Cancer Treatment
15:00 Richard Kolesnick Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, NY	ENT1 Dimerization in a Ceramide-Rich Platform Enhances Gemcitabine Uptake Improving Sarcoma Patient Response Rate
15:20 Hernando Lopez Bertoni Johns Hopkins School of Medicine Baltimore	Resistance Is Futile: Collapsing Networks to Outmaneuver GBM
16:00 Anthony Faber VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center, VA	Subsumstat reverses SS18-SSX-driven BAF changes to shrink human and mouse synovial sarcoma tumors
16:20 Jutatip Panaampon Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston	Title to be added
Break	
16:50 Grant Fischer, UNC School of Medicine, NC	Integrative Bioinformatics and Experimental Insights into Melanoma Pathology
17:10 Gamze Ayaz, NCI/NIH, MD	Thyclotide-Peptide Conjugates Enable Efficient Cellular Delivery and Reactivate p53 by Disrupting MDM2 Interaction in Cancer Cells
17:30 Morgan M. Eikanger, University of South Dakota, SD	Veratridine suppresses the Rictor-mTORC2 signaling pathway to Inhibit Metastatic Colon Cancer
17:50 Zeinaf Muradova Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Dana- Farber Cancer Institute, MA	Gadolinium-Based Theranostic Nanoparticles as Immunomodulators in Cancer Models
18:10 Audrey Van Heest	Engineering Protease-Responsive Biosensors for Precision Oncology

DAY 3- March 27, 2026 SCIENTIFIC SESSION IV- 8:00-13:00 Cancer Biology, Targeted Therapies & Tumor Microenvironment	
8:00 Keynote Talk Peter Caravan, Massachusetts General Hospital, MA Non-invasive imaging of the tumor microenvironment to monitor treatment response	
8:30 J. Javier Bravo-Cordero, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY	The Textures of the Tumor Microenvironment: An Integrated Imaging Perspective
8:50 Priya Hays, Hays Documentation Specialists, LLC	Advances and Challenges in MRD Measurement for Determining Prognosis by Liquid Biopsy
9:10 Asaf Rotem, Astrazeneca, MA	Multimodality of Single Cell Analysis in Clinical Settings
Break	
9:20 Yunqing Li, Hugo W. Moser Research Institute at Kennedy Krieger, MD	Targeting Tumor Cell Intrinsic Epigenetic Determinants in Brain Tumors
9:40 Carrie D. House , San Diego State University, CA	Chemotherapy-induced NF-kB activation drives stress tolerance and relapse in ovarian cancer
10:00 Jennifer M Binning Moffit Cancer Center, FL	Engineering Targeted Degradors of the HPV Oncoprotein E6
10:20 Louise Treanor, Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, MA	How DLBCL Outsmarts CD19 CAR T Cells: Cross-Antigen Escape, Resistance, and the Gene Signature Predictive of clinical CAR T-cells Response
10:40 Frank Cichocki, University of Minnesota, MN	An Intrinsic Functional Switch Governing Natural Killer Cell Fate and Function in Cancer
11:00 Mutlay Sayan Harvard Medical School, MA	Defining the Role of Whole-Pelvis Radiotherapy in Modern Prostate Cancer Care
11:20 Yu (Clay) Cao, GenEditBio Limited, MA	The Development of Novel in vivo T cell Engineering Systems
11:40 Stefanie Galban, University of Michigan, MI	Title to be updated
12:00 Allison Fitzgerald Dana Farber Cancer Institute, MA	Strategies to Enhance Cell Therapy Infiltration into Solid Tumors
12:20 Krinio Giannikou, Harvard Medical School, MA	Multi-Omics Characterization of Germ Cell Tumor Biology and Therapeutic Vulnerabilities
12:40 Allegra A. Petti, Massachusetts General Hospital, MA	Integrating spatial and single-cell transcriptomics to resolve the spatial organization of glioblastoma

VIRTUAL SESSION	
Victor Peperzak, University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands	Enhancing CAR T Cell Cytotoxicity Against Multiple Myeloma Through Targeted Cargo Delivery
Minji Jung Stanford University, CA	Bidirectional Links Between Kidney Cancer and Cardiovascular Disease: Emerging Epidemiologic Insights
John Bridgeman Immunokey Ltd, UK	CARKey™ - A multi-specific CAR T-cell Platform to Overcome Solid Tumour Antigen Heterogeneity
Eric Humke, CMO, EpiBiologics, CA	TBA
TAY Rong En Singapore Immunology Network Singapore	Serotonin Receptor 5-HT2A as a Potential Target for HCC Immunotherapy

CLOSING REMARKS OF CONFERENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2027 EDITION