



Contacts:

Lisa Rivero

Vice President

lrivero@jpa.com | +1 617-657-1305

Becky Bunn, MSc

Public Relations Manager

Becky.Bunn@IASLC.org | 720-254-9509

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer 19th World Conference on Lung Cancer (WCLC)

WCLC History: The International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) first established the World Conference on Lung Cancer (WCLC) as a global, multidisciplinary scientific forum for sharing current knowledge and research. The WCLC continues to expand as scientific advances develop.

The IASLC held the first WCLC in 1978 on Hilton Head Island, S.C., with goals that included presentation and evaluation of current knowledge relevant to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer, and synthesis of appropriate ideas into recommendations for the international and multidisciplinary medical community. The success of the conference led to a second in 1980, which was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, where more than 1,000 delegates came from 38 countries to discuss the latest developments in thoracic malignancy research.

Early on, the IASLC WCLCs were hosted every third year. At the 9th WCLC, the IASLC board of directors decided to hold conferences every other year, starting in 2003, based on increasing scientific advances as well as rapidly increasing conference attendance and membership. The conference's popularity and the rapid pace of scientific development in the prevention and treatment of lung cancer prompted the recent transition to an annual conference. This transition began with the 17th WCLC in Vienna, Austria, in December 2016, and continues to the present day with the IASLC 19th WCLC in Toronto, Canada.

Each year, the WCLC experienced an increase in attendance and submitted abstracts, sparking an evolution in programming. The IASLC began handing out awards at the WCLC in 1991, including the IASLC Merit Award, the Mary J. Matthews Pathology/Translational Research Award, the Paul A. Bunn, Jr. Scientific Award and the Joseph Cullen Prevention/Early Detection Award. In 2017, the IASLC Foundation started awarding the IASLC Foundation Cancer Care Team Award at the WCLC, an accolade designed to honor multidisciplinary teams providing exceptional cancer care to thoracic cancer patients.

In conjunction with the WCLC, the IASLC also introduced travel awards for representatives from developing countries and travel awards for young investigators. In addition, the IASLC International Mentorship Program was added for early-career physicians/researchers studying thoracic malignancies. The awardees are matched with scientific and clinical mentors from within the hosting WCLC region for professional development and education. These programs are now synonymous with each conference.

The WCLC stands out as the premier global, multidisciplinary forum for lung cancer. It has evolved from a conference for medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgical oncologists, epidemiologists, radiologists, pathologists, pulmonologists and health outcomes experts to an expanded event that also includes patients, patient advocates, nurses and allied health professionals involved in lung cancer.

IASLC History: At its first informal meeting in October 1972 — the First International Workshop for Therapy of Lung Cancer — 115 individuals from 15 countries discussed the benefit of a multidisciplinary approach and the development of an organization to address lung cancer. In August 1973, the future founders circulated the first formal outline of the organization, and by the middle of 1974, approximately 250 individuals comprised the founding membership. They held the first formal IASLC meeting in 1974 in Florence, Italy, where they selected the inaugural slate of officers and board of directors.

The IASLC continues to grow, starting with 250 members in its first year (1974) to more than 7,500 members in 2018. As it has since the start, the IASLC promotes research on all aspects of lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies, and encourages worldwide cancer prevention efforts. IASLC members collaborate across international borders to share and adopt best practices around the globe as they conduct state-of-the-art and groundbreaking research. IASLC experts provide up-to-date guidelines, declarations, atlases and documentation of seminal and influential research for the study of lung cancer to assist our members as they contribute to major breakthroughs in the diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer.

Since that inaugural meeting in the early 1970s, the WCLC and the IASLC continue to make significant contributions to the screening, prevention, research, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer.

The IASLC mission is:

- to embrace the etiology, epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and all other aspects of lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies;
- to provide education and information about lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies to IASLC members, to the medical community at large, and to the public; and
- to use all available means to eliminate lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies as a health threat for patients throughout the world.

The story of the progress made in research and care of lung cancer demonstrates this mission in action and reflects the dedication and commitment of lung cancer specialists worldwide over the past 40 years.

[Read more about our history.](#)