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

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) and Dr Sabrina Burgener, The Australasian Cell Death Society (The University of Queensland)**
Session 1: New Australian Inflammation Centres members and supporters CHAIRS: TBC				
9:05	*8:35*	*8:05*	*6:05*	Prof Mike Rogers (Garvan Institute of Medical Research) *The mevalonate biosynthesis pathway and inflammation*
9:20	*8:50*	*8:20*	*6:20*	A/Prof Patrick Bertolino (The Centenary Institute) *Understanding liver inflammation through its architecture and myeloid niches*
9:35	*9:05*	*8:35*	*6:35*	A/Prof Adrian Achuthan (The University of Melbourne) *Decoding Cytokine Networks in Inflammatory Arthritis*
9:50	*9:20*	*8:50*	*6:50*	Dr Connie Jackaman (Curtin Medical Research Institute) *Investigating the role of dysferlin in inflammation*
10:05	*9:35*	*9:05*	*7:05*	Dr Benny Shah (Melbourne Dental School, The University of Melbourne) *TBC*
10:20	*9:50*	*9:20*	*7:20*	*Katy (My Tuong Khanh) Tu (La Trobe University) *Apoptotic DNA packaging by caspase-activated DNase shapes macrophage responses in inflammation*
10:30	*10:00*	*9:30*	*7:30*	**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)				
11:00	*10:30*	*10:00*	*8:00*	A/Prof Laura Edgington-Mitchell (The University of Melbourne) *Chemical biology approaches to dissect protease function in inflammation*
11:20	*10:50*	*10:20*	*8:20*	Dr James (Jim) Harris (CSIRO) *End-to-end biotherapeutics development at the CSIRO*
11:35	*11:05*	*10:35*	*8:35*	Dr Cyntia Taveneau (Monash University BDI) *Code to Complex: AI Protein Design, from Sequence to Interaction*
11:50	*11:20*	*10:50*	*8:50*	Dr Amanda Oliver (QIMR Berghofer) *Epithelial-immune interactions as regulators of barrier tissue inflammation*
12:05	*11:35*	*11:05*	*9:05*	Dr Pooranee Morgan (Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute) *Investigating the role of polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA)-dependent ferroptosis in atherosclerosis progression*
12:20	*11:50*	*11:20*	*9:20*	*Cheng Shen (WEHI) *Proteomic profiling of the macrophage inflammatory responses to micro- and nanoplastic exposure*
12:30	*12:00*	*11:30*	*9:30*	**Lunch Break with Poster Viewing: Poster Session I continued (12.30 pm - 1.00 pm) and Poster Session II (1.00 pm - 1.30 pm)**

Session 3: Infection and inflammation CHAIRS: Thivya Balendran (University of Melbourne) and TBC				
13:30	*13:00*	*12:30*	*10:30*	Prof Ana Traven (Monash University BDI) *Immune evasion mechanisms of an emerging drug-resistant pathogen*
13:50	*13:20*	*12:50*	*10:50*	Dr Maliha Alikhan (Monash University CID) *A cytomegalovirus (CMV) driven T cell program exacerbates kidney injury in ANCA-associated vasculitis*
14:05	*13:35*	*13:05*	*11:05*	Dr Matt Johansen (Centenary Institute) *Tuberculosis-induced immune priming reshapes host antiviral responses to SARS-CoV-2 infection*
14:20	*13:50*	*13:20*	*11:20*	Dr Laurence Luu (UNSW) *Cervicovaginal microbiome composition and antibiotic usage are associated with pelvic inflammatory disease*
14:35	*14:05*	*13:35*	*11:35*	*Abigail Cox (QIMR Berghofer) *Apolipoprotein E drives inflammation resolution pathways essential for recovery from Japanese encephalitis*
14:45	*14:15*	*13:45*	*11:45*	*Alice Larsen (Hudson Institute of Medical Research) *Investigation and Therapeutic Targeting of PKR in Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Immune Responses*
14:55	*14:25*	*13:55*	*11:55*	**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)				
15:25	*14:55*	*14:25*	*12:25*	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).*
15:40	*15:10*	*14:40*	*12:40*	Dr Ruby Dawson (Adelaide University) *Investigating the involvement of innate immune receptors Pyrin and ZBP1 in Helicobacter-induced Gastric Pathology*
15:55	*15:25*	*14:55*	*12:55*	Dr Alexander Sedgwick (The University of Melbourne) *NKp44 and PDGF-D – innate sensing of growth factors in tumour immune-surveillance*
16:10	*15:40*	*15:10*	*13:10*	Shermin Chan (Adelaide University) *Investigating the role of the protease ADAM17 in pancreatitis-associated acute lung injury as a potential therapeutic target*
16:25	*15:55*	*15:25*	*13:25*	*Dr Paul Baker (Hudson Institute of Medical Research) *Functional analysis of NLRP1 variants of uncertain significance*
16:35	*16:05*	*15:35*	*13:35*	**Close for the day – TBC 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) *TBC*
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 (10.30–11.00 am)** **+ 1st half of lunch break (30 minutes: 12.30–1.00 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: 1.00–1.30 pm)** **+ afternoon tea break (2.55–3.25 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*