

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Malaysia's Top Scientific Minds Join AACR to Bridge Translational Research Gap and Advance Cancer Control in Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, 11th November 2025 – The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) and Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM) officially launched the AACR on Campus-Malaysia programme in Kuala Lumpur today at the Connexion Conference & Event Centre (CCEC). The inaugural event, titled “Defeating Cancer Through Global Education and Training,” focuses on empowering early-career researchers and clinicians with the knowledge and skills to drive cancer control in Asia.

The ceremony was inaugurated by the Guest of Honour, Academician Datuk Professor Ulung Dr. Looi Lai Meng, Vice President of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM); alongside Professor Dr. Elizabeth M. Jaffee, Chair of the AACR Global Affairs Committee; and Professor Dr. Cheong Sok Ching, Chief Scientific Officer from Cancer Research Malaysia and Chairperson of the programme.

The two-day AACR on Campus programme on 10th and 11th November 2025 is strategically designed for early-career researchers and clinicians, with a curriculum focused on the unique cancer burden in Asia, where genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors create specific challenges.

Professor Cheong, underscored the mission: “This collaboration serves as a vital platform to bridge the translational gap between preclinical, clinical and implementation studies in our region. By tailoring global expertise to our local context, we ensure that our work contributes to Malaysia’s National Strategic Plan for Cancer Control Programme 2021–2025; improving outcomes in prevention, early detection, and treatment access.”

Professor Jaffee, highlighted the importance of this international exchange. “The AACR on Campus initiative is centred on the principle that to defeat cancer globally, we must empower and invest in scientists who understand their local populations,” said Professor Jaffee. “By bringing world-renowned experts to Kuala Lumpur, we are directly fostering collaborations and ensuring that breakthroughs in areas like cancer immunotherapy and precision oncology are translated into tangible improvements for patients across Southeast Asia.”

The programme’s core sessions will cover:

- Advancement and Innovation in Cancer Immunotherapy
- Leveraging Cancer Genomics for Precision Oncology
- Early Detection, Prevention, Screening, and Implementation
- Innovations and Best Practices in Early Clinical Trial Design

“As the nation's science advisory body, the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) supported this event as it invests in the next generation of scientists, ensuring they receive multidisciplinary training across medicine, data science, and engineering”, Academician Datuk Prof. Ulung Dr. Looi Lai Meng, Vice President of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) stated. "This event is a cornerstone in our strategy to nurture scientists whose discoveries are Asian by relevance, yet global by impact. We encourage all young attendees to seize this opportunity to build meaningful international collaborations with peers and experts."

A key highlight of this programme is covered in Day 2 which focuses heavily on professional skill development, crucial for career progression and attracting international funding.

Scholarly Publishing in Cancer Research: Dr. Lisa Situ, Assistant Editor of the AACR journal Cancer Discovery, is designed to guide young researchers through manuscript writing and navigating the peer review process.

Successful Grantsmanship and Grants Administration: Dr. Yixian (John) Zhang, Vice President, Research and Grants Administration at the AACR, provided tips on grant writing and maximizing impact, in addition to outlining AACR Grants and Awards Programs.

The AACR on Campus-Malaysia programme is supported by several local and international partners, including the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), Business Events Sarawak (BE Sarawak), The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), Yayasan Sime Darby, Sarawak Research and Development Council (SRDC), Malaysian Oncological Society (MOS), Academy of Sciences Malaysia (particularly the Young Scientist Network), University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), University Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and University of Nottingham, Malaysia and Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak.

It was attended by over 200 participants from Malaysia, and countries around the world including Indonesia, Singapore, Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, China, United States of America and many more.

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About AACR

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is the first and largest cancer research organization in the world, with more than 59,000 members residing in 142 countries and territories. The AACR is dedicated to accelerating the conquest of cancer through research, education, communication, and collaboration.

About Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM)

Founded in 2000, Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM) is the nation's first and only independent, non-profit cancer research organisation dedicated to improving cancer outcomes for Asians. For 25 years, CRM has delivered cutting-edge research and community solutions that reflect the unique genetics, lifestyles and healthcare needs across Asia, funded entirely by donations and research grants.

CRM leads pioneering programmes in breast, oral, nasopharyngeal, lung and hereditary cancers. Its breakthroughs include Asia's most comprehensive breast-cancer genomic studies, a made-in-Malaysia cancer vaccine now advancing towards clinical trials, and MeMoSA®, an AI-enabled mobile screening innovation for early oral cancer detection, particularly for underserved communities.

Beyond laboratories, CRM champions real-world impact through Malaysia's first patient navigation programme known as NORA (Navigation, Outreach & Resource Access), improving treatment access and survival for underserved communities nationwide. CRM has also mainstreamed genetic testing and counselling in Malaysia, enabling prevention and early detection for hereditary cancers.

As it marks 25 years, CRM remains committed to advancing equitable, impactful cancer innovations for Malaysia and Asia.

Learn more or donate at www.cancerresearch.my

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From left to right: Dr Bradley Miller, Dr Alfonso Coral Lopez, Professor Dr Cheong Sok Ching, Professor Dr Elizabeth Jaffee, Professor Ulung Datuk Dr Looi Lai Meng, Professor Dr Electra Paskett, Dr Yixian (John) Zhang and Dr Paul Boutros

