

The Melanoma Research Alliance

POWERFUL RESEARCH. FASTER RESULTS.

The mission of the Melanoma Research Alliance (MRA) is to end suffering and death due to melanoma by collaborating with all stakeholders to accelerate powerful research, advance cures for all patients, and prevent more melanoma.

Melanoma
Research Alliance

C U R E M E L A N O M A . O R G

By The Numbers: MRA's Research Investments



\$162M+

Since 2007, MRA has invested over \$162M in melanoma research

\$100k
Licensing revenue returned to MRA



475+

MRA has supported >475 research projects at 160 institutions



19

MRA has funded research in 19 countries

>\$450M
Follow-on funding



225

Unique Therapeutic Approaches Studied



61

Clinical Trials Supported by MRA



17

Approved Therapeutics



Thousands
of lives saved and patients cured

Grant Mechanisms

Melanoma
Research Alliance



Grant Mechanisms

Team Science Award: requires multidisciplinary teams and involvement of Young Investigator. \$900k over 3-years [offered every other year]

Established Investigator Award (EIA): past first five years of academic appointment with an established record of scientific productivity. \$375k over 3-years [offered every other year alternating with Team Science awards]

Young Investigator Award (YIA): within five years of first faculty appointment, requiring a mentorship commitment from a senior investigator. \$255k over 3-years

Pilot: test potentially transformative ideas that may not have extensive data, but articulate a clear hypothesis – “high-risk, high-reward.” Applicants must be past first five years of academic appointment. \$100k over 2-years

Dermatology Career Development Award: engages early career faculty and clinical fellows in Dermatology or related departments to conduct research related to prevention, early detection, diagnosis and/or staging requiring a mentor. \$150K over 2-years

Academic-Industry Partnerships: Investigator-initiated research or trials for Team or EIA awards

Next Steps Program

Advance translation of discoveries into the clinic by:

- Developing needed preclinical resources and tools
- Identify new therapies against validated targets
- Build large comprehensive datasets to identify new diagnostic and prognostic biomarkers

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with 'Research' highlighted. A sidebar menu on the left lists 'RESEARCH' categories, with 'Funding Opportunities' expanded to show '2023-2024 Request for Proposals' and 'Next Steps Program'. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail 'Home / Research / Funding Opportunities / Next Steps Program', a main heading 'Next Steps Program', and a paragraph explaining the program's purpose. Below this is a section titled 'Separate Requests for Application (RFAs) in the following three high priority research areas will be released throughout 2024 with key dates for each RFA listed in the table below:' followed by three bullet points detailing the research areas: Advancing Drug Discovery, Diagnostic and Prognostic Biomarker Identification, and Characterization of Rare Melanoma Preclinical Models.

About Melanoma ▾ For Patients ▾ **Research** ▾ News ▾ Get Involved ▾ About MRA ▾

RESEARCH

- Research Overview
- Funding Opportunities** ▾
 - ▶ 2023-2024 Request for Proposals
 - ▶ **Next Steps Program**
- MRA Grant Mechanisms
- MRA Grant Awards
- Scientific Retreat ▾
- RARE Registry
- Research Resources ▾

Home / Research / Funding Opportunities / Next Steps Program

Next Steps Program

MRA is excited to announce a new funding opportunity called **Next Steps**, a separate and distinct grant mechanism from the MRA's annual RFP call for applications. The intent of this funding strategy is to help advance translation of discoveries into the clinic by supporting: 1) needed preclinical resources and tools for the research community to identify and begin to develop new therapies and 2) infrastructure to analyze and build large datasets to identify better diagnostic and prognostic biomarkers leading to hypothesis-driven research proposals for submission to MRA and other funding agencies.

Separate Requests for Application (RFAs) in the following three high priority research areas will be released throughout 2024 with key dates for each RFA listed in the table below:

- **Advancing Drug Discovery to Identify New Therapies:** Drug discovery efforts against validated targets to support new therapeutic entity identification, optimization and testing in preclinical models, with an emphasis on targets including adapter proteins, transcription factors, cell surface proteins, etc (ie: CRKL, TERT, GAB2, YAP, LZTR, B7H3);
- **Diagnostic and Prognostic Biomarker Identification:** Analysis and/or validation of large multi-institutional datasets to advance improvements in early detection and diagnosis across different skin types and identify prognostic biomarkers at different stages of the disease;
- **Characterization of Rare Melanoma Preclinical Models:** Characterization of rare melanoma cell lines and PDX models with different molecular assays and drug sensitivity tests with the goal of making the models and corresponding data available to the research community to enable more preclinical research in rare melanomas.

MRA Scientific Retreat

- Premier annual convening of ~300 global thought leaders from across the global melanoma research community.
- Agenda includes keynote lectures, five scientific sessions, networking roundtables, poster sessions, panel discussions, & more.
- 94% of participants described the scientific sessions as “outstanding” or “great”



MRA Priority Areas

Melanoma
Research Alliance

Advancing Discoveries, Changing Lives, Curing Melanoma (2024 – 2029)

Although MRA is seen as the non-profit leader in applying innovative models and approaches to research and has had numerous successes in advancing critical scientific and clinical questions for melanoma patients, there is still more work to be done. Three key areas MRA is focused on:

Prevention, Detection & Diagnosis

Investments in AI, machine learning, informatics and other technologies to improve prevention, detection and diagnosis

New Treatments

Develop new treatments for 50% of patients with tumors that do not respond to current treatments.

Special emphasis on patients with brain metastasis and LMD

RARE Melanomas

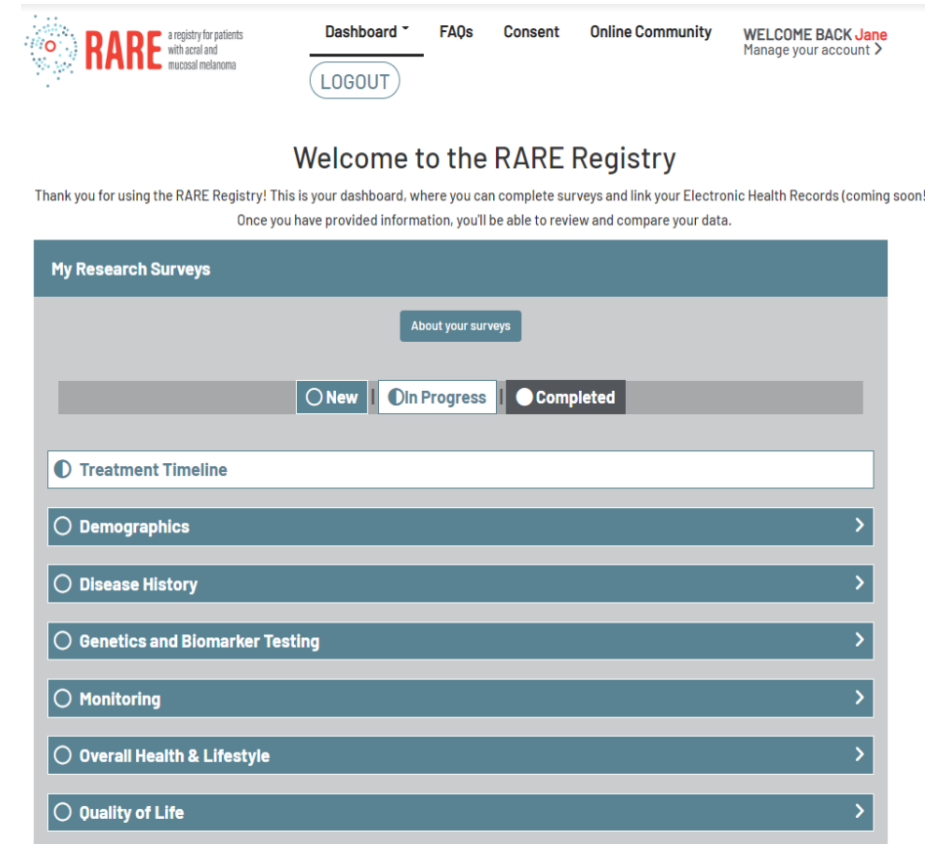
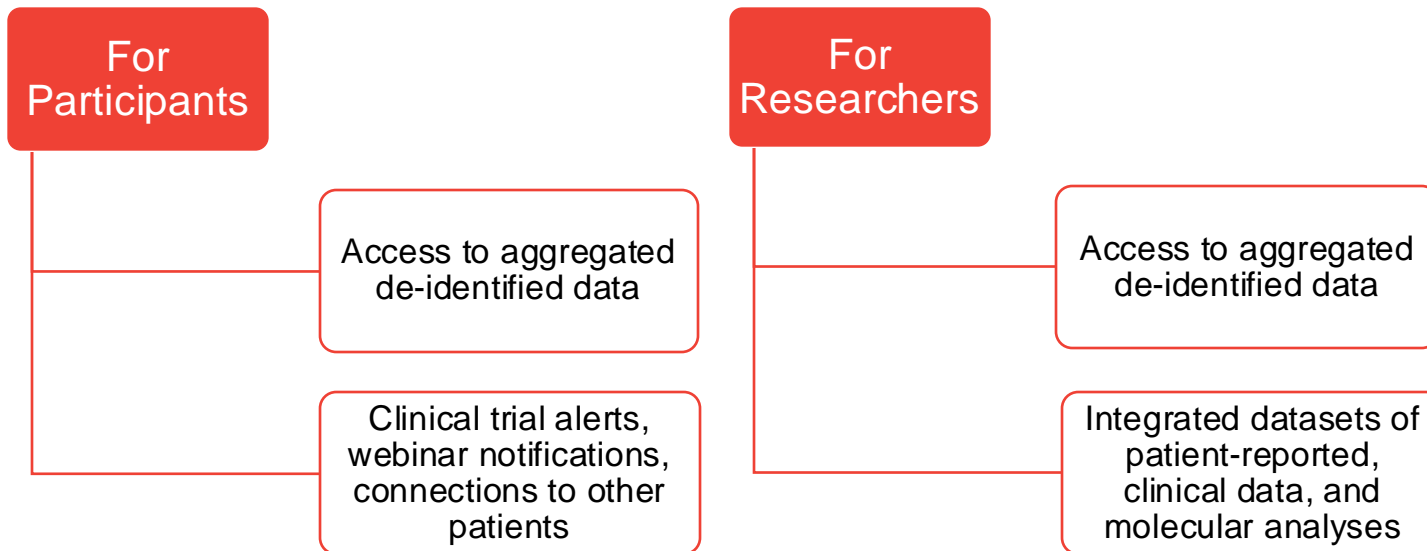
Strategic investments across rare melanomas to translate research from lab bench to bedside

RARE Registry

Acral Melanoma Global Consortium

RARE Registry

- RARE is a web-based, direct to patient registry for patients with acral, mucosal, and cutaneous melanomas.
- Participants fill out a series of surveys and are also able to upload medical reports.
- Opportunity to fill out additional surveys as they are made available.



RareMelanoma.org

New Features Coming in 2024

- **EMR Integration:**
 - Will simplify sharing additional medical reports and other test results with the RARE Registry.
- **MRA Melanoma Biorepository:**
 - Will allow participants to donate tumor tissue and other specimens to RARE for future studies.
- **RARE Research Portal:**
 - New portal will allow researchers to access de-identified RARE participant information to advance research.



RARE and development of additional resources is supported in part through funding from CDMRP Rare Cancer Research Program

Other Resources and Opportunities

Melanoma
Research Alliance

Clinical Trial Awareness

Raising **awareness of clinical trials** is a critical component of all MRA's patient engagement efforts.

MRA's Clinical Trial Navigator tool serves **~450 patients per month**.

Over 19,000 users have accessed the tool since December 2017.

Version 2.0 currently in testing.

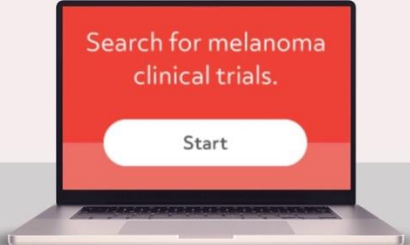
Clinical Trials to Watch

- BNT111 Melanoma Vaccine
- Neoadjuvant vs. Adjuvant Therapy
- TIL Therapy Beats Yervoy
- ARTISTRY-6 Trial

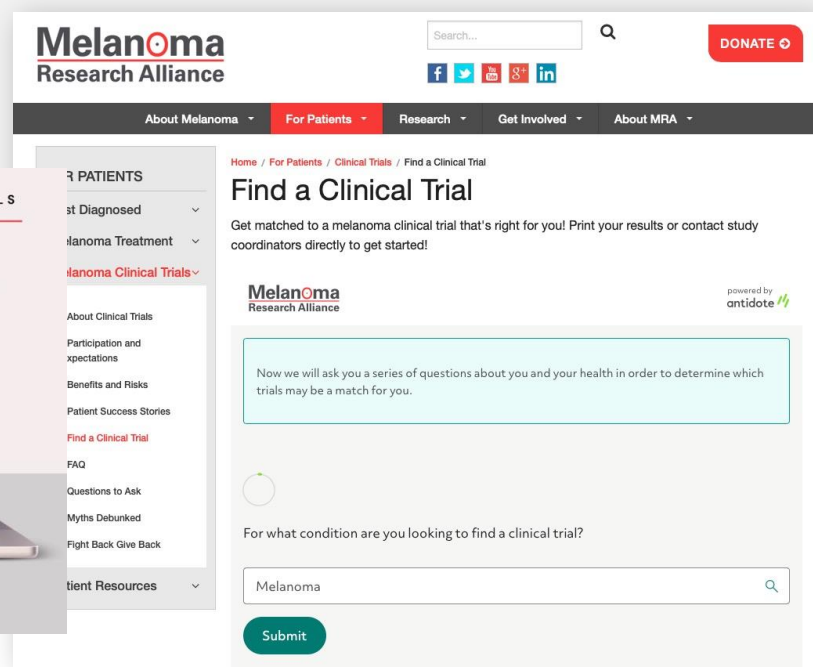
Melanoma Research Alliance

CUREMELANOMA.ORG/CLINICALTRIALS

Match to clinical trials in 60 seconds.



Melanoma Research Alliance



The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with options: About Melanoma, For Patients (highlighted), Research, Get Involved, and About MRA. The main content area is titled 'Find a Clinical Trial' and includes a search bar with 'Melanoma' entered and a 'Submit' button. A sidebar on the left lists various resources for patients, such as 'About Clinical Trials', 'Participation and Expectations', and 'Patient Success Stories'.

Melanoma 
Clinical Trial Navigator

Communications & Community Outreach



MRA website: 600,000+ visitors and 1.5+ million pageviews per year.



MRA Request for Proposals Distribution List: 6,000+ researchers are subscribed to MRA's RFP list. Includes investigators from across United States and 20+ countries.



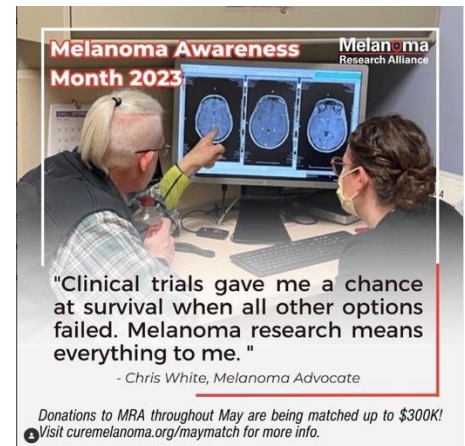
MRA E-news: Monthly publication – reaching 19,000+ people, featuring latest in melanoma research. All articles can be viewed at: CureMelanoma.org/blog.



Melanoma Exchange Online Community: Online patient/family community of 8,000+ people. Available at CureMelanoma.org/community.



MRA Social Media: Each month MRA social media profiles reach 100,000+ people, divided across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, & LinkedIn.



Melanoma

Research Alliance

C U R E M E L A N O M A . O R G

Marc Hurlbert, PhD; CEO – mhurlbert@curemelanoma.org

Stephanie Kauffman; President and COO – skauffman@curemelanoma.org

Joan Levy, PhD; CSO – jlevy@curemelanoma.org

Sara DiNapoli, PhD; Director, Scientific Programs – sdinapoli@curemelanoma.org

Nico Starink, MPH; Senior Associate Grants and Registry – nstarink@curemelanoma.org

Kris'tina Ackerman; Senior Associate Grants and Operations – kackerman@curemelanoma.org



Melanoma Research Alliance
730 15th Street, NW
Fourth Floor
Washington DC, 20005