



2019 Career Catalyst Research Grants: Redefining Metastatic Breast Cancer through Liquid Biopsy

Program Announcement

Each year, **over 41,000 women and men die from metastatic breast cancer in the U.S. alone.** At Susan G. Komen, we are committed to changing this unacceptable reality and set a goal to cut the number of breast cancer deaths in half by 2026. We know we can't do it alone or without innovative research.

We have listened to our patient advocates living with metastatic breast cancers (MBC), and worked with our scientific advisors to focus our priorities on research topics that have significant potential to save lives.

Komen is pleased to announce a Career Catalyst Research grant opportunity, "Redefining Metastatic Breast Cancer through Liquid Biopsy." The Letter of Intent instructions and application system will open on June 10, 2019. Submission deadline is July 10. For more information visit <http://www.komen.org/RFA>.

Cutting edge research has shown that liquid biopsies can predict treatment response and guide precision medicine for many cancer types. This technology has shown promise in breast cancer, but experts agree that more research is needed before it can become a common practice in the clinic.

When compared to tissue biopsy, liquid biopsy offers a non-invasive approach to improve the care of patients and it can also improve how we treat metastatic breast cancer by:

A liquid biopsy is a blood test that looks for cancer cells or pieces of DNA from cancer cells that are circulating in the blood.

- Detecting biomarkers that could tell us how metastatic breast cancer responds (or will respond) to treatment, and could help physicians find the best possible treatment for their patients at both diagnosis and as breast cancer progresses.
- Detecting new or recurrent metastatic breast cancer earlier than ever before, before other symptoms develop.

Why we need to focus on liquid biopsy



Patient Advocate Dr. Kelly Shanahan with her daughter

"As a metastatic breast cancer patient I am a strong and vocal proponent of liquid biopsies - just ask the oncologists at the 2019 ASCO Annual Meeting, whom I publicly challenged to perform these tests on every metastatic cancer patient, and gather and collate the data for research!" says Dr. Kelly Shanahan, a physician living with metastatic breast cancer and Komen Advocate in Science. "I keep hearing that doing routine liquid biopsy at diagnosis and through progression is 'not ready for prime time', but this research can help bring these test to prime time and help patients sooner."

Why we need more effective biomarkers

"I was a busy mom raising two young children and was told I was cured from early stage breast cancer," said Komen Advocate in Science Teri Pollastro. "With the help of a blood test showing an elevated biomarker, I was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. Sixteen years later, this same biomarker is used to monitor my disease. Unfortunately, it does not work for many breast cancer patients. We need more research focused on developing better biomarkers to detect metastatic disease early and to monitor treatment effectiveness for those of us who are already living with this disease. I know we can do better."



Patient Advocate Teri Pollastro

KOMEN'S CALL TO ACTION



To help bring this technology to more patients, **we are asking the breast cancer research community to submit their most innovative and impactful ideas to help unlock the potential of liquid biopsy technology** through our Career Catalyst Research Grant program.

For over 10 years, Career Catalyst Research (CCR) Grants have fostered promising breast cancer researchers in the early stages of their careers. This year, we are supporting outstanding research that will use liquid biopsy technology to improve the treatment and early detection of metastatic breast cancer. **Scientific research is key to finding the breakthroughs that will produce new treatments for those living with metastatic breast cancer.**

Early career researchers within 8 years of their first faculty appointment are eligible to apply.

Why research is so important



Patient Advocate Sandra Spivey

"I have been living with metastatic breast cancer for over 20 years now," said Komen Scholar & Advocate in Science Sandra Spivey. "I've had access to treatments that wouldn't be available if it wasn't for early-stage (basic) research funded through Komen."

By supporting the next generation of researchers pioneering liquid biopsy for metastatic breast cancer we can improve how this disease is treated and managed, and bring this cutting edge technology to the patients who need it.

Susan G. Komen®

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Questions? Learn more at www.komen.org.