

Microplastics and Human Health, Santa Fe, NM, Jan 11-14, 2026

TENTATIVE CONFERENCE PROGRAM

CONFERENCE DAY 0 (January 11, 2026 from 5-8 pm) – Welcome reception

CONFERENCE DAY 1 (12Jan2026)

8:00	Convene, Registration, Breakfast	
8:40	Welcome, Opening Remarks	
9:00	Keynote – Stephanie Wright, PhD Associate Professor in Environmental Toxicology Environmental Research Group Imperial College London	“From inhalation to circulation: The past, present, and future of microplastics and human health research”
10:00	Research seminars: Female reproductive Chairs: Genoa Warner, Marcus Garcia	Speakers: Genoa Warner, PhD , NJIT, “Polystyrene and polyethylene terephthalate nanoplastics differentially impact mouse ovarian follicle function” Myla Stanford , Baylor University, “Polymer, Size, and Time Shape Microplastic Cytotoxicity Across Placental and Immune Cells with Links to Preterm Birth-Relevant Immune Microenvironments” Olga Khaybullina, PhD , University of Alabama-Birmingham, “Rethinking Fetal Risk: What 14C-Polystyrene Reveals About Nanoplastic Accumulation During Pregnancy”
10:45	Coffee Break	
11:00	Highlighted Research seminar: Cassandra Rauert, PhD , The University of Queensland, Brisbane	“Determining human exposures and internalisation of micro and nanoplastics, an update from the Minderoo Centre – Plastics and Human Health”
11:40	Research seminars: Methods for detection and quantitation Chairs: Beizhan Yan, PhD and Jorge Gonzalez Estrella	Alba Torrents de la Peña , Scripps Research, “p-CAPture: A novel method to identify and quantify micro- and nanoplastics” Naixin Qian , Columbia University, “Rapid Single-Particle Chemical Imaging and Analysis of Nanoplastics by Stimulated Raman Scattering Microscopy” Justin Scott , Cove Environmental, “Trace Level Quantitation of Micro- and Nanoplastics Utilizing Thermal Desorption and Pyrolysis–GC/MS Coupled with Selective Ion Monitoring: Development and Validation” Yingyue Ni , Boston University, “A machine-learning powered pipeline for microplastic quantification and classification using Py-GC/HRMS: Toward generalizable microplastic exposure assessment”
1:00	Lunch	Provided by Hotel
2:00 – 2:30	Highlighted Research seminar: Becca Lauzon, PhD , University of Rochester Medical Center	“Messaging about Microplastics and Human Health”
2:30 – 3:00p	Research seminars: Communication of the global plastics problem Chair, Katrina Korfmacher, PhD, University of Rochester Medical Center	Katherine Pelch , Natural Resources Defense Council “Big conversations about tiny plastics: NGO communication strategies and public perceptions data on microplastics and health” Bethany Jorgensen, PhD , University of New Mexico, “Using narrative portraiture to understand experiences of plastics in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of Menorca (Spain)”
3:00 – 4:00p	Research seminars: Airborne Microplastics Chaired by Aaron Erdely	Athena Nguyen , Frontier Lab America, “Pyrolysis-GCMS analysis of Microplastics in the air atmosphere” Sabina Halappanavar , Health Canada, “Challenges and Opportunities in the Toxicology of Microplastics in Ambient Air”

		Kyu-sung Kim, PhD , KBRI “Inhaled Nanoplastics Drive PINK1/Parkin-Mediated Mitophagy and Metabolic Dysregulation, Compromising Neurovascular Integrity”
4:00	Poster Session 1	They will be displayed all day, but attended from 4-6 pm for a dedicated viewing and social networking opportunity.
6:00	Dinner – free schedule	Santa Fe is a culinary gem in the U.S. with a variety of Southwestern restaurants and other diverse options within walking distance from the hotel. We encourage attendees from near and far to enjoy their visit!

CONFERENCE DAY 2 (13Jan2026)

8:00	Breakfast	Light breakfast will be available for attendees
8:45	Reconvene, Introduction of Speaker	
9:00	Keynote – Todd Gouin, PhD TG Environmental Research Sharnbrook, UK	Plasticizers in microplastics, a critical view
9:40	Research seminars: Aquatic species research for human health decision making Chair: Stacey Harper, PhD, Oregon State University	Susanne Brander, PhD , Oregon State University “Similarities across responses in fish to diverse micro and nanoplastic particle types, informing common mechanisms of action across vertebrates” Jacques Robert , University of Rochester “Leveraging xenopus to assess the risks of microplastic exposure on development and immunity” Girija Prasad, CIPET:SARP-LARPM, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India , “Spatial and Seasonal Patterns of Riverine Microplastics and Their Ecological Risks: A Case Study from the Cauvery River, India”
10:40	Coffee Break	
11:00	Research seminars: Digestive and Hepatic Outcomes Chair: Eliseo Castillo, PhD, University of New Mexico	Namrata Pandey , University of Plymouth, “Investigating the impact of Polystyrene Nanoplastics in liver using hepatic cell lines and human precision-cut liver slices” Kyle Kim , University of Washington, “Elucidating the effects of environmental microplastics on the gut-brain axis of humanized ApoE3/E4 mice” Aaron Romero , University of New Mexico, “Chronic Dietary Microplastic Exposure Weakens Skeletal Integrity” Lingjun Li , Arizona State University, “Metabolic Reprogramming in Gut Microbiota Exposed to Polystyrene Microplastics”
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Highlighted Research Seminar: Yasue Mitsukara, PhD Keio University	“Unexpectedly High Accumulation of Nanoplastics in the Human Placenta: Higher Levels than in the Brain and Liver”
1:40	Research seminars: Cardiovascular health effects of plastics Chair: Barry Bleske, PharmD and Matthew Campen, PhD, University of New Mexico	Tim O’Toole , University of Louisville “Microplastics consumption potentiates atherosclerotic lesion development in ApoE ^{-/-} mice” Changcheng Zhou , University of California at Riverside “Microplastic exposure elicits sex-specific atherosclerosis development in low-density lipoprotein receptor-deficient mice” Ross Clark , University of New Mexico, “Dietary Ocean Micronanoplastics are Associated Accelerated Atherosclerosis in ApoE ^{-/-} Mice”
2:40	Research seminars: Neurological health effects of plastics Chairs: Kiran Bhaskar, PhD and Shahani Noor, PhD, University of New Mexico	Jaime Ross, PhD , University of Rhode Island, “Lifecyle of microplastics in the body and their contribution to Alzheimer’s disease” Brandon Pearson, PhD , Oregon State University, “Experimental models to test causal relationships

		between MNP exposure and Alzheimer's disease pathology" Yang Mi , National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan, "Neonatal Brain Exposure to Nanoplastics via Oral Route: Size-Dependent Uptake and Regional Localization"
4:00	Poster Session 2	Microplastics Education Workshop , "Exploring microplastics and human health with high school science classes" Katrina Korfmacher, PhD
4:00	Dinner – Possibly a talk around messaging microplastics or community engagement? Or performance from Torrents de la Pena?	They will be displayed all day, but attended from 4-6pm for a dedicated viewing and social networking opportunity.
6:00		Southwestern-themed dinner for all attendees, award announcements

CONFERENCE DAY 3 (14Jan2026)

8:00	Reconvene, Introduction of Speaker	
8:30	Keynote – Mark Wiesner , PhD James B. Duke Distinguished Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering Duke University	"Plastic aging and its impact on fragmentation and additive release"
9:30	Research seminars. Nanoplastics origin, physicochemistry, and health risk Chair, Matthew Campen, PhD, and Eliane El Hayek, PhD, University of New Mexico	Speakers: Sanat Kumar, PhD , Columbia University, "Mechanism of Quiescent Nanoplastic Formation from Semicrystalline Polymers" Aaron Erdely, NIOSH , "Morphological and chemical characterization of nanoplastics in human tissue" Eve Rowland, PhD, UNM "Visualization of micro/nanoplastic (MNP) particles within historical and modern tissue samples of <i>Dipodomys ordii</i> via transmission electron microscopy"
10:30	Coffee Break	
10:40	Microplastics and human health translation to policy and action Chair: Suzanne Brander, PhD, Pew Charitable Trust	Paulita Bennett-Martin , 5 Gyres Institute "#MicroplasticFreeUS: a comprehensive policy approach to addressing microplastic pollution by the 5 Gyres Institute" Samantha Pickering , Michigan Environmental Council, "Michigan Microplastics Policy to Protect the Great Lakes and Human Health"
Noon	Concluding remarks, Adjournment	

Anticipated Meeting Outcomes: We aim for 3 key outcomes from this meeting.

1. A broader sharing of key findings from multiple labs on multiple angles related to microplastics toxicity, policy, chemistry, other emerging concepts.
2. Development of new collaborative efforts. While many of us have a history of collaboration, there are often novel and essential studies that require new complementary interactions.
3. Pathways for trainees and junior faculty – this topic area is emerging and the major federal revisioning of priorities has had a large impact on the ability to network for trainees and early-stage investigators (ESI). This proposed face-to-face meeting will be geared towards interactions between all investigators and trainees.