

Melanoma

Research Alliance

Melanoma Research Alliance Announces More Than \$13 million in New Grants for Melanoma Research

WASHINGTON, DC, June 23, 2015 – The Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA), the largest private funder of melanoma research, today announced grant awards of more than \$13 million to conduct cutting-edge [melanoma research](#). The awards include \$7.5 million from MRA’s research funds, and an additional \$5.6 million obtained through the added leverage of MRA’s innovative collaborative funding program with companies, institutions, and foundations.

Since its founding in 2007, MRA, which directs 100% of funds raised to research, has provided more than \$67 million to fund melanoma research. Including the collaborative funds, an additional \$73 million has been spent on melanoma research. That brings the overall total since MRA’s inception to \$142 million, which has already helped in important advances in therapies for individuals suffering from or at risk of metastatic melanoma.

The [current awards](#) are to 42 scientists at 25 leading academic institutions in four countries, involving 33 programs aimed at accelerating research into novel prevention and treatment strategies to spur better outcomes for melanoma patients and those at risk. These research programs seek to advance the understanding of melanoma risk factors, identify new therapeutic approaches, and improve existing treatments by developing biomarkers to predict response to therapy and testing combinations of drugs.

With this latest round of awards, MRA’s funding portfolio comprises:

- 178 projects
- 236 principal investigators
- 98 institutions
- 14 countries

“The caliber of applications received this year was once again exceptional and presented our Grant Review Committee, which plays a key role in selecting the most impactful new approaches in the field of melanoma research, with highly promising opportunities to put our research dollars to work,” said [Louise M. Perkins, PhD](#), Chief Science Officer at the Melanoma Research Alliance. “While melanoma treatment options have expanded in recent years, existing therapies still benefit too few melanoma patients. This year’s MRA awards will build on the momentum in the field and hopefully accelerate improved outcomes for all patients.”

The slate of 33 grants for 2015 includes:

- 2 Team Science Awards
- 13 Established Investigator Awards
- 12 Young Investigator Awards
- 3 Academic-Industry Partnership Awards
- 3 Pilot Awards

MRA’s funding model includes a novel mechanism for collaborative funding through partnerships with institutions that provide supplemental funding for quality research. These collaborative-funding awards allow MRA to expand its melanoma research portfolio by jointly funding additional researchers and institutions. This year’s grant awards include 10 collaboratively funded awards with academic institutions, the most to date.

MRA is also granting several special opportunity awards including the Bristol-Myers Squibb-MRA Established Investigator and Team Science Awards in Immunotherapy, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer-MRA Pilot Award, the

SkinCeuticals-MRA Dermatology Young Investigator Award and the Amgen-MRA Established Investigator Academic Industry Partnership Award.

“These grants represent a diverse cross section of science focused on advancing our understanding of melanoma,” said Debra Black, MRA Co-Founder and Chair. “We are delighted to have support from partners across industries, including academic institutions and private donors, who have joined together in order to maximize impact in combating this often devastating disease.”

Institutions Receiving Grant Funding

Researchers receiving the awards are associated with the following institutions: Boston University School of Medicine; Brigham and Women's Hospital; Columbia University Medical Center; Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; Hadassah Medical Organization; Harvard Medical School; Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai; Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research at MIT; Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center; Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; New York University School of Medicine; Northwestern University - Chicago Campus; QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute; Spanish National Cancer Research Centre; University of California, Los Angeles; University of California, San Francisco; University of Kentucky; University of Maryland College Park; University of Michigan; University of Pennsylvania; University of South Carolina; The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center; University of Utah; University of Virginia; and Yale University.

Donor and Partner Acknowledgements

MRA's 2015 grants are made possible through the important contributions of individuals, families, institutions, and corporate allies. Donors and partners include Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation, the King Family, Leveraged Finance Fights Melanoma, Merck (known as MSD outside the US and Canada), Rising Tide Foundation for Clinical Cancer Research, SkinCeuticals, Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer, Sotheby's, and Tara Miller Foundation.

MRA is also pleased to collaboratively fund investigators with the following institutions: Brigham and Women's Hospital, Columbia University Medical Center, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York University School of Medicine, University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Foundation, University of Maryland, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, University of Virginia, and Yale University.

For a full description of the grants and awardees, visit www.CureMelanoma.org.

About The Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA)

MRA is a public charity formed in 2007 under the auspices of the Milken Institute, with the generous founding support of Debra and Leon Black. MRA is the largest private funder of melanoma research and has provided more than \$67 million to research seeking to better prevent, diagnose, and treat melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Due to the ongoing support of its founders, 100% of every dollar MRA raises goes to support its melanoma research program. MRA's ability to fund wide-ranging research in melanoma is amplified by unique collaborations and partnerships with individuals, private foundations, and corporations. Visit www.CureMelanoma.org for more information, or follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

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