



[NIH Office of the Director \(OD\)](#)

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NIH continues its commitment to high risk-high reward research

Eighty-one awards to support innovation

Eighty-one awards are being given to pursue visionary science that exhibit the potential to transform scientific fields and speed the translation of research into improved health, under the High Risk-High Reward program supported by the National Institutes of Health Common Fund.

"The Common Fund High Risk-High Reward program provides opportunities for innovative investigators in any area of health research to take risks when the potential impact in biomedical and behavioral science is high," said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.

The NIH Director's Pioneer, New Innovator, and Transformative Research awards encourage creative thinkers to pursue exciting and innovative ideas about biomedical and behavioral research. The [Pioneer award](#), established in 2004, challenges investigators at all career levels to develop highly innovative approaches that have the potential to produce a high impact on a broad area of biomedical or behavioral research. The [Transformative Research awards](#) program, established in 2009, promotes cross-cutting, interdisciplinary approaches and is open to individuals and teams of investigators who propose research that has the potential to create or overturn fundamental paradigms. The [New Innovator award](#) initiative, established in 2007, supports investigators who are within 10 years of their terminal degree or clinical residency, but who have not yet received a Research Project Grant (R01) or equivalent NIH grant, to conduct exceptionally innovative research.

In 2012, the NIH is awarding 10 Pioneer awards, 51 New Innovator awards, and 20 Transformative Research awards. The total funding, which represents contributions from the NIH Common Fund and multiple NIH institutes and centers, is approximately \$155 million.

The 2012 recipients' names and institutions are listed below.

2012 NIH Director's Pioneer award recipients

- Anne Brunet, Ph.D., Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.
- Edward M Marcotte, Ph.D., University of Texas, Austin
- Hidde I. Ploegh, Ph.D., Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Cambridge, Mass.
- Christina D. Smolke, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Yi Tang, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles
- Doris Ying Tsao, Ph.D., California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif.
- Lihong Wang, Ph.D., Washington University, St. Louis
- Chao-Ting Wu, Ph.D., Harvard University Medical School, Boston
- Gary Yellen, Ph.D., Harvard University Medical School, Cambridge, Mass.
- Feng Zhang, Ph.D., Broad Institute Inc., Cambridge, Mass.

2012 NIH Director's New Innovator award recipients

- Christopher David Allen, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco
- Debra Auguste, Ph.D., Harvard University

- Emily Patricia Balskus, Ph.D., Harvard University
- Trevor G. Bivona, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco
- Josh Leitch Bonkowsky, University of Utah, Salt Lake City
- Elhanan Borenstein, Ph.D. University of Washington, Seattle
- Clifford Brandywine, Ph.D. Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.
- Amy Hitchcock Camp, Ph.D. Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.
- Jan Eduard Carette, Ph.D. Stanford University
- Shuibing Chen, Ph.D., Weill Medical College of Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
- Ping Chi, Ph.D. Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research, New York City
- Mark Churchland, Ph.D., Columbia University Health Sciences, New York City
- Bianxiao Cui, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Duc Si P. Dong, Ph.D., Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute, La Jolla, Calif.
- Emily Falk, Ph.D., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- Adam Walter Feinberg, Ph.D., Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh
- Harvinder Singh Gill, Ph.D., Texas Tech University, Lubbock
- Andrew L. Goodman, Ph.D., Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
- Jeff Gore, Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge
- Xue Han, Ph.D. Boston University
- Daniel Alan Heller, Ph.D. Sloan- Kettering Institute for Cancer Research, New York City
- John Matthew Higgins, Ph.D., Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston
- Laura Johnson, Ph.D. Duke University, Durham, N.C.
- Rahul Manu Kohli, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
- Daniel Kronauer, Ph.D., Rockefeller University, New York City
- Bjoern F. Lillemeier, Ph.D., Salk Institute for Biological Studies, San Diego
- Allen Po-Chih Liu, Ph.D., University of Michigan
- Wendy Liu, Ph.D., University of California, Irvine
- Gaby Maimon, Ph.D., Rockefeller University
- Luciano A. Marraffini, Ph.D., Rockefeller University
- Wei Min, Ph.D., Columbia University Morningside, New York City
- Sua Myong, Ph.D., University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- Christopher Niell, Ph.D., University of Oregon, Eugene
- Axel Nimmerjahn, Ph.D., Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Sallie R. Permar, Ph.D., Duke University
- Alexandros Pertsinidis, Ph.D., Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research
- Martin Prlic, Ph.D., Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle
- Avital Adah Rodal, Ph.D., Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.
- Rajat Rohatgi, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Anne Schaefer, Ph.D., Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York City
- Xiaokun Shu, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco
- Vikaas Singh Sohal, Ph.D., University of California, San Francisco
- David Stoltz, M.D., Ph.D., University of Iowa, Iowa City
- Ming Su, Ph.D., University of Central Florida, Orlando
- Alexander Eckehart Urban, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Ilana Witten, Ph.D., Princeton University
- Kim A. Woodrow, Ph.D. University of Washington
- Andrew Yoo, Ph.D., Washington University
- Siyang Zheng, Ph.D., The Pennsylvania State University, University Park
- Ann Capela Zovein, Ph.D., University California, San Francisco

2012 NIH Director's Transformative Research Projects award recipients

- Asa Abeliovich, Ph.D., Columbia University Health Sciences
- David B. Allison, Ph.D., University of Alabama at Birmingham
- David Altshuler, M.D., Ph.D., Broad Institute Inc. (Massachusetts General Hospital) and Chad A. Cowan, Ph.D., Harvard University
- Ben A. Barres, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Helen M. Blau, Ph.D. Stanford University
- Emery N. Brown, M.D., Ph.D. (Massachusetts General Hospital), Edward S. Boyden, M.D., Ph.D. , Ken Solt, M.D. (Massachusetts General Hospital), and Matthew A. Wilson, Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Karen L. Christman, Ph.D. and Nathan C. Gianneschi, Ph.D., University of California, San Diego
- Robert B. Darnell, Ph.D., Rockefeller University
- Karl Deisseroth, Ph.D., Stanford University
- Robert W. Gereau, Ph.D., and Michael R. Bruchas, Ph.D., Washington University; and John Rogers, Ph.D., University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- Christopher K. Glass, Ph.D., University of California, San Diego

- Paul Marasco , Ph.D., Cleveland VA Medical Research/ED/FDN
- Dianne K. Newman, Ph.D., California Institute of Technology
- Lonnie D. Shea, Ph.D. and Vadim Blackman, Ph.D., Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.
- Sergey S. Shevkopyas, Ph.D. Tulane University, New Orleans
- Milan N. Stojanovic, Ph.D., Columbia University Health Sciences; and Hao Yan, Ph.D., Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- Thomas Tuschl, Ph.D., Rockefeller University; Uwe Ohler, Ph.D., Duke University, Durham, NC; and Dinshaw Patel, Ph.D., Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research
- Howard L. Weiner, Ph.D., Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston
- Natalie A. Wisniewski, Ph.D., Johns Profusa Inc., San Francisco; and Mike McShane, Ph.D., Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
- Kai W. Wucherpfennig, Ph.D., Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston; and Stephen Gottschalk, M.D., Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX

More information on the Pioneer award is at <http://commonfund.nih.gov/pioneer> including information on this year's awardees and the two-day NIH Director's Pioneer award Symposium which begins on Thursday, Sept. 13, 2012, and is free and open to the public.

More information on the New Innovator award is at <http://commonfund.nih.gov/newinnovator> including information on this year's awardees.

More information on the Transformative Research Projects award is at <http://commonfund.nih.gov/T-R01> including information on this year's awardees.

The NIH Common Fund supports a series of exceptionally high impact research programs that are broadly relevant to health and disease. The NIH Director's awards Program is funded through the Common Fund and managed by the NIH Office of the Director in partnership with the various NIH Institutes, Centers and Offices. Common Fund programs are designed to overcome major research barriers and pursue emerging opportunities for the benefit of the biomedical research community at large. The research products of Common Fund programs are expected to catalyze disease-specific research supported by the NIH Institutes and Centers. Additional information about the NIH Common Fund can be found at <http://commonfund.nih.gov>.

About the National Institutes of Health (NIH): NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

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