

Newsletter

Spring 2026

bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr || IBRO <https://rb.gy/ybd8r>



Boston University Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Office BU IBRO
www.bu.edu/research/ibro

Affinity Research Collaboratives (ARCs & Pre-ARCs), Spring 2026

<https://www.bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr/>

**Affinity Research Collaborative (ARC) Application/Renewal deadline:
August 17, 2026**

Link to updated application/report form:

<https://www.bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr/the-arcs/joining-an-arc/>

Both basic & translational research ideas are welcome.

**Please contact Dr. Katya Ravid (kraivid@bu.edu)
to learn more about forming/joining a funded ARC.**

Pre-ARCs, 2025-2026

Visionary Integration of Technology, AI, and Learning in Critical Illness:

Drs. Charlene Ong, Noelle Saillant, Deepa Gopal &
Ioannis Paschalidis

**Contact information, current Information and Upcoming Meetings
listed at**

<https://www.bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr/2025/12/08/pre-arc-vital-visionary-integration-of-technology-ai-and-learning-in-critical-illness/>

Food Is Medicine:

Olivia Thomas, Drs. Alana Brennan, Maria Kukuruzinska, Megan McCrory &
Vipul Chitalia

**Contact information, current Information and Upcoming Meetings
listed at**

<https://www.bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr/2024/08/15/food-is-medicine-pre-arc/>

ARCs (4)

- **(Yr 3) Tuberculosis Interdisciplinary Approach to Research Alliance (TIARA)** / Co-Directors: Drs. Karen Jacobson, C. Robert Horsburgh
- **(Yr 3) Musculoskeletal Health, Biology Over a Lifespan (MHet)** / Co-Directors: Drs. Paola Divieti Pajevic, LaDora Thompson, David Felson
- **(Yr 2) Innovative Technology and Novel Biomarker Discovery and Development for Disease Diagnosis and Treatment (B4D)** / Co-Directors: Weining Lu, Chao Zhang, Joel Henderson, Liang Hao, Manju Subramanian
- **(Yr 1) Boston University Women's Health (WH) Research** / Co-Directors: Drs. Elisha Wachman, Emelia Benjamin, Joyce Wong

ARC Programs (5)

- **Respiratory Pathogens: COVID-19 and Beyond** / Co-Directors: Drs. Markus Bosmann, Mohsan Saeed
- **Thrombosis and Hemostasis in Health and Disease** / Co-Directors: Drs. Vipul Chitalia, Katya Ravid, Jean Francis
- **Mobile and Electronic (ME)-Health** / Director: Dr. Belinda Borrelli, Leadership: Drs. Daniel Fulford (Co-Director, Joanne Murabito, M.D. (Co-Director), and Lisa Quintiliani
- **Precision Medicine for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders** / Co-Directors: Drs. Lindsay Farrer, Rhoda Au, Alice Cronin-Golomb
- **Fibrosis ARC: Connecting Tissues and Investigators** / Co-Directors: Drs. Maria Trojanowska, Bob Varelas

Recent Metrics

9 ARCs during 2024-2026 yielded 230 collaborative publications and secured **112 multi-PI and multi-investogators grants**: 24 newly funded, 88 continued (with nearly 40% success rate!)

Recent and Upcoming Events hosted by ARCs

January 2026

Wednesday 1/14/26: VITAL Pre-ARC & Hariri Institute Focused Research Program
Workshop: Driving Data-an AI PRISM workshop
10:00 am – 1:00 pm

665 Commonwealth Ave (*Charles River Campus*)

[Hariri Building 1101](#)

co-hosted by the VITAL Pre-ARC & the Hariri Focused Research Program

Wednesday 1/14/26: B4D ARC monthly research seminar

1:00 – 2:00 pm 650 Albany St, W528 or Zoom

Dr. Jessica Fetterman: “Creation of the Lifelong Endowment for Genomic and Cellular DiscoverY Program”

Wednesday 1/28/26: Mobile and Electronic Health ARC Seminar

(Virtual)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Invited Speaker: Dr. Pauline Whelan, Honorary Senior Research Fellow, University of Manchester & Chief Operating Officer of CareLoop Health Ltd

“Self-Management and Remote Monitoring for People with Psychosis”

February 2026

Wednesday 2/11/26: MHet ARC Trainees Presentation

(hybrid)

Zoom or 635 Comm Ave, room 236 (Charles River Campus)

8:30 am – 10 am

Presenter: Elaine Huang, MS

“Deep Learning in Histopathological Whole Slide Images (WSIs) for Breast Cancer Subtype Classification”

Monday 2/23/26: Precision Medicine for Alzheimer Disease & Related Disorders ARC Program presents:

Health Economics in Alzheimer’s Disease and Alzheimer’s Disease–Related Dementias (AD/ADRD) Mini-Symposium

(Virtual)

1:00 pm – 2:15pm

Invited Speakers: Amitabh Chandra, PhD (Harvard); Norma Coe, PhD (University of Pennsylvania); David Cutler, PhD (Harvard)

“Why health economics should matter to my research in ADRD”

Format: 15 minute talks with 5 minutes for Q&A for each speaker, and then a 15 minute panel discussion at the end

Tuesday 2/24/26 (*postponed, rescheduled to 5/11/26*): Mobile and Electronic Health ARC Seminar

(Virtual)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Invited Speaker: John Piette, PhD, University of Michigan

“Improving Healthcare Access, Efficiency, and Quality Using Machine Learning and NLP”

Wednesday 2/25/26 (*postponed, rescheduled to 4/29/26*): Food as Medicine Pre-ARC mini-symposium

L403, 72 East Concord St (*Medical Campus*)

2:00 pm – 4:15 pm

Keynote Speaker: [Dr. Fang Fang Zhang](#), Tufts University

March 2026

Wednesday 3/18/26 [MHet ARC Trainees Presentation](#)

(hybrid)

Zoom or 635 Comm Ave, room 236 (Charles River Campus)

8:30 am – 10 am

Presenter: Nargiz Valikhanova

“Exploring role of Schwann cell precursors in fracture healing”

Presenter: Henry Brisebois

“Quantitative Raman Imaging for Label-Free Characterization of the Extracellular Matrix: Applications in Cartilage and Lung”

Thursday 3/19/26: [TIARA ARC mini-symposium](#)

L403, 72 East Concord St (*Medical Campus & Zoom*)

RSVP HERE

11:30 am – 2:30 pm

Keynote Speaker: [Dr. Sarah Fortune](#), “Pursuing Tuberculosis Elimination from Genes to the Globe”

John LaPorte Given Professor of Immunology and Infectious Diseases

Chair, Department of Immunology and Infectious Diseases

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Chair of the Department of Immunology and Infectious Disease

Thursday 3/19/26: [Mobile and Electronic Health ARC Seminar](#)

(Virtual)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Invited Speaker: Nicholas Jacobson, PhD, Dartmouth College

“Therabot: 6.5 Years and Over 100,000 Human Hours Building and Evaluating the First Generative AI Psychotherapy Chatbot”

Monday 3/23/26: [B4D ARC mini-symposium](#)

X714/715, 650 Albany St (*Medical Campus*)

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm RSVP

Keynote Speaker: [Dr. Shannon Stott](#), Chair of the BU Biomedical Engineering Department, “Microfluidics for detecting rare biomarkers in disease”

April 2026

Friday 4/10 & Saturday 4/11/26: [Medical AI Hackathon](#)

co-sponsored by the Evans Center IBR & others

4/10: 3-6pm & 4/11: 9aa-6pm

CDS building, 665 Commonwealth Ave, 17th floor

contact: [Dr. Vijaya Kolachalama](#), ARC co-director

Monday 4/13/26: [3rd Annual MHet ARC Mini-Symposium](#)

11:00 am – 4:00 pm

Photonics Building, 8 St. Mary’s St, 906 Colloquium Room

New this year: There will be opportunities for top scoring abstracts to be selected for short talks.

Monday 4/23/26: [Precision Medicine for Alzheimer Disease & Related Disorders ARC Program: April Seminar](#)

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

(*Virtual*)

Wednesday 4/29/26: Precision Medicine for Alzheimer’s Disease: [6th Annual FHS-BAP Symposium](#)

12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Please register for this year’s symposium by clicking on the following link: [Webinar Registration – Zoom](#)

Wednesday 4/29/26 (*New Date!*): [Food as Medicine Pre-ARC Mini-symposium](#)

650 Albany St, room X714&715

2:00 pm – 4:15 pm

Keynote Speaker: [Dr. Fang Fang Zhang](#), Tufts University

[Full Agenda](#) & [Registration](#)

May 2026

Tuesday 5/5/26: BU BIRCWH & Women’s Health Research ARC Symposium: Boston Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women’s Health Symposium
 9:30 pm – 3:15 pm
 665 Commonwealth Ave (Charles River Campus) [Hariri Building 1101](#)
 co-hosted by the BU Women’s Health Research ARC, Boston BIRCWH sites (BU/BMC, Tufts/Tufts Medical, MGB), Hariri Institute
 Keynote Speaker: [Harriette GC Van Spall, MD, MPH, FRCPC](#), “Opportunity and Unintended Consequences with Use of AI to Advance Women’s Health Research”

June 2026

Tuesday 6/9/26: Thrombosis & Hemostasis ARC Program present in collaboration with the Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute (CVI):
 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm (hybrid)
 650 Albany St, X715 and Zoom
 Invited Speaker: [Dr. Elisabeth Battinelli](#) (HMS and BWU)

- 12:00-12:20 pm: Dr. Elisabeth Battinelli, “Role of platelets in cancer immunity”
- 12:20-12:35 pm: Dr. Katya Ravid, “Diet-Cardio-Oncology axis”
- 12:35-12:55 pm: Dr. Vipul Chitalia, “Diet-Cardio-Oncology axis”

Congratulations

[Drs. Chao Zhang, Wening Lu and colleagues- Dr. Zhang for his first RO1, partially stemming from his work within the Innovative Technology and Novel Biomarker Discovery and Development for Disease Diagnosis and Treatment \(B4D\)- ARC](#)

[Dr. Belinda Borrelli, Director of the ME Health ARC, 2026 IADR Giddon Award for Distinguished Research in the Behavioral Sciences. The prestigious Award is a top prize in the field and is bestowed upon truly remarkable papers \(paper/work stemming from ARC-related research\). \[....\]”](#)

Representative achievements and recognitions received by ARC leadership and participants in the past 2 years

ARC Director / Participant	Award /Recognition in the past 3 years	Year
Rhoda Au (Precision Medicine in Alzheimer Disease ARC co-director)	serving on the National Academies Committee that led to this report	2026

Rhoda Au (Precision Medicine in Alzheimer Disease ARC co-director)	Goodes Prize Award from the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery	2024
LaDora Thompson (MHet ARC co-director)	Donald P. Kent Award, Gerontological Society of America	2025
Belinda Borrelli (ME ARC director)	Top-cited article, <i>Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology</i>	2025
Belinda Borrelli (ME ARC director)	Appointed by HHS to be on the NIH council.	2025
Belinda Borrelli (ME ARC director)	2026 IADR Giddon Award for Distinguished Research in the Behavioral Sciences.	2026
Emelia Benjamin (WH ARC co-director)	International " <i>Doctor Honoris Causa</i> ". <u>Honorary Doctorate in Medical Science, Aalborg University, Denmark</u>	2025
Emelia Benjamin (WH ARC co-director)	International Research.com Medicine in United States Leader Award, accessed 10/6/2025	2025
Emelia Benjamin (WH ARC co-director)	American Heart Association Eugene Braunwald Academic Mentorship Award	2025
Katya Ravid (Thrombosis ARC co-director)	Selected to Serve on ASH National Scientific Committee on Megakaryocytes and Platelets	2025-2029
Jean Francis (Thrombosis ARC co-director)	Named by Boston Magazine as Top Boston Doctor; National Kidney Foundation Award for Excellence in Nephrology and Kidney Transplantation	2023, 2024 & 2025
Jean Francis (Thrombosis ARC co-director)	Elected as Fellow of the American Society of Nephrology	2025
Jean Francis (Thrombosis ARC co-director)	"Evans Physician Designation Award", awarded by BUMC Evans group	2025
Karen Jacobson (TIARA ARC co-director)	Department of Medicine Mentorship award	2025
Karen Jacobson (TIARA ARC co-director)	Nomination to Secretary/Treasurer and then Vice President for NAR	2024-2026
Meredith Brooks (TIARA ARC member)	Emerging Investigator Recognition, American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine	2024
Meredith Brooks (TIARA ARC member)	Dean's Innovation Challenge Award, and subsequent Winner, from BUSPH	2025

Meredith Brooks (TIARA ARC member)	Fellowship, John's Hopkins University 7th Cohort of the HIV Implementation Science Training Program	2025
Allison Portnoy (TIARA ARC member)	Early Career Recognition Award, International Papillomavirus Society	2023
Allison Portnoy (TIARA ARC member)	Boston University Rafik B. Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering Junior Faculty Fellowship	2025
Weining Lu (B4D ARC co-director)	Invited grant reviewer, Integrated Grant Management System (IGMS), Ministry of Health (MOH), Government of Singapore	2024
Weining Lu (B4D ARC co-director)	Invited Renal Grand Rounds speaker, Nephrology Division, Department of Medicine, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Montefiore Medical Center, New York, NY	2024
Weining Lu (B4D ARC co-director)	Invited grant reviewer, NIH grant review Special Emphasis Panel (SEP); NIDDK	2025
Manju Subramaniam (B4D ARC co-director)	Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine - Ophthalmology: Outstanding Clinical Instructor	2024
Liang Hao (B4D ARC co-director)	2024 Titans of the Tiny Symposium, International Institute for Nanotechnology, Evanston IL	2024
Liang Hao (B4D ARC co-director)	2025 Innovation Award from the American Lung Association: Liangliang Hao Wins Innovation Award for Research into Lung Disease College of Engineering	2025
Liang Hao (B4D ARC co-director)	2025 Kenneth Rainin Foundation Innovator Award: Rainin Funds for Researchers Developing Smart Probiotics College of Engineering	2025
Liang Hao (B4D ARC co-director)	2025 Beckman Young Investigator Award: Liangliang Hao Beckman Foundation	2025

Since 2015, the Evans Center for Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research (ECIBR) has provided opportunities for **interdisciplinary** collaborations within our newly envisioned and developed **Affinity Research Collaboratives (ARCs)**. With mentoring provided by the ECIBR, as needed, ARC groups innovatively address complex biomedical challenges by **integrating knowledge, concepts and methods from multiple disciplines**, in line with **[convergence science approaches](#)**.

Interested in joining an ARC? please contact the ARC leaders and/or Robin MacDonald [remac@bu.edu]

[For More Information about the ARCs and ARC process](#)



SCAN ME

Visit our web sites

ECIBR: <https://www.bumc.bu.edu/evanscenteribr/> IBRO: <https://rb.gy/ybd8r>

Address inquiries related to logistics to: Robin MacDonald, at remac@bu.edu



BU CTSI