

# Impact Report

2021 / 22



THE TERRY FOX  
FOUNDATION



# A DREAM AS BIG AS OUR COUNTRY

Eighteen-year-old Terry Fox of Port Coquitlam, BC never saw himself as remarkable. Granted, he displayed an unusual determination to achieve the goals he set for himself but his orbit was local – family, school, sports and friends. But Terry's cancer diagnosis of osteogenic sarcoma just above the knee, the subsequent amputation of his leg and experience in the children's cancer wards changed all that. A newly nurtured reservoir of compassion, combined with a fierce determination to bring an end to the suffering cancer causes, set Terry on a path that, quite simply, changed the world.

Terry's personal experience led him to a simple conclusion – more money was needed for cancer research. And so, in the modest but motivated style that would prove to be his trademark, Terry started training and planning for his cross-Canada run to raise funds for cancer research. He dipped his artificial leg in the Atlantic Ocean on April 12th, 1980 and proceeded to unite Canadians in a way never before, nor since, seen. The only thing that could have stopped Terry from reaching the Pacific Ocean did. Cancer returned in his lungs and he was forced to stop on September 1st, 1980 after having run 5,373 kilometres.

Before his death on June 28, 1981, Terry had achieved his once unimaginable goal of \$1 from every Canadian. More importantly, he had set in motion the framework for an event, The Terry Fox Run, that would ignite cancer research in Canada, raising more than \$850 million since 1980, and bring hope and health to millions of Canadians.

*"It took cancer to realize that being  
self-centered is not the way to live.  
The answer is to try and help others."*

– Terry Fox



*Photo by Gail Harvey provided to the Fox Family*

# Another Inspiring Year, All Thanks to You

**After being shaken by the worldwide pandemic, Terry Foxers proved once again that no obstacle would stand in their way of fundraising for cancer research and pursuing Terry's dream of a world without cancer.** When challenged to hold yet another virtual Terry Fox Run, our amazing supporters did not disappoint. They heard Terry's voice tell them that "Anything's possible if you try." And try they did. As I reflect upon the previous year and what we were able to achieve together, I can say that we've learned our most valuable lesson yet: when we work together, nothing can stop us.

After watching from afar in 2020, it was great to be a part of the 2021 Terry Fox Run and watch the excitement unfold from within. To see the thousands of volunteers as well as Terry Fox Research Institute supported researchers bring this event to life was truly an inspiration. Thanks to their brimming passion and selfless commitment, our Terry Fox Runs continue to be proudly 100 per cent volunteer-led. This means that the funds raised by our Terry Foxers makes the greatest possible difference where it matters most—in the lives of cancer patients and their families across Canada by supporting breakthrough research. It is a privilege to lead organizations that have such an important place in the hearts and minds of people across this country. But even more, we are so deeply grateful to our incredible community of supporters who powered through learning curves with unwavering determination to help carry on Terry's mission. As we reflect upon the previous year and what we have achieved together, we can say that we've learned our most valuable lesson yet: no matter how much the world has changed, nothing can stop us.

The same holds true for Canada's world-class cancer investigators. Never undaunted by the unknown, they navigated the challenges of COVID-19 and its disruption to cancer research by doing what they do best: innovating new approaches, breaking through boundaries, and boldly forging into new territory. As we emerge from the most difficult years of the pandemic, our Terry Fox supported research community is working tirelessly to regain momentum in the pace of discovery and mitigate the setback caused by the closure of laboratories during lockdowns. Indeed, the inspired generosity of our supporters has been a constant beacon of hope for them in the midst of such rapid change. Thanks to you, we're gearing up to accelerate investments in cancer research because patients cannot afford further delay. That's why initiatives like the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network is so important and a top funding priority for The Terry Fox Foundation. Through this unprecedented collaboration that connects Canada's top cancer institutes and their researchers to share knowledge and resources to drive forward precision medicine, we're doubling down on team-based cancer research that creates the fastest route from scientific discovery to more personalized and effective treatments for patients.

As we enter another year, we will continue to find inspiration in Terry's courage and bravery; and in his ability to push past barriers and get to the next light post. There is no other charitable organization like ours with the power to bring together millions of people for one united cause, with one common leader. Terry Fox truly was one of a kind and The Terry Fox Foundation and Terry Fox Research Institute each pride ourselves in holding his values close in every endeavour we undertake.

Yours Sincerely,



**Michael Mazza**  
Executive Director  
*The Terry Fox Foundation*



**Jim Woodgett, PhD**  
President and Scientific Director  
*The Terry Fox Research Institute*

# TERRY'S LEGACY LIVES ON BECAUSE OF YOU

Every dot shown on this map represents a city or town that hosts a Terry Fox Community Run, School Run, or both.



\$20.8M

Total in Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

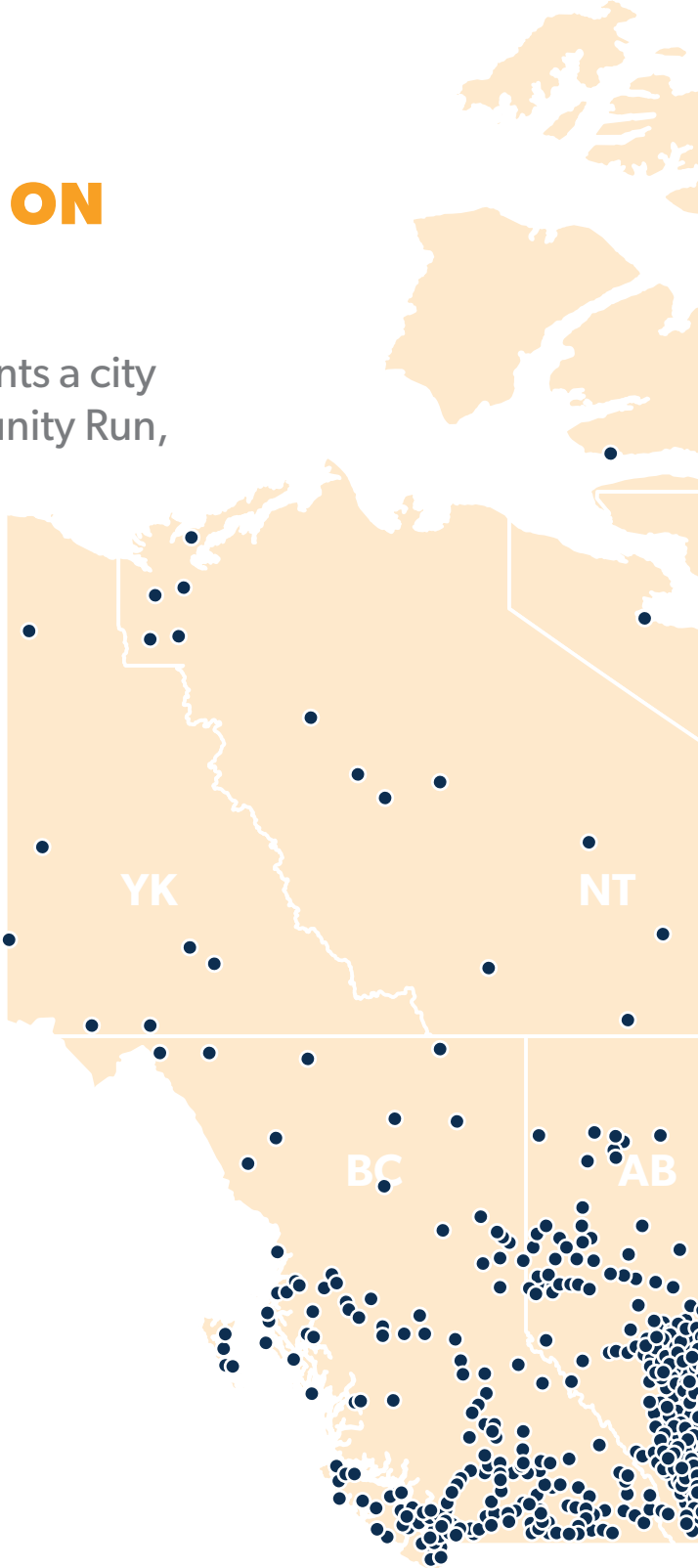


830

Community Runs and School Runs

2,432

Teams across Canada



## BC / YK

119  
COMMUNITY RUNS

1385  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$2.7M  
TOTAL RAISED

## AB / NT / NU

91  
COMMUNITY RUNS

1415  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$2.6M  
TOTAL RAISED

## SK

47  
COMMUNITY RUNS

467  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$719K  
TOTAL RAISED

## MB

32  
COMMUNITY RUNS

480  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$657K  
TOTAL RAISED

## ON

224  
COMMUNITY RUNS

3877  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$11.7M  
TOTAL RAISED

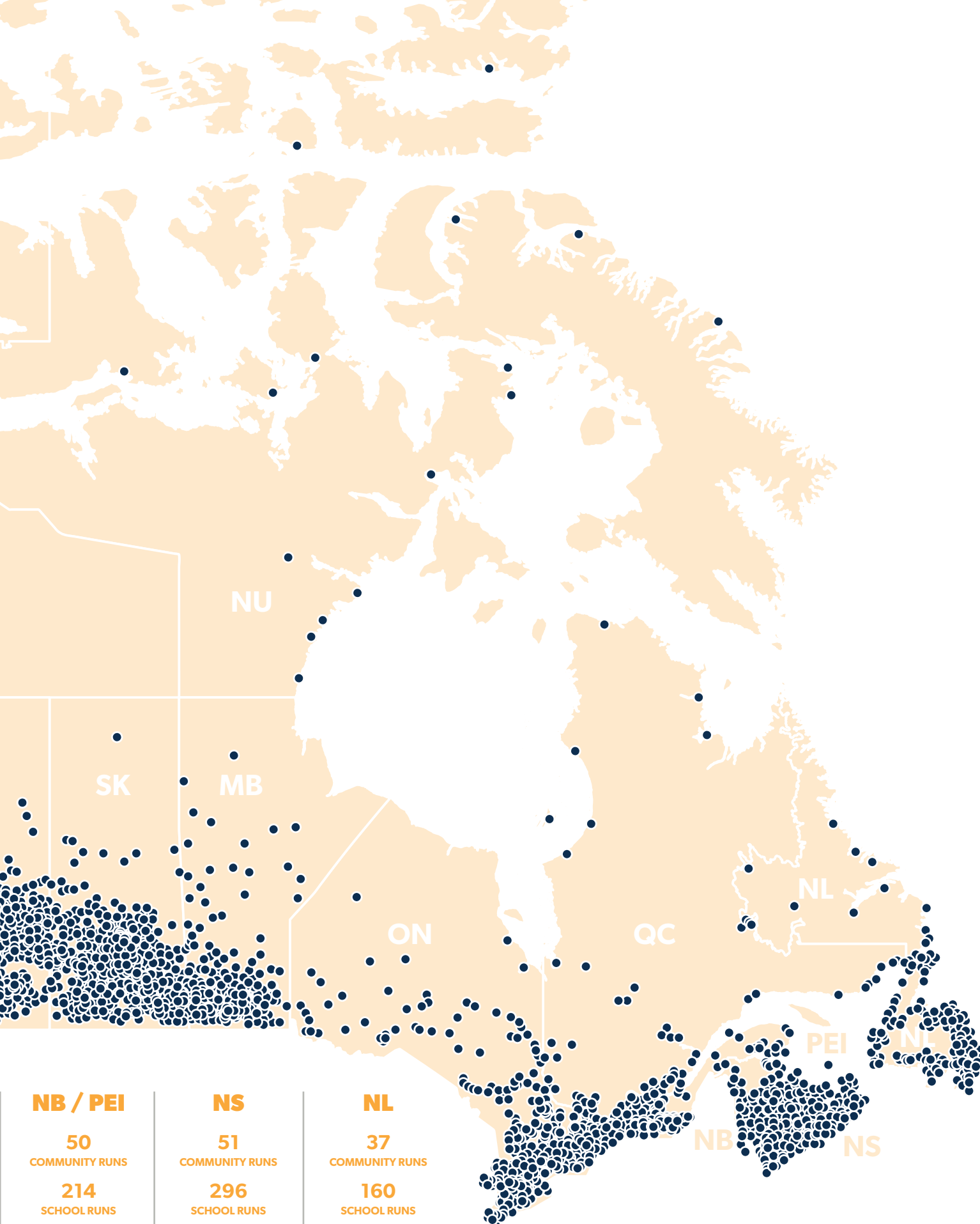
## QC

47  
COMMUNITY RUNS

235  
SCHOOL RUNS

\$989K  
TOTAL RAISED





# TERRY FOXERS TRY LIKE TERRY



## Team Edward Jones

In 2021, Edward Jones Canada pledged that they would support the Terry Fox Foundation by inviting all of their staff spanning ten provinces, as well as the Yukon, to join the Terry Fox Run. Their team quickly became the largest National Team in the 2021 Terry Fox Run. Together, the Team raised \$210,000 in support of cancer research in Canada. Team Edward Jones proclaimed that they're "invested in curing cancer" because it impacts all Canadians, and nobody is immune to its presence. By championing the best cancer research in Canada, Team Edward Jones is setting an example in their communities that they hope more will be inspired by.



## Team Blakes

**Team Blakes was formed with members of Blakes, Cassels & Graydon LLP, and they fielded their first team in 1986.**

The event is now embedded in the business law firm's culture and the co-captains June Allison and Chris Hewat shared that "His story endures and resonates. His objective to raise funds for cancer research is one that is easy to support because so many people have faced the disease."

Their main focus is participation; "It's great for families, and people can take part in any way." When they reflect on their 36-year tenure as co-captains, Ms. Allison and Mr. Hewat agree the most rewarding aspect for them is knowing they are contributing to a worthy cause.

Corporate teams require committed team captains, people who can reach out to colleagues and get them involved. At Blakes, one of the motivators for participants is to set up internal teams and encourage some friendly competition between groups.

"Cancer is a horrible disease that affects far too many people," says Ms. Allison. Since 1986, Blakes' national team has supported the Terry Fox Run in several provinces and raised more than \$720,000 for cancer research. ([theglobeandmail.com](http://theglobeandmail.com))

## A Big Thank You to Our



2,432

Corporate, Dedication  
and Family Teams

1,890

Registered Terry's  
Team Members\*

\*Cancer Survivors

## Comedy Nights for Cancer Research

**Joe is a remarkable Terry Foker. He's the President of a winery equipment supplier in Niagara on the Lake, and he hosts a comedy night where everything is donated to cancer research.** In 2021, he hosted a "distanced" event, bringing in over \$22,000 in his first night of sold-out shows, and \$35,000 the second night. It was noted by the local Run Organizer that their community events would not have crossed the \$1 million threshold without the help of Pillitteri's passionate fundraising efforts. His skills as an entertainer have benefited cancer research in Canada, and Joe has now set a personal goal of reaching the \$1 million fundraising mark himself.

## "Fiddling for Fox"

**A 15-year-old fiddler has been attending the Farmers Market in Peterborough and "Fiddling for Fox" for a few years.** Amelia Shadgett, known as Millie, plays alongside her dad and got started with the Terry Fox Run at her school in 2017. She knows that music is a great way to get people's attention and used music she wrote to raise funds at school, a method she then took out to the Farmers Markets. She has raised over \$3,000 in 2020 and 2021. She shared that "we need to find a cure for cancer so that it can save lives that are going to be lost." It is so inspiring to know so many incredible Terry Foxers are out there "trying like Terry" to raise money for such important research being done in Canada.



**\$8,392,449**

2021 Community Runs (Canada) Fundraising



# SCHOOL RUNS

**In the last twelve months, more than 8,500 schools fundraised to bring in a total of \$12,375,760.** It was an incredible year for the Terry Fox School Run, despite continued challenges and many schools adopting cohort learning protocols, these schools continued to impress us with new and creative ways to ensure their traditional Terry Fox School Run would take place. Amidst the changes, virtual meetups with Fred Fox became an incredible part of so many Terry Fox school events, with more than 100,000 students engaging with Fred and listening to his stories of growing up with Terry and the Marathon of Hope, as well as taking part in a live Q&A.

## A Big Thank You to Our



9,209

Schools That  
Host Runs

3.2M

Students and  
Organizers

## Fun Facts

### 28 years of participation, \$1.69M raised

The Sterling Hall School in Ontario brought in another \$72,184.04 this past year

### Top Fundraisers bring in \$56,769.45

The students at All Saints Secondary School come together every year to proudly fundraise for cancer research

## SPOTLIGHT SCHOOL

### Terry Fox Elementary School, Pierrefonds, QC

**Having participated for 30 years to date, this wonderful Elementary school brought in \$21,924.92 in 2021, bringing their grand total to \$49,665.37.**

They kicked off their efforts in April and concluded on September 29, having walked or ran more than 8,000 kilometres – more than the distance across Canada from east to west – in the name of Terry Fox. The work they did paid off, bringing in nearly \$22,000 in fundraising revenue for the school.

“We’re very fortunate to have the namesake of our school as such an incredible role model for our kids. Everything that Terry Fox has done is a teachable moment for our kids,” Douglas Stewart, Principal of the school shares.



## TOP FUNDRAISING SCHOOL

### The Sterling Hall School, Toronto, ON

This elementary school in Ontario has participated for 28 years. This year, the school brought in \$72,184.04, which brings their grand fundraising total to \$1,694,145.19. The students began Run Day with a ceremony hosted by SHS Agents of Change students for all homerooms. Each class participated in a 30-minute special sharing circle, where they reflected on both Terry Fox and the founding of SHS. They reflected on Terry's journey, his character, and how they can make a positive impact on the future. The students then demonstrated their spirit with a car rally, as well as running laps to collect points in a friendly homeroom competition. SHS staff and students made the step to move to online fundraising from pledge sheets this year, and were extremely successful, resulting in over 90% of donations being made online.



## TOP FUNDRAISING SCHOOL

### All Saints Secondary School, Whitby, ON

All Saints Catholic Secondary School has a long-standing tradition of participating in the annual Terry Fox School Run. This year, they brought in \$56,769.45 in fundraising revenue and this brought their 17-year total to \$472,433.74. Inspired by Terry's courage and selflessness, the entire school community comes together every year to fundraise for cancer research. This year marked the 17th year of participation and a tremendous one it was. The All Saints Student Council and staff planned several activities for their students to participate in as part of their fundraiser, including: a pep rally, hair donations, the Terry Fox Walk/Run, a dodgeball tournament, food trucks, and carnival games.



# \$12,375,760

2021 School Runs (Canada) Fundraising

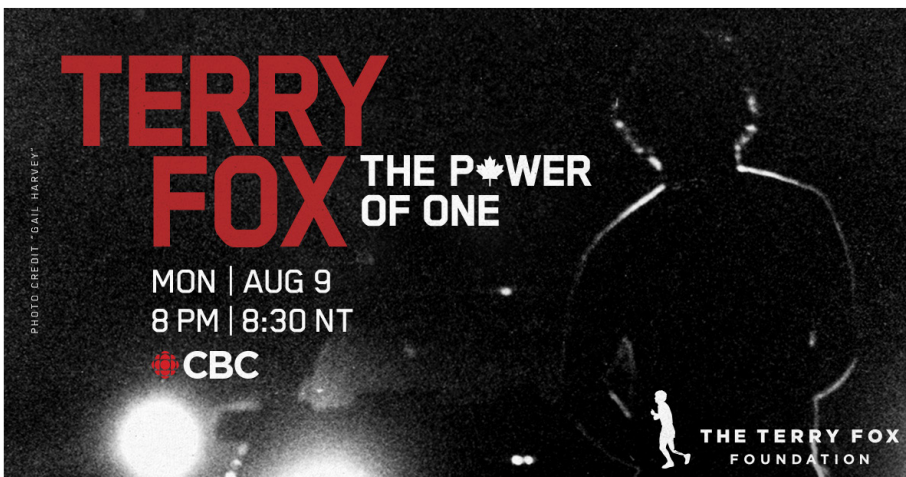
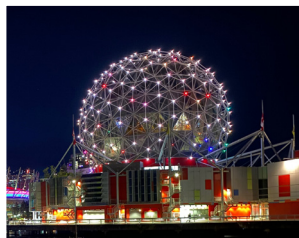
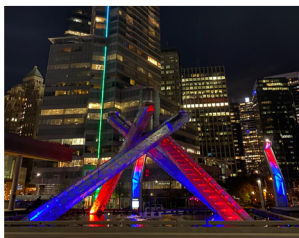


# TERRY FOX: THE POWER OF ONE

**On August 9, 2021, a special one-hour broadcast was hosted in partnership with Canada's national public broadcaster.** Entitled Terry Fox: The Power of One, this program shared diverse stories of hope, courage, and resilience, as told by iconic Canadians inspired by the vision and enduring legacy of Terry's Marathon of Hope.

Proceeds from the show funded innovative cancer research, including the bold new project called the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network – a powerful collaboration of Canada's best cancer researchers to accelerate precision medicine by sharing knowledge and resources, and building a new, accessible cancer data platform to deliver the best possible outcome for each cancer patient, no matter where they live.

The show included musical performances by Alessia Cara, Tom Cochrane and William Prince, and included special appearances from several celebrity personalities including: Michael "Pinball" Clemons, Sidney Crosby, Mike and Patrick Downie, Perdita Felicien, Rick Hansen, Marie-Mai, Tyler McGregor, Rick Mercer, Catherine O'Hara, Lloyd Robertson, Katarina Roxon, Darryl Sittler, Isadore Sharp, Tyler Shaw, Josh Trager, Jay Triano, Hayley Wickenheiser, and The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P. Prime Minister of Canada.





# THE FOX FAMILY HERITAGE



**The Fox Family are proud Canadians.** Like many families, they wanted to research their heritage and discovered their Métis lineage on the Gladue side of the family (Betty Fox's mom was Marian Gladue). To honour this history, the family liaised with Métis Nation BC to create the 2021 Terry Fox Run t-shirt, as well as a limited-edition commemorative Terry Fox Sash.

The t-shirt design celebrated Terry's heritage, with illustrations of traditional Métis floral beading created by Métis artist Mal Blondeau (the Métis are known as the Flower Beadwork People.) The flowers chosen honour the land where Terry's ancestors lived: the prairie crocus of Manitoba and the wild prairie rose of North Dakota. The Foundation's mission - to fund cancer research - was written in English, French and the Métis traditional language of Michif, as is the phrase "Try Like Terry", in honour of his remarkable effort. The back of the shirt includes a mouse track beadwork border with the Métis infinity symbol.

The sash is considered an integral and highly symbolic aspect of Métis history and identity. This special sash celebrates Terry's maternal Métis heritage and weaves together red and blue, two of Terry's favourite colours. Each sash is individually stitched with care from a Métis-owned small business.

# INTERNATIONAL



21

Countries World-Wide



13

Funded International  
Programs



42

International Runs



# \$480,000

2021 International Fundraising

# STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the year ended March 31, 2022

Revenue	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Annual giving		
Canada	24,508,618	18,461,653
International	488,239	676,934
Bequests and memoriams	666,399	570,948
Government student grants	75,457	77,448
Royalties	59,827	36,786
	<b>25,798,540</b>	<b>19,823,769</b>
Investment Income (loss) & Gains	1,446,318	8,888,165
Sale of merchandise	836,349	888,353
	<b>28,081,207</b>	<b>29,089,287</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Fundraising	4,432,668	3,447,331
Administration	3,726,630	2,302,789
	<b>8,159,298</b>	<b>5,750,120</b>
Investment management fee	339,914	319,610
Cost of merchandise sold	820,842	511,100
	<b>9,320,054</b>	<b>6,580,830</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses before distribution of funds</b>	<b>18,761,153</b>	<b>23,019,457</b>
<b>Distribution of funds and other charitable activities</b>		
The Terry Fox Research Institute	16,169,487	13,587,043
International cancer research organizations	398,756	2,167,269
	<b>16,568,243</b>	<b>15,754,312</b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses / distributions</b>	<b>2,192,910</b>	<b>7,265,145</b>





# RESEARCH PROGRESS YOU MADE POSSIBLE

## MARATHON OF HOPE CANCER CENTRES NETWORK

### Can our microbiomes predict how we'll respond to immunotherapy? (And can we alter them to improve treatment response?)

Every patient that walks into Dr. Bertrand Routy's office wants to know the same thing: how will they respond to the immunotherapy he's just prescribed them. Each time Dr. Routy is forced to answer frankly: "I don't know. We'll just have to wait and see."



For Dr. Routy, an immunologist and microbiome specialist at the Centre de recherche du Centre Hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CRCHUM) whose practice and research focuses on non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), this answer simply isn't good

enough. "When immunotherapy emerged a decade ago, we thought it would revolutionize lung cancer treatment," he says. "But while it has incredible results for some patients, the majority of my patients still don't benefit from this innovative treatment, and advances in the field have sadly plateaued in recent years."

To push past this plateau, Dr. Routy believes that researchers must think outside the box to find new ways to understand who will respond to immunotherapy and, more importantly, improve the efficacy of these therapies for more patients. He will use new Clinician-Scientist Award funding from the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network's to try to answer these questions by exploring an emerging area of health sciences: the human microbiome.

#### The microbiome-cancer connection

The human microbiome is the name given to the trillions of microbes that live within and on the human body. In recent years, the composition of our gut microbiome – the collection of microbes that live in our digestive tracts – has become a hot topic for researchers and health enthusiasts alike, after it was found to play an important role in many aspects of our health, from overall longevity to mental well-being.

But the gut isn't the only place of the body where bacteria and microbes live. Recently, researchers have discovered these organisms in tissue previously perceived as "sterile", including tumours and blood. These discoveries have led immunotherapy researchers like Dr. Routy to begin exploring potential links between these microbiomes and cancer — yielding extraordinary results in the process.

"We now know that the diversity of our microbiomes and the presence or absence of specific bacteria in our bodies affects

how we respond to different cancer therapies," explains Dr. Routy. "These bacteria – whether they're in the gut or in a tumour – are key mediators of our response to immunotherapy, which makes us believe that we could test for their presence to know if a patient will respond to the therapy or not."

This could constitute a major paradigm shift for immunotherapy, which is why he and his team will use the new award to validate these findings in patients with NSCLC undergoing immunotherapy, while also taking them one step further. As part of his project, he will perform multi-omics sequencing of the gut microbiome, the peripheral blood, and the tumour to see if these three microbiomes are actually connected, while also conducting clinical studies that test if altering the gut microbiome – through the use of fecal transplants and prebiotics – can have a downstream effect in the composition of the tumour microbiome, which in turn could help improve the chances of a positive response to immunotherapy.

"I truly believe that if validated, this would be the biggest discovery in immunotherapy research since the advent of immune-checkpoint inhibitors," says Dr. Routy.

#### Coming together to advance precision medicine for cancer patients

The Clinician-Scientist Award will permit Dr. Routy and his team to access the full power of the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network, accessing expertise and data from collaborators across Canada. This will help him validate any findings made through the project, which will be essential to bring them one step closer to his patients.

"Researchers are always limited by the number of tumour samples we have access to, so we're very happy that through the network, other investigators will be able to sequence the same type of tumour and give us more data to validate the results we find here in Montreal," explains Dr. Routy. "To change clinical practice, you need robust evidence, and to get robust evidence, you need large patient cohorts. It's through efforts like the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network, where we can collaborate and share data, that we can make discoveries that actually impact the lives of our patients."

### Using new techniques to improve the efficacy of radiation therapy

Over the last 120 years, radiation therapy has saved the lives of countless cancer patients around the world. But despite its impact, it still has important limitations: it doesn't work on all patients and is often associated with harsh side-effects.

This may soon change thanks to work from a team of Terry Fox-funded researchers in Toronto. The team, led by Dr. Gregory Czarnota, a radiation oncologist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centres, has found a way to make the therapy up to 60 times more effective, using a technique that could change the future of radiation therapy for cancer.

This innovative approach enhances radiation therapy by directing small gas bubbles known as microbubbles into tumours. When these microbubbles are stimulated with ultrasound under magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) guidance, they pry open the defenses of cancer cells, allowing more radiation to reach its target.

In two first-in-human studies with a cohort of 10 patients—one involving women with recurrent breast cancer, and the second focused on patients with metastatic head and neck tumours—the therapy yielded incredible results. Complete responses were achieved in almost all cases, with a large fraction of tumours entirely resolved with doses of radiation that, on their own, would otherwise have been insufficient to produce these results.

"Everything completely disappeared," said Dr. Czarnota. "These were patients with very little hope and tumours which would be considered incurable, and they were all gone. We've never seen anything quite like that before."

The team, which has been approved to receive new funding from the Terry Fox Research Institute, will now refine methodologies and move its research into larger clinical trials that will see if this approach not only improves the efficacy of radiation therapy, but also that of other therapies such as chemotherapy and immunotherapy.

### Children with Down syndrome are 150 times more likely to develop leukemia. We now know why (and perhaps how to stop it).

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder that occurs in early development when a random error in cell division leads to an extra copy of chromosome 21. This extra chromosome causes several developmental changes in children with Down syndrome, including a 150-fold increased risk of developing myeloid leukemia within the first five years of their life.

Until now, researchers did not understand how and why children with Down syndrome are more prone to develop leukemia, but a study by TFRI-funded researchers is changing that. Thanks

to their work, we now know that the mutation that leads to the extra copy of chromosome 21, combined with second mutation in a gene called GATA1, lead to the development of a pre-leukemic state during the first months of a fetus' gestation. While not all children with this pre-leukemic state develop leukemia, this combination of mutations, unique to patients with Down syndrome, sets the stage for this to happen.

Understanding how this process works has allowed the team to search for ways to disrupt it early on, with very promising early results. While there's still some work to do before these new drugs can be tested in humans, the team is extremely excited by what they are seeing and is hopeful that they will soon have the tools needed to prevent significantly decrease the chances for children with Down syndrome to develop leukemia.

"This study has given us unprecedented insight into the human leukemia process," says Dr. John Dick, a TFRI-funded researcher who co-led the study. "Ultimately, we may be able to prevent the acute illness by treating it in its earliest phase, when it is preleukemic, to prevent its progression to full blown leukemia."



### Exposure to ambient air pollution is a significant contributor to lung cancer among non-smokers

Despite a decrease in smoking rates around the world, some countries have seen a baffling increase in lung cancer incidence, especially in women who have never smoked. The reasons behind this rise have remained relatively unknown, but a study by Terry Fox-funded researchers has been able to pinpoint exactly why this is happening.

The main culprit? Air pollution.

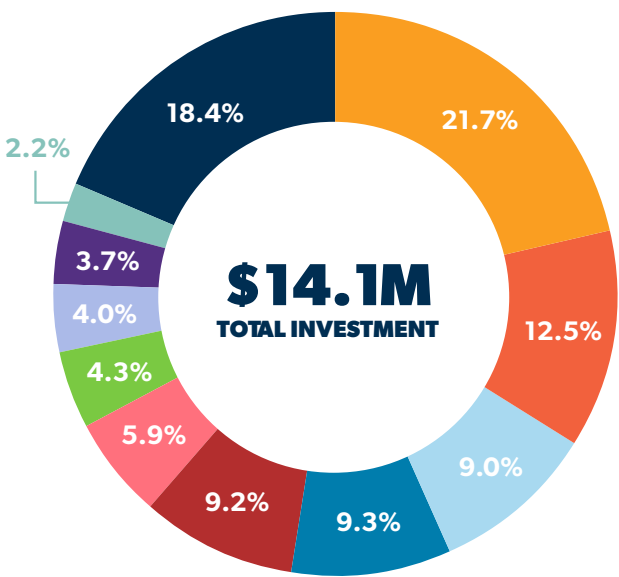
According to the study, outdoor air pollution is the most important factor in the development of lung cancer in never smokers, especially among East Asian women. This new information not only explains why more non-smokers are developing lung cancer, but also provides the basis for creating screening programs for people in places with high air-pollution levels so they can be treated earlier, increasing their chances of survival.

# OUR RESEARCH

## 2021-22 Funding by Cancer Type

Blood	\$3.1M
Prostate	\$1.8M
Pediatric & Young Adult	\$1.3M
Brain	\$1.3M
Breast	\$1.3M
Rare Cancers	\$827K
Colorectal	\$602K
Lung	\$568K
Pancreatic	\$526K
Ovarian	\$316K
Other*	\$2.6M

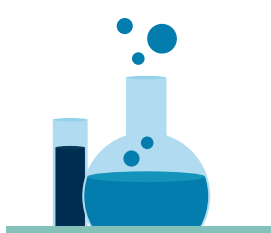
\*This category includes our investment in projects that have non-specific cancer types as well as a cumulative total of our investment in cancer types that received less than 4% of our annual funding, including gastrointestinal cancers, head and neck cancers, melanomas, liver and sarcomas.



## Digital Health & Discovery Platform

In the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Terry Fox Research Institute invested \$1,939,579.86 in the Digital Health and Discovery Platform. Key outcomes of this investment include the development of a Pan-Canadian data governance framework that protects individual privacy and will be validated through a pilot initiative. In parallel, communication and data strategies leading to the implementation of activities to educate, inform and engage the diverse group stakeholders, to build the DHDP network and target users to stimulate the commercialization of homegrown research discoveries.

## By The Numbers



309  
Funded  
Researchers



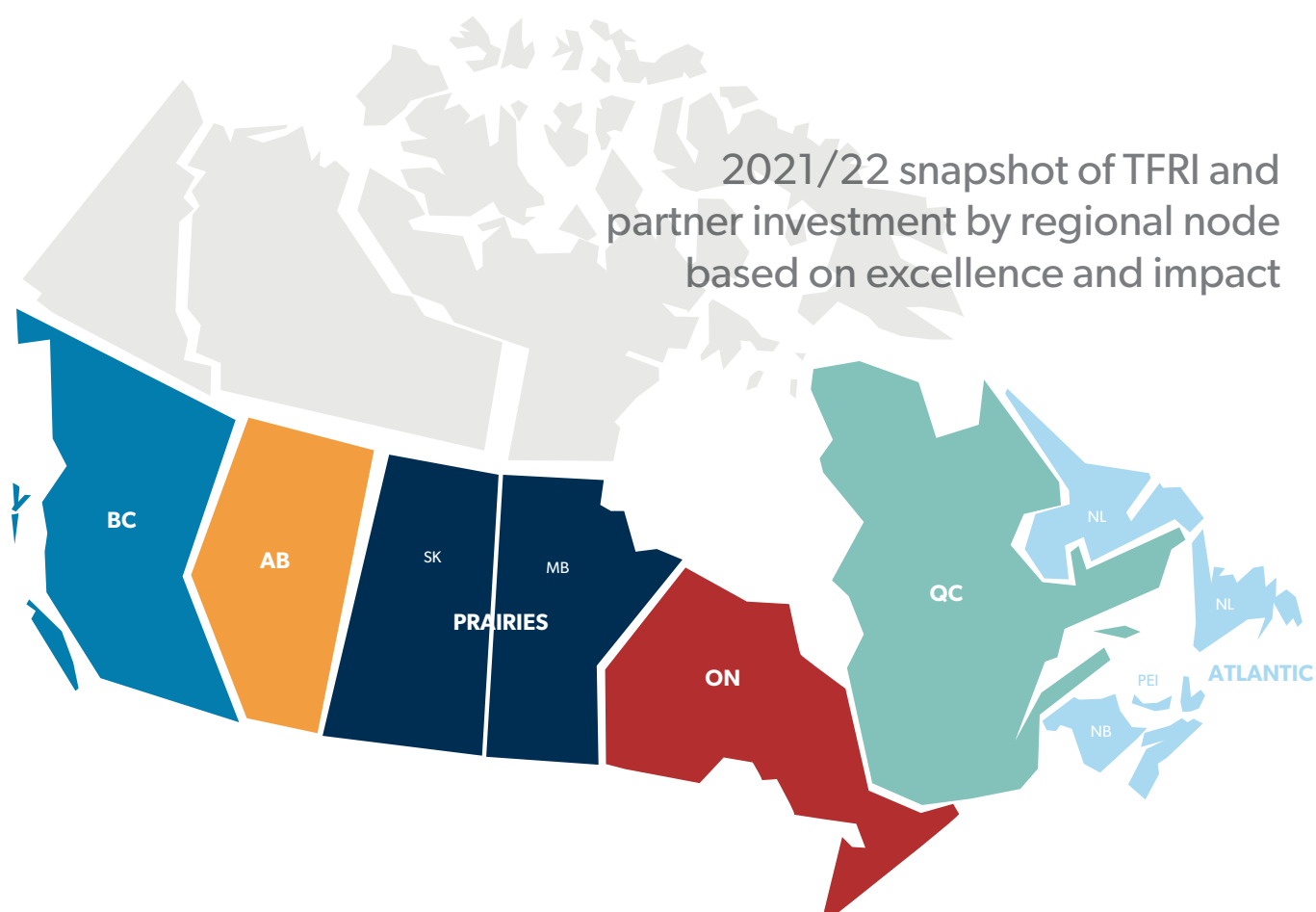
93  
Collaborative Institutions  
Across Canada



35  
Funded  
Projects



# SNAPSHOT OF TFRI INVESTMENT BY REGIONAL NODE



BC	AB	PRAIRIES	ON	QC	ATLANTIC
<b>\$4.7M</b> INVESTED	<b>\$653K</b> INVESTED	<b>\$300K</b> INVESTED	<b>\$6.3M</b> INVESTED	<b>\$1.1M</b> INVESTED	<b>\$1M</b> INVESTED
<b>12</b> PROJECTS*	<b>4</b> PROJECTS*	<b>1</b> PROJECTS*	<b>22</b> PROJECTS*	<b>8</b> PROJECTS*	<b>3</b> PROJECTS*
<b>61</b> RESEARCHER S	<b>25</b> RESEARCHER S	<b>13</b> RESEARCHER S	<b>128</b> RESEARCHER S	<b>26</b> RESEARCHER S	<b>15</b> RESEARCHER S
<b>15</b> INSTITUTION S	<b>14</b> INSTITUTION S	<b>5</b> INSTITUTION S	<b>19</b> INSTITUTION S	<b>15</b> INSTITUTION S	<b>12</b> INST ITUTIONS

*\*Many of our projects are pan-Canadian in nature and their research is conducted in more than one region. Thus, project totals shown here should not be added up, as their sum will equal more than 35, the total number of projects we fund.*

## **“It’s the least I can do”: Melanoma survivor shares story – and data – to help cancer patients**

Five days after being diagnosed with Stage IV melanoma, Wayne Wright saw his oncologist for the first time. Dr. Anna Spreafico, a clinician-investigator at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in Toronto, walked him through his options and patiently answered his questions. Then she gave him her blunt assessment: his prognosis wasn’t great, she said, but there were still some treatment options they could explore.

The conversation infused the Toronto resident, who had spent the previous five days in an emotional limbo, with new hope. The retired business executive immediately felt at ease with his new doctor, and one of the treatment options she presented seemed particularly exciting. Immunotherapy, which harnesses the power of the immune system to fight off cancer, has shown incredible results in some patients with advanced melanoma—and while it doesn’t work on everyone, Wayne was hopeful it would work for him.

“I’d never heard about it before, but I went home and did my research, and when I called Dr. Spreafico a couple of days later with my decision, I was in a completely different headspace: I was energized and hopeful,” remembers Wayne.



A few days later, he received his first course of the immunotherapy drug pembrolizumab. That day, he also got his blood drawn as part of INSPIRE, a study conducted by Dr. Spreafico and her colleagues at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre that was collecting samples from patients on pembrolizumab to see if there were specific biomarkers that could help predict which patients would respond favourably to the drug. Six months of uncertainty, trips to the hospital and blood draws ensued, but at the end of them, Wayne received the news he was hoping for: his cancer had totally disappeared.

“I was so overjoyed and grateful for the care that I received that I knew I had to find ways to pay it forward,” says Wayne, now 79 and six years cancer-free.

Today, Wayne shows this gratitude by serving as an unofficial mentor to cancer patients within his extended network, who call on him to exchange stories and discuss anxieties. The clinical and genomic data he donated as part of the INSPIRE trial has already led to new discoveries, and is poised to help even more cancer patients as it will soon be deposited to the Marathon of Hope Cancer Centres Network (MOHCCN), a pan-Canadian network of cancer centres led by the Terry Fox Research Institute.

The MOHCCN is creating a massive database that includes clinical and genomic data from 15,000 patients like Wayne who are treated in cancer centres across Canada. This database will contain an unprecedented wealth of information that can be analyzed through new technologies like artificial intelligence to provide insights that will help personalize treatment for cancer patients based on the particular characteristics of their tumours.

The Princess Margaret Cancer Centre leads one of the five regional consortia participating in the Network, which means it is contributing data to the Network and can also access data for research purposes. This unprecedented pan-Canadian collaboration is helping to advance precision medicine here so all patients can benefit from it no matter where they live.

“This massive database will provide us with a much bigger knowledge set for us to learn from,” says Dr. Spreafico. “This is extremely exciting and has the potential to transform how we conduct research and learn how best to treat and make an impact on the life of cancer patients.”

# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

- More than \$7,665,000 raised for the virtual Terry Fox Run and \$12,300,000 for the Terry Fox School Run
- 698 Communities, 2,432 Teams, and 9,209 Schools engaged in fundraising
- Terry Fox: The Power of One broadcast benefit held on CBC to honour Terry's legacy and raise money for cancer research
- adidas Canada brought back the Orion shoe for one final sale opportunity
- The Fox Family honoured their Indigenous Heritage and released an exclusive Terry Fox Run T-shirt to honour it, as well as a Sash
- Terry Fox Runs were held internationally in more than 21 different countries around the world





# THANK YOU

to all of our generous and amazing  
Terry Fox supporters, including  
those who contributed by:

- Making a donation
- Volunteering
- Hosting their own fundraising event
- Participating in or donating to a Run
- Becoming a monthly donor
- Donating securities
- Leaving a gift to The Terry Fox Foundation in their will

*"It's got to keep going without me."*

- Terry Fox

## **The Terry Fox Foundation**

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