

NETRF announces \$2.5 million funding for neuroendocrine cancer research

Neuroendocrine tumor (NET) research supported by nonprofit foundation

The Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation (NETRF) continues its aggressive funding of neuroendocrine cancer research with eight new grants totaling \$2.5 million. With this newest round of funding, NETRF expands its portfolio to include research into lung neuroendocrine tumors (NETs), which affect about one in four NET patients.

NETRF is the leading private funder of neuroendocrine cancer research, funding more than \$22 million in NET research since 2005. NETRF looks for innovative and transformational ideas, such as leveraging findings made in other cancer types to accelerate progress in NETs. The eight new projects explore some of the latest advancements in cancer:

- CAR T-cell therapy combined with antibody-drug conjugates
- Photodynamic therapy
- Deciphering the impact of mutations in key genes in NETs
- Improving outcomes by combining biomarkers and radiomics
- “Smart” chemotherapy
- Novel SSTR2 radioligands
- Alpha-particle emitting agents for the treatment of lung NETs
- Testing new cancer vaccines on NETs

As a less common cancer, NETs lag behind other cancers for research funding. “Neuroendocrine tumor is a neglected tumor type that doesn’t get its due funding from the National Cancer Institute and other organizations,” said George Fisher, MD,

PhD, co-chair, NETRF Board of Scientific Advisors.

NETs occur in hormone-producing cells, most commonly forming in the lung, pancreas, and gastrointestinal tract. Despite appearing in different sites, tumors forming in this cell type are classified as neuroendocrine and require different tests and treatments.

“We are searching out the best science, identifying dedicated investigators, and asking the right questions with the singular goal of trying to identify new treatments, and better ways to manage the disease,” said Dan Chung, MD, co-chair, NETRF Board of Scientific Advisors.

Two U.S. cancer centers will receive their first NETRF grant: Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, Buffalo, NY, and Moffitt Cancer Center, Tampa, FL. Two international organizations will also receive their first NETRF grant: BC Canada, Vancouver, Canada, and Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen, Netherlands. Other institutions funded in this grant cycle include the University of Pennsylvania, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Stanford University, and the University of California, San Francisco.

“We seek out projects to understand the basic biology of NETs, in addition to research that may be translated from the bench to the clinic to make an impact on patient treatment,” said Elyse Gellerman, NETRF chief executive officer.

The NETRF grant process is a competitive and structured peer-review process, which starts with an annual call for letters-of-intent in late spring. All applications are evaluated by NETRF’s Board of Scientific Advisors. Final approval is made by the NETRF Board of Directors.

As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, NETRF is supported by charitable donations from individuals and foundations. A generous, transformational gift from the Margie and Robert E. Petersen Foundation will fund several of the new projects.

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Source:

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