The SU2C Funding Model and Scientific Review Process

We are at a pivotal moment in time, when scientists believe they have -- at last -- both the knowledge and the technology to make critical breakthroughs in the struggle against cancer.

Two key ingredients are needed to facilitate these breakthroughs: additional funding and new ways for researchers at different institutions to work together. That's what Stand Up To Cancer was designed to bring about.

SU2C and the scientists whose work we support have a laser-like focus on developments that can be moved quickly from the lab to the clinic, where they can save patients' lives. This part of the cancer research spectrum is called “translational” research, and SU2C utilizes a team approach on just such projects. Data is shared across institutions, and scientists long accustomed to competing are now united in the struggle against a common foe – cancer.

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), the largest scientific organization in the world involved in high-quality, innovative cancer research, is SU2C's scientific partner. AACR has enormous prestige in the research field and ensures that the highest standards of scientific integrity guide the process of selecting the recipients of SU2C funds and administering the grants. AACR works in conjunction with a "Blue Ribbon" Scientific Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Phillip A. Sharp, Institute Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Nobel Prize winner for a seminal discovery in cancer research. The Committee also includes Vice-chairpersons Dr. Arnold J. Levine and Dr. Brian J. Druker, an additional 15 highly accomplished researchers and physician-scientists, and two patient advocates who help keep the patient's perspective paramount.

Dream Teams

The “Dream Team” concept first permeated our national consciousness when a group of NBA superstars put their usual rivalries aside as members of the 1992 U.S. Olympic basketball team that won gold. SU2C’s Dream Teamswork much the same way. They’re composed of outstanding researchers from different institutions across the country; even around the world. The teams include both senior researchers and “young guns;” scientists who work in laboratories and those who work directly with patients; and an array of technical experts -- most of whom have not had opportunities to collaborate in this way before.

Dream Teams are chosen in a fair and open process, based on the likelihood of success, as well as on high-priority areas where rapid progress is urgently needed. (Pancreatic cancer, which has the highest mortality rate of all major cancers and for which the survival rate has not improved substantially over the last 40 years, is one high-priority

area being pursued by an SU2C Dream Team.)

Innovative Research Grants

SU2C's Innovative Research Grantsprovide support for cutting-edge work being undertaken by an individual investigator and his or her lab team. Our scientific advisors looking for novel ideas that are considered "high risk" and thus would not usually be funded by the traditional sources. That level of risk carries with it the potential for "high reward" in terms of lives saved. The special multidisciplinary selection committee focuses on funding young scientists (for example, at the assistant professor level) whose work holds great potential for translation from the lab to the clinic.

The AACRcasts a wide net across the cancer research community to attract proposals, and the Innovative Research Grants provide three years of funding of up to $250,000 per year. While applicants cannot be members of existing SU2C "Dream Teams", the hope is that ideas for new Dream Teams will emerge from these projects.

Click Here For Scientific Advisory Committee