

# Break Through Cancer & ALK Positive, Inc. Team Up to Conquer ALK-Positive Lung Cancer with a Multi-year Partnership □

*The goal is to find cures for ALK- positive lung cancer by targeting residual disease that remains after initial treatment.*

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES, May 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Break



Through Cancer announces a new partnership with ALK Positive Inc. (ALK Positive), a foundation funded by patients with ALK-positive lung cancer and their families. ALK Positive and Break Through Cancer are joining forces to fund a new initiative in lung cancer research with the hope of creating durable responses and cures for patients with ALK-positive lung cancer.

ALK Positive is the first foundation partner to commit funding to Break Through Cancer for the initiative. Jointly, they hope to inspire other foundations, individual donors, and industry partners to join them as they work to build a coalition to support this life-saving effort.

ALK Positive was founded on the principle that funding innovative, cutting-edge research is the only way to improve patient outcomes & ultimately transform ALK-positive cancer into a curable disease."

*Dr. Ken Culver, ALK Positive's  
Director of Research and  
Clinical Affairs*

Why fund ALK-positive lung cancer research?

ALK-positive lung cancer is a specific type of lung cancer that is frequently not related to smoking and often occurs in younger patients. The precise cause of ALK-positive lung cancer is unknown. This type of lung cancer is defined by a distinctive, measurable genetic change in lung cells leading to changes in the ALK gene. Despite advances with ALK-targeting drugs, these therapies are not curative.

ALK Positive, a patient-driven organization founded in 2017, has committed \$2M over four years to launch this endeavor with Break Through Cancer with the goal of finding cures for ALK-positive lung cancer by targeting residual disease that remains after initial treatment.

Kirk Smith, patient advocate and president of the ALK Positive Board of Directors, explains the motivation for its involvement, "ALK Positive was founded on the principle that funding innovative, cutting-edge research is the only way to improve patient outcomes and ultimately

transform ALK-positive cancer into a curable disease.”

ALK Positive, Inc. supports over 600,000 patients around the globe who are diagnosed with the ALK gene mutation within their tumors. Along with this financial commitment, ALK Positive is intent on engaging their community of patients in support of this effort. “ALK Positive’s mission is to inspire hope throughout our ALK cancer community through research that can create clinical trials for them as soon as possible,” stated Dr. Ken Culver, ALK Positive’s Director of Research and Clinical Affairs. “We have a vision of a future that includes cures for our disease. Bringing our members into clinical research designed for them is part of that vision.”

Break Through Cancer is a new foundation that empowers researchers and physicians from top cancer research institutions to intercept and find cures for several of the world's deadliest cancers.

Break Through Cancer has pioneered a new approach to cancer research that utilizes radical collaboration in a “TeamLab” model, which is enabled by real-time data and discovery sharing. TeamLabs work across multiple institutions and look beyond conventional therapies, utilizing new strategies, structures, and thinking from across disciplines.

Targeting residual disease in metastatic ALK positive cancer

While initial treatments often lead to dramatic responses with few or no tumor cells detectable by radiographic scanning, the cancer often recurs because of a small number of malignant cells have escaped the killing effects of the targeted therapy. This residual disease fuels the cancer’s recurrence and spread. This TeamLab’s approach will work to identify and exploit the vulnerabilities of the residual cancer cells. Then it will test novel therapies—such as vaccine-based targeting strategies—to strike those weak points. The ultimate goal is to develop treatment strategies that leave no cancer cells alive.

“Through our approach of radical collaboration, Break Through Cancer and its partners are committed to discovering and implementing novel approaches to significantly extend treatment responses in patients with ALK-positive lung cancer,” says Tyler Jacks, PhD, President of Break Through Cancer. “Our goal is to convert good, initial therapeutic responses to actual cures.”

About Break Through Cancer

Founded in 2021, Break Through Cancer empowers outstanding researchers and physicians to both work toward prevention and to find interventions and cures for several of the deadliest cancers by stimulating radical collaboration among outstanding cancer research institutions, including Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, MIT’s Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. The organization looks beyond conventional therapies, utilizing new strategies, structures, and thinking from across disciplines to accelerate the pace of discovery.

The President of Break Through Cancer is Tyler Jacks, Ph.D., founding director of MIT's Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research and the David H. Koch (1962) Professor of Biology. The Foundation's board includes leaders from each of the five Break Through Cancer partner institutions and a Scientific Advisory Board of cancer experts from around the country.

The Foundation was launched with an extraordinary challenge pledge of \$250 million from Mr. and Mrs. William H. Goodwin, Jr. and their family, and the estate of William Hunter Goodwin III. This is only a fraction of the funding and resources needed to solve the complex problems the cancer community faces, however. We will need support and creative minds from across the public and private ecosystems to make this happen. We are just getting started!  
breakthroughcancer.org

About ALK Positive, Inc.

ALK Positive is a 501(c)(3) organization with the mission to improve the life expectancy and quality of life of ALK-positive cancer patients worldwide. ALK Positive is committed to raising funds for research proposals that will transform ALK-positive cancer into a chronic or curable condition for all patients living with this disease. ALK Positive has raised over \$7M to date to fund ALK-positive specific cancer research.

For more information about ALK Positive, please visit [www.alkpositive.org](http://www.alkpositive.org).

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