Australian Inflammation Centres 2026 Annual Symposium

(jointly held with the ASI Innate Immunity Special Interest Group and ACDS)

Hosted at Melbourne Dental School (The University of Melbourne), November 9-10, 2026

The Jean Falkner Tahija Lecture Theatre,

Melbourne Dental School,

720 Swanston St, Carlton,

The University of Melbourne, Victoria

Co-hosts and Sponsors

Australian Inflammation Centres

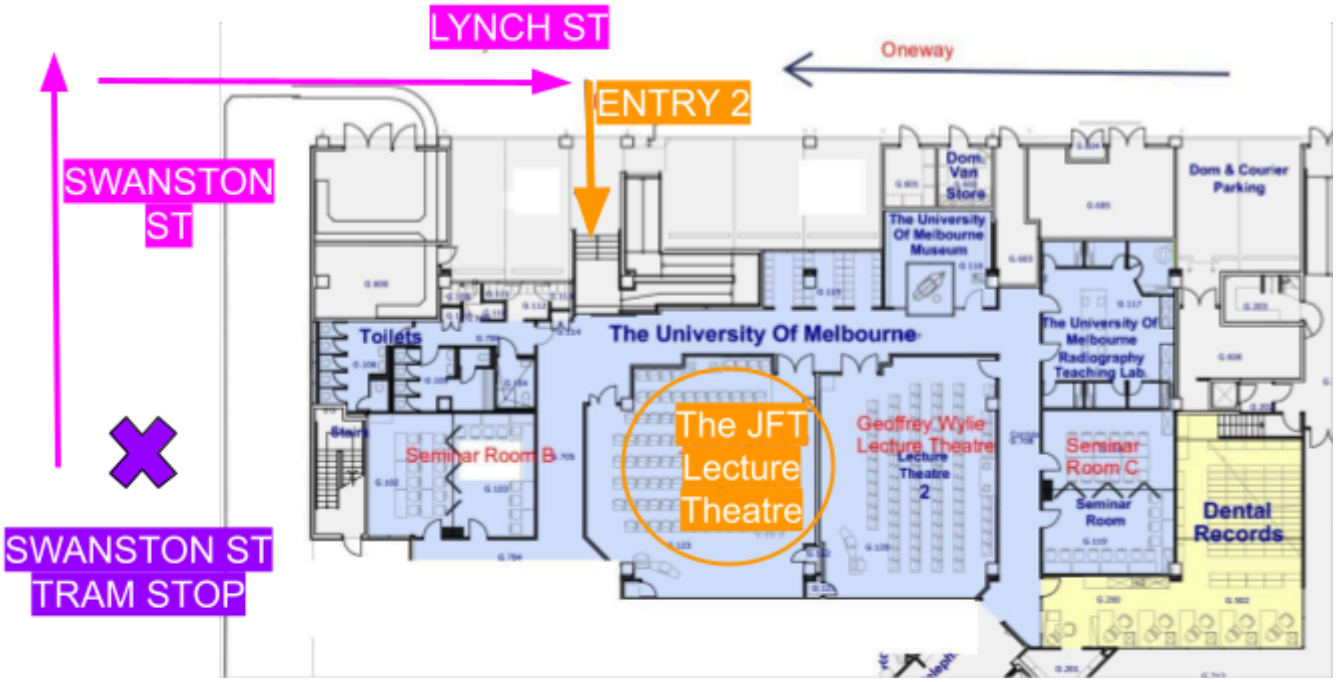
Venue

Melbourne Dental School

The Jean Falkner Tahija Lecture Theatre,
Melbourne Dental School,
720 Swanston St, Carlton,
The University of Melbourne, Victoria

Please enter via Lynch Street "Entry 2"

From the Swanston Street tram stop, head towards Lynch St and turn right onto Lynch St. Please use "Entry 2" to enter the Melbourne Dental School.



Australian Inflammation Centres Symposium 2026

Day 1 Program - Monday 9 November 2026

AEDT (Local)	*ACDT*	*AEST*	*AWST*	
9:00	*8:30*	*8:00*	*6:00*	**Welcome: A/Prof Adrian Achuthan, AIC (The University of Melbourne), Prof Michael Hickey, AIC (Monash University CID) and Dr Sabrina Burgener, The Australasian Cell Death Society (The University of Queensland)**
Session 1: New Australian Inflammation Centres members and supporters CHAIRS: Prof Michael Hickey and Dr Sabrina Burgener				
9:10	*8:40*	*8:10*	*6:10*	Prof Mike Rogers (Garvan Institute of Medical Research) *The mevalonate biosynthesis pathway and inflammation*
9:25	*8:55*	*8:25*	*6:25*	A/Prof Patrick Bertolino (The Centenary Institute) *Understanding liver inflammation through its architecture and myeloid niches*
9:40	*9:10*	*8:40*	*6:40*	A/Prof Adrian Achuthan (The University of Melbourne) *Decoding Cytokine Networks in Inflammatory Arthritis*
9:55	*9:25*	*8:55*	*6:55*	Dr Connie Jackaman (Curtin Medical Research Institute) *Investigating the role of dysferlin in inflammation*
10:10	*9:40*	*9:10*	*7:10*	Dr Benny Shah (Melbourne Dental School, The University of Melbourne) *Investigating the Link Between Chronic Gum Disease and Brain Inflammation and Injury*
10:25	*9:55*	*9:25*	*7:25*	*Katy (My Tuong Khanh) Tu (La Trobe University) *Apoptotic DNA packaging by caspase-activated DNase shapes macrophage responses in inflammation*
10:35	*10:05*	*9:35*	*7:35*	**Morning Tea Break with Poster Viewing - Poster Session I**
Session 2: Novel technologies and omics CHAIRS: A/Prof Mireille Lahoud (Monash University BDI) and Dr Ngee Kiat 'Jake' Chua (WEHI)				
11:05	*10:35*	*10:05*	*8:05*	A/Prof Laura Edgington-Mitchell (The University of Melbourne) *Chemical biology approaches to dissect protease function in inflammation*
11:25	*10:55*	*10:25*	*8:25*	Dr James (Jim) Harris (CSIRO) *End-to-end biotherapeutics development at the CSIRO*
11:40	*11:10*	*10:40*	*8:40*	Dr Cyntia Taveneau (Monash University BDI) *Code to Complex: AI Protein Design, from Sequence to Interaction*
11:55	*11:25*	*10:55*	*8:55*	Dr Amanda Oliver (QIMR Berghofer) *Epithelial-immune interactions as regulators of barrier tissue inflammation*
12:10	*11:40*	*11:10*	*9:10*	Dr Pooranee Morgan (Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute) *Investigating the role of polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA)-dependent ferroptosis in atherosclerosis progression*
12:25	*11:55*	*11:25*	*9:25*	*Cheng Shen (WEHI) *Proteomic profiling of the macrophage inflammatory responses to micro- and nanoplastic exposure*
12:35	*12:05*	*11:35*	*9:35*	**Lunch Break with Poster Viewing: Poster Session I continued (12.35 pm - 1.05 pm) and Poster Session II (1.05 pm - 1.35 pm)**

Session 3: Infection and inflammation CHAIRS: Dr Maggie Lam (Hudson Institute) and Thivya Balendran (University of Melbourne)				
13:35	*13:05*	*12:35*	*10:35*	Prof Ana Traven (Monash University BDI) *Immune evasion mechanisms of an emerging drug-resistant pathogen*
13:55	*13:25*	*12:55*	*10:55*	Dr Maliha Alikhan (Monash University CID) *A cytomegalovirus (CMV) driven T cell program exacerbates kidney injury in ANCA-associated vasculitis*
14:10	*13:40*	*13:10*	*11:10*	Dr Matt Johansen (Centenary Institute) *Tuberculosis-induced immune priming reshapes host antiviral responses to SARS-CoV-2 infection*
14:25	*13:55*	*13:25*	*11:25*	Dr Laurence Luu (UNSW) *Cervicovaginal microbiome composition and antibiotic usage are associated with pelvic inflammatory disease*
14:40	*14:10*	*13:40*	*11:40*	*Abigail Cox (QIMR Berghofer) *Apolipoprotein E drives inflammation resolution pathways essential for recovery from Japanese encephalitis*
14:50	*14:20*	*13:50*	*11:50*	*Alice Larsen (Hudson Institute of Medical Research) *Investigation and Therapeutic Targeting of PKR in Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Immune Responses*
15:00	*14:30*	*14:00*	*12:00*	**Afternoon Tea Break with Poster Viewing:** **Poster Session II continued**
Session 4: Inflammation and cancer CHAIRS: Dr Yu Chinn Joshua Chey (Adelaide University) and Agnes Carolin (QIMR Berghofer)				
15:30	*15:00*	*14:30*	*12:30*	Dr Angela Ferguson (The University of Sydney) *A distinct endothelial-like cancer-associated fibroblast in human Hepatocellular carcinoma is associated with vessels-encapsulating tumour-clusters (VETC).*
15:45	*15:15*	*14:45*	*12:45*	Dr Ruby Dawson (Adelaide University) *Investigating the involvement of innate immune receptors Pyrin and ZBP1 in Helicobacter-induced Gastric Pathology*
16:00	*15:30*	*15:00*	*13:00*	Dr Alexander Sedgwick (The University of Melbourne) *NKp44 and PDGF-D – innate sensing of growth factors in tumour immune-surveillance*
16:15	*15:45*	*16:15*	*13:15*	Shermin Chan (Adelaide University) *Investigating the role of the protease ADAM17 in pancreatitis-associated acute lung injury as a potential therapeutic target*
16:30	*16:00*	*15:30*	*13:30*	*Dr Paul Baker (Hudson Institute of Medical Research) *Functional analysis of NLRP1 variants of uncertain significance*
16:40	*16:10*	*15:40*	*13:40*	**Close for the day – A/Prof Adrian Achuthan and Dr Sabrina Burgener**
17:00 – 19:00 (AEDT) Networking Session (all in-person registrants): **The Clyde Hotel** (385 Cardigan St, Carlton)				

* = talk selected from abstracts

Day 2 Program - Tuesday 10 November 2026

AEDT (Local)	*ACDT*	*AEST*	*AWST*	
Session 5: Innate immune signalling CHAIRS: Dr Elizabeth Dunn (Centenary Institute) and Dr Kha Phan (La Trobe University) *Symposium Day 2 opening remarks*				
9:00	*8:30*	*8:00*	*6:00*	Dr Laszlo Groh (Mhlangalab/Radboud University) *Mechanisms underlying salt-induced IL-8 response in monocytes*
9:20	*8:50*	*8:20*	*6:20*	Dr Andrew Fleetwood (Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute) *Trained immunity protects myeloid progenitor cells from ferroptosis A*
9:35	*9:05*	*8:35*	*6:35*	Dr Shouya Feng (Hudson Institute of Medical Research) *Uncovering mechanisms of pyrin inflammasome activation through patient-derived variants*
9:50	*9:20*	*8:50*	*6:50*	Nicole Amiet (Monash University BDI) *MAPK signalling is the master regulator of type I interferon responses in cDC1*
10:05	*9:35*	*9:05*	*7:05*	Dr Tom Schultz (The University of Queensland) *Defining molecular regulators of TLR4 expression and function in bacterial infection*
10:20	*9:50*	*9:20*	*7:20*	Dr Ebony Monson (La Trobe University) *Lipid droplets in health and disease*
10:35	*10:05*	*9:35*	*7:35*	**Morning Tea Break**
Session 6: Inflammatory disease pathology CHAIRS: Dr Raissa Wibawa (Hudson Institute) and Dr Joshua Bourne (Monash University CID)				
11:00	*10:30*	*10:00*	*8:00*	Prof Jay Horvat (The University of Newcastle) *Iron-ing out respiratory disease*
11:20	*10:50*	*10:20*	*8:20*	A/Prof Yu Yu (Curtin Medical Research Institute) *Decoding NK and Cytotoxic Cell Phenotypes in High-Grade Serous Ovarian Cancer: Spatial Insights into Treatment Response*
11:40	*11:10*	*10:40*	*8:40*	Dr Holly Anderton (WEHI) *Context-Dependent Roles of Necroptotic Signalling in Cutaneous Inflammation*
11:55	*11:25*	*10:55*	*8:55*	Zoe Vandeleur (Garvan Institute of Medical Research) *NK cell dysregulation in auto-inflammatory prenylopathies*
12:10	*11:40*	*11:10*	*9:10*	Caitlin Vella (La Trobe University) *Enhancing Efferocytosis in Cardiovascular Diseases*
12:25	*11:55*	*11:25*	*9:25*	Dr André Samson (Monash University CID) *A necroptotic-to-apoptotic signaling axis underlies inflammatory bowel disease*
12:45	*12:15*	*11:45*	*9:45*	**Close and awards presentations:** **Prof John Silke, AIC (WEHI) and Dr Dominic De Nardo, ASI Innate Immunity SIG (Monash University)**

Poster Presentations | Day 1 - Monday 9 November 2026
[Geoffrey Wylie Collaborative Learning space]

Poster Session I: **Morning tea break (10.35–11.05 am)** **+ 1st half of lunch break (30 minutes: 12.35–1.05 pm)**	
1	**Ashley Wong (Hudson Institute of Medical Research)** *Post-Translational Control of A1 Stability and Function in Myeloid Cells*
2	**Yining Tian (WEHI)** *Genomic Alterations in TNF-Related Cell Death Pathways as Potential Biomarkers for Personalized Therapy in Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma*
3	**Heba Khattab (Adelaide University)** *Investigating the role of miR146a in pancreatitis-induced acute lung injury*
4	**Katherine Renevear (Hudson Institute of Medical Research)** *Identification and characterisation of disease-associated NLRC4 variants.*
5	**Dr Dilara Ozkocak (WEHI)** *Efferocytosis drives redistribution of RNA-processing machinery in the macrophage subcellular proteome*
6	**Dr Elizabeth Dunn (Centenary Institute)** *Investigating Vaccine Adjuvant Mechanisms of Action in Human Lymph Nodes*
7	**Xuan She (Adelaide University)** *Investigating the Metabolic Effects of ASC and Caspase-1 Knockdown in Pancreatic Cancer Cell Lines*
Poster Session II: **2nd half of lunch break (30 minutes: 1.05–1.35 pm)** **+ afternoon tea break (3.00–3.30 pm)**	
1	**Thivya Balendran (The University of Melbourne)** *The role of CCL17 in mediating inflammation in Rheumatoid arthritis*
2	**Rex Daileg (Adelaide University)** *AIM2-dependent regulation of gastric cancer cell behaviour and inflammatory response*
3	**Madeline Cleveland (Hudson Institute of Medical Research)** *Functional analysis of PSTPIP1 variants of uncertain significance*
4	**Dr Lorraine O'Reilly (WEHI)** *Cell death therapy tailored combination with CAR T-cells or conventional treatment for late-stage head and neck cancer*
5	**Dr Rhynelle Dmello (Adelaide University)** *Investigating the biological role and therapeutic potential of A Disintegrin and Metalloprotease 17 (ADAM17) in small cell lung cancer*
6	**Rui Gao (Hudson Institute of Medical Research)** *2'-O-Methyl Guanosine RNA Fragments Inhibit Toll-Like Receptor 3 and 13 Activation*
7	**Dr Karen Doggett (WEHI)** *The IFN-γ–SOCS1 Axis in AML: Implications for Therapeutic Response and Clinical Outcome*