



New Canada-Wide \$100,000 Impact Award for Disability Research Opens Nominations

TORONTO, ON – June 23, 2026 – More than eight million Canadians live with a disability. Yet despite the critical role that research plays in improving accessibility, independence, healthcare outcomes and quality of life, disability research has historically received limited public recognition. A new national award aims to help change that.

[Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons](#) is proud to announce the launch of the [Impact Award for Disability Research](#), a new annual \$100,000 award recognizing a mid- to senior-career investigator whose work is producing meaningful, measurable improvements in the lives of people with physical and sensory disabilities.

The award is presented directly to the recipient rather than their institution and is not tied to research grants or institutional funding.

[Nominations are now open](#) and may be submitted by researchers themselves or by colleagues, organizations, institutions and other nominators on their behalf. Eligibility requirements, nomination criteria and submission guidelines are available at iadr.cfpdp.com. The recipient will receive a personal \$100,000 prize to use at their discretion and national recognition for disability research excellence and impact.

“Disability research has the power to transform lives, strengthen communities and create a more accessible and inclusive Canada,” says **The Honourable Vim Kochhar**, Founder and Chair of CFPDP. “The Impact Award for Disability Research was created to recognize researchers whose work is making a lasting difference and helping to improve opportunities for Canadians with disabilities.”

The Impact Award for Disability Research celebrates research that extends beyond academic achievement to create real-world change through innovation, improved services, public policy, accessibility and enhanced quality of life. It recognizes demonstrated real-world impact rather than lifetime achievement.

Beyond recognizing outcomes, the award seeks to elevate disability research nationally and encourage stronger collaboration among researchers, healthcare leaders, innovators, policymakers, industry and disability communities.

The award is [co-chaired](#) by **Dr. Tom Chau**, Senior Scientist at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital and Professor at the University of Toronto, and **Kris Shah**, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of Baylis Medical Technologies.

“Canada is home to exceptional researchers whose work is advancing accessibility, participation and inclusion,” said Dr. Chau. “This award recognizes research excellence and the lasting impact that it can have on individuals, families and communities.”

The inaugural recipient of the award will be chosen by an [independent national selection board](#) of 10 distinguished leaders with expertise spanning disability research, healthcare, academia, the disability sector and Paralympic sport. Together, they bring extensive experience evaluating research excellence, innovation and real-world impact across a wide range of disciplines.

[Nominations](#) will be accepted until October 16, 2026. The inaugural recipient will be honoured at CFPDP’s [43rd Annual Great Valentine Gala](#) on February 13, 2027, at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto.

“We encourage researchers to nominate themselves for the Impact Award for Disability Research and we invite colleagues, partners, organizations and others to nominate individuals whose work deserves national recognition,” added Hon. Kochhar. “This award is an opportunity to highlight leadership and celebrate the significant impact of disability research in Canada.”

About the Impact Award for Disability Research

Established by Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP), the Impact Award for Disability Research recognizes mid- to senior-career Canadian researchers whose work has produced measurable improvements in accessibility, inclusion, independence, health outcomes, participation and quality of life for people with physical and sensory disabilities. Presented annually, the award includes a \$100,000 personal prize awarded directly to the recipient and national recognition for research excellence and impact. Learn more and submit a nomination today at iadr.cfpdp.com.

About Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons:

Founded in 1984, Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP) seeks to emphasize a person's abilities — rather than disabilities — and to recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities. Over more than four decades, CFPDP has established, led and supported numerous initiatives that promote accessibility, inclusion and opportunity, including [Canadian Helen Keller Centre](#), the [Canadian Disability Hall of Fame](#), [A Seat at the Table](#) and a growing network of [endowment funds](#) supporting students with disabilities at post-secondary institutions across Canada. Together with its partners, CFPDP has raised more than \$85 million to support these and other initiatives. Learn more at cfpdp.com.

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