

For immediate release

**Diabetes Research Connection Awards $400,000 to**

**Eight Promising T1D Studies**

*After rigorous peer review by DRC’s Scientific Review Committee, eight early-career researchers were awarded seed funding for their work to find the cause, treatment, and cure for T1D*

**SAN DIEGO – June 16, 2022 –** [Diabetes Research Connection](http://www.diabetesresearchconnection.org) (DRC), a 501(c)(3) that funds [research projects](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/#successfullyfundedd561-cf47abaf-3536) conducted by early-career researchers aimed at prevention, cure, and better care for those with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D), recently awarded seed funding to eight promising new T1D studies totaling a $400,000 investment, as it celebrates 10 years advancing diabetes research. The process of distributing the awards is underway.

DRC announces awards twice annually after its [Scientific Review Committee](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/about-us/scientific-review-committee-2/) (SRC), comprised of T1D experts nationwide, conducts rigorous review of dozens of applications from researchers at renowned institutions and universities.

June 2022 DRC funding recipients include:

* **Rehana Akter, Ph.D. – University of Washington**

[Is Cholesterol Exacerbating T1D by Reducing the Functionality and Regeneration Ability of Residual Beta Cells?](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/cholesterol-exacerbating-t1d/)

* **Jennifer Dwyer, Ph.D. – The Jackson Laboratory**

[Taming a Particularly Lethal Category of Cells May Reduce/Eliminate the Onset of T1D](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/lethal-category-of-cells/)

* **Leonardo Ferreira, Ph.D. – Medical University of South Carolina**

[A Potential Second Cure for T1D by Re-Educating the Patient’s Immune System](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/re-educating-the-patients-immune-system/)

* **Sandra Mara Ferreira, Ph.D. – University of Florida**

[Understanding How a Pancreatic Molecule (GABA) Works May Lead to a New Treatment for T1 and T2 Diabetes](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/pancreatic-molecule-gaba/)

* **Anna Kahkoska, M.D., Ph.D. – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

[Stakeholder-Engaged Precision Health for Longevity and Healthy Aging with Type 1 Diabetes](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/healthy-aging-with-t1d/)

* **Melanie Shapiro, Ph.D. – University of Florida**

[Can the Inhibition of One Specific Body Gene Prevent Type 1 Diabetes?](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/specific-body-gene/)

* **Xin Tong, Ph.D. – Vanderbilt University**

[A call to question…Is T1D Caused by Dysfunctionality of Two Pancreatic Cells (β and α)?](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/dysfunctionality-of-two-pancreatic-cells/)

* **Han Zhu, Ph.D. – University of California, San Diego**

[Validating the Hypothesis to Cure T1D by Eliminating the Rejection of Cells from Another Person by Farming Beta-Cells from a Patient’s Own Stem Cells](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/eliminating-the-rejection-of-cells/)

One researcher among the eight awarded DRC funding, [Dr. Jennifer Dwyer of The Jackson Laboratory](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/lethal-category-of-cells/),says, "Two years after I earned my Ph.D., my son was diagnosed with T1D. Knowing how this impacted his metabolism, I took a break from work to care for my young family. During this time away from the bench, I got to know the inspiring T1D community through my son's physicians, networking with other T1D families, and reading scientific literature. Artificial pancreas technology is wonderful, but it is not enough; we can do better. In deciding to return to science, I wanted to work on something I cared deeply for."

[Alberto Hayek, M.D.](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/about-us/board-of-directors/), renowned diabetes expert, former Scientific Director at San Diego’s Scripps Whittier Institute for Diabetes, Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics at UCSD, DRC board member and co-founder says, “DRC continues to provide seed funding to promising T1D research conducted by innovative early-career scientists across the U.S. The eight talented researchers we selected in one of two funding phases in 2022 are exploring exciting leads as to the cause and prevention of T1D and how we might ultimately cure the disease. These types of early-stage studies are often overlooked by other funding sources yet have potential to forever influence our understanding of T1D.”

#### U.S.-based post-doctoral fellows, professors, and instructors whose research is focused on T1D and have not received NIH funding as a Principal Investigator, are eligible to [apply for DRC funding](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/submit-a-project/). Once a study has been approved by DRC’s SRC, donors have the opportunity to [support a research project](https://diabetesresearchconnection.org/projects/) of their choice, interact with researchers, receive project updates and personalized thank-you letters, and attend in-person events with researchers. [www.DiabetesResearchConnection.com](http://www.DiabetesResearchConnection.com)

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