



Hope Funds for Cancer Research

Press Release

## Hope Funds Announces 2024 Research Fellows

For Immediate Release

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**Newport, RI - June 3, 2024** -- Hope Funds for Cancer Research, dedicated to advancing research into the most difficult-to-treat cancers, has announced the selection of recipients of this year's Hope Funds Postdoctoral Fellowships.

"These young researchers are making significant contributions as they devise new approaches to understanding the most difficult-to-treat cancers," said Leah Rush Cann, Chair, Hope Funds Board of Trustees Executive Committee. "We at Hope Funds are privileged to have the opportunity to fund their important work, which reflects our commitment to promoting scientific innovation."

Applications for the fellowships came from the most prestigious research institutions and were reviewed by a global scientific study section comprised of key opinion-leader scientists working in oncology.

From more than a hundred applications, Hope Funds selected its 2024 Fellows: Raul Jobava, Ph.D. in the laboratory of Joan Seitz, Ph.D. at Yale University, Jonathan Lee, Ph.D., in the laboratory of Frank Slack, Ph.D., at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at Harvard University, and Adrienne Vancura, Ph.D. in the laboratory of Richard A. Young, Ph.D. at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research at MIT.

Each Fellow will receive approximately \$180,000 over three years to fund their research.

### About the 2024 Fellows

**Raul Jobava, Ph.D.**, is a postdoctoral associate in the laboratory of Joan Steitz, Ph.D. at Yale University, where he studies terminal uridylyltransferases, the enzymes that promote RNA degradation. His long-term career goal is to combine integrative structural biology techniques with high-throughput molecular genetics to help lay the groundwork for drug development. He earned his bachelor's degree from Tbilisi State Medical University in the Republic of Georgia, followed by a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH.

**Jonathan D. Lee, Ph.D.**, is a current postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of Frank Slack, Ph.D. at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at Harvard. He works to develop new tools and technologies to characterize the sets of transcription factors and regulatory RNAs dysregulated in difficult-to-treat cancers, with a current focus on acute myeloid leukemia. He received his A.B. and A.M. in Chemistry, S.M. in Applied

Mathematics, and Ph.D. in Biology and Biomedical Science at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA.

**Adrienne Vancura Ph.D.** is a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of Richard A. Young, Ph.D., at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research at MIT. She is currently working on transcription factors which harbor novel RNA binding domains, and how these interactions govern the structure of genomes. Her goal is to be an independent investigator exploring RNA molecules and their versatile functions within a cell. Dr. Vancura received her B.S. and Ph.D. in Biology at the University of Bern, and her M.S. in Biochemistry and Cancer Biology at the University of Amsterdam.

### **About the Hope Funds Fellowships**

Hope Funds for Cancer Research supports research for highly innovative projects that challenge the traditional paradigms associated with understanding the causes, mechanisms, progression, disease markers, or risk factors of the most difficult-to-treat cancers. Hope Funds believes it is important to emphasize creative approaches to research and award grants to young scientists based on the following criteria: project innovation and originality; the significance and direct relevance of the research proposal; the project's approach and conceptual framework; the researcher's qualifications and those of his or her mentors; and the quality of the researcher's overall working environment.

### **About Hope Funds for Cancer Research**

Hope Funds for Cancer Research was formed in 2006 to establish a funding vehicle that would take a rational scientific, medical, and investment approach to making grants for the most innovative and promising research efforts to address the most difficult-to-treat cancers, including pancreatic, lung, liver, sarcomas, esophageal, brain, gastric, renal and ovarian cancers, as well as rare leukemias, lymphomas and MDS. These cancers are insidiously aggressive illnesses that kill most of their victims within months, even with aggressive chemotherapy. The Trustees of the Hope Funds for Cancer Research believe that funding young, innovative researchers will lead to breakthroughs in these areas and increase life expectancy for those with these types of cancers. The Hope Funds for Cancer Research is a 509 (a)(1) charity under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service's code. For additional information, please visit [www.hope-funds.org](http://www.hope-funds.org) or call 401-847-3286.

*Hope Funds for Cancer Research: Advancing innovative research in understudied cancers*

For additional information about the organization, please visit [www.hope-funds.org](http://www.hope-funds.org) or call (401) 847-3286.

Hope Funds for Cancer Research is an independent and unaffiliated non-profit organization

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