

**ACCELERATE**  
INNOVATION FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH CANCER

STRATEGIC PARTNER:  
ANDREW McDONOUGH  
  
FOUNDATION®



# ACCELERATE Annual Activities Report 2025



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# Foreword from our Chair



**Nicole Scobie**  
ACCELERATE Chair

Reflecting on my first full year as Chair of ACCELERATE, I'm struck by the depth of the commitment that this organisation demands - and the extraordinary privilege it represents. ACCELERATE is, to my knowledge, one of very few platforms in this space led by a patient advocate. That distinction is not incidental; it is a deliberate statement of who we are. It speaks directly to our founding conviction that meaningful progress in paediatric oncology drug development must be driven by all stakeholders, including — and arguably especially — the patients and families who stand to benefit most. I'm proud to carry that responsibility.

My first year as chair has been more demanding than I anticipated. Leading a multi-stakeholder platform of this nature involves navigating complex dynamics, managing competing priorities, and overcoming real challenges. Fortunately, I was always able to count on the dedication and professionalism of the people around me. Our Board, our Scientific Committee, our General Assembly, and our Working Groups have each demonstrated a level of commitment and expertise that I find genuinely inspiring. None of what we have achieved this year would have been possible without them, and I extend my deepest gratitude to every person who has contributed their time, knowledge, and energy to our collective mission.

It's important to be clear that my term as Chair spans four years. That is a finite window, and I'm acutely aware of it. Within that time, I'm

determined to make a meaningful and lasting difference. That sense of purpose is what sustains me when the challenges feel most daunting, and it's what I hope will continue to grow ACCELERATE in the years ahead.

## Three Priorities: Governance, Sustainability and Strategy.

From the outset, I set out to build and strengthen ACCELERATE around three overarching priorities. These reflect what I believe our organisation must have in place to deliver sustained impact.

### Governance

Effective governance is the foundation on which everything else rests. This year, we've put a lot of time and energy in developing robust systems and policies, establishing clear guidelines for how we work, how we make decisions, and how we hold ourselves accountable. These frameworks give our multi-stakeholder community the clarity and confidence they need to engage fully and constructively. Governance may not be the most visible aspect of our work, but it is among the most important.

### Sustainability

Sustainability has been equally central to my focus this year. ACCELERATE must be an organisation that not only endures, but that can grow and take on new and ambitious projects as the landscape of childhood cancer drug development evolves. I'm pleased to report that we've made genuine strides in this regard. The organisation is now in a stronger position to maintain its momentum - and this is thanks to the continued engagement and generosity of our partners. In particular I'm thankful for the continued long-term support of the B+ Foundation. New partners include LifeArc, the Little Princess Trust, Cancer Research UK, Solving Kids Cancer UK, KiKa, Elevate Childhood

Cancer and the Evan Foundation. I'm grateful to each of them for the trust they place in ACCELERATE and for the resources they bring to our shared vision.

## Strategy

Our third priority has been strategic clarity. Through a process of genuine collaboration - drawing on the knowledge and perspectives of individuals at every level of the organisation - we developed a solid strategic plan. It rests on three pillars:



Together, these three pillars provide a clear direction for how ACCELERATE will work, what it will produce, and how it will demonstrate its value to the field.

## Our Vision and Mission

Underpinning everything we do is a vision of a global landscape that enables and promotes the timely development and approval of innovative, safe and effective therapies for children and adolescents with cancer. In pursuit of that vision, our mission is to mobilise the global stakeholder community to identify challenges in paediatric oncology drug development and work collaboratively to drive accountable, effective, and sustainable solutions.

These are our commitments - to children with cancer, but also to the broader community that ACCELERATE exists to serve.

## Looking Ahead

As I look ahead to the remainder of my term, I'm ambitious and but also realistic. There's still a lot to be done. The challenges we face in paediatric oncology drug development are big, and the solutions require new ideas, a lot of work, genuine collaboration, and, in my opinion, a willingness to be bold. It's so important we continue to come together - across disciplines, across sectors, across geographies - because that is what this work needs, and because the children we serve deserve nothing less.

I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you. I'm grateful for your trust, your dedication, and your shared commitment to the mission we hold in common. Let us make these years count.

# Executive Summary



**ACCELERATE celebrated its 10 year anniversary and a decade of impact in 2025. It was a dynamic year of growth, marked by a strengthened strategy, enhanced sustainability, and important developments within our operational structure.**



The **ACCELERATE Annual Conference 2025**, held in a hybrid format, brought together a vibrant community of 220 international stakeholders committed to driving meaningful change in drug development for children and adolescents with cancer. The conference served as a milestone event, marking 10 years of progress in paediatric oncology drug development and setting strategic priorities for the future. The event featured discussions on past achievements, challenges and progress made in the various activities led by ACCELERATE. Engaging panel discussions allowed participants to share insights and identify persistent barriers. There were active contributions, insightful discussions and unwavering commitment by participants to advancing paediatric oncology drug development.

A **Paediatric Strategy Forum** was successfully organised, reinforcing ACCELERATE's unique convening role in early drug development:

- **The 15<sup>th</sup> Paediatric Strategy Forum – Antibody Drug Conjugates (ADC)**, held in Denver, created critical space to focus on solid tumours with lessons learnt from hematological malignancies (leukaemias and lymphomas) and a talk on brain tumours. The outcome was a strategy for prioritizing the development of ADCs in paediatric malignant solid tumours.

The **ALADDIN project** wrapped up in Q2, delivering wide-range impact—educationally, scientifically, and institutionally—by fostering innovation, supporting regulatory advancement, and strengthening international collaboration. It addressed the unmet educational needs of stakeholders, mainly paediatric oncologists and patients, patients' representatives and advocates in the field of regulatory science. Its contributions are shaping the future of cancer research and regulatory science across Europe and beyond and will contribute to accelerate the development of innovative therapies for children and adolescents with cancer.

[ACCELERATE's Working Groups \(WGs\)](#) maintained strong momentum throughout the year:

- [The FAIR WG \(Focused on Access, Innovation, and Repurposing\)](#) continued to advocate for accelerating innovation in drug development for young people with cancer, through the removal of arbitrary age limits in clinical trials.
- [The Patient-Reported Outcomes \(PROs\) WG](#) advanced efforts to integrate meaningful patient perspectives into clinical research and regulatory processes.



**5 ACCELERATE articles published in 2025**

This year saw [staff transitions](#), with rotations off and changes in the team. At the end of 2025, ACCELERATE's Director of Operations moved on to pursue other opportunities and was replaced by an Operations Manager in February 2026. This person is responsible for sound governance support and effective coordination across ACCELERATE's activities. Looking ahead, the ambition is to further expand the team in 2026, subject to available funding.

## Our Partners

We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the [Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation](#) for its continued support, which has been essential to sustaining and expanding our work.



We are also grateful to [LifeArc](#) and [Solving Kids' Cancer UK](#) for their support in 2025 and beyond.



Our thanks also go to our new partners: [Cancer Research UK \(CRUK\)](#), [KiKa \(Children Cancer-free\)](#), the [EVAN Foundation](#), and [Elevate Childhood Cancer](#) who began supporting ACCELERATE in early 2026.



Finally, we would like to thank the [Little Princess Trust](#) for its support of the 2026 Annual Conference.



[LEARN ABOUT OUR PARTNERS HERE](#)

All of our accomplishments were made possible through the continued dedication of our multi-stakeholder community.

**In summary, 2025 was a year of expansion and advancement for ACCELERATE— setting a solid foundation for the future while navigating key transitions.**

As we move through 2026, our focus is on ensuring sustainability, expanding our capacity, and continuing to foster collaboration across all stakeholders working to improve outcomes for children and adolescents with cancer.

# Annual Conference



## 13<sup>th</sup> ACCELERATE Paediatric Oncology Annual Conference

6-7 February 2025 | Brussels and online



The ACCELERATE Annual Conference 2025 took place in Brussels on 6-7 February, bringing together **220 participants** from **23 countries**, including **169 attendees** and a **global virtual audience**. ACCELERATE is a collaborative platform, and participants represented key stakeholders – regulators, industry leaders, academics and patient advocates. While most attendees were from Europe, there was **strong international participation**, with over 50 from the US, as well as representatives from Canada, Japan and Australia.

The conference served as a milestone event, marking **10 years of progress in paediatric oncology drug development and setting strategic priorities for the future**. At the start of the meeting, Dominik Karres, EMA representative, read a letter from Emer Cooke, Executive Director of EMA, in which EMA fully congratulated ACCELERATE for its accomplishments so far, reaffirmed its support, and expressed a willingness to **“closely collaborate and discuss new and innovative ways to address the key challenges of research priorities”**. This strong endorsement from EMA set an encouraging tone for the meeting.

The event then continued with a discussion on past achievements, challenges and progress made in the various activities led by ACCELERATE. Engaging panel discussions allowed participants to share insights and identify persistent barriers.

The following topics were discussed:

- Objectives defined in 2020
- Are oncology trials more “FAIR” (Fostering Age Inclusive Research)
- Are academic trials fit for filing?
- Is international collaboration strengthened?
- Are childhood cancer survivors’ data accessible for drug development requirements?
- Advocates in ACCELERATE
- Are the educational needs in regulatory science on paediatric cancer medicines addressed?
- Was paediatric oncology drug development accelerated and prioritized?

In the afternoon, seven breakout groups were tasked with identifying ACCELERATE’s top three priorities for the next five years and the changes needed to speed up progress. On the second day, the groups presented their conclusions, followed by sessions on key initiatives in the field, including AI for regulatory submissions, the

Australian initiative to accelerate innovation in paediatric oncology, platform trials, and analyses of paediatric trials reviewed through the EU Clinical Trials Information System. Discussions also explored new business models to support the development of childhood cancer-specific therapies and reaffirmed the importance of international collaboration, particularly with colleagues in the US.

## Key Takeaways:

- ✔ **MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT OF PAEDIATRIC STRATEGY FORUMS**, which are crucial to discuss strategies regarding new drug development, especially in the new regulatory framework. Participants of the conference emphasized the need to translate its outputs into concrete action and establish clear metrics to track progress.
- ✔ **BREAKING BARRIERS TO INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**: cross-border access to clinical trials and harmonizing regulatory processes remain critical challenges. There was a strong call to work on removing obstacles hindering multinational studies.
- ✔ **FROM DRUG CONCEPT TO MARKET – THE NEED FOR SPEED**: participants stressed the importance of collecting and analysing drivers of delays in drug development and access to market, ensuring faster and more equitable access to new therapies.
- ✔ **EDUCATION, TRAINING AND VISIBILITY**: to strengthen ACCELERATE’s impact, participants suggested expanding educational activities beyond the EU ALADDIN PROJECT and advocacy programmes and enhance lobbying and visibility efforts.



# Paediatric Strategy Forums



## 15<sup>th</sup> Paediatric Strategy Forum on Antibody Drug Conjugates for the treatment of paediatric solid malignancies

10-11 June 2025 | Denver, Colorado, USA



The 2025 Paediatric Strategy Forum on Antibody-Drug Conjugates (ADCs), held in Denver on 10–11 June 2025 brought together **167 participants** across academia, industry, regulatory agencies, and advocacy groups to examine the rapidly evolving field of antibody drug conjugates (ADCs) for paediatric solid tumours. Discussions highlighted that **ADCs represent a promising therapeutic class**, with growing understanding of the importance of linker and payload design in addition to antibody target relevance, improved clarity around toxicity drivers, and expanding relevance to tumours with CNS involvement.

A major outcome was the collective agreement on the need to **prioritise paediatric relevant ADCs** through robust evidence: tumour target expression profiles, preclinical models showing regression at clinically meaningful doses, and careful assessment of payload suitability for children. Prioritisation also included identifying high value targets such as HER2, HER3, PTK7, GD2, 5T4 and c Met.

The Forum emphasised several **critical challenges** hindering paediatric ADC development: fragmented pipelines with duplicative agents, difficulties designing feasible trials for very rare tumours, limited opportunities for small biotech to support paediatric programmes, scientific barriers including biomarker identification and CNS delivery, and operational burdens relating to trial recruitment, regulatory divergence, and unequal global access.

Stakeholders reinforced the importance of a coordinated ecosystem, calling for deeper collaboration across cooperative groups, regulatory agencies, and industry partners. Enhanced global alignment, new incentive models, and stronger integration of advocate perspectives were identified as essential to accelerate development.

Participants reported tangible impact on their work, including strategic portfolio reassessment, adoption of biomarker driven approaches, and

new collaborations formed during the Forum. Long term expected outcomes include advancing global platform trials, accelerating biomarker and IVD development, and refining cross stakeholder dialogue to ensure faster progression of priority ADCs for children and adolescents with cancer.

The manuscript on the ADC Paediatric Strategy Forum is in preparation.



# Research and Working Groups



## Fostering Age Inclusive Research (FAIR trials) working group:

### Key Progress and Achievements

[The Fostering Age-Inclusive Research \(FAIR\) Working Group](#) is dedicated to removing the longstanding ‘18-year old dogma’ in paediatric oncology drug development. Its core purpose is to raise awareness and promote systemic change, ensuring improved access for adolescents to anti-cancer drugs and enhancing the efficiency of the drug development process. The group’s activities are strategically aligned with the ACCELERATE Strategic Framework, focusing on increasing access to clinical trials for children and adolescents.

### Reporting Period & Leadership

The reporting period covers the calendar year 2025, with Dr Nathalie Gaspar leading the group. Max Williamson stepped down in early September 2025, leaving the co-lead position open. Carole Lecinse supports coordination and communication. The list of academia, advocacy and industry working group members can be found on the website: [FAIR trials | ACCELERATE Working Group](#)

### Scope & Mandate

FAIR’s mandate encompasses advocating for age-inclusive research, tackling regulatory and practical barriers, and supporting adolescents’ participation in clinical trials. Its scope of work includes both raising awareness at the European level and driving meaningful change in drug labelling and development practices.

### Progress & Achievements

- Expanding FAIR Working Group with advocates, industry and academia (both paediatric and medical oncologists) members.
- Driving FAIR Adolescent Inclusion Labelling and FAIR AYA PIP Projects (analysing data):
  - WP1/2: open available trials project; statistical analysis ongoing
  - WP3: Labelling project to be discussed with JANE2
  - WP4: PIP project submitted; initial submission of manuscript on “Inclusion of adolescents in European Paediatric Investigation Plans of anti-cancer medicinal products – An ACCELERATE Analysis”
- Increasing awareness of the FAIR trials agenda in key stakeholders in early drug development:
  - Medical oncologists (ASCO community of practice AYA, preparing webinars)
  - Industry: presentations (e.g. IPSEN)
- Preparing webinars for each stakeholder:
  - Collaboration with JANE2 EU Joint Action (task 11.5) medical and paediatric oncologists on one hand and parents/patients on the other hand
  - For industry: discussion on other strategies with ASCO and ESMO
- Further developing a collaboration between FAIR WG and JANE2 EU Joint Action
- Developing a collaboration between FAIR WG and CI4EU
- Implementing yearly 9 FAIR Group (all members) online meetings, 1 F2F during the Accelerate Annual Conference and 3 to 4 satellite focus group meetings each (industry, parents/patients, etc)



## Success & Impact

### Key Successes

- Onboarding new medical oncologists and advocates
- Development of investigator/ sponsor and advocacy toolkits
- Implementation of collaborations with EU project stakeholders
- Conference presentations and expanded visibility, including openness to US stakeholders



### Impact

- Raised awareness among key stakeholders regarding new drug development challenges
- Identification of practical solutions to access issues for adolescents and young adults (AYA)
- Contributions to improved paediatric drug development pathways
- Strengthened collaboration and community engagement between clinicians, industry, and patient advocates

## Strategic Alignment

FAIR's activities directly support the ACCELERATE Strategic Framework by promoting clinical trial access for paediatric and adolescent populations, advocating for regulatory change, and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration. Their work is instrumental in shaping guidelines, influencing policy, and driving uptake of best practices across Europe and beyond.

### Outlook

Building upon its 2025 achievements, FAIR aims to further strengthen stakeholder engagement, refine advocacy toolkits, and increase the adoption of inclusive drug development practices. Continuing collaborations with EU projects and international partners will be central to its efforts to improve outcomes for adolescents and young adults facing cancer.

# Patient Reported Outcomes (PROs) in paediatric anticancer drug development working group: *Key Progress and Achievements*

The Patient Reported Outcomes (PROs) Working Group is committed to advancing the meaningful integration of patient perspectives in paediatric oncology clinical trials, ensuring the child's voice is systematically embedded in drug development. The group operates across five work packages (WPs), each targeting a distinct facet of PRO implementation, with collaborative efforts spanning academia, industry, regulatory authorities, and patient advocacy.

## Reporting Period & Leadership

The reporting period covers the calendar year 2025, with David Riedl leading the group.

Work package leads and coordination: David Riedl (Chair; WP2), Ameeta Retzer (WP1), Madeleine Adams (WP3), Lenneke Schrier (WP4) and Franziska Helmborg supports coordination and communication. The list of academia, regulators, advocates and industry can be found on the website: Patient Reported Outcomes

## Mandate and Strategic Contribution

The PROs Working Group supports ACCELERATE's mission by embedding PROs in clinical trial design as a standard practice. This strengthens regulatory and Health Technology Assessment (HTA) decision-making and empowers researchers, industry, and patient advocates to implement PROs efficiently. The group's scope covers reviewing existing resources, identifying barriers and facilitators, guideline extension, education, and regulatory advice, all aligned with the ACCELERATE Strategic Framework.

## Work Package Overview and Key Achievements

- **WP1 – Review of Existing Resources**  
Led by Ameeta Retzer, WP1 conducted a comprehensive scoping review of PRO resources in paediatric oncology, searching four major databases and grey literature. The review identified over 21,000 records, with 29 information sources included for detailed analysis. Key methodological themes were summarised, including stakeholder involvement, proxy use, measure selection, data collection, data sharing, and statistical analysis. The findings have been prepared for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.
- **WP2 – Identification of Obstacles**  
WP2, under David Riedl, completed a systematic literature review of barriers and facilitators to PRO implementation, mapped using the CFIR framework. An international survey was launched and completed, with 127 responses from principal investigators. Qualitative interviews are planned to further explore implementation challenges. New team members joined WP2, strengthening capacity for ongoing analysis.
- **WP3 – Extension of Existing Guidelines**  
Madeleine Adams led WP3 through thematic analysis of WP1 findings, identifying 12 themes and 80 subthemes relevant to PROs in paediatric oncology. These were mapped to the SPIRIT-PRO guidance, and funding was secured for a consensus-generating exercise to develop a dedicated paediatric oncology extension. WP1 and WP3 maintained close collaboration throughout the year.

- **WP4 – Education and Dissemination**

Led by Lenneke Schrier, WP4 remained in the planning phase pending completion of foundational work. The mission is to ensure accessible dissemination of knowledge through practical formats, including webinars, toolkits, and guidance documents for investigators, patients, and families. Preparations are underway to support best practice adoption across academic, industry, and regulatory settings.

- **WP5 – Qualification Advice**

Pamela Kearns stepped down as WP5 lead in 2025, and leadership is currently open. WP5's relevance remains high due to the regulatory and HTA interface, and its scope will be revisited once foundational work is further advanced. Interested parties are encouraged to contact the Working Group Chair for involvement.

- **Cross-WP Collaboration**

The group prioritised cross-work package collaboration to align findings, maximise impact, and ensure practical uptake of best practices. This approach has strengthened the Working Group's contribution to the ACCELERATE strategic agenda.

## Success & Impact

### Key Successes

- » Completion and submission of the WP1 scoping review manuscript to a leading peer-reviewed journal
- » Successful launch and completion of the WP2 survey with 127 respondents
- » Completion of WP3 thematic analysis (12 themes, 80 subthemes) and mapping to SPIRIT-PRO guidance
- » Funding secured for the WP3 consensus-generating exercise
- » Sustained high engagement from a large, multidisciplinary collaborator group across academia, industry, regulatory bodies, and patient advocacy.



### Impact

The WG is building a comprehensive evidence base on PRO implementation barriers and best practices specifically for paediatric oncology. The planned SPIRIT-PRO paediatric extension will provide internationally recognised guidance that could directly improve trial design quality and ensure the patient's perspective is systematically captured in drug development.

### Evidence or Metrics

- » One manuscript submitted for peer review
- » Two General Assemblies
- » One presentation at the ACCELERATE Annual Conference

### Outlook

In summary, the PROs Working Group has made significant progress across the five work packages, with key milestones achieved in resource review, identification of implementation challenges, guideline development, and preparation for education and regulatory advice. Ongoing collaboration and stakeholder engagement will further advance the integration of PROs in paediatric oncology trials, supporting the overall mission of ACCELERATE for improved drug development and patient outcomes.

# EU Projects and Communication Activities



## Education – ALADDIN Project – 2025

### Activities and Key Outcomes



In 2025, the **ALADDIN (Multi-stakeholder Education Alliance to Accelerate Drug Development for Children and Adolescent with Cancer)** project entered its final implementation phase, concluding the **three-year EU funded programme** aimed at strengthening multi stakeholder education in paediatric oncology drug development. ACCELERATE was the coordinator of the project.

The year's work centred on finalising deliverables, consolidating outputs, and preparing the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

The **ALADDIN Final Meeting, held on 15 May 2025 in Budapest**, brought together consortium partners and stakeholders to review progress across all work packages, including project management (WP1), educational programme design (WP2), implementation (WP3), evaluation (WP4) and dissemination and sustainability (WP5). The meeting minutes confirm that achievements were reviewed, challenges discussed and next steps outlined for the transition beyond the funded period.

A significant 2025 milestone was the completion and submission of the **Final Technical Report** (Part B), covering the entire project period from June 2022 to May 2025. Additionally, the consortium produced the **Deliverable 5.4 Sustainability Plan**, delivered on 30 April 2025, which set out core commitments to keep the ALADDIN Educational Portal active, maintain content visibility and form an ACCELERATE Educational Working Group to oversee long term sustainability.

By late 2025, the EU had validated all project deliverables, and the final EU payment was confirmed during the closing consortium meeting in November. The partners collectively agreed to allocate the **€18,732.20** under expenditure to future platform maintenance and sustainability activities rather than redistributing it.

Key outcomes for 2025 therefore included the successful completion of all planned deliverables, the formal wrap up of the project through the Budapest final meeting, the submission and EU validation of the Final Report, and establishment of a robust sustainability framework ensuring that ALADDIN's educational resources and collaborative structures will persist beyond the project's official end date.



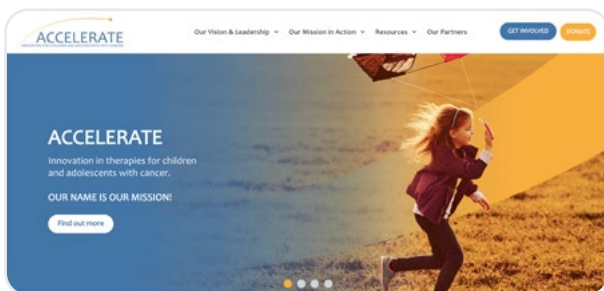
The ALADDIN website [Aladdin - Multi-stakeholder education in drug-development](#) as well as the [Educational Portal](#) provides a comprehensive, open-access environment where learners and professionals can engage with structured content on paediatric oncology drug development.



## Communications

In 2025, ACCELERATE continued to communicate key updates and activities through a multi-channel approach.

The [website](#) remained the central hub for information on events, publications, and ongoing projects, with regular updates ensuring stakeholders had access to the most up-to-date resources.



Social media platforms—[LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#)—were actively used to promote events, share project milestones, and engage with the broader community. Notably, the ACCELERATE LinkedIn account experienced steady growth,

with the number of followers increasing by over 150 in the last 12 months to a total of nearly **1,000 followers**.



Additionally, ACCELERATE distributed e-blasts to its network of over **3,000 stakeholders**, providing timely updates on ongoing initiatives and encouraging participation in ACCELERATE events.

Looking ahead, ACCELERATE aims to further expand its audience and enhance its reach. To achieve this, the platform recognizes the need for dedicated communication expertise, which it hopes to secure in 2026, pending funding availability.



## Publications

Several important manuscripts were published in 2025 and the number will remain consistent as a result of the growing number of initiatives launched by ACCELERATE. The most relevant papers were the following:

- Paediatric Strategy Forum for medicinal product development of agents targeting GD2 ganglioside in children and adolescents with cancer, EJC, Steven DuBois et al., European Journal of Cancer, November 2025 ([LINK](#))
- Paediatric strategy forum for medicinal product development of cyclin-dependent kinase inhibitors in children and adolescents ACCELERATE in collaboration with the European Medicines Agency and with participation of the Food and Drug Administration, EJC, Pearson et al, July 2025 ([LINK](#))
- New models for the development of and access to CAR T-cell therapies for children and adolescents with cancer: an ACCELERATE multistakeholder analysis, The Lancet Oncology, Pearson et al, April 2025 ([LINK](#))
- Paediatricstrategyforumfor medicinal product development in diffuse midline gliomas in children and adolescents ACCELERATE in collaboration with the European Medicines Agency and with participation of the Food and Drug Administration, The Lancet Oncology, Pearson et al, February 2025 ([LINK](#))
- Pathway for the Development of ATR Inhibitors in Paediatric Malignancies: An ACCELERATE Multistakeholder Analysis, JCO Precision Oncology, Gatz et al, January 2025 ([LINK](#))

# Governance



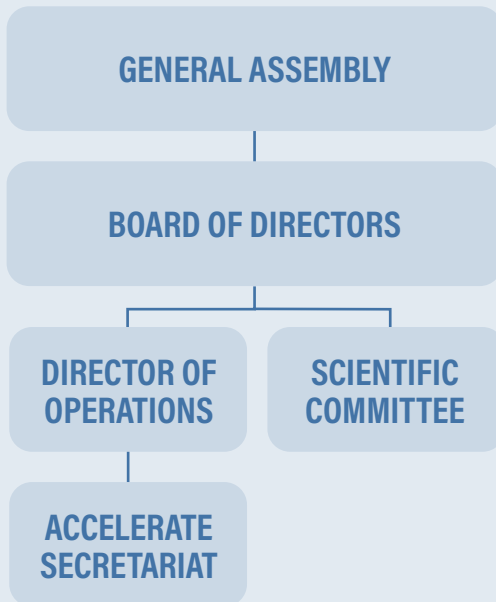
In 2025, ACCELERATE continued to implement the governance reforms initiated in 2024, reinforcing **transparent, inclusive decision-making** and **clearer accountability across the platform**.

Building on the establishment of the renewed Board of Directors and the new General Assembly, ACCELERATE completed a **smooth leadership transition** in early 2025, bringing renewed momentum for the years ahead.

The General Assembly convened for the first time on 20 January 2025, appointing the following officers: **Nicole Scobie as Chair, Elizabeth Fox as Vice-Chair, and Sam Daems as Treasurer**. This enables the governance bodies to operate in line with the updated structure.

Work also progressed on operationalising the revised statutes approved by the General Assembly on 18 November 2024, including steps toward formal publication. Together, these developments strengthened oversight and strategic direction through the Board, broadened member engagement via the General Assembly, and ensured continued scientific leadership through the multi-stakeholder Scientific Committee. Alongside these structural changes, ACCELERATE navigated staff transitions during the year, underscoring **the importance of sustained governance support and effective coordination across ACCELERATE's activities**.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



*Oversight body with exclusive powers to amend Statutes, appoint/remove key officials, approve budgets and accounts, and dissolve the Association.*

*Responsible for strategy, administration and management, subject to the oversight and reserved powers of the General Assembly.*

*Defines and steers the scientific and medical program of the Association. Multistakeholder, each stakeholder has an equal voice.*

## Meet the Board

The Board of Directors, collectively, holds powers of administration and management of ACCELERATE. The Board play a crucial role in the governance, oversight, and strategic direction of the organization.

- Exercise administrative and management authority under General Assembly approval

- Set the strategic direction for the organization
- Monitor operational performance and compliance with the organization's statutes
- Ensure financial stability and stakeholder accountability

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Nicole Scobie**  
ACCELERATE Chair  
Patient Advocate,  
Switzerland



**Elizabeth Fox**  
ACCELERATE Vice-Chair  
St Jude Children's  
Research Hospital,  
USA



**Sam Daems**  
ACCELERATE Treasurer  
Patient Advocate,  
Belgium



**Pamela Kearns**  
ITCC Representative  
University of  
Birmingham,  
UK



**Maja Beck Popovic**  
SIOPE Representative  
Lausanne University  
Hospital,  
Switzerland



**Joe McDonough**  
The Andrew  
McDonough B+  
Foundation,  
USA



**Vickie Buenger**  
Childhood  
Cancer Advocate,  
USA



**Douglas Hawkins**  
University of  
Washington,  
USA



## Meet the General Assembly

The General Assembly is composed of all ACCELERATE Members and holds the highest decision-making authority within the platform. It is responsible for key governance matters, including appointing the Board of Directors and its officers, approving the budget and accounts, and amending the statutes. Meeting at least once a year, the General Assembly ensures broad member oversight and strategic

direction for ACCELERATE. Beyond these formal responsibilities, ACCELERATE aims to foster a more active role for the General Assembly members. They will be encouraged and invited to contribute their expertise and long-standing experience with ACCELERATE by actively engaging in ACCELERATE's activities and taskforces – thereby helping to shape the platform's direction and impact.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY



**Nicole Scobie**  
Switzerland



**Elizabeth Fox**  
USA



**Sam Daems**  
Belgium



**Pamela Kearns**  
UK



**Maja Beck Popovic**  
Switzerland



**Joe McDonough**  
USA



**Vickie Buenger**  
USA



**Douglas Hawkins**  
USA



**Gilles Vassal**  
France



**David Jenkinson**  
UK



**Willemijn Plieger**  
The Netherlands



**Karsten Nysom**  
Denmark



**Lucy Jones**  
Australia



**Gregory Reaman**  
USA



**Carsten Dannöhl**  
Belgium



**Sandra Meech**  
USA

## Meet the Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee defines and steers ACCELERATE's scientific and medical strategy. It is a multistakeholder body composed of four colleges—academia, patients, industry, and regulators—with equal representation and voice. Each college includes two members from Europe and North America, ensuring

balanced geographical and stakeholder input. The committee also includes intuitu personae members who contribute additional expertise. The composition of the committee remains largely consistent with the previous year, with only a few changes and new appointments. The committee is chaired by Gilles Vassal.

### SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

#### ACADEMIA



**Gilles Vassal**  
Institut  
Gustave Roussy,  
France



**Lynley Marshall**  
Royal Marsden  
Hospital,  
UK



**Steven DuBois**  
Dana-Farber / Boston  
Children's Cancer  
and Blood Disorders  
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**Anjalia Sharma**  
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## Meet the ACCELERATE Staff

ACCELERATE appointed an Operations Manager to lead the ACCELERATE Office, ensure continuity, and support implementation of our growing

portfolio of activities. The Operations Manager reports to the Chair and Board of Directors.

### ACCELERATE STAFF



**Angela Meurer**  
Operations Manager



**ACCELERATE**  
INNOVATION FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH CANCER

**Accelerating Innovative  
Therapies for Children  
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