



## Ontario Brain Institute Foundation & Ontario SPOR Support Unit: Patient Partner Travel Award

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*This award is a partnership between the OBI Foundation and Ontario SPOR Support Unit to support meaningful patient engagement in research.*

### What is this award?

This award supports patient, youth, and family advisors ('advisors') to attend conferences and scientific meetings. Advisors should have a clear role in sharing the work and successes of IDPs (Integrated Discovery Programs- CALM, CAN-BIND, CP-NET, POND Network, TRANSCENDENT). Patient, youth, and family expertise are essential to impactful research, and this award aims to reduce financial barriers to attending. Since this is focused on advisory committee members, IDP team staff are not eligible for this award.

### Why this is important

We have heard from patient, youth, and family advisors that it's important to be acknowledged for their contributions to IDP activities. This includes being part of conferences and/or scientific meetings where IDPs share their successes and activities. In addition, the participation of patients and partners has been shown to enrich discussions and increase public engagement with research. It also helps health professionals better understand patient, youth, and family perspectives.

### Award details

- **Amount:** Your IDP can nominate up to 2 advisors, with a total limit of \$2,000 CAD per year
- **Who can be nominated:** Members of your IDP Advisory Committee
- **Where:** Conferences and research/scientific events in North America
- **When:** Events must be held by March 31, 2026

### What expenses are covered?

See the Ontario Brain Institute policy on expense reimbursements [here](#). Please note that partners are expected to choose cost-effective options when booking travel. Eligible expenses are:

- Conference registration fees
- Transportation (flights, trains, or mileage if driving)
- Hotel accommodation (including the night before the conference starts)
- Daily meal allowance
- Caregiving expenses (\$50/day)
- Travel costs for a parent or support person who is needed to travel with the advisor

## How to apply

**Step 1:** Nominate a patient, youth, or family advisor from your Advisory Committee for this travel award (up to \$2,000 per year for 1 or 2 advisors). We understand that may include a caregiver to accompany them (e.g. partner under 18).

**Step 2:** Coordinate with your advisor to confirm their role in the conference (e.g. co-presenting, attending network meetings, co-developing conference-related products)

**Step 3:** Send the application form to your nominated advisor and ensure they have all the information they need: <https://form.jotform.com/251424034683251>

**Step 4:** OBI will follow up with a decision within 3 weeks of submission

## Before your advisor travels

Your responsibilities as the nominating IDP:

- Coordinate registration and attendance with your advisor
- Ensure that at least one IDP member has registered
- Confirm your advisor's role with your IDP team

Remind your advisor to:

- Keep all receipts in case copies are needed (e.g. conference registration, flights, hotel)
- Register for the conference

## After your advisor attends

What you and your advisor need to do within 30 days:

- Work together to write a short reflection or story about advisors' experiences (up to 500 words)
- This could include what they learned, important conversations, or the impact of participating

**Optional:**

- Share photos or materials from the event that we can share with other partners

## If your advisor can't attend

Plans sometimes change. If your nominated advisor is unable to attend, ask them to immediately contact OBI (Caroline) so we can figure out next steps.

**If they haven't spent any money yet:**

- They will be expected to return the full award amount

**If they've already paid for some things:**

- They will be asked for copies of receipts for all non-refundable costs (like registration or flights)
- They will be expected to return any unused award money