PRESS RELEASE

STALLERGENES GREER FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2023 SCIENCE AWARDS FOR ALLERGY

Baar (Switzerland), May 27, 2024 – The Stallergenes Greer Foundation, dedicated to fostering innovation and precision medicine in the field of allergy, is delighted to announce the recipients of the 2023 edition of its prestigious Science Awards for Allergy. These awards recognise outstanding contributions to allergy research and environmental health initiatives and allocate up to €150,000 to support these efforts.

After thorough review of the 45 high-level applications by the Foundation's Scientific Board and Managing Board, the following researchers have been selected as recipients:

Innovation Awards

- Rising Talent Category:

Assoc. Prof. **Jennifer Koplin**, Group Leader, Childhood Allergy & Epidemiology, Child Health Research Centre, The University of Queensland, Australia, recognised for her research: *"Association between earlier introduction of peanut and prevalence of peanut allergy in infants in Australia"* will receive €25,000.

Assoc. Prof. **Rachel Peters**, Principal Research Fellow, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Australia, recognised for her research: *"Multiple food allergy phenotypes in infancy are associated with lung function deficits and asthma at 6 years of age: a prospective cohort study in Australia"* will receive €25,000.

- Mid-Career Scientist Category:

Assoc. Prof. **Jenny Hallgren Martinsson,** Senior Lecturer in Immunology, Department of Medical Biochemistry and Microbiology, Uppsala University, Sweden, recognized for her research: *"Circulating mast cell progenitors increase during natural birch pollen exposure in allergic asthma patients"* will receive €25,000.

Dr **Luciana Kase Tanno,** Researcher, University Hospital of Montpellier, France, recognised for her research: *"Changing the history of anaphylaxis mortality statistics through the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases 11"* will receive €25,000.

Environmental Health Award

Dr **Dorra Gharbi**, Post doctoral research fellow, Allergology and Immunology Unit, Lung Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa, recognised for her research: "*Allergenic tree pollen in Johannesburg and Cape Town as a public health risk: Towards a sustainable implementation framework for South African cities"* will receive €50,000.

Michele Antonelli, CEO of Stallergenes Greer and Chairman of the Stallergenes Greer Foundation, expresses his congratulations to the award recipients. "*These researchers exemplify the spirit of innovation and dedication that the Stallergenes Greer Foundation seeks to promote. Their work not only advances our understanding of allergies but also brings us closer to creating healthier futures for all. These grants contribute to nurturing the next generation of researchers, in line with the foundation's core mission of supporting academic endeavors aimed at fostering future leaders in allergy healthcare.*"

The Scientific Committee, composed of a panel of international renowned experts:

- Pascal Demoly, Professor of Pulmonology and Head of Department at the University Hospital of Montpellier (France)
- Alessandro Fiocchi, MD, Director of Allergy at Pediatric Hospital Bambino Gesù, Rome, (Vatican City)
- Carla Irani, Associate Professor, Internal Medicine and Clinical Immunology, Allergology - Immunological Asthma at Hôtel Dieu de France University Medical Center, Beirut (Lebanon)
- Kari Nadeau, MD, PhD, Chair of the Department of Environmental Health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston (MA, U.S.A.)

highlighted the comprehensive coverage of allergy research of these awards, spanning public health with international classification of diseases, clinical science in asthma, and epidemiology in food allergy and aerobiology. The members also noted that these awards present an outstanding opportunity to highlight the importance of allergy research while tackling the increasing prevalence of allergic disease across the globe.

The Stallergenes Greer Foundation extends its gratitude to all applicants and acknowledges the invaluable contribution of the Scientific Board in the selection process.

The next Science Awards will be announced in 2025.

About the research projects

Jennifer Koplin's research uses large-scale population-based studies to advance the understanding of childhood food allergy. These studies contribute to the development of novel prevention interventions and are helping to target emerging prevention and treatment strategies for the individuals who will benefit most from these interventions. Her innovative work with the EarlyNuts study evaluated the uptake and impact of early peanut introduction on peanut allergy, not only showing that population-level changes in infant feeding practices are possible, but also contributing to reshaping clinical and public health guidelines, and inspiring novel clinical trials internationally.

Soriano VX, et al: Association Between Earlier Introduction of Peanut and Prevalence of Peanut Allergy in Infants in Australia. JAMA. 2022 Jul 5;328(1):48-56.
https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35788795/

Rachel Peters' research aims to reduce the adverse consequences of infant food allergy – affecting up to 10% of children worldwide – on children's future health. Through a pioneering study on the link between childhood food allergy and respiratory health, she uncovered that infants with food allergy, even if it resolves, present with lung function deficits and a higher risk of asthma by school age. These findings are sparking greater clinical vigilance regarding the monitoring of respiratory health of children with food allergies and will support clinicians worldwide in tailoring patient care.

Peters RL. Soriano VX, Lycett K, et al: Multiple food allergy phenotypes in infancy are associated with lung function deficits and asthma at 6 years of age: a prospective cohort study in Australia. The Lancet child & adolescent health 2023 Sep;7(9):636-647 .https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37506717/

Jenny Hallgren Martinsson's research interest is to determine the role of mast cells—immune cells responsible for immediate allergic reactions—in allergic asthma. Her recent cutting-edge study on birch pollen-sensitized asthma patients and mast cell biology suggests that mast cell progenitors may play a pathogenic role in allergic asthma, thus paving the way for the development of new biomarkers and treatment targets for asthma.

P Abigail Alvarado-Vazquez et al, Circulating mast cell progenitors increase during natural birch pollen exposure in allergic asthma patients Allergy. 2023 Nov;78(11):2959-2968. doi: 10.1111/all.15860. Epub 2023 Aug 24 https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=Alvarado-Vazquez+PA&cauthor_id=37615432

Luciana Kase Tanno dedicated her career to epidemiology research to support public health and preventive actions, more particularly focusing on hypersensitivity conditions such as anaphylaxis. Leveraging a detailed academic and evidence-based action plan, her work helped in reviewing the current International Classification of Diseases to provide greater visibility to allergic and hypersensitivity conditions. Her efforts and commitment will further ensure that patients may benefit from the best management strategy throughout the world.

Kase Tanno et al, Changing the history of anaphylaxis mortality statistics through the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases 11." J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2019 Sep;144(3):627-633. doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2019.05.013. Epub 2019 Jun 20. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31229269/

Dorra Gharbi's research focuses on aerobiology, air quality and environmental health. Her transdisciplinary work is enhancing our understanding of how climate, environmental exposures (aeroallergens) and intrinsic factors intersect to impact respiratory health outcomes. Her efforts to investigate a phenomenon in a specific setting "allergenic pollen-producing trees within the context of urban green infrastructure in South African cities", to inform a wider inquiry regarding the health risk for the South African population, as well as the management thereof in a sustainable implementation framework. The outcome of this research opens the possibility of designing early warning systems to predict community-level surges in poor respiratory health outcomes and be able to provide allergy management plans to prevent allergic reactions.

Gharbi, D., Neumann, F.H., Cilliers, S. et al. Allergenic tree pollen in Johannesburg and Cape Town as a public health risk: towards a sustainable implementation framework for South African cities. Discov Sustain 4, 32 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-023-00151-9

About the Stallergenes Greer Foundation

The Stallergenes Greer Foundation, under the aegis of the Fondation de France, is a non-profit foundation whose aim is to build healthier futures for all. The Stallergenes Greer Foundation pursues a comprehensive approach calling for “the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally, to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment”, as defined by the One Health initiative.

About the Fondation de France

Created in 1969, Fondation de France is a private organisation recognised of public interest, whose mission is to support all forms of generosity and translate them into effective actions of general interest. With close to 1,000 hosted foundations, the Fondation de France supports more than 10,000 promising and innovative initiatives each year, in France and abroad. Independent and private, it operates thanks to the generosity of donors.

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