



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Your gifts are saving lives



Thank you to everyone who has given to support groundbreaking research into harnessing the immune system to fight cancer. Together, you have raised £383,039.8 towards this life-saving work.

2,585 donors

have supported this project

We are incredibly grateful for the amazing support of alumni and friends.

It gives us the flexibility to respond to new ideas, provides the pump priming for our team to test these ideas and progress them to the point that we are able to gain external funding via research grants.

I'm thrilled to share that we were recently awarded CRUK Centre Status. The important research that alumni funding is supporting has undoubtedly been a crucial part in helping to make this possible. Thank you.

Professor Gary Middleton, Professor of Medical Oncology, Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy

Image from multiplex stainer funded by your donations

Purple: Immune cells | Green: Tumour cells | Red: Signal inhibiting molecules targeted by therapy*

*Cancer cells produce molecules that switch off the signal that makes them recognisable to immune cells, inhibiting the immune system's ability to kill the tumour. By targeting this molecule, it is possible to switch the signal back on so the immune cells can attack the tumour.

HARNESSING THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO COMBAT CANCER

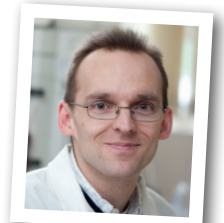


Two leaders in their field, Professor Gary Middleton and Professor Ben Willcox, are working hard to discover new ways to harness the immune system to fight cancer. More than 2,550 donors have given to support this vital work.

'The funds donated by alumni and friends are game-changing for our research. Your support has enabled us to purchase a specialist piece of equipment, an advanced multiplex tissue stainer. This machine analyses the characterisation of the immune signature inside tumours, allowing us to investigate why some tumours respond to therapy and why some don't.

This means we can focus treatments more accurately for patients. It will also help us to better understand the role of particular immune cells, which could unlock new immune therapeutic strategies. It's helped us to become a key opinion leader in this field.'

*Professor Ben Willcox,
Professor of Molecular
Immunology, Institute
of Immunology
and Immunotherapy*





FROM 'BENCH TO BEDSIDE' IN BIRMINGHAM

'The Institute of Translational Medicine (ITM), which officially opened on 4 October 2016, is a world-class research facility that will translate science from the "bench to the patient's bedside" by bringing together multidisciplinary researchers, clinicians, statisticians and informatics, and clinical trials experts within one innovative space.

'Greater Birmingham is one of the most important sites for life sciences and translational medicine in the UK. Our region is globally unique, offering access to a large, stable population, with a relatively high incidence of genetic diversity and rare disease.

'This population profile, combined with our clinical, scientific and academic strengths, provides the optimum environment for delivering clinical trials to develop more effective diagnostics and therapeutics to transform our ability to treat human disease. Thank you to everyone who has generously invested in the development of the ITM. You are enabling research that will save and improve lives for patients in Birmingham, and far beyond.'

Professor Subrata Ghosh, Professor of Translational Medicine, Director of the Institute of Translational Medicine

I'm currently being treated for a form of kidney disease at the Centre for Rare Diseases in the ITM.

The environment within the ITM, and the access to cutting-edge research and specialised staff it affords, has greatly enhanced the treatment options available to me. I benefit from personalised treatment, more so than what would be possible in a traditional high-turnaround outpatients clinic.

I have taken part in two research studies and I am considering participating in a third. It is good to know that future patients will benefit from this critical research. I'm extremely grateful to everyone who has given to support the ITM to help make this important work possible.

Martin Skilling, ITM Patient

2,151 donors
have supported this project



Professor Subrata Ghosh (far right) and Martin Skilling (centre left) at the official opening of the ITM.

Louise Ferriman and her family



58%
OF GIFTS
(ITM)

Over the years, you have given gifts to these



3 donors
supported this project



11%
OF GIFTS
(MATERNAL
HEALTH)

13%
OF GIFTS
(CHILDHOOD
CANCER)

18%
OF GIFTS
(CANCER
IMMUNOLOGY)

**past five
you have
generously
projects**



186 donors
supported this project

FIGHTING CHILDHOOD CANCER



'We've discovered cancer cells require a particular nutrient, arginine, to divide and grow. By depriving cancer cells of this nutrient, through a new drug we have been developing, the cancer cells can no longer survive and they die.'

'In the last 18 months, this therapy has undergone trials in adults with cancer, with some remarkable results. The trials have shown that the drug appeared to have significantly milder side-effects than conventional treatments, such as radiotherapy or chemotherapy.'

'We are now taking this treatment forward in two international clinical trials. These trials will provide hope for children with no other alternative options for treatment, as well as provide valuable insights into this brand new therapy.'

'Thank you to everyone who has generously donated – your support has been essential in undertaking this vital work.'

Dr Frank Mussai, Clinical Senior Lecturer in Paediatric Oncology, Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy

At the age of two, my son, George, was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia.

The research of Dr Frank Mussai and his team means so much to me and my family. George is now in remission. If it wasn't for researchers like Dr Frank Mussai, he might not be alive right now.

With the support of family and friends, we've already raised £6,000 towards Dr Mussai's work. Next year I'm planning to undertake five marathons in four weeks to raise further funds! I'm determined to use our experience to raise awareness of this terrible disease, and to support the research that has helped save my son's life.

Louise Ferriman, Donor and Community Fundraiser

MATERNAL HEALTH: GLOBAL IMPACT



Globally, maternal sepsis is one of the top three killers of mothers. In low-income countries, a third of women who contract severe sepsis during pregnancy or childbirth will die, compared to just 0.05% in the UK.

Supported by you, a team of Birmingham researchers, led by Dr David Lissauer, are working to save the lives of mothers who develop sepsis in low-income countries. In partnership with the World Health Organisation and local health practitioners, the team have developed a specialist kit, 'FAST-M'. This life-saving bundle will help local health care workers to quickly identify and treat sepsis.

'FAST-M' is set to form a key component of the World Health Organisation maternal sepsis initiative.

A large multi-national randomised clinical trial is planned, starting this year, to further test and develop the bundle.

Thank you to everyone who has given to make this life-saving work possible.

I'm very excited to be involved in this project. Having a simple method of diagnosing and treating sepsis will make a real difference to the treatment health carers are able to provide. I'm confident that this work will save the lives of many mothers.

Laura Munthali, project manager based in Malawi



TOMMY'S NATIONAL CENTRE FOR MISCARRIAGE RESEARCH

'One in four pregnancies end in miscarriage, affecting 250,000 women and their partners every year. April 2016 marked the opening of Tommy's National Centre for Miscarriage Research, the UK's first national research centre dedicated to early miscarriage.

'The research centre, led by Birmingham's Professor Arri Coomarasamy, is a partnership of three universities: the University of Birmingham, the University of Warwick, and Imperial College London, working with their affiliated NHS trusts.

'Research covers everything from genetic testing to immune and lifestyle factors, and the work in Birmingham builds on the University's international reputation for early pregnancy research.

'Birmingham is a great location for miscarriage research. We have some of the brightest researchers and clinicians who have dedicated their professional lives to this area. We also have cutting-edge laboratory facilities, and access to one of the largest regional genetics centres.

'Miscarriage is a common but deeply personal and often isolating experience for many couples. The Centre is dedicated to making a difference, and to answering the questions that matter the most.

'We are committed to understanding the causes of miscarriage and finding new ways to prevent it. Tommy's investment in the centre is the best thing that has happened to miscarriage research. It will change many lives.'

**Professor Arri Coomarasamy,
Director of Tommy's National
Centre for Miscarriage Research**



**This baby girl, she's
my miracle.**

It took me two-and-a-half years to have her and the University of Birmingham and the Women's Hospital were with me every step of the way.

Knowing there are people out there researching early miscarriage gives women hope and belief when some times there are no answers available.

**Harpreet Bains, who
experienced three miscarriages
and now has a four-month-
old daughter**

Research project

launching April 2017

Research into miscarriage is going to be one of our main health fundraising priorities for 2017. Look out for further information to follow or get in touch with us at donorrelations@contacts.bham.ac.uk to find out more.

Get in touch

We'd be delighted to hear from you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Thank you again for all your incredible support!

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