

Convergence to Cure Cancer through Research

A Message from the New Editor-in-Chief

Chi Van Dang^{1,2}



Cancer research is at an unprecedented, exciting crossroad, where we can begin to use the word "cure" without trepidation and with substantial hope that our science will deliver this promise. I am delighted to assume responsibility as the new Editor-in-Chief of *Cancer Research*, which was launched in 1941 from a rich ancestry that started in 1916 as the flagship journal of the American Association for Cancer Research. *Cancer Research* has published many land-

mark papers as well as many foundational cancer science papers that enriched and advanced our knowledge over its 100-year history. Many of these papers provided conceptual frameworks that have delivered us closer to the hope for "cures."

During this time, cancer research has advanced conceptually and technologically. We now appreciate that cancer is not just one, but in fact over 200 diseases, each with its own complexity and nuances. Host genetic factors and immunity have emerged as compelling influences on the predisposition to cancer development and importantly on therapeutic outcomes. Furthermore, cancer science has expanded from heavily mechanistic *in vitro* studies to preclinical animal models and ultimately to translational human studies. With the execution of The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA), we are now enriched with vast genomic data about many types of cancers. The TCGA data repertoire has been a gold mine for our understanding of the genomic and epigenomic alterations in human cancers, but this is still just the beginning. As such, additional data mining with new tools and computational approaches will continue to add to our knowledge and guide cancer biology, and hence, we must embrace these scholarly studies in *Cancer Research*. We have also extended our understanding well beyond the cancer cell-intrinsic alterations of

oncogenes and tumor suppressors into components of the tumor microenvironment (TME), which is experimentally becoming more tractable as new approaches and experimental techniques are innovated. The complexity of the TME includes its three-dimensional organization and, importantly, the dynamic nature of its composition in space with different cell types with different metabolic needs, and in time with vascular changes and cellular movements that are likely affected by the circadian clock. The challenge of understanding the TME to switch immunosuppressive to immunopermissive microenvironments awaits our cancer research community. Our understanding of the complexity of cancer is leading to changes in the way cancer research is performed. While individual laboratories will continue to generate ground-breaking discoveries, the field is being challenged to also conduct interdisciplinary team science. *Cancer Research* is prepared to embrace these challenges and to catalyze the reporting of discoveries with new journal sections and editorial team. Collectively, we are responsible for driving cancer discoveries toward reducing the burden of cancer in our communities.

With great pride, the newly assembled Board of Senior Editors will catalyze publication of major scientific findings across ten sections including three new ones that embrace emerging research paradigms and team science. Specifically, we are launching the Convergence and Technologies section, which will report findings from the coalescence of diverse scientific disciplines such as engineering, mathematics, physics, and data science to solve cancer mysteries. The new Resource Reports section will provide a repertoire of papers, which describe cancer research databases and include new tools and technologies that will be widely useful to our community. In keeping with quickly moving cancer research fields, a special Controversy & Consensus section will bring to life some of the most debated and challenging topics in cancer research such as reproducibility of big datasets and ethical issues associated with the use of these data. Because of its broad readership, *Cancer Research* serves the entire community through sections of the Journal spanning epidemiology to molecular mechanisms in cancer biology. The broad scope remains, but molded to how subfields of cancer research have evolved, and we look forward to seeing transformative concepts in sections that include: Genome & Epigenome, Metabolism & Chemical Biology, Molecular Cell Biology, Tumor Biology & Immunity, Translational Science, and Population & Prevention Science. The new Breaking Insights section will serve as a conduit for rapid reports of special importance, providing summaries and expert opinions of selected recently published articles. A superlative group of authoritative experts have kindly agreed to serve the community with me as Senior Editors to lead each section and to ensure that high quality impactful science continues to be published in *Cancer Research*.

The process of peer-review, which despite the centrality of objectivity, is inherently social in nature. One perspective of reviewing a scientific paper is our judgment of its "artistic score" that reflects the originality, creativity, and novelty of its content along with its "technical score," which evaluates the

¹Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, New York, New York. ²The Wistar Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Corresponding Author: Chi V. Dang, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research, 666 Third Avenue, 28th Floor, New York, NY 10017. Phone: 212-450-1566; Fax: 212-450-1545; E-mail: cdang@licr.org

doi: 10.1158/0008-5472.CAN-17-3771

©2018 American Association for Cancer Research.

experimental design and methods used. While the technical score tends to be more objective, the artistic score seems more challenging and sometimes reflects the eye of the beholder. As such, *Cancer Research* Senior Editors will have full authority to ensure that excessive demands by reviewers for experiments that are well beyond the intended scope of the manuscript will not stand in the way of publishing impactful new findings.

In closing, I thank George Prendergast as Editor-in-Chief emeritus and the editorial board for their many years of exceptional service to our community, which will now be served with many

new senior editors. I greatly treasure the partnership with Judy Quong, Executive Editor, and Christine Rullo, Vice President for Publications AACR, who are both essential for the continued success of this Journal. On behalf of the *Cancer Research* Editorial Board, I thank all authors and readers for contributing and partaking in a remarkably privileged journey of being able to have a dialogue with Mother Nature through experimental cancer science, and the pleasure to publish and read our impactful findings in *Cancer Research*. I hope that Mother Nature's secrets will continue to be revealed in this journal in ways that will reduce the burden and pain of cancer in patients globally.

Cancer Research

The Journal of Cancer Research (1916–1930) | The American Journal of Cancer (1931–1940)

Convergence to Cure Cancer through Research: A Message from the New Editor-in-Chief

Chi Van Dang

Cancer Res 2018;78:3-4.

Updated version Access the most recent version of this article at:
<http://cancerres.aacrjournals.org/content/78/1/3>

E-mail alerts [Sign up to receive free email-alerts](#) related to this article or journal.

Reprints and Subscriptions To order reprints of this article or to subscribe to the journal, contact the AACR Publications Department at pubs@aacr.org.

Permissions To request permission to re-use all or part of this article, use this link <http://cancerres.aacrjournals.org/content/78/1/3>. Click on "Request Permissions" which will take you to the Copyright Clearance Center's (CCC) Rightslink site.