



Western
Bone and Joint Institute

2022 Annual Report

“A Vision of Lifelong Mobility through Musculoskeletal Health”

Prepared on behalf of over 300 BJI Members

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List of Abbreviations

ADEISS	Additive Design in Surgical Solutions Centre	NFRF	New Frontiers Research Fund
BJI	Western’s Bone and Joint Institute	NSERC	Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
BOG	Governing Board	OGS	Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program
CaNMOR	Canadian Network for Mobility Research	OA	Osteoarthritis
CIHR	Canadian Institutes of Health Research	ORS	Orthopaedic Research Society
Cluster	Western’s Cluster of Research Excellence in MSK Health	OARSI	Osteoarthritis Research Society International
CMHR	Collaborative Training Program in Musculoskeletal Health Research	RAC	Research Advisory Committee
CFI	Canadian Foundation for Innovation	Schulich	Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
CRC	Canadian Research Chairs Program	TEC	Training and Education Committee
EXEC	Executive Committee	TLC	Trainee Leadership Committee
HULC	Roth McFarlane Hand and Upper Limb Centre	WRC	Western Research Chair
MSK	Musculoskeletal		
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging		

Section 1.0 – The BJI Advantage

Pain and disability from musculoskeletal conditions prevent individuals from living their lives to the fullest. Western's Bone and Joint Institute (BJI) is focused on research excellence towards eliminating the tremendous personal and societal costs from musculoskeletal conditions. BJI catalyzes progress and innovation through mechanisms that foster the formation of transdisciplinary teams to tackle complex research challenges and move research out of the lab and into the clinic and community.

Vision

- Lifelong mobility through MSK health.

Mission

- To catalyse transdisciplinary MSK research, innovation, translation and education.

Mandate

- To investigate the causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatments for MSK conditions;
- To enhance movement, mobility and participation in daily life; and
- To improve support systems and rehabilitation for a wide range of MSK conditions.

To learn about BJI's past accomplishments or its current strategic plan please visit: https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/about_us/Institute%20Reports/index.html. Here you will find previous annual reports and BJI's strategic plan. Strategies were aligned to the three categories of the Institute's mission and guide the next sections of this report.

Section 2.0: Acceleration of Research Success & Innovation

The 5-year strategic goals for acceleration of research success and innovation are to: a) engage researchers with unique expertise across all career stages; b) maintain a collaborative environment for effective team formation and integration of transdisciplinary perspectives; c) develop novel, relevant, and timely research ideas; d) support early stage / high risk ideas from researchers; e) launch a strategic fund to advance BJI strategic research priority initiatives; f) enhance the sharing of data and/or samples and promote the use of standardized research tools/protocols; g) facilitate the mobilization of teams and the development of major grant submissions; and h) enhance entrepreneurial culture & skills to advance commercialization and industry contracts potential. Below is a summary of current strategies and metrics used to assess progress related to these goals.

2.1 – Local Engagement & Recruitment of Stakeholders / Experts

Orientation meetings and invitations to join the Institute were distributed to 4 potential new members. The BJI membership overall grew from 266 people in 2021 to 307 in 2022 including a total of 121 faculty, 96 trainees, and 90 other members including: partners, collaborators, and staff (Appendix A; https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/about_us/people/index.html).

New Member Recruitment & Membership Details

Details and bios related to our 11 new faculty members in 2022 can be found in Appendix A.



Dr. Folarin Babatunde
School of Physical Therapy



Dr. Kristin Clemens
Department of Medicine,
Epidemiology and Biostatistics



Dr. Jamie Fleet
Physical Medicine and
Rehabilitation



Dr. Ntonghanwah Forcheh
School of Physical Therapy



Dr. Assaf Kadar
Roth McFarlane Hand & Upper
Limb Centre, Division of
Orthopaedic Surgery



Dr. Daniel Lizotte
Computer Science,
Epidemiology & Biostatistics
**BJI Research Advisory
Committee**



Dr. Arghya Paul
Chemical and Biochemical
Engineering and Chemistry



Siobhan Schabrun
William and Lynne Gray
Research Chair in Mobility and
Activity



Dr. David Seminowicz
Department of Medical Biophysics



Dr. Supriya Singh
Department of Surgery
BJI Research Advisory Committee

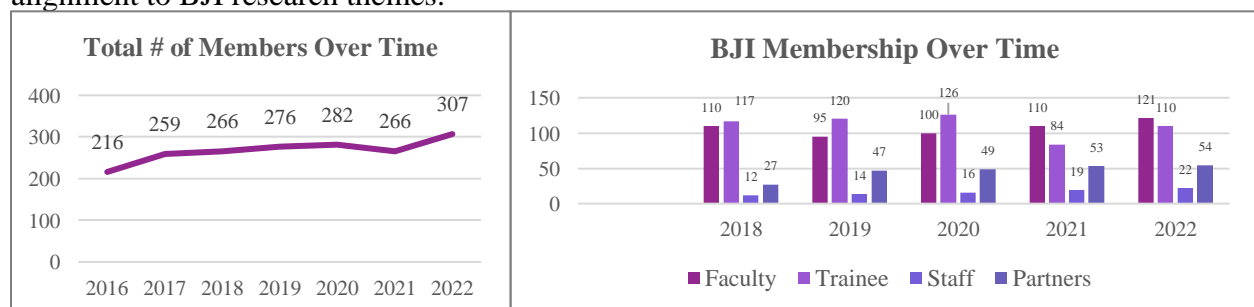


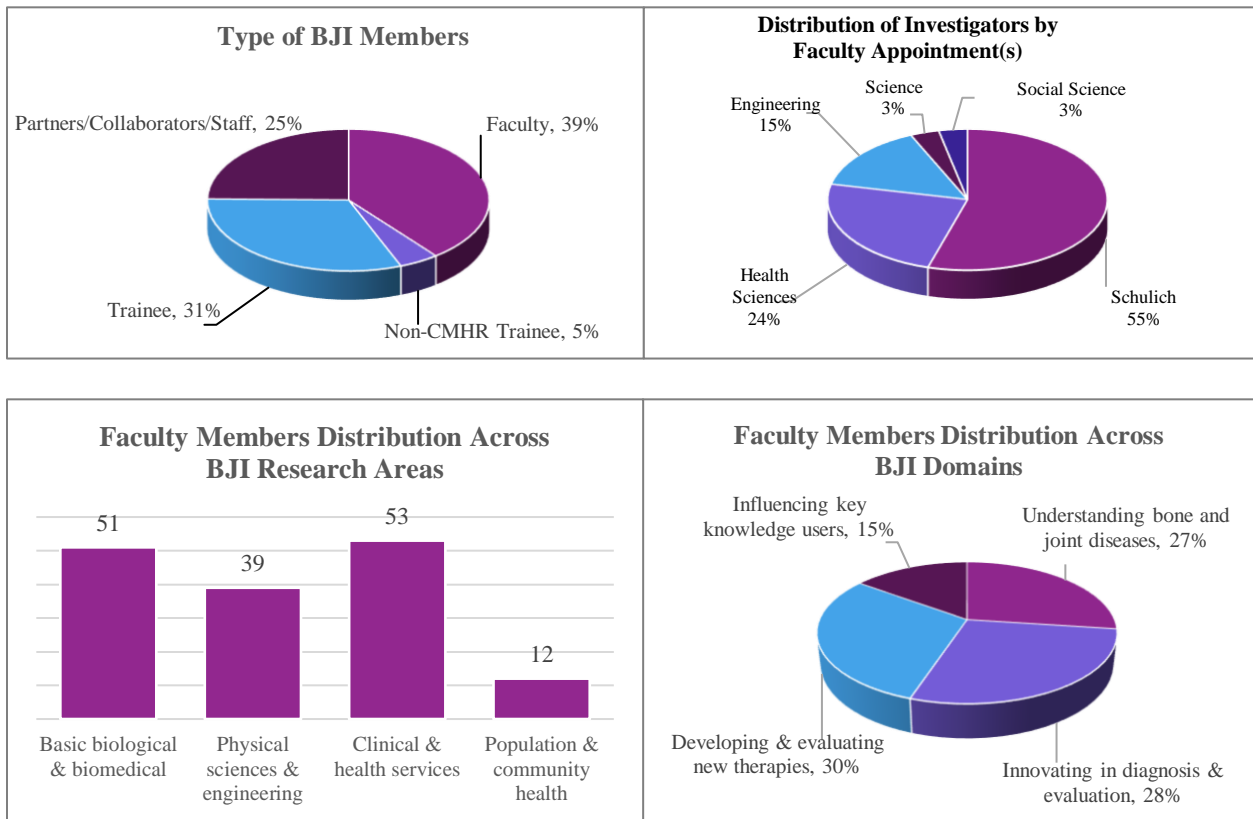
Dr. Janelle Unger
School of Physiotherapy

Prestigious Awards and Recognitions

BJI members holding prestigious awards include: 24 Research Chairs (7 Endowed/Industry-funded), 4 Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada, 8 Fellows of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, 2 Fellows of the Canadian College of Physicists in Medicine, 5 Distinguished University Professors, and 9 Faculty Scholars. A comprehensive list of all awards held by membership can be viewed in Appendix B.

The graphics below display the types of members, distribution across partner Faculties, and alignment to BJI research themes.





2.2 – Think Tanks, Strategic Funding & Catalyst Grants Program

Think Tank Series

BJI had 4 main Think Tanks in 2022 that were facilitated by BJI administration in collaboration with BJI Lead Investigators (Appendix C). The goal of the Think Tanks is to explore grand MSK challenges and find solutions by bringing together transdisciplinary knowledge and perspectives (typically include 10-15 outstanding local, national, or international experts). All current think tanks aim to advance work across multiple strategic priorities identified in the 5-year strategic plan: less invasive and joint-preserving treatments; strategies to decrease surgical infection; tools that support self-management and rehabilitation; clinical and cost effectiveness studies; data and/or samples sharing mechanisms; and the development and application of standardized research tools/protocols. These Think Tanks led to the submission of three large team grants in 2022 (CFI Innovation Fund, New Frontiers Transformation Fund, and a CIHR THINC grant). Details about the Think Tank Series are available at: https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/events/BJI_ThinkTanks.html.

Catalyst Grants Program

The BJI Catalyst Grants supports the initiation of innovative, high-impact, and early-stage projects and enable the leveraging of external funding. Two of five 2021 submissions received were chosen for funding in early 2022 (\$60,000) details of projects and teams are available in Appendix D. Detailed program description, the revision procedures, and/or the review committee(s) can be found at: https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/research/catalyst_grants_program/index.html. A Fall competition was launched receiving 9 applications. The review committee will meet in 2023, with grants slated to begin on April 1.

A long-term analysis was completed of the BJI Catalyst Grants from the first 3 years of the competition (2015, 2016, 2017). During this initial phase, we funded 17 projects, totaling an investment of \$413,356 (or an average of \$24,315 per project). These Catalyst grant recipients have gone on to secure ~\$6,819,000 of other funding attributed directly to research initiated by the Catalyst Grant. As of early 2023, these first 3 years of Catalyst Grants have also led to 47 publications, 8 industry partnerships, 2 clinical trials, 1 patent, and 15 new collaborations with other members within the BJI.

Strategic Funding Program

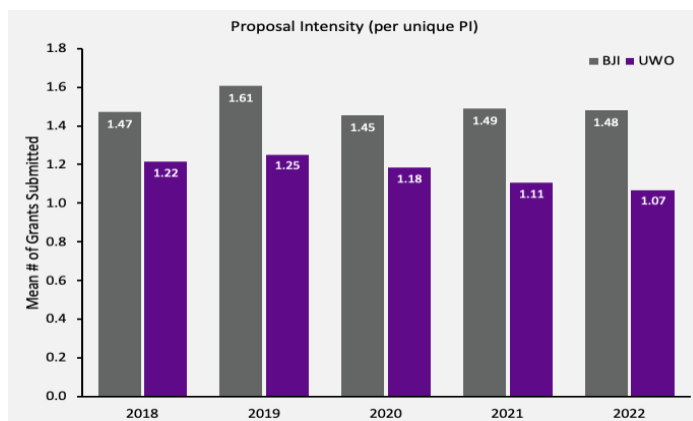
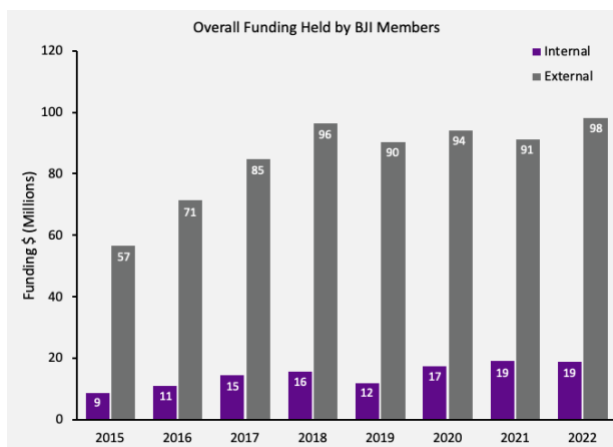
The Strategic Funding Program funded one \$20K project this year. Dr. Ana Luisa Trejos was funded to enhance a project “*Improving biosignal data interpretation for wearable rehabilitation robots*”. Details describing both the team and the project are available in Appendix E; and program details are available online at https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/research/Strategic_Research_Fund/index.html.

2.3 – Research Funding

All Funding Sources

In total, BJI members held 406 external grants and 338 internal grants (Appendix F) during 2022. These totaled over \$117 M in multi-year funding, with over \$98 M in external funds. This maintains over \$100 M in funding held by BJI members since 2018.

In 2022, BJI members were awarded an *BJI record* 122 external grants totaling over \$24 M. Despite representing only 8% of all faculty members at Western, BJI members brought in 16% of the total Western research funding awarded.

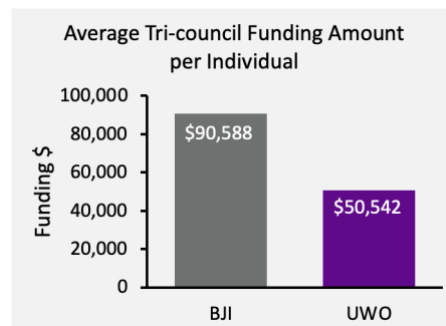


BJI members applied for a total of 176 new grants in 2022. This works out to an average of 1.48 grants per PI which was 39% higher than the Western average of 1.07. It is important to note that while the average number of grant submissions per PI at Western has been declining since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, a similar decrease has not been observed at the BJI. Note that success rate for grants applied for in 2022 is incomplete, as several major programs including NSERC Discovery

Grants, NSERC Research Tools & Instruments, NFRF Exploration and some CIHR Project Grants are still pending decisions or updates in ROLA (Western’s Research Database). *These data do not include grants located at or shared with other Institutions or Institutes.*

Tri-council Funding Overview

In 2022, BJI members were awarded 42 new Tri-council grants, totaling \$10,780,000. BJI faculty members were responsible for 11.4% of the total number of Tri-council awards and 15.7% of the total Tri-council funding amount awarded at Western in 2022. Further exemplifying our Tri-council success, the average BJI member Tri-council grant was 79% larger than the Western average (\$90,588 versus \$50,542). *These data do not include grants located at or shared with other Institutions or Institutes*



2.4– Innovation & Commercialization

MSK Innovation Competition

The BJI’s MSK Innovation Program aims to cultivate skill sets that enhance, support, and celebrate entrepreneurship spirit and commercialization of musculoskeletal innovations. The competition targets London-based entrepreneurial MSK experts (e.g., from academic and research institutions, research hospitals, start-ups, etc.) with the goal of pitching novel ideas to a panel of friendly judges. This five-stage competition format is maintained including: 1) an innovation workshop, 2) submission of initial proposals, 3) selection of teams, 4) a mentorship program for selected teams and 5) a final pitch event.

The 2022 competition saw the first in-person event post COVID. 2 prizes totaling \$35,000 were awarded to two teams. Details about this year’s prize winners can be found in the story “*Novel Innovations to enhance everyday mobility comfort for all!*” found on the BJI website at: <https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/documents/stories/Innovation2022.pdf>.

Vessl Prosthetics, winners of a \$25k prize in May of 2022 reported being able to leverage this modest investment to \$634,000 in funding by the end of the calendar year. This includes grants and other dilutive investments. Further returns on investment are expected from this award in 2023.

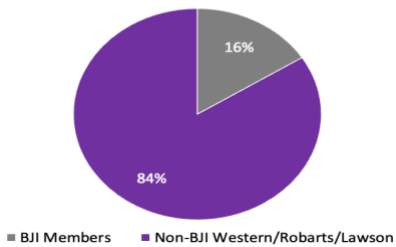
For a description of the competition including application details and past winners please visit: https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/research/msk_innovation_competition/index.html

Technology Transfer & Commercialization

The information below is based on fiscal reporting by the technology transfer office – WORLDdiscoveries® at Western www.worlddiscoveries.ca. The total number of technology submissions, patent applications filed, and patents issued by BJI members has fluctuated annually, but since fiscal year (FY) 2019, there has been a total of 24, 3, and 15 respectively. In FY 2022, this represents 16% of all technology submissions and 60% of all patents issued via WORLDdiscoveries® by Western/Robarts/Lawson faculty members. These data do not include submissions, applications or patents issued independently of Western (i.e., other Institutions and/or Agencies). Note that BJI members did not file any patent applications in FY 2022.

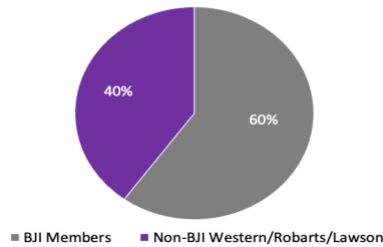
Number of new technology submissions

FY 2022



Number of new patents issued

FY 2022



Industry Contracts

In 2022, BJI members held 122 industry contracts or donations at Western totaling \$5,869,000.

2.5 – Local Collaboration Events

Showcases

The BJI Showcase Series continues to enhance BJI members’ knowledge of current work and opportunities for local collaboration. Eight - one hour showcase events held in 2022, featured a total of 13 presenters using plain language to support cross disciplinary engagement. Speakers’ goals varied from introducing research priorities/expertise (new members) to providing project progress update (e.g., catalyst grant holders), troubleshooting challenges, gaining new perspectives on a problem or methodology, creating new collaborative opportunities, celebrating success and/or exploring future study ideas. A list of topics and presenters is available in Appendix G or online at https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/events/bji_showcase/index.html.

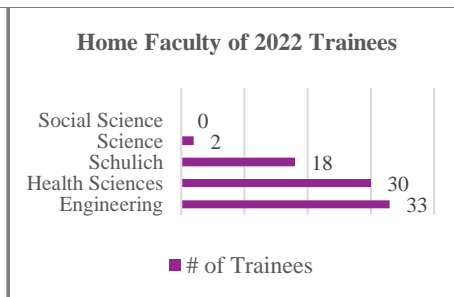
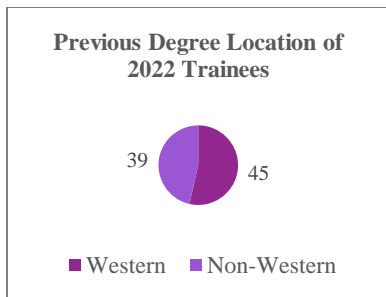
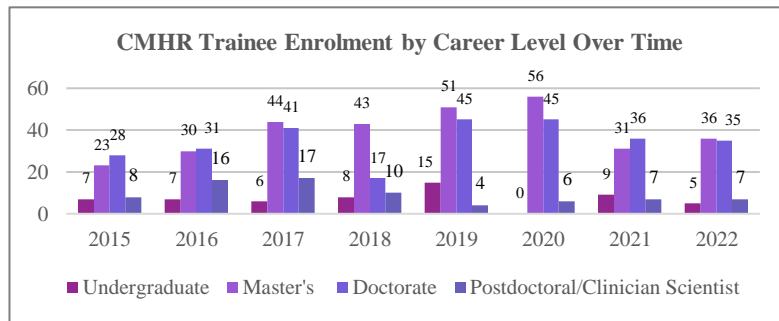
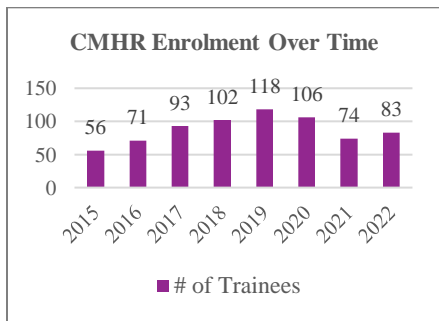
Section 3.0: Education & Training

The 5-year strategic goals for education and training are mainly accomplished via the Collaborative Program in MSK Health Research (CMHR; <https://cmhr.uwo.ca>) with support from the BJI administrative team. These goals include: a) supporting the development of the next generation of transdisciplinary MSK researchers (graduate and undergraduate trainees); b) developing an improved communications plan to increase enrollment of top doctoral students & postdoctoral fellows; c) offering expanded postdoctoral programming to accelerate trainee career progression post-graduation (academic and non-academic sectors); and d) increasing trainee’s success rate in external funding competitions.

3.1 – Enrollment & Mentorship

Western’s BJI’s CMHR received 31 applications and enrolled a total of 18 new trainees in 2022. A success rate of 58.1%. In addition to 5 undergraduate students in the CMHR Undergraduate Summer Program, new awards or extensions were given to 8 master’s students and 9 doctorate students in the CMHR working toward a specialized degree designation, and 3 postdoctoral fellows. Graphical representation of trainees involved in the program overtime, including information about their previous degree location, place of origin, and home faculty are below. The home program of current trainees is within one of our now 15 participating graduate programs. For a full list please visit:

https://cmhr.uwo.ca/Program%20Overview/participating_programs.html.



3.2 – Bone and Joint Transdisciplinary Research Awards

BJI sponsored research by 20 trainees via our *Bone and Joint Transdisciplinary Research Awards Program* (<https://cmhr.uwo.ca/Awards/index.html>) (9 new awards, 11 continuing) for a total investment of nearly \$ 175,000 into the next generation of MSK researchers in 2022. A total of 82 trainees were active in the program See Appendix A for a full list of Trainee Membership. BJI also sponsored 5 students via the *Summer Studentship Awards Program* totaling \$18K and hosted an additional 2 USRI Summer Students funded internally through Western.

3.3 – Trainee External Awards & Achievements

In 2022, CMHR began the development of an internal review process for external grant submissions through the Teaching and Education Committee. Full processes and delivery of this future program are still in discussion. In total, over \$4.6M* in external training support was received (e.g. NSERC, CIHR, OGS) with an additional \$2.2M in internal training funds. A detailed report from the CMHR Directors is available in Appendix H.

*Includes \$1.69M in NSERC Create support also noted in Research Funding - Section 2.3

Section 4.0 – Knowledge Translation

The 5-year strategic goals for the knowledge translation are to: a) enhance the inter-connectedness of the MSK community (locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally) and b) increase collaboration among institutions for a more coordinated national MSK research effort. Plans to hire a communications expert to support the Western Research Institutes portfolio were set in motion in 2022. This expertise will certainly help the Institute to move this important goal along in the later stages of the Institute’s term.

4.1 – Publications

In 2022, the members in Bone and Joint Institute (BJI) produced a total of 501 papers associated with the Institute. That equates to an average of 4.1 publications per BJI member. 397 of the 501 publications are captured in InCites. The average category normalized citation impact of these 397

publications is 1.23 times the world average benchmark of 1.0, with citation counts higher than or equal to 31% of the publications in the Web of Science database in their respective research area, publication year¹ and document type, on average. The contribution made by BJI members through these scholarly works was evidenced by scholars across 73 different countries/regions around the world (Top 5: USA, Canada, UK, mainland China, and Italy) and 93 different research areas who have cited these publications. Of the 397 publications, 35 publications (8.8 %) are listed among the top 10% most cited publications in the Web of Science database. Find the full list of publications in Appendix J.

Of the publications available in InCites, 166 publications (41.8%) were co-authored with one or more international scholars across 45 countries/regions (Top 5: USA, UK, Australia, Netherlands, and Germany), with an average category normalized citation impact well above the world average at 1.52. These 397 publications also showed evidence of internal collaborations with 106 publications (26.7%) being co-authored by 2 or more BJI members. BJI internally co-authored publications have an average category normalized citation impact slightly higher than the world average at 1.07. With 172 publications (43.3%) identified as open access, the knowledge created by BJI members in 2022 supported more equitable access and garnered citations, with an average category normalized citation impact of 1.35 and citation counts higher than or equal to 31% of the publications in Web of Science database in their respective research area, publication year¹ and document type, on average. A total of 445 publications produced by BJI members in 2022 are tracked in Altmetric, 372 of which have attracted attention with a total of 6,694 mentions in social media, 397 references in news stories, 38 mentions in blogs, 11 mentions in peer reviews, 3 referenced in policy documents, 3 references in Wikipedia, 2 mentions in Faculty Opinions, and 2 mentions in videos.

¹ Some publications with early access in 2021 are categorized as 2021 publications in InCites/Web of Science.

4.2 – National Networks / Events & Engagement of Cross-jurisdictional Experts

Canadian Network for Mobility Research (CaNMOR)



The opportunities for this national group to meet have been affected by the global pandemic. Collaborations through major granting opportunities continued in 2022 with an CIHR THINC submission. Results of the competition will not be received until spring 2023.

Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network



In 2022, the Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network focused on increasing capacity through strategic investment, new collaborations, and strengthening existing partnerships. The Network invested \$150K to catalyze eight new research collaborations. The Network continued its collaboration with emPower (Western) to operationalize the Clinical Trials Network, and with OpenWear (Universite Laval) to scale-up research with wearable technologies. Additionally, a new partnership was developed with Rehab+; a powerful knowledge mobilization tool hosted by MacPlus (McMaster). National and international conferences were supported including co-hosting the Canadian Bone and Joint Conference in 2022 alongside BJI, as well as multiple trainee-led conferences across Canada. Finally, the Network provided over \$23K in travel support to 20+ trainees who were able to attend and present their thesis work at national and international research conferences.

4.3 – Partnered Events

Canadian Bone & Joint Conference (CBJC)

In April of 2022, the 4th Annual Biennial Canadian Bone and Joint Conference was offered to an international group of registrants. Preceded once again by the Young Investigators Forum, a one-day trainee planned and attended event, the CBJC spanned two days with 55 total participants. Registration numbers declined from the 2020 virtual event, however COVID fatigue was identified by many as an issue in registering. The event included a Keynote address by Dr. Rita Orji, Dalhousie University, followed by 4 plenary sessions with 9 invited speakers and 13 oral presentations. Additionally, two concurrent sessions featuring 19 student presentations were offered as well as a live online poster showcase. Event details and evaluation information are available in Appendix I.

4.4 – Media & Communications

The BJI continues to work with our membership to help them tell their stories, and to share the value added by the institute through multiple media and communications avenues. A full list of our stories in 2022 are available in Appendix K. Plans to work with a future communications officer to be housed within Western Research will help to increase our broad communications and knowledge translation and reach our strategic communications goals.

Section 5.0 – Financial Report

Below is an up-to-date summary table of the BJI financials including actuals and projections from Year 7 (FY 2020-21) to Year 11 (FY 2024-25). Approval for one additional year has been received from the VP Research Office for the Institute, taking us to Year 11 before a review is required.

As in previous years, the budget contains an infusion to the budget from the original cluster fund (now BJI) allocation, which is reflected in the Cumulative surplus/deficit (BJI & Cluster) line in the summary at the top of the table.

Revenues

A portion of the cumulative surplus is allocated annually (in year fund allocation) to help support multi-year planning/ operations/awards. When funds are received from partners, Faculties, grants, etc. the in-year allocation from the cumulative surplus is reduced accordingly. Not all revenues listed in the projections are confirmed. A request for \$140K in Decanal funds was made for FY 2024, funds for FY 2025 are projected but had not been made at the time of this report. Should revenues fall behind, our priority is to maintain core operations. Catalyst, innovation, and young investigator support could be reduced or put on hold temporarily to accomplish this until additional funding can be secured. If additional support is secured, it would boost those programs or increase opportunities for strategic projects. It is important to note that investments from Advancement and the Faculties is becoming crucial to ensure that we can maintain programs beyond year 11. Due to the uncertainty with respect to fundraising as a revenue source, projections for years 10 and 11 were kept nil. Continued operational savings in fiscal year 2022 due to COVID has allowed us to plan beyond year 10, but we will require substantial investment to maintain, grow and expand activities to achieve our goal of becoming one of the leading MSK research institutes at an international level.

Expenses

Expenses directly support the BJI research environment that promotes and encourages transdisciplinary collaboration to tackle grand challenges. This includes the continuation of: a) Member Initiatives & Events such as think tanks, showcase series, thematic and skill development workshops, strategic research retreat, and other events; b) Strategic and Innovation Research Awards such as catalyst grants for new early-stage and high risk research project ideas, an innovation program to support entrepreneurship, a strategic funding program to enable timely action related to priority initiatives; c) a Young Investigator Program to develop the next generation of transdisciplinary MSK researchers via post-doc or clinical fellowships, graduate research awards, and undergrad summer research internships; d) Research Meetings and Conferences to expand our reach and profile via national/international planning meetings, hosting of the Canadian Bone and Joint Conference and Young Investigator Forum, conference sponsorships, and trainee travel awards; d) Communications (website, advertisement, news items, outreach events) and Operations (equipment, services, supplies, governance meetings) to maintain necessary workflow and presence. Lastly, staff compensation (Associate Director Allowance, Administrative Officer, Research Officer, and part time support staff) ensures that implementation of Institute programs and activities is possible, efficient, and effective.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-2025 ^d
	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Projected	Projected
Summary					
Cumulative surplus/deficit (BJI & Cluster)	1,100,945	1,132,380	812,043	645,430	237,907
In-year fund allocation from cumulative surplus	310,000	775,000	450,000	410,000	260,000
Revenues	938,995	1,081,100	845,403	800,000	650,000
Expenses	602,560	573,142	648,104	797,523	626,225
In-year surplus deficit	336,435	507,958	197,299	2,477	23,775
FUND BALANCE	1,127,380	865,338	559,343	237,907	1,682
AVAILABLE FUNDS					
In-Year Fund Allocation from Cumulative Surplus	310,000	775,000	450,000	410,000	260,000
Membership Fees		100	0	0	0
Central Support	600,000	300,000	300,000	300,000 ^a	300,000 ^a
Faculty Support	0	0	90,000	190,000 ^{d,e}	90,000 ^d
Partner Support	0	0	0	0	
Conference Fees	0	0	4,403	0	
Event Sponsorship	28,995	6,000	1,000	0	
Fundraising /Donations/Internal Grants	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL REVENUES	938,995	1,081,100	845,403	900,000	650,000
EXPENSES					
Member Initiatives & Events (think tanks, showcase, workshops, seminars, research retreat, other events)	132	718	3,833	16,320	11,700
Member Funding Opportunities (catalyst grants program, MSK innovation program, strategic funding program)	60	95,120	187,961	394,120	175,000
Young Investigator Program (courses, workshops, undergrad summer program, stipends, transdisciplinary awards, operations)	217,835	222,119	217,604	169,000	149,000
National Initiatives (national events - conference and young investigator forum, travel awards, network support)	14,388	2,500	12,045	26,500	16,500
Communications (website, advertisement, news items, outreach events)	1,939	4,737	792	6,250	6,250
Operating (equipment, services, supplies)	803	10,875	7,403	17,208 ^b	17,000 ^b
Staff Compensation (Administrative Officer, Research Officer, Administrative Assistant, Research Assistant)	307,472	237,0739	218,467	268,125	250,775 ^c
TOTAL EXPENSES	602,560	573,142	648,104	897,523	626,225
a Central Support committed to FY24 & 25					
b Increased budget to allow for External Advisory Council Travel Expenses x1/year					
c Staff Compensation: PTE removed from budget					
d Institute term extended by 1 year to 2025 – decanal support has been requested but not secured.					
e Funding support (\$50K) for FY 2023 was received after year end, thus showing in FY 2024					

List of Appendices

A – BJI Membership

B – Prestigious Awards

C – BJI 2022 Think Tank Series

D – BJI Catalyst Grants Awards, New & In Progress

E– Strategic Funding Program

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G – 2022 Showcase Series

H – Collaborative Specialization in Musculoskeletal Health Research (CMHR)

I – 2022 CJC Conference Evaluation Report

J – 2022 MSK Publications by BJI Members

K – BJI News Stories