Could you tell us about the work you are leading?

I am the Director of CRI’s flagship program, the Clinical Accelerator and Venture Fund. I lead and manage the program’s scientific and investment strategy for a $110M+ evergreen venture fund. I also oversee and coordinate activities between our clinical trials management delivery partners, as well as various academic and biopharma stakeholders. At CRI, I initiated and manage the CRI IO Landscape, a drug and clinical trial database to track the evolving field of immunotherapy.

What made you passionate about going into the field?

I have always loved immunology and immunotherapy and have wanted to take all that I learned in the lab and translate it into the clinic. A few months after I joined CRI, my mother was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, a disease that is not very responsive to immunotherapy. Since her diagnosis and her passing, it is my goal to make an impact on those cancer types that are difficult to treat and are not responsive to immunotherapy.

What has surprised you about working in immuno-oncology?

That despite all the wonderful advances: the Nobel Prize last year and the clinical successes, that we still do not have a fundamental understanding of a number of the biological processes that govern an immune response to cancer. The field has grown so much, but it needs to grow even more in its understanding of mechanism.

What are your thoughts on encouraging young women to enter STEM?

Please reach out to women leaders in the field – and importantly, all women leaders in the field need to help mentor women and help each other reach our career goals.

**Vanessa M Lucey, PhD**

**Cancer Research Institute**

on her work as director of an immunotherapy incubator

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**Dr Vanessa M Lucey** is the Director of Cancer Research Institute’s Venture Fund and Clinical Accelerator. Before CRI, Dr Lucey researched as a scientist in immunology. She received her BS in Biology from Fordham University, her PhD from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, a postdoctoral fellowship at NYU School of Medicine and her MBA from Mercy College School of Business.

Over the course of her career, Dr Lucey has studied costimulatory molecule ICOS in Graft-Versus-Host-Disease and Graft-Versus-Leukemia.

**During the Cell & Gene Therapy Day portion of Immuno-Oncology360°, Dr Lucey will be participating in a panel discussion on the “Landscape and Evolution of the Marketplace.”**

For more information, visit [www.IO360summit.com](http://www.IO360summit.com)