

press release

Milan, 11th February 2022

To mark the International Day of Women in Science, Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna, with Prada Group as supporting partner, and Fondazione AIRC are happy to announce the winners of the first edition of the Call for proposals “Gianni Bonadonna” Fellowships.

In the week that opened on February 4th, with World Cancer Day, and ends today, with the International Day of Women in Science, **Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna**, with the support of **Prada Group**, and **Fondazione AIRC** are pleased to present two young researchers, winners of the first Call for Fellowship in memory of the father of Italian medical oncology, Gianni Bonadonna. **Gaia Giannone** and **Stefania Morganti** have indeed been awarded two fellowships within the 2021 edition of the FGB-AIRC Call for Fellowship. The Fellowships are for a 3-year period abroad, that the researchers will spend in outstanding cancer institutes, learning innovative approaches to cancer and starting their projects focused on two female tumors. The goal is to offer more effective therapies to many patients.



Gaia Giannone, coming from the Istituto di Candiolo - Fondazione del Piemonte per l’Oncologia - IRCCS, will work on ovarian cancer at the Imperial College in London. Her project will focus on high-grade serous ovarian carcinoma, the most frequent and aggressive cancer of this kind. The aim is to identify mutations that occur during tumor progression and the development of resistance, in order to offer more precise therapies to patients at each stage of the disease.

Stefania Morganti will move from the Istituto Europeo di Oncologia in Milan to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, for a research on HER2-positive metastatic breast cancer. The aim of her research project is to deepen the studies on minimal residual disease as a possible indicator of long-term response to therapy.

More adequate treatment strategies based on specific characteristics of the tumors may emerge in this way, for the benefit of patients.



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Both research projects will contribute to the advancement of knowledge on ovarian and breast cancer and to an improvement in patients' treatments and quality of life. Thus, one of the most ambitious aims of the partnership between Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna, with the support of Prada Group, and Fondazione AIRC is now realized: to train a new generation of clinician scientists, which will be able to combine the expertise and knowledge of basic research with a solid clinical preparation, to be made available to cancer patients.

"The awarding of these first two translational research grants named after Gianni Bonadonna is in the wake of what the father of modern medical oncology always considered essential: oncologists who know about medicine and about research, to continue implementing treatment options for cancer patients." - declares **Luca Gianni**, President of Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna - "The two research oncologists who benefit from this initiative mark the first step in the commitment of Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna, together with the Prada Group as supporting partner, and AIRC to keep the engine of innovation in Italian oncology running".

"The assignment of the two 'Gianni Bonadonna' scholarships marks the beginning of the training and specialization period in international clinical research for two young researchers - says **Federico Caligaris Cappio**, Scientific Director of Fondazione AIRC. The experience in foreign laboratories of excellence is a very important element for the growth of our scientists, to whom we must ensure the best conditions for their return to our country, in order for them to bring back what they have learned abroad. For this reason, AIRC publishes special Calls, such as the Start-Up. We are also working on new plans to enable the brightest young researchers to work in the field, in order to ensure the future of the best cancer research and contribute to its growth".

"Education and culture are essential tools that help us not only to understand ourselves and the world we live in but also push us to explore what we do not know. I am happy that Prada can support a new generation of excellent researchers in their study and education path alongside the Gianni Bonadonna Foundation." - declares **Miuccia Prada**.

In this context, Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna and Fondazione AIRC, given the success of the first Call and the high quality of the applications received for the 2021 edition, are pleased to announce the **second edition of the Call for the "Gianni Bonadonna" Fellowship 2022**. Details will be published in the upcoming months on the institutional websites of FGB and AIRC.



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Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna (www.fondazionebonadonna.org) was launched to honor and pursue the legacy of Gianni Bonadonna, founding father of modern oncology who developed key new therapies for women with breast cancer and patients with lymphomas. Fondazione Gianni Bonadonna's mission is to promote therapeutic innovation from the earliest phases of research and support the education of new generations of physician-scientists in oncology.

Courageously fighting cancer since 1965, **Fondazione AIRC** supports innovative scientific projects through continuous and transparent fundraising, disseminates scientific information, and promotes the culture of prevention at home, in schools, and within communities. Its supporters number 4.5 million, with 20 thousand volunteers and 17 regional committees in Italy. All together, they provide resources to over 5,000 researchers - 62% women and 55% under 40 - to bring the lab results to patients in the shortest possible time. In more than 55 years, AIRC has distributed over 1.7 billion euros to cancer research (data updated as of 10 January 2022). For further information and details, please visit airc.it.

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