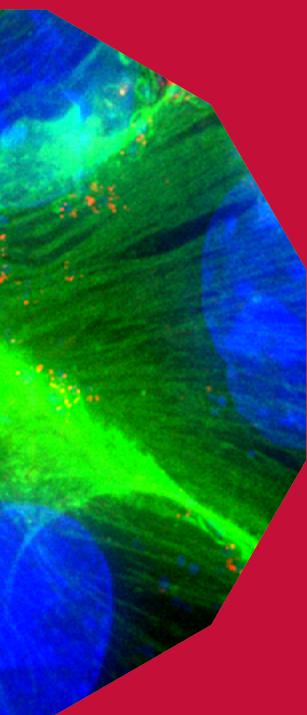


Our discoveries Your impact 2025



Welcome from our Chief Executive

As ever, it was a privilege to lead The Institute of Cancer Research, London, in 2025 – a fantastic year for scientific breakthroughs, organisational developments and fundraising achievements.

We would not be able to carry out our important work at the same capacity without your ongoing support. I know I speak on behalf of us all when I say we continue to be grateful to all of you – our donors, supporters and partners – for helping to keep progressing our research.

With your backing, we have made many scientific advances in the past year, including discovering how a common genetic mutation drives disease; how cancer cells adapt to harmful genetic changes, revealing new opportunities for targeted treatment; and identifying a potential new drug to target unique childhood brain tumours – to name just a few.

Our ongoing work has led to a number of other significant accomplishments this year. A new combination of targeted drugs, co-developed by the The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR), The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust and industry partners, has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the United States for treating a rare form of ovarian cancer. The targeted breast cancer drug, capivasertib – which our research laid the foundations for – has now also been recommended by NICE for use on the NHS, in combination with fulvestrant, to treat certain types of advanced or metastatic breast cancer.

The generosity of our fundraisers continues to be the backbone of our work. Across the year, we had 1,065 people raise funds for us across road races, sports challenges and DIY fundraising activities, and our 2024 Christmas appeal raised £137,000 for our life-changing research to help more women survive ovarian and breast cancer.

These activities, to name a few, meant we saw an increase of £2m in donations from the previous year, bringing our total to £15.5m.

The enthusiasm I see every day from our scientists, staff and supporters working tirelessly towards our mission is incredibly inspiring.

On behalf of all staff and students across the ICR, thank you for your generosity and ongoing support to help us make the discoveries that defeat cancer.

A circular portrait of Kristian Helin, a man with grey hair, wearing a light blue shirt and a grey blazer, smiling at the camera. He is positioned on the left side of the page.

Kristian Helin

Professor Kristian Helin
Chief Executive Officer

Financial highlights in 2025

We are truly committed to our mission of defeating cancer, which means we – with your incredible support – need to raise as much money as possible to advance our research. Scientific progression will always be our priority, and this is reflected in our income and expenditure.



£15.5m

We celebrated an excellent year for fundraising, thanks to the generosity of our fundraisers, supporters and partners. Through donations, legacies and philanthropic giving from individuals, trusts and foundations, we raised £2m more than in the previous year.



95%

A total of 95 per cent of our expenditure went towards research and research support costs – 95p of every pound donated. When you support us, you can rest assured that your contributions will make a difference to people living with cancer.



Over the last year, our Christmas, spring and summer appeals raised £260,000. The appeals focused on ovarian and breast cancer, blood cancers and melanoma respectively.



£398k

More than 1,605 supporters willingly pushed themselves out of their comfort zone in various ways. From running marathons to cycling between cities, to climbing up mountains, they all found a way to help us raise a substantial £398,396 for our research.



£6m

We received more than £6m from gifts left to us in Wills. This remains an integral part of our overall fundraising income, and we are immensely grateful to those who have chosen to make their legacy life changing.



1,389

Regular gifts helped our researchers undertake new hypotheses with confidence, safe in the knowledge of sustained funding. The commitment of £210,000 from 1,389 regular donors in the past year is helping to propel our research into the future.

Our discoveries

2025



With your ongoing support, we have been able to make considerable strides towards our goal of defeating cancer.

Your donations and efforts have helped us advance many exciting research projects, some of which we have spotlighted below.

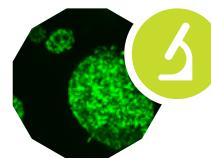
Potential new drug to target a unique childhood brain tumour

Our researchers found that the breast cancer drug ribociclib might help treat an aggressive childhood brain tumour called diffuse hemispheric glioma. The drug slowed tumour growth in a child for 17 months after other treatments failed. This discovery offers hope that similar drugs could improve future treatment options for this disease.



A simple spit test could revolutionise prostate cancer screening

A new saliva-based genetic test developed in the BARCODE 1 study, could identify men at highest genetic risk more accurately than current PSA or MRI tests. An improved version is now being trialled that could offer a simple, cost-effective way to detect aggressive prostate cancer earlier.



Scientists develop new tool to beat cancer's survival tactics

An international study involving our researchers identified more than 250 genes linked to bowel cancer, many newly discovered. By analysing whole-genome data, scientists defined genetic sub-groups that behave and respond differently to treatment. These insights could enable personalised therapies using existing drugs and shed light on how lifestyle and the gut microbiome influence cancer.



Harnessing stress signals to improve immune detection of cancer

Our researchers discovered that combining the drug palbociclib with a cancer-killing virus can make tumours more visible to the immune system. The treatment triggered stress responses that activated immune pathways and boosted tumour visibility. This approach could improve treatment effectiveness, help detect cancer earlier and signal when tumours become resistant to therapy.



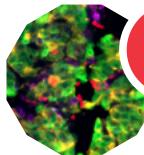
Targeting breast cancer at its earliest stages

A major international study found that the next-generation drug inavolisib can greatly improve outcomes for patients with advanced breast cancer carrying PIK3CA mutations. Combined with existing therapies, it extended survival and delayed the need for chemotherapy. Guided by liquid biopsy testing, this personalised approach builds on decades of our research into targeted PI3K inhibitors.



How genetic changes affect treatment response in myeloma

Our researchers found that changes in a gene called CRBN affect how patients with multiple myeloma respond to treatment. Some mutations cause resistance to older drugs but not to newer ones, meaning patients may still benefit from alternative therapies. These insights could guide personalised treatment decisions using genetic testing.



Anticipating response to targeted therapy in prostate cancer

Our researchers found that genetic markers in prostate tumours can predict how well patients respond to the drug olaparib. Men with DNA-repair gene mutations, such as BRCA2, benefited most from treatment. This discovery enables doctors to personalise care, estimate treatment duration and avoid ineffective therapies for advanced prostate cancer.



New drug combination for rare ovarian cancer

A new drug combination, avutometinib and defactinib, has been approved in the US by the FDA to treat recurrent low-grade serous ovarian cancer – the first treatment of its kind worldwide. Developed through research led by the ICR and The Royal Marsden, it offers a more effective and better-tolerated option for patients whose cancer is resistant to standard therapies.



Precision radiotherapy cuts treatment time without compromising outcomes

A large UK trial found that women with low-risk breast cancer can safely receive targeted radiotherapy to just the tumour area instead of the whole breast. This approach, which was equally effective and reduced side effects, is now widely used across the NHS – providing thousands of women each year with more personalised treatment.



Mapping cancer vulnerabilities through synthetic lethality

We have discovered how cancer cells survive harmful genetic damage by switching on backup genes. Using a new tool called SYLVER to study thousands of tumours, we found gene 'partnerships' that help cancer cells cope when protective genes are lost – a phenomenon known as synthetic lethality, where the loss of two related genes is fatal to cancer cells but not to healthy ones. These insights could lead to more precise tests and targeted cancer treatments.

Other highlights

- A new test developed by our researchers can predict within two weeks whether breast cancer is likely to return, helping personalise treatment for ER+/HER2+ patients and sparing thousands from unnecessary therapies and side effects.
- Discovered at the ICR and developed through our Drug Development Unit in partnership with The Royal Marsden, NXP800 is now in clinical trials for ovarian cancer and showing promise against advanced prostate cancer, offering hope for new, targeted treatment options.
- 2025 marks 20 years since a key discovery in the development of PARP inhibitors at the ICR. These drugs are now used to treat people with BRCA-related cancers, including breast, ovarian, pancreatic and, more recently, prostate cancer. We continue to build on this legacy, by improving and expanding the benefits of PARP inhibitors for patients.

Thank you

We want to thank each and every one of you for supporting us this year. Whether you donated, set up a regular monthly gift, took part in a fundraising event or pledged a gift in your Will, you are helping us in our mission to defeat cancer.

Your support translates directly to better outcomes for people living with cancer and a vision of the future where none of us will lose loved ones to this disease. We are extremely grateful to all of you and hope you will continue to support us going forward.



“Being involved in a clinical trial saved my life”

Tony McHale



Tony McHale, who was featured in our 2025 Christmas appeal, discovered he had an alteration in the BRCA2 gene.

This led him to join the international IMPACT prostate cancer screening trial in 2012 – which assessed the potential benefits of PSA testing in men with BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations.

A year and a half later, the screening revealed he had developed prostate cancer, despite having no symptoms of the disease. Following a course of intensive radiotherapy, Tony was given the all-clear, and he remains cancer-free to this day.

It only takes a moment to give a gift, but the impact of your donation can last a lifetime.

ICR.ac.uk/ProstateCancerAppeal