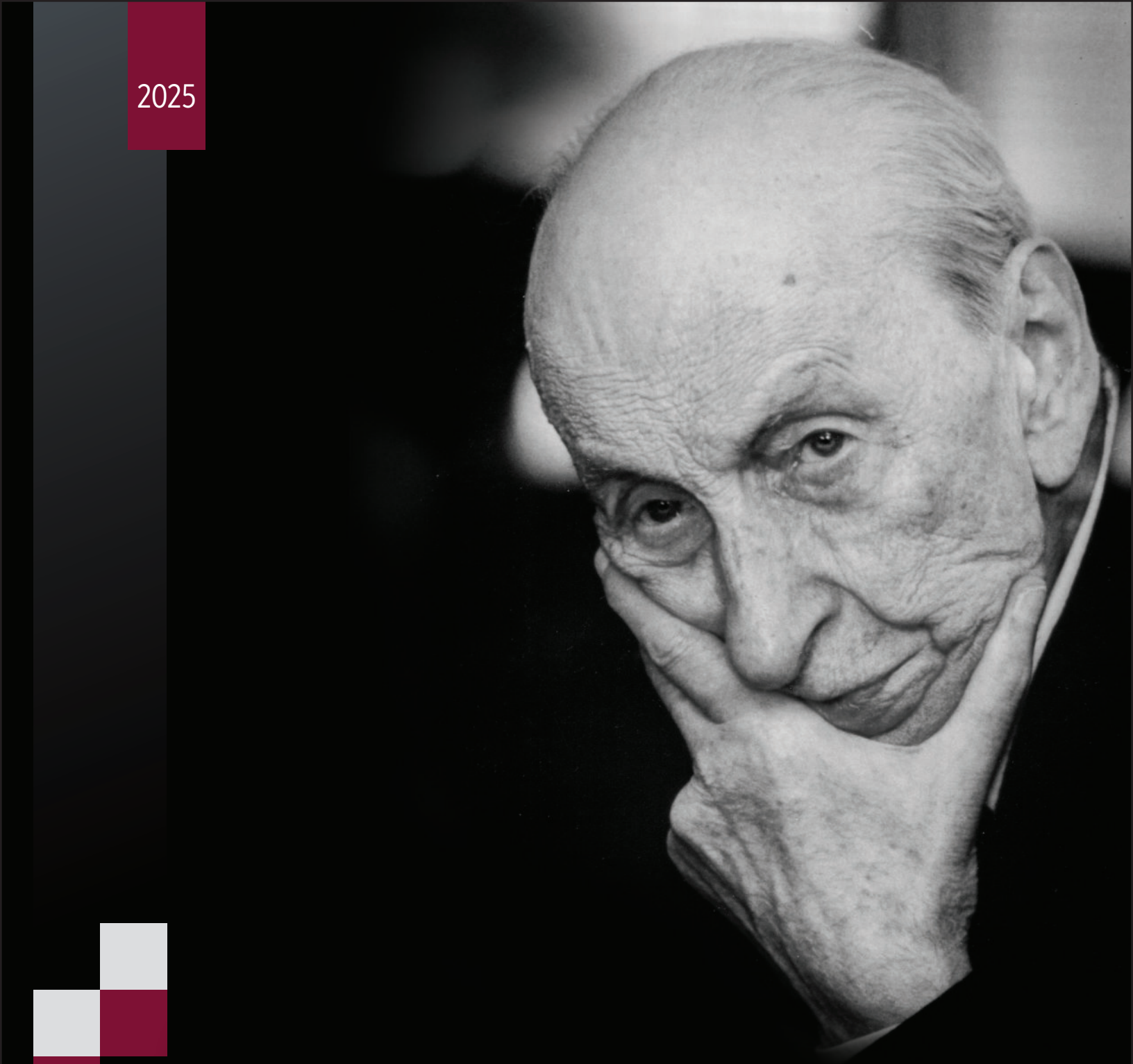
2025



PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION-AACR INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT IN CANCER RESEARCH

Fondazione Pezcoller

AACR American Association for Cancer Research

Pezcoller.it
AACR.org/SAA

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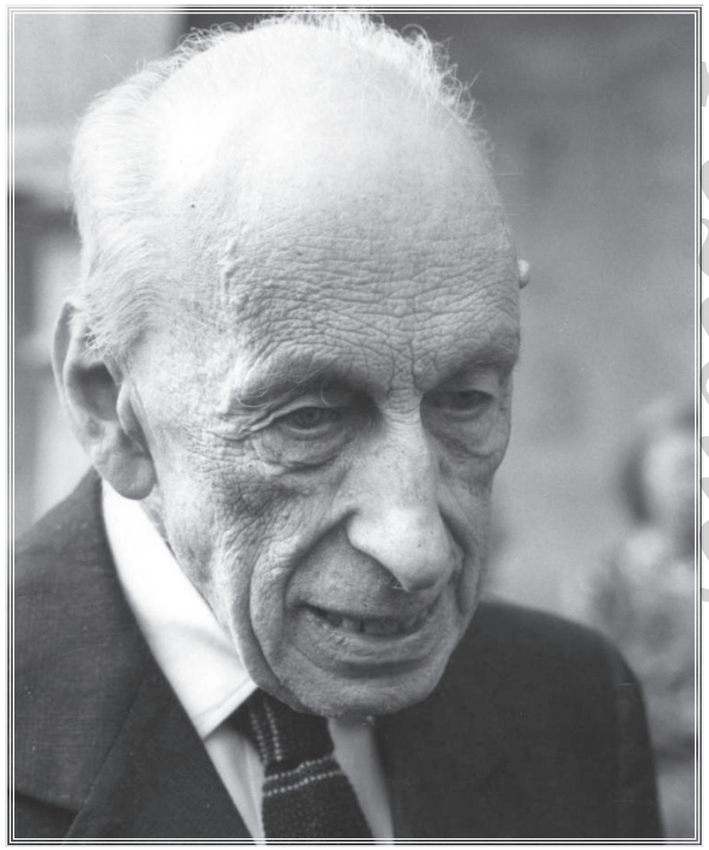

Pezcoller

PROFESSOR ALESSIO PEZCOLLER

Professor Alessio Pezcoller was born on April 23, 1896 in Rovereto, a small Northern Italian town, located just a few kilometers from Trento, the capitol city of the Trentino province and location of the historic sixteenth century Trento Council.

Shortly after his graduation from Florence University where he earned a university degree in medicine in 1921, Professor Pezcoller moved to the University of Milan where he studied within the Surgical School, which was chaired by one of the most highly reputed surgeons of the time, Professor Mario Donati. In Milan, Professor Pezcoller qualified for university teaching in surgical pathology, clinical surgery, and operating medicine. In the mid-1930's, upon Professor Donati's departure from the University of Milan, Professor Pezcoller transitioned to Santa Chiara Hospital in Trento where he assumed the position of Chief Surgeon in 1937. He would continue working at Santa Chiara Hospital for the next thirty years.

During the early years of his time at Santa Chiara Hospital, Professor Pezcoller specialized in general abdominal surgeries and neurosurgery. He was also instrumental in conducting many surgeries that were needed as a result of various injuries that soldiers and civilians would incur as a result of World War II. Due to the high demand for his time and the need for his expertise during this difficult period of history, Professor Pezcoller opted to live within the hospital so that he could be nearby and available should a surgery be needed for a patient. It was also during this tumultuous and formative time that he conceptualized and developed his idea to form the Pezcoller Foundation, with the mission to promote biomedical research intended to decipher the fundamental mechanisms of human disease.

Upon his retirement in 1966, Professor Pezcoller vehemently dedicated his time, energy, and life to achieving his goal of establishing the Pezcoller Foundation. He would continue to shape and lead the Pezcoller Foundation and its mission until his death in January of 1993 at the age of 97.

PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION

PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION HISTORY

The Pezcoller Foundation is a non-profit organization established in Trento, Italy in 1980 by Professor Alessio Pezcoller (1896-1993), former Chief Surgeon at Santa Chiara Hospital in Trento, Italy. The Pezcoller Foundation's mission is aimed at promoting biomedical research in the field of cancer and pursues its institutional aims through:

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

- The Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research
- The Pezcoller Foundation–EACR Cancer Research Awards (for female and early career researchers)

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

- The Pezcoller Foundation Symposia Series
- The Pezcoller Foundation Seminars
- The Pezcoller Foundation Lectures

RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG RESEARCHERS

- The Pezcoller Foundation-Italian Cancer Society Fellowships and Research Grants
- The Pezcoller Foundation-Scholar-in-Training Awards
- The Pezcoller Foundation-EACR Bursaries

Upper right: Professor Alessio Pezcoller
Middle: Professors Alessio Pezcoller and Umberto Veronesi
Lower left: Professors Alessio Pezcoller and Umberto Veronesi
Lower right: Professor Umberto Veronesi, Mr. Giorgio Pederzolli, Professor Alessio Pezcoller

PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION GOVERNANCE

The Pezcoller Foundation is governed by a President and a Board of Directors who serve the Pezcoller Foundation on a voluntary basis. All associated terms of service extend for a period of five years. The Past Presidents of the Pezcoller Foundation include: Renato Vinante (1980-1986), Giustiniano de Pretis (1986-1988), Aimone Sordo (1988-1996), Pietro Monti (1996-2001), Gios Bernardi (2001-2011), and Davide Bassi (2011-2016). The current President is Enzo Galligioni, MD, a medical oncologist and former Head of Medical Oncology at the Santa Chiara Hospital in Trento, Italy (1996-2016) where he was involved in both clinical and research activities. Since his retirement in 2016, he has been primarily involved in Pezcoller Foundation activities.

PAST PRESIDENTS

2011-2016
DAVIDE BASSI

2001-2011
GIOS BERNARDI

1996-2001
PIETRO MONTI

1988-1996
AIMONE SORDO

1986-1988
GIUSTINIANO DE PRETIS

1980-1986
RENATO VINANTE

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FEDERICA MANDATO
SECRETARY-GENERAL

VERONICA FOLETTO
SCIENTIFIC OFFICER

THE AWARD

AWARD HISTORY

Once formed, the Pezcoller Foundation initially established a biennial International Award to recognize excellence in cancer research. This award was given to Dr. Vincent T. DeVita, Jr. (1988), Dr. Maurice Tubiana (1991), Dr. Bert Vogelstein (1993), and Sir Paul M. Nurse (1995) who subsequently won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2001.

Inaugural Pezcoller Foundation Award recipient, Dr. Vincent T. DeVita, Jr., Trento 1988. Also pictured are Drs. Alessio Pezcoller and Aimone Sordo.

The first Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement In Cancer Research awarded to Dr. Anthony J. Pawson by then Pezcoller Foundation President, Dr. Pietro Monti in 1998.

The 2001 Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research awarded to Dr. Elizabeth H. Blackburn by then Pezcoller Foundation President, Dr. Pietro Monti.

PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION - AACR PARTNERSHIP

In 1997, a strategic partnership was launched between the Pezcoller Foundation and the AACR. As outlined within the formal partnership agreement executed on April 13, 1997, the award was to be named the: PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION–AACR INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR CANCER RESEARCH.

On April 16, 2018, the formal partnership agreement was renewed and the award name was changed to the: PEZCOLLER FOUNDATION-AACR INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT IN CANCER RESEARCH.

This prestigious award is accompanied by a prize of €75,000, has been annually awarded since 1997, and continues to build upon the tradition of recognizing outstanding cancer science. Twenty-eight premier scientists have received the award thus far. The rigorous award nomination and selection process and the caliber of past award winners, are further evidenced by the fact that four past award recipients have been subsequently awarded the Nobel Prize.

Top to bottom (right):

April 13, 1997, then Pezcoller Foundation President Dr. Pietro Monti, shaking hands with the AACR CEO Dr. Margaret Foti, in the presence of then AACR President Dr. Donald S. Coffey, AACR Past President Dr. Enrico Mihich, and Pezcoller Foundation Delegation members Drs. Gios Bernardi and Giorgio Pederzolli

April 16, 2018, renewal of the Pezcoller Foundation-AACR agreement, signed by the AACR CEO Dr. Margaret Foti and the Pezcoller Foundation President, Dr. Enzo Galligioni, in the presence of then AACR President Dr. Elizabeth M. Jaffee and members of the Pezcoller Foundation Delegation

December 7, 2019, last in-person award selection committee meeting held at AACR Headquarters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; All subsequent award selections have been held virtually as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

April 7, 2024, Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research Selection Committee Chair (2023-2024), Dr. Robert D. Schreiber, alongside 2024 award recipient, Dr. Titia de Lange and Pezcoller Foundation President, Dr. Enzo Galligioni at the AACR Annual Meeting 2024 in San Diego, California

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

AACR HISTORY

Founded in 1907, the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to advancing cancer research with the mission to prevent and cure all cancers. AACR's membership includes more than 58,000 laboratory, translational, and clinical researchers; population scientists; other health care professionals; and patient advocates residing in 141 countries and territories. The AACR marshals the full spectrum of expertise of the international cancer community to accelerate progress in the prevention, biological understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer by annually convening more than 30 conferences and educational workshops, the largest of which is the AACR Annual Meeting which attracts over 22,000 attendees from around the world. In addition, the AACR publishes ten prestigious, peer-reviewed scientific journals and two publications for cancer survivors, patients, and their caregivers. The AACR funds meritorious research directly as well as in cooperation with numerous cancer organizations. As the Scientific Partner of Stand Up To Cancer, the AACR provides expert peer review, grants administration, and scientific oversight of team science and individual investigator grants in cancer research that have the potential for near-term patient benefit. The AACR actively communicates with legislators and policymakers about the value of cancer research and the related sciences in saving lives from cancer.

AACR GOVERNANCE

The AACR is governed by 5 Officers and a Board of 15 Directors who serve the AACR, on a voluntary basis for three-year terms.

American Association for Cancer Research Headquarters, Philadelphia, PA

2024 Officers and Directors of AACR Board

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CATHERINE J. WU, MD, FAACR

TRENTO, ITALY

THE AWARD CEREMONY

In addition to presenting a featured award lecture during the AACR Annual Meeting, all award winners are requested to participate in an official Award Ceremony held in Trento, Italy, and present a formal scientific lecture at the University of Trento.

Originally a celtic city, Trento was later conquered by the Romans in the first Century BC. In 1027, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Conrad II, created the prince-bishop of Trento position, which held both temporal and religious powers. Prince-bishops ruled Trento until Napoleon conquered the city in 1801. In 1814, Trento was assigned to the Habsburg Empire. Trento later became famous for the Council of Trento (1545-1563), which gave rise to the Counter-Reformation, ushering in a resurgence of Catholicism throughout Europe. The city owes much of its unique history to its central position along the main communication routes between Italy and Northern Europe.

Initially, the award ceremony for the Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research was held in the historic Buonconsiglio Castle located in Trento. This castle was the residence of the prince-bishops of Trento from the 13th century to the end of the 18th century and is the largest and most important monumental complex of the Trentino Alto Adige region.

In 2018, the award ceremony was moved to the historic Teatro Sociale in downtown Trento to accommodate larger audiences from the local scientific community and the public. The Teatro Sociale was officially opened on May 29, 1819, with the opera "La Cenerentola" by Gioachino Antonio Rossini. In 1984, the theatre was purchased by the Autonomous Province of Trento and in June 2000, after eleven years of work, was reopened to the public.

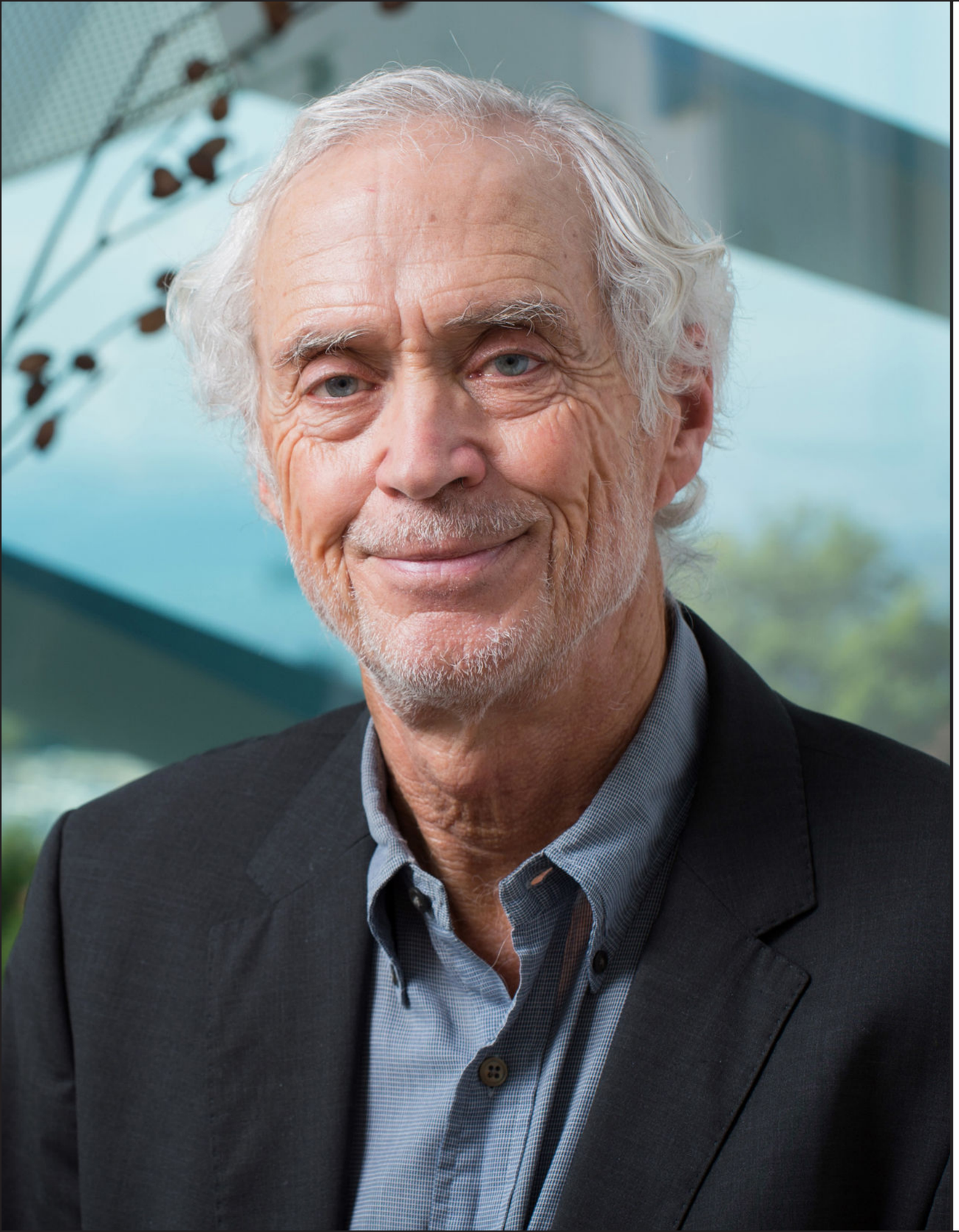
The Dome, Trento, Italy

The Science Museum, Trento, Italy

The Dolomites, Trento, Italy

Buonconsiglio Castle, Trento, Italy

The Teatro Sociale in Trento, Italy, Award Ceremony venue since 2018



2025 AWARDEE

2025
DOUGLAS HANAHAN, PHD, FAACR

Ludwig Distinguished Scholar, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, Lausanne, Switzerland

For pioneering the engineering of mouse models of tumorigenesis that uncovered mechanisms of stepwise cancer progression involving interactions among diverse cells in the tumor microenvironment; and for advancing mechanism-guided therapeutic targeting in preclinical trials, revealing treatment benefits and adaptive resistance, thereby informing innovative hallmark co-targeting strategies to prolong treatment efficacy.

Dr. Hanahan is recognized for his fundamental discoveries in cancer research that have had a far-reaching translational impact. Through the generation and characterization of innovative mouse models, he defined multi-step tumorigenesis by uncovering the molecular mechanisms required to drive cancer growth and helped establish the principle that malignant traits in cancer are conferred by cooperative interactions between cancer cells and co-opted host cells recruited into the tumor microenvironment.

Notably, Dr. Hanahan formulated, together with Robert Weinberg, PhD, the “Hallmarks of Cancer,” a logical framework for rationalizing the vast complexity of cancer that continues to evolve and resonate broadly with the entire cancer research community.

Dr. Hanahan is revered as a quintessential scientific pioneer who has expertly helped propel and shape the emergence of functional genetics in cancer research. Early in his career, Dr. Hanahan demonstrated that oncogene expression is not sufficient to drive tumor formation, identifying that tumorigenesis requires the acquisition of secondary events, such as resistance to cell death, the induction of angiogenesis, or immune evasion.

Dr. Hanahan was also among the first to demonstrate that the tumor microenvironment is a barrier to antitumor cytotoxic T-cell activity. His studies subsequently contributed to the development of novel therapeutic strategies involving the targeting of various cell types such as immune and stromal cells present in the tumor microenvironment. Further, he helped establish the concept that inflammation can be tumorigenic and explored the tumor-promoting functions of tumor-infiltrating immune cells, cancer-associated fibroblasts, vascular cells, and extracellular proteases.

In collaboration with the late Judah Folkman, MD, Dr. Hanahan co-discovered the 'angiogenic switch', a key process in tumor growth. This fundamental work led to critical insights into therapeutic strategies for targeting tumor angiogenesis, such as the identification of unexpected adaptive resistance mechanisms, which illuminated why some monotherapies exhibit limited clinical efficacy.

More recently, he has demonstrated the potential of angiogenesis inhibitors in co-targeting treatment strategies. Additionally, Dr. Hanahan’s latest research has profoundly contributed to cancer neuroscience by revealing the functional importance of co-opted neuronal signaling pathways in cancer cell invasion, metastasis, and immune evasion.

Dr. Hanahan has been a member of the AACR since 2000 and was elected as a Fellow of the AACR Academy in 2014. His scientific achievements have been recognized with numerous awards and honors, including the AACR Lifetime Achievement Award (2014); the Fondazione San Salvatore Award for Cancer Research (2012); and the National Cancer Association of France Grand Prize for Biology (1993).

He is also an elected foreign member of the Royal Society (2023) and an elected member of the European Molecular Biology Association (2010), the National Academy of Sciences (2009), the National Academy of Medicine (2008), and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2007).

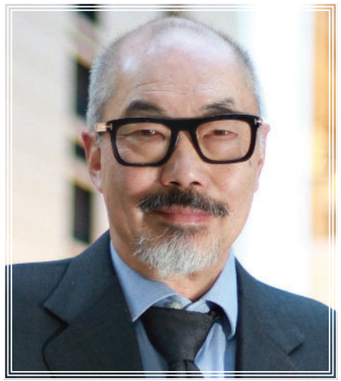
Dr. Hanahan earned his undergraduate degree in physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his PhD in biophysics at Harvard University. Throughout his impressive career, he has authored or co-authored several book chapters and hundreds of publications including reviews, perspectives, commentaries, many of which have been featured in high impact journals, and subsequently citated by others worldwide.

PAST AWARDEES

2024
TITIA DE LANGE, PHD, FAACR

Director, Anderson Center for Cancer Research;
Leon Hess Professor, The Rockefeller University, New York, New York, USA

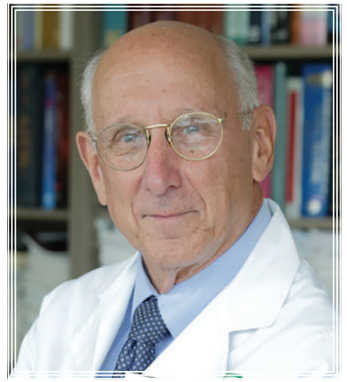
For her ground-breaking discovery of molecular mechanisms by which telomeres protect chromosome ends, for the identification of the shelterin protein complex, and for demonstrating how loss of telomere protection results in aberrant genomic integrity and tumorigenesis. Dr. de Lange's research has proven to be invaluable in the field of telomere research and has led to greater understanding for cancer development as well as genome maintenance.



2023
TAK W. MAK, PHD, FAACR

Director, Campbell Family Institute for Breast Cancer Research, University Health Network Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For fundamental contributions to the fields of immunology, cancer biology, and cancer therapy, including cloning the beta chain of the human T cell receptor and creating genetically modified mouse strains to elucidate the role of the immune system in tumorigenesis. He also characterized two novel kinases, PLK4 and TTK, now promising targets in Phase II clinical trials, and CTLA-4, a negative regulator of T cell activation, later applied to the development of immune checkpoint blockade therapy.



2022
STEVEN A. ROSENBERG, MD, PHD, FAACR

Chief, Surgery Branch; Senior Investigator; Head, Tumor Immunology Section, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, USA

For pioneering the development of effective immunotherapies and gene therapies for patients with advanced cancers and being the first to introduce a foreign gene into a human and to successfully utilize T-cell receptors against solid epithelial cancers and chimeric antigen receptors against lymphomas. He has identified somatic mutations as targets of T-cell immunotherapy and has demonstrated that administration of tumor infiltrating lymphocytes along with a IL-2 and a lymphodepleting preparative regimen stimulates complete remission in metastatic melanoma and selected other cancers.

2021
HANS CLEVERS, MD, PHD, FAACR

Professor of Molecular Genetics, Utrecht University and the UMC Utrecht; Principal Investigator, Hubrecht Institute and the Princess Máxima Center for Pediatric Oncology; Oncode Investigator, Utrecht, The Netherlands

For pioneering research that uncovered the mechanisms by which Wnt signaling controls gene expression in colon cancer and the self-renewing gut epithelium, which subsequently led to the identification of adult stem cells in healthy tissue and in tumors; for groundbreaking research involving the indefinite expansion of stem cells to form organoids in vitro, and for facilitating the adoption of organoids as an essential model system for the study of various cancers and treatment modalities.

PAST AWARDEES

2020
JOHN E. DICK, FRS, FAACR

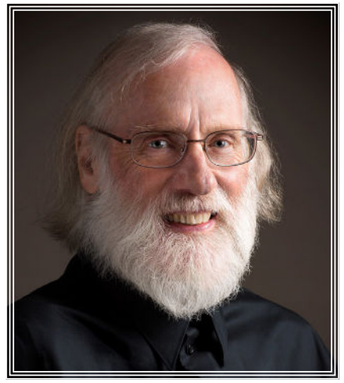
Senior Scientist, Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine, University Health Network; Professor of Molecular Genetics, University of Toronto; Co-Leader, Acute Leukemia, Translational Research Initiative, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For discovering and characterizing the mechanisms by which stem cells contribute to normal and leukemic hematopoiesis.

2019
ALBERTO MANTOVANI, MD

Emeritus Professor of Pathology; Scientific Director, Istituto Clinico Humanitas, Humanitas University, Milan, Italy; Chair, Inflammation and Therapeutic Innovation, Queen Mary University, London, United Kingdom

For seminal research discoveries linking inflammation and tumor-associated macrophages with cancer onset that have been essential to progress in the field of cancer immunology.



2018
TONY R. HUNTER, PHD, FAACR

American Cancer Society Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology Laboratory; Renato Dulbecco Chair and Director, Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, California, USA

For the critical discovery of tyrosine kinases being the first to demonstrate that deregulated tyrosine phosphorylation can cause malignant transformation, which has since led to proven successes involving the use of cancer chemotherapeutics that target tyrosine kinases.

2017
DAVID M. LIVINGSTON, MD, FAACR (1941-2021)

Professor of Genetics; Emil Frei Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Chairman, Executive Committee for Research; Charles A. Dana Chair of Human Cancer Genetics, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

For fundamental research that led to the landmark discovery of BRCA1 and BRCA2 and a better understanding of the retinoblastoma pathway of cell cycle control as well as the transcriptional co-activation function of key regulatory proteins including p300 and CBP.

PAST AWARDEES

2016
JOAN MASSAGUÉ, PHD, FAACR

Member, Cancer Biology and Genetics Program; Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Foundation Chair; Director, Sloan Kettering Institute, New York, New York, USA

For pioneering efforts toward delineating the TGF-β signaling pathway and its mechanism of action including receptor activation and regulation of key target genes, and for demonstrating how TGF-β can function as both a growth suppressor and promoter of cancer metastasis.

2015
JAMES P. ALLISON, PHD, FAACR

Chair, Department of Immunology, Division of Basic Science Research; Olga Keith Wiess Distinguished University Chair for Cancer Research; Regental Professor, Department of Immunology, Division of Basic Science Research; Executive Director, Immunotherapy Platform; Deputy Director, David H. Koch Center for Applied Research of Genitourinary Cancers; Director, Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas, USA

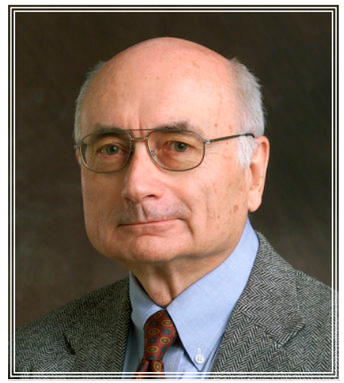
For groundbreaking discoveries, including the identification of CTLA-4 as an inhibitory receptor on T cells that serve as an immune response checkpoint, and for demonstrating that CTLA-4 blockade is capable of enhancing anti-tumor T cell responses by releasing CTLA-4 suppression, a finding that has since revolutionized the development of novel cancer immunotherapies. His groundbreaking research was recognized with the 2018 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

2018 ~ **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**, Stockholm, Sweden

2014
ELAINE V. FUCHS, PHD, FAACR

Rebecca C. Lancefield Professor of Mammalian Cell Biology and Development, The Rockefeller University; Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; New York, New York, USA

For scientific contributions that have illuminated how skin stem cells respond to environmental signals, change gene expression patterns, and remodel cellular interactions in epidermal development; and for discovering how stem cell activation processes may be deregulated in cancer.

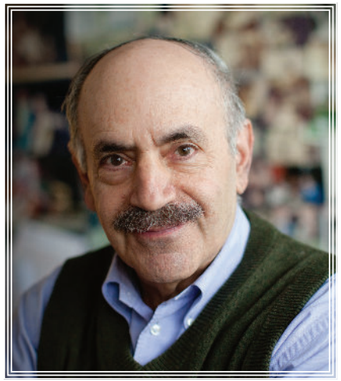


2013
PETER K. VOGT, PHD, FAACR

Professor, Department of Molecular and Experimental Medicine, The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California, USA

For the seminal discovery that the Rous sarcoma virus causes cancer through the activity of the *Src* gene, representing the first-ever identification of a protooncogene and marking a turning point in the understanding of the fundamental genetic mechanisms of carcinogenesis.

PAST AWARDEES



2012
ROBERT A. WEINBERG, PHD, FAACR

Founding Member, Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research; Professor of Biology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

For essential contributions to revolutionizing the fields of cellular and molecular biology and cancer genetics, highlighted by his discovery of the first human oncogene, *RAS*, and the first tumor suppressor gene, *RB*.

2011
PIER PAOLO PANDOLFI, MD, PHD

Scientific Director, Institute of Cancer; Senior Scientist, Renown Health, Reno, Nevada, USA

For significant research findings in the field of molecular cancer biology, characterizing chromosomal translocations leading to acute promyelocytic leukemia, uncovering the molecular pathogenesis of fusion proteins, and ultimately leading to novel cancer therapeutics.

2010
JOSEPH SCHLESSINGER, PHD, FAACR

William H. Prusoff Professor of Pharmacology; Chair, Department of Pharmacology; Co-Director, Cancer Biology Institute, Yale School of Medicine, New Haven, Connecticut, USA

For scientific contributions to the understanding of intracellular signaling pathways, including his description of the mechanism of action by which activated receptor tyrosine kinases bind to signaling proteins via Src homology 2 (SH2) and phosphotyrosine binding (PTB) domains.

2009
NAPOLEONE FERRARA, MD, FAACR

Distinguished Professor of Pathology; Adjunct Professor of Ophthalmology and Pharmacology; Hildyard Endowed Chair in Eye Disease, University of California, San Diego Moores Cancer Center, San Diego, California, USA

For the groundbreaking discovery of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), and for describing its role in promoting angiogenesis in tumors and subsequently developing bevacizumab to inhibit blood vessel growth in multiple cancer types.

PAST AWARDEES

2008
AXEL ULLRICH, PHD, FAACR

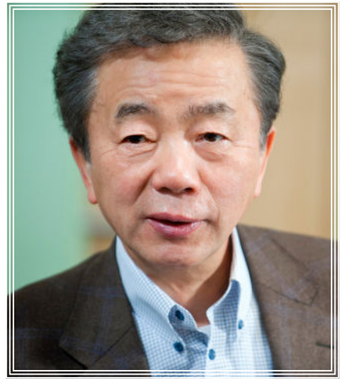
Emeritus Scientific Member, Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Martinsried, Germany

For fundamental discoveries in signal transduction research that include the identification of the primary structure of the human epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR), providing key insights into the genomic determinants that promote cancer progression and the development of novel cancer treatments notably the FDA-approved therapeutics Herceptin and TENT/Sunitinib.

2007
MINA J. BISSELL, PHD, FAACR

Distinguished Scientist, Biological Systems and Engineering Division, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California, USA

For pivotal scientific discoveries in epithelial tumor biology that have effectively shaped the understanding of the mechanisms by which the extracellular matrix and tumor microenvironment regulate gene expression and the stability of the differentiated cellular states in normal and malignant tissues.



2006
TADATSUGU TANIGUCHI, PHD, FAACR

Professor and Chair, Immunology Laboratory, Graduate School of Medicine, University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan

For groundbreaking discoveries that include the isolation and characterization of the first cytokine genes (interferon-β and interleukin-2), the discovery of the IRF family of transcription factors, and the subsequent elucidation of their molecular functions in cancer.

2005
LEWIS C. CANTLEY, PHD, FAACR

Meyer Director, Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center; Professor of Cancer Biology in Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, New York, USA

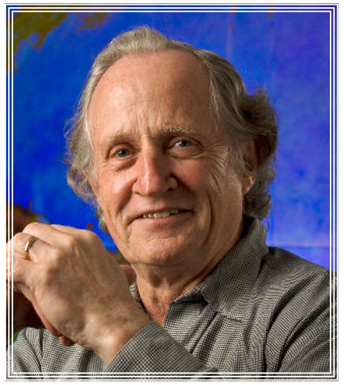
For outstanding contributions to the field of signal transduction, including the discovery of phosphoinositide 3-kinase (PI3K) and the elucidation of its role in signal transduction, and for the establishment of methods for unbiased determination of protein-protein interactions and kinase specificity.

PAST AWARDEES

2004
STANLEY J. KORSMEYER, MD (1950-2005)

Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Sidney Farber Professor of Pathology and Professor Medicine, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

For landmark experiments involving lymphoma patient-derived cell lines that established the primary role of Bcl-2 in programmed cell death, for demonstrating its role in regulating cell survival, and for identifying key family members including Bad and Bid, which led to the subsequent development of small molecule Bcl-2 inhibitors.



2003
MARIO R. CAPECCHI, PHD, FAACR

Professor, Department of Human Genetics; Adjunct Professor, Department of Oncological Sciences, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

For the discovery, development, and application of targeted mutagenesis in mouse embryonal stem cells, which ultimately revolutionized the field of mouse genetics to model human disease by helping to elucidate the molecular mechanisms responsible for tumorigenesis and providing cancer models for the testing of novel therapeutics. These significant research findings were recognized by the 2007 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

2007 ~ **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**, Stockholm, Sweden

2002
CARL-HENRIK HELDIN, PHD

Professor, Department of Medical Biochemistry and Microbiology, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

For formative contributions to our understanding of growth factor-mediated signal transduction in mammalian cells, particularly platelet-derived growth factor (PDGF), and transforming growth factor (TGF-β) signaling.

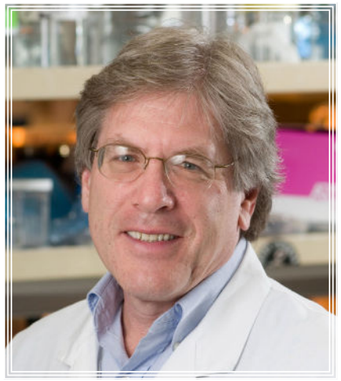
2001
ELIZABETH H. BLACKBURN, PHD, FAACR

Morris Herztein Professor Emerita of Biology and Physiology, Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, University of California, San Francisco
San Francisco, California, USA

For seminal contributions to the discovery of telomerase, and for defining its role in maintaining telomeres and protecting chromosomal ends from degradation, processes that have since been identified as critically important during DNA replication and cell division. These fundamental contributions to cellular and molecular biology were celebrated by the 2009 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

2009 ~ **Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine**, Stockholm, Sweden

PAST AWARDEES



2000
CHARLES J. SHERR, MD, PHD, FAACR

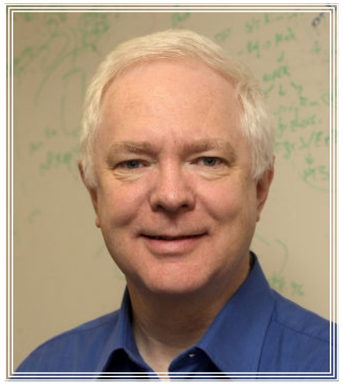
Chair, Department of Tumor Cell Biology; Herrick Foundation Chair, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee, USA

For the discovery of three mammalian D-type G1 phase cyclins and associated cyclin-dependent kinases, including CDK4, and for elucidating their roles in cellular proliferation, replication, and neoplastic transformation.

1999
CARLO M. CROCE, MD, FAACR

John W. Wolfe Chair in Human Cancer Genetics; Member, Cancer Biology Program, Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center, Columbus, Ohio, USA

For extensive discoveries that have significantly extended the understanding of the genetic basis of Burkitts lymphoma, T-cell lymphoma, and acute leukemia, including his discovery that chromosomal abnormalities involving immunoglobulin gene loci and Myc are capable of contributing to both cancer initiation and progression.



1998
ANTHONY J. PAWSON, PHD (1952-2013)

Senior Scientist and Head, Programme in Molecular Biology and Cancer, Samuel Lunnenfeld Research Institute; Apotex Chair in Oncology, Mount Sinai Hospital; Professor, University of Toronto, Terry Fox Cancer Research Scientist, National Cancer Institute of Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

For fundamental research in revolutionizing the understanding of signal transduction and the molecular mechanisms by which cells respond to external cues, and for his discovery of Src homology 2 (SH2) domains, which have been since proven critical for protein-protein interactions.

2026 AWARD PROGRAM GUIDELINES

AWARD SUMMARY

The prestigious Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research was established in 1997 to recognize a scientist of international renown who has made a major scientific discovery in basic cancer research or who has made significant contributions to translational cancer research.

Eligible candidates must continue to be active in cancer research; have a record of recent, noteworthy publications; and be conducting ongoing work that holds promise for continued substantive contributions to progress in the field of cancer.

The award is intended to honor an individual scientist. However, more than one scientist may be co-nominated and selected to share the award in the event that their investigations are intimately related in subject matter and have resulted in work that is worthy of the award and a joint nomination.

The award recipient will receive an unrestricted grant, a commemorative award plaque, and present a featured scientific lecture in conjunction with the AACR Annual Meeting immediately following their selection. The award recipient will also be invited to present a featured scientific lecture at the University of Trento, in conjunction with the official award ceremony to be held in Trento, Italy in May, 2026.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Cancer researchers affiliated with any institution involved in cancer research, cancer medicine, or cancer-related science anywhere in the world may be nominated. Such institutions include those in academia, industry, or government.

Individuals who have previously been awarded the Nobel Prize in any category are ineligible to receive this award.

Institutions and/or organizations are not eligible to receive the award.

NOMINATION DEADLINE FOR 2026 AWARD

June 30, 2025

NOMINATION PROCESS

Nominations may be submitted by any individual, whether an AACR member or nonmember, who is currently or has previously been affiliated with any institution involved in cancer research, cancer medicine, or cancer-related sciences.

Self-nominations are prohibited.

Nominators must maintain strict confidentiality of their nominations, and all nominations must be submitted electronically to **https://myaacr.aacr.org**. Paper nominations will not be accepted.

Eligible nominations **must include** the following:

- A nomination letter written in English (Max: 1,000 words), which comprehensively describes the candidate's major scientific discovery in basic cancer research or significant contributions to translational cancer research, and the impact of these accomplishments on the cancer field. Letter must specifically outline the candidate's current research activity and indicate how their research holds promise for continued substantive contributions to the field. All publications that directly support the mentioned research accomplishments must be referenced within the provided letter.
- A brief scientific citation (Max: 50 words) highlighting the major scientific contribution(s) justifying the award candidate's nomination.

AWARD SELECTION

Eligible nominees will be considered by a prestigious Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research Selection Committee consisting of an international cohort of renowned cancer leaders appointed by the AACR President in consultation with the Pezcoller Foundation Council.

The Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research Selection Committee will consider all nominations as they have been submitted and are restricted from combining submitted nominations, adding new nominees, or otherwise making alterations to any submitted nomination.

Once chosen, the primary and alternate award recipient selections made by the Pezcoller Foundation-AACR International Award for Extraordinary Achievement in Cancer Research Selection Committee shall be sent to the AACR Executive Committee and the Pezcoller Foundation Council for final consideration and ratification.

Selection of the award recipient shall be made on the basis of the candidate's scientific accomplishments without regard to race, gender, nationality, geographic location, or religious or political views.

INQUIRIES

Please direct all inquiries pertaining to this award to Michael J. Powell, PhD, Senior Director of Scientific Programs and Strategic Initiatives, at **michael.powell@aacr.org** or by phone at **(215) 440-9373**.

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