

Breakout Groups

The SASS breakout groups have a therapeutics/clinical focus with well-defined deliverables. Deliverables include new strategic directions as drug targets, combination drug strategies, and predictive biomarkers. Deliverables also include consortia grant applications and review papers.

Each breakout has a precursor organizing “working” group which meets two times (June and August 2023) before SASS. These are coordinated by Macy Kasbo and Natalia Kelley (BWH/Harvard).

SASS 2023 Breakout Groups:

1. Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumor (GIST): Sebastian Bauer (Essen), Ping Chi (MSKCC), Andy Wagner (DFCI).

This multidisciplinary group defines emerging therapeutic challenges in patients whose GISTs are progressing on approved TKI drugs.

Deliverable 1: GIST state-of-the-science review. A draft will be prepared prior to the breakout meeting (in style of W.H.O. chapters) and finalized and submitted for publication after the SASS conference.

Deliverable 2: organize an international stand-alone multidisciplinary GIST basic and clinical research conference: March 2024 (Boston or Lisbon).

2. Sarcoma Research Consortia: Katie Janeway (DFCI/Boston Children’s), Sam Singer (MSKCC), Jonathan Fletcher (SARC)

Brings together representatives of multi-institutional sarcoma research programs to define opportunities for inter-program collaboration. The programs include three NCI SPOREs (HyperRas SPORE, MSKCC SPORE, and LMS SPORE), Advocacy group representatives, The Osteosarcoma Institute, Count Me In, LMS Roundtable, DF PDGFRA GIST Program, Harvard David Liposarcoma Program, NCI Clinical Proteomic Tumor Analysis Consortium (CPTAC), SARC, Sunshine Project, and TARPSWG.

Deliverable: inter-program collaborations on drug targets and correlative science strategies of cross-cutting relevance in two or more subtypes of sarcoma.

3. Immune biology and Immunotherapies: Ron DeMatteo (Penn), Seth Pollack (Northwestern), Bree Wilky (U Colorado)

Defines novel strategies to be explored in development of immunotherapies of sarcoma subtypes. This includes development of combination approaches for subtypes that have been heretofore refractory to immunotherapy as well as target identification and sarcoma-specific technology development for cellular therapies. Also includes creation of immunocompetent GEMMs to facilitate immunotherapy development and enable studies of the sarcoma immune microenvironment.

Deliverable: pilot project funding for preclinical validations of an immunotherapy approach and/or development of GEMMs. These studies will optimally include validations of relevant biomarkers and correlative science assays.

4. Advances in Sarcoma Therapies – Delivery, Strategies, Targets: Suzanne George (DFCI), Margaret von Mehren (FCCC), Brigitte Widemann (NCI),

Brings together sarcoma researchers and members of CTEP and the FDA to examine opportunities and define priorities for maximizing sarcoma therapeutic response through newer drug approaches, selective drug delivery, and/or drug targets not previously tested in sarcoma. This breakout also enables lab scientists to obtain guidance from seasoned sarcoma clinical trialists. Opportunities to maximize response to newer strategies will be defined and expanded upon in subsequent SASS conferences: protein degraders, γ -secretase inhibitors, HIPPO pathway inhibitors as examples.

Deliverable: Identify projects for preclinical validation of one or more novel therapeutic strategies.