

# Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award

A program of the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation



**Alumni Directory**

**2018 - 2025**

The Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation is committed to effecting permanent positive change in the lives of the residents of Greater Boston, particularly individuals and families in economically disadvantaged communities. Today, three generations of the Smith family oversee the Foundation, stewarding approximately \$15 million annually in grants aimed at promoting greater health, educational attainment, and economic mobility. In the area of health, the Foundation supports the advancement of biomedical research and the expansion of access to high-quality health care at safety net institutions serving low-income individuals and communities of Greater Boston.

The Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award was created in 2017 to fuel creativity and innovation in junior investigators in the basic sciences. The Award supports the pursuit of high impact ideas to generate breakthroughs and drive new directions in biomedical research. The Award funds high-risk, high-reward pilot projects solicited from the brightest junior faculty in the region. The Awards are currently in the amount of \$400,000 over two years.

Since 2018, the Smith Family Foundation: Odyssey Award has helped launch the careers of 37 outstanding scientists with support totaling \$12.1 million.

The following is a listing of all Award Recipients in alphabetical order with current contact information as well as the title of the funded research project. The Smith Family is extraordinarily proud of the accomplishments of its Awardees and is honored to provide the critical support for their newly established research programs.

**Jonathan Abraham, M.D., Ph.D.**  
(2022 Award Recipient)  
*Cracking the codes of emerging virus entry*  
Harvard Medical School  
[jonathan\\_abraham@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:jonathan_abraham@hms.harvard.edu)

**Haribabu Arthanari, Ph.D.,**  
(2022 Award Recipient)  
*Focus on the Blindspot: Deciphering the Functional Role of Disordered Regions on the Enzymatic Activity of Enzymes*  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
[hari@dfci.harvard.edu](mailto:hari@dfci.harvard.edu)

**Franziska Bleichert, Ph.D.**  
(2024 Award Recipient)  
*In situ structural biology of eukaryotic DNA replication*  
Yale University  
[franziska.bleichert@yale.edu](mailto:franziska.bleichert@yale.edu)

**Lydia Bourouiba, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Respiratory Disease Transmission: Mechanistic Understanding for Control and Prevention of Epidemics*  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
[lbouro@mit.edu](mailto:lbouro@mit.edu)

**Alan Brown, Ph.D.**  
(2023 Award Recipient)  
*The Molecular Organization of a Liquid-like Biomolecular Condensate*  
Harvard Medical School  
[alan\\_brown@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:alan_brown@hms.harvard.edu)

**Benjamin Lovegren de Bivort, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Mapping Loci of Individuality for Spontaneous and Stimulus-Evoked Behaviors*  
Harvard University  
[debivort@oeb.harvard.edu](mailto:debivort@oeb.harvard.edu)

**Edward Chouchani, Ph.D.**  
(2021 Award Recipient)  
*Systematic Chemical Manipulation Of Redox Sensitive Cysteines To Regulate Inflammatory Processes*  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
[EdwardT\\_Chouchani@dfci.harvard.edu](mailto:EdwardT_Chouchani@dfci.harvard.edu)

**Joseph Davis, Ph.D.**  
(2023 Award Recipient)  
*Visualizing Protein Complexes At The Membrane*  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
[jhdavis@mit.edu](mailto:jhdavis@mit.edu)

**Marcelo Dietrich, M.D.**  
(2021 Award Recipient)  
*Opioid-Producing Neurons that Mediate the Attachment of Infants to their Mothers*  
Yale University  
[marcelo.dietrich@yale.edu](mailto:marcelo.dietrich@yale.edu)

**Florian Douam, Ph.D.**  
(2024 Award Recipient)  
*Characterizing A Novel Humanized Mouse Platform to Model Arbovirus Transmission*  
Boston University  
[fdouam@bu.edu](mailto:fdouam@bu.edu)

**Jessica Fetterman, Ph.D.**  
(2024 Award Recipient)  
*Development of Novel Approaches for Editing Mitochondrial Genetic Variants in Patient-Derived Stem Cells*  
[jefetter@bu.edu](mailto:jefetter@bu.edu)

**Jenna Galloway, Ph.D.**  
(2021 Award Recipient)  
*Identifying the molecular and cellular determinants of exercise-driven tendon remodeling*  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
[jgalloway@mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:jgalloway@mgh.harvard.edu)

**Elena Gracheva, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Regulation of Fluid and Ionic Balance Under Extreme Physiological States in a Mammalian Hibernator*  
Yale University  
[elena.gracheva@yale.edu](mailto:elena.gracheva@yale.edu)

**Yonatan Grad, M.D., Ph.D.**  
(2020 Award Recipient)  
*Mechanisms of Host-pathogen Interactions from Conditionally Essential and Deleterious Genes*  
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health  
[ygrad@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:ygrad@hsph.harvard.edu)

**Paul Greer, Ph.D.**  
(2023 Award Recipient)  
*Elucidating Common Mechanisms Across Neurodegenerative Disorders*  
University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School  
[Paul.Greer@umassmed.edu](mailto:Paul.Greer@umassmed.edu)

**Ya-Chieh Hsu, Ph.D.**  
(2018 Award Recipient)  
*Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Fetal Skin Regeneration*  
Harvard University  
[yachieh\\_hsu@harvard.edu](mailto:yachieh_hsu@harvard.edu)

**Ruaidhri Jackson, Ph.D.**  
(2023 Award Recipient)  
*Interchromosomal mRNA Chimerism in Innate Immunity*  
Harvard Medical School  
[ruaidhri\\_jackson@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:ruaidhri_jackson@hms.harvard.edu)

**Shantanu Jadhav, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Neural Coordination Mechanisms for Memory Function and Dysfunction*  
Brandeis University  
[shantanu@brandeis.edu](mailto:shantanu@brandeis.edu)

**Ankur Jain, Ph.D.**  
(2025 Award Recipient)  
*RNA Misfolding as a Driver of Cold-Sensitive Autoimmune Diseases*  
Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research  
[ajain@wi.mit.edu](mailto:ajain@wi.mit.edu)

**Dong Kong, Ph.D.**  
(2022 Award Recipient)  
*Genetic Dissection of Dyslipidemia in Neurodevelopmental Disorders*  
Boston Children's Hospital  
[dong.kong@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:dong.kong@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Eunjung "Alice" Lee, Ph.D.**  
(2025 Award Recipient)  
*Harnessing Interactions Between Transposable Elements RNA and RNA-Binding Proteins for Personalized Splicing Modulation*  
Boston Children's Hospital  
[Ealice.lee@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Ealice.lee@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Gene-Wei Li, Ph.D.**  
(2020 Award Recipient)  
*Breakaway Transcription as an Alternative Paradigm for Bacterial Gene Expression*  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
[gwli@mit.edu](mailto:gwli@mit.edu)

**Maofu Liao, Ph.D.**  
(2019 Award Recipient)  
*Elucidating the Molecular Mechanism of ABCA7, a Membrane Transporter associated with Alzheimer's Disease*  
Harvard Medical School  
[maofu\\_liao@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:maofu_liao@hms.harvard.edu)

**Chenxiang Lin, Ph.D.**

(2020 Award Recipient)

*Tension-loaded DNA Nanodevices for Structural Determination of Mechanosensitive Proteins*

Yale University

[chenxiang.lin@yale.edu](mailto:chenxiang.lin@yale.edu)

**Sebastian Lourido, Ph.D.**

(2021 Award Recipient)

*Controlling the developmental transitions of a eukaryotic pathogen*

Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research

[lourido@wi.mit.edu](mailto:lourido@wi.mit.edu)

**Sarah McMenamin, Ph.D.**

(2021 Award Recipient)

*Mechanisms by which shape is specified and remembered during development and regeneration of the zebrafish fin*

Boston College

[mcmenam@bc.edu](mailto:mcmenam@bc.edu)

**Wei Mi, Ph.D.**

(2025 Award Recipient)

*Designing Innovative BacPROTACs to Combat Gram-Negative Bacterial Infections*

Yale University, School of Medicine

[wei.mi@yale.edu](mailto:wei.mi@yale.edu)

**Meenakshi Rao, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2020 Award Recipient)

*Glial Phagocytosis in Intestinal Homeostasis*

Boston Children's Hospital

[Meenakshi.Rao@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Meenakshi.Rao@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Esther Rheinbay, Ph.D.**

(2024 Award Recipient)

*Impact of Somatic Y Chromosome Loss in Immune Cells on Tumor Response*

Massachusetts General Hospital

[erheinbay@gha.harvard.edu](mailto:erheinbay@gha.harvard.edu)

**Mohsan Saeed, Ph.D.**

(2023 Award Recipient)

*Deciphering the Immune Evasion Mechanisms of Arboviruses in Mosquitoes*

Boston University School of Medicine

[msaeed@bu.edu](mailto:msaeed@bu.edu)

**Sichen Shao, Ph.D.**

(2022 Award Recipient)

*Establishing Tractable Systems to Mechanistically Dissect Mammalian ERAD*

Harvard Medical School

[Sichen\\_Shao@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Sichen_Shao@hms.harvard.edu)

**Sarah Slavoff, Ph.D.**

(2019 Award Recipient)

*Non-Canonical Translation of Small Open Reading Frames in the Human Genome*

Yale Cancer Center

[sarah.slavoff@yale.edu](mailto:sarah.slavoff@yale.edu)

**Mansi Srivastava, Ph.D.**

(2020 Award Recipient)

*Comparing Development and Regeneration to Uncover Mechanisms for Maintaining Regenerative Ability in Adult Animals*

Harvard University

[mansi@oeb.harvard.edu](mailto:mansi@oeb.harvard.edu)

**David Sykes, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2024 Award Recipient)

*The TEMPI Syndrome: How Does AN Autoreactive Antibody Trigger Erythropoietin Production and Erythrocytosis?*

Massachusetts General Hospital

[dbsykes@partners.org](mailto:dbsykes@partners.org)

**Xin Tang, Ph.D.**

(2025 Award Recipient)

*BAGAcergic Inhibition of Brain Tumor Progression*

Boston Children's Hospital

[Xin.Tang@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Xin.Tang@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Andrew Wang, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2021 Award Recipient)

*Understanding the Role of Brain T-cells in  
Defending Sleep*

Yale University

[andrew.wang@yale.edu](mailto:andrew.wang@yale.edu)

**Xu Zhou, Ph.D.**

(2025 Award Recipient)

*Intracellular Environment Engineering in  
Immune Modulation*

Boston Children's Hospital

[Xu.Zhou@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Xu.Zhou@childrens.harvard.edu)

**Marc Wein, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2022 Award Recipient)

*Trafficking and Translation of mRNA in  
Osteocyte Dendrites*

Massachusetts General Hospital

[mnwein@mgh.harvard.edu](mailto:mnwein@mgh.harvard.edu)

**Jing-Ke Weng, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2018 Award Recipient)

*Novel Psychiatric Therapeutics Inspired by  
Bioactive Plant Polyketides*

Whitehead Institute for Biomedical  
Research

[wengj@wi.mit.edu](mailto:wengj@wi.mit.edu)

**Jessica Whited, Ph.D.**

(2019 Award Recipient)

*Transmission of Amputation Information  
Throughout the Body in Axolotl*

Brigham and Women's Hospital

[jessica\\_whited@harvard.edu](mailto:jessica_whited@harvard.edu)

**Craig Wilen, M.D., Ph.D.**

(2022 Award Recipient)

*Epigenetic Regulation of Coronavirus  
Susceptibility*

Yale University

[craig.wilen@yale.edu](mailto:craig.wilen@yale.edu)

**Wesley Philip Wong, Ph.D.**

(2019 Award Recipient)

*Single-Molecule Protein Identification with  
Mechanical Nanocalipers*

Boston Children's Hospital

[wong@idi.harvard.edu](mailto:wong@idi.harvard.edu)