

Welcome from the Local Organizing Committee Chairs

As conference co-chairs, and on behalf of our local organizing committee, we welcome you to the 68th Canadian Society of Microbiologists Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. As you can see, CSM2018 hosts a showcase of the best microbiology research in the country, and beyond, with many opportunities to initiate and foster lasting research connections. Continuing the CSM's strong commitment to the professional development of early career researchers, the conference program features workshops, student poster and oral symposium competitions, and a postdoctoral research symposium.

This year, we are honoured to have Dr. Nancy Freitag join us as the Plenary speaker. Dr. Freitag is a Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, the Associate Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program, and the Assistant Dean of M.D. /Ph.D Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine. Dr. Freitag serves as an Editor for the journals *Infection and Immunity* and *mBio*, and is a standing member of the 'Host Interactions with Bacterial Pathogens' NIH study section. She is also a member of the American Academy of Microbiology and has served as an ASM Distinguished Lecturer. In her Plenary lecture, Dr. Freitag will be talking about the molecular pathogenesis of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

We are delighted to have 12 distinguished keynote speakers join us to headline broad-interest symposia that focus on bridging between I&I, MGCM and AEM sections and emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary research within the field of microbiology. We thank the efforts of the session chairs, featured in our program book and on the conference website, for the careful planning and selection of principal investigators from across Canada to round out each symposium. The conference program includes, for the first time in CSM history, a session dedicated to Indigenous Health and Water Security. We are deeply honoured by the participation of First Nations community members in this session.

The University of Manitoba Fort Garry Campus boasts a beautiful campus with ample green space. We will be meeting in the University Centre or the Armes Building, only a short distance apart. Social activities during the meeting will include an opening reception on Monday evening, a student mixer with entertainment and refreshments on Tuesday evening, an excursion to the Forks in downtown Winnipeg on Wednesday evening, and a President's banquet at the Metropolitan Theatre on Thursday evening.

Please enjoy your time in Winnipeg and we wish you an engaging and productive CSM 2018 experience.

Sincerely,

Ann Karen Brassinga, Ayush
Kumar and Ivan Oresnik
CSM 2018 conference co-chairs

