

**LUSTGARTEN  
FOUNDATION**  
PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 20, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- The Pancreatic Cancer Collective, the strategic partnership of the Lustgarten Foundation and Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C), has awarded a total of \$7 million in first-round "New Therapies Challenge" grants to seven teams of top cancer researchers to explore new pancreatic cancer treatments, the American Association for Cancer Research, the Scientific Partner of SU2C, announced today. Each team will receive up to \$1 million in initial funding, with \$4 million per team for clinical studies awaiting the most successful projects in the second round.

These teams are the first projects funded under the Pancreatic Cancer Collective launched this spring to accelerate pancreatic cancer research and improve patient outcomes for pancreatic cancer, which is one of the deadliest cancers, with a five-year survival rate of only 8 percent, according to the National Cancer Institute.

"New and effective treatments are urgently needed for cancer of the pancreas," said Phillip A. Sharp, PhD, the Nobel laureate who is chair of SU2C Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and scientific co-leader of the Collective. "The two-step process created by the Pancreatic Cancer Collective is an innovative and flexible approach that will speed up the research process, help us have a real impact on pancreatic cancer, and bring new hope to patients and their families."

The seven teams given funding in this first round of the Collective's New Therapies Challenge will conduct their research for the next 14 months, reporting their results to the Collective and the Joint Scientific Advisory Committee (JSAC) which selected these teams. The second round of funding of \$4 million per team will support clinical studies of the most promising teams from the first round.

"Pancreatic cancer research is moving faster than ever before," said Kerri Kaplan, Lustgarten's president and chief executive officer. "Now is the time for innovation and acceleration towards improved treatment for the patients who so desperately need and deserve better options."

"We are in a very exciting place right now for pancreatic cancer research," said David A. Tuveson, MD, PhD, Lustgarten's Chief Scientist and director of the cancer center at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, co-scientific leader of the Collective. "We're bringing together insights from immunology, targeted therapy, genomics, modeling, and other fields, and we're going to find out what should go forward to clinical studies. We are very optimistic that we can make some real progress."

"We launched this joint Collective to create a network of grants and researchers to accelerate the translation of research findings into treatments, through innovative and flexible models," said Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, president and CEO of Stand Up To Cancer. "We believe this New Therapies Challenge will help spur breakthroughs, and the potential for additional funding will spur even more breakthroughs."

The Pancreatic Cancer Collective's New Therapies Challenge Research Teams are:

***Adoptive Transfer of TGF- $\beta$  Resistant TIL to Defeat Immunosuppressive PDAC:*** Team leader: Patrick Hwu, MD, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center; co-leaders: Chantale Bernatchez, PhD, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and Cliona M. Rooney, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine. The team will create tumor-specific killer T cells (tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes, or TILs) that are resistant to transforming growth factor beta (TGF- $\beta$ ) (a protein that can counteract the immune system), and use the TILs to attack pancreatic cancer.

***Combined Targeting of MEK1/MEK2 and Autophagy for Pancreatic Cancer Therapy:***

Team leader: Martin McMahon, PhD, Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah; co-leader: Eric Collisson, MD, University of California San Francisco. The team will test combined blockade of intracellular signaling via the RAS pathway, and autophagic recycling of the cells' interior contents.

***Exploiting DNA Repair Gene Mutations in Pancreatic Cancer:*** Team leader: Alan D.

D'Andrea, MD, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; co-leader: James M. Cleary, MD, PhD, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The team's goal is to evaluate DNA repair inhibitors in pancreatic cancer. It will seek to improve PARP inhibitor monotherapy by developing strategies that will combine different targeted therapies and have activity in patients with PARP inhibitor resistance.

***Immunotherapy Targeting Mutant KRAS:*** Team leader: Robert H. Vonderheide, MD, DPhil, Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania; co-leaders: Elizabeth M. Jaffee, MD, Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins, and Beatriz M. Carreno, PhD, Abramson Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania. The team's goal is to develop a cellular therapy that exploits novel cell engineering that can be used to manufacture highly selective, anti-cancer T cells on a per-patient basis.

***Molecularly Targeted Radionuclide Therapy via the Integrin AlphaVBeta6:*** Team leader: Julie L. Sutcliffe, PhD, University of California Davis; co-leader, Richard L. Bold, MD, University of California Davis. The team will develop a peptide receptor radionuclide therapy (PRRT) to attack a protein called integrin  $\alpha\beta6$  that is significantly upregulated in pancreatic cancer.

***Targeting SHP2 in Pancreatic Cancer:*** Team leader: René Bernards, DPhil, Netherlands Cancer Institute; co-leaders, Emile E. Voest, MD, PhD, Netherlands Cancer Institute, and

Hana Algül, MD, MPH, Technical University of Munich. The team will test a combination of drugs to more effectively kill pancreatic tumors that have a mutation in the KRAS gene.

***Targeting Stem Cell Signals in Pancreatic Cancer:*** Team leader: Tannishtha Reya, PhD, University of California San Diego School of Medicine; co-leaders: Andrew M. Lowy, MD, UC San Diego Moores Cancer Center, and Margaret A. Tempero, MD, University of California San Francisco. The team will test whether certain drugs can reduce growth of pancreatic cancer by inhibiting a hormone receptor that is believed to be a key regulator of pancreatic cancer stem cells.

The Lustgarten Foundation and Stand Up To Cancer have collaborated closely since 2012, jointly funding more than 209 investigators from 31 leading research centers in the United States and the United Kingdom. These efforts include four Dream Teams and five Research Teams, including two Convergence Teams bringing together computational experts with clinical oncologists. Cancer Interception, research supporting the earliest diagnosis of pancreatic cancer, even before the cancer may have fully formed, is the focus of one of the Dream Teams and one of the Research Teams. All told, these collaborative teams have planned, started, or completed 25 clinical trials. The Pancreatic Cancer Collective is building on this momentum to push the boundaries of what can be accomplished even further.