

# Melanoma Research Alliance

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## MELANOMA RESEARCH ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES OVER \$10.5 MILLION IN NEW RESEARCH AWARDS

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### Scientists in Seven Countries to Share Awards to Advance Treatment and Understanding of Deadly Skin Cancer

WASHINGTON, DC, May 3, 2016 – The Melanoma Research Alliance (“MRA”) announced today the awarding of over \$10.5 million for 18 research projects being led by investigators at 30 institutions in seven countries to accelerate new therapeutic approaches for melanoma, improve existing treatments, develop new biomarkers, and advance the understanding of melanoma risk factors.

This round of research programs involving 46 investigators brings total melanoma research funding awarded by MRA, the largest private funder of melanoma research, to over \$79 million in 15 countries since its founding nine years ago.

“While the past several years have been one of extraordinary medical advances in the treatment of metastatic melanoma, the fact remains that over 76,000 individuals are afflicted by melanoma each year and nearly 10,000 die annually in the U.S. from the disease,” said Debra Black, Chair and Co-Founder of MRA. “Our efforts in MRA’s relatively short existence have helped accelerate the pace of new discoveries to treat and prolong life for patients with this vicious cancer. Through our scientific program, MRA has attracted hundreds of new researchers to the cause of finding treatments and ultimately, we hope, cures for melanoma.”

Louise M. Perkins, PhD, MRA’s Chief Science Officer, added: “Melanoma is a case study for state-of-the-art cancer treatment with personalized medicine and immunotherapy. MRA’s critical and timely research funding is contributing in real time not only to the research progress in melanoma but in other cancers as well. It’s been a significant investment, but with these new awards announced today, we underscore our commitment to furthering research on all fronts until this battle is won.”

The grants approved by the MRA Board include: two Academic-Industry Partnership Awards, six Young Investigator Awards and 10 Team Science Awards.

Among the grants are several Special Opportunity Awards, including two Saban Family Foundation-MRA Team Science Awards for Israel-led teams; a L’Oréal Paris-MRA Team Science Award for Women in Scientific Research; and a Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC)-MRA Young Investigator Award, along with Team Science Awards for acral and uveal (ocular) melanoma.

Nineteen academic medical centers in the U.S. are sharing in the 2016 grants, in addition to investigators in Canada, Germany, Israel, Scotland, Spain and Switzerland.

For more information on the 2016 awards, visit the MRA website:  
<http://www.curemelanoma.org/research/mra-research-awards/>

### **About Melanoma**

Most melanomas originate from the skin, though they can also arise from other parts of the body containing melanocytes, including the eyes, brain or spinal cord, or mucous membranes. Melanoma of the skin is one of the most common cancers in the United States and its incidence has tripled in the last 30 years. It is the most common cancer diagnosis in young adults 25-29 years old and the second most common cancer in young people 15-29 years old. Melanoma is the deadliest of all skin cancers.

### **About 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 \$79 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 percent 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](http://www.CureMelanoma.org) for more information, or follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

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