

Tulane University launches crowdfunding partnership for medical research

December 10, 2013 3:30 AM Keith Brannon

kbrannon@tulane.edu

504-621-2724

It's raised millions for inventors, entrepreneurs, filmmakers and even the Pebble watch, but can crowdfunding work its magic for science-based research?

[Tulane University School of Medicine](#) will find out as it launches the first university partnership with [Microryza](#), a crowdfunding site that enables scientists to go directly to the public for seed money for early stage research. Thirteen Tulane researchers have 45 days to raise up to \$15,000 each for [projects](#) such as using nanotechnology to treat cancer, screening blood sugar to diagnose diseases early when they're most treatable and looking at a new model to prevent sports-related concussions, among others. The full project list is available at: <https://www.microryza.com/tulane>.

"These are 13 incredibly bright scientists with great ideas who just need the funding to make their innovations a reality," said Mary Brown, vice dean and vice president of health sciences systems for Tulane. "This is an innovative way to try to get promising research funded in a new, extremely competitive environment for federal research dollars."

Like most crowdfunding sites, each project has an "all or nothing" funding target, meaning backers are only charged for donations if scientists reach their funding goals.

"The clock is ticking! We've got until midnight on Jan. 24 to fund 13 projects," Brown said.

Denny Luan, Microryza co-founder, said the Tulane partnership is the first of many the company hopes to make with major research institutions.

"Federal research funding cuts have had a huge detrimental effect on scientific innovation and progress, resulting in years of research being cut short. We're hoping that this partnership sheds some light on the very important and fascinating

research happening at Tulane,” Luan said. “Science doesn't have to be hidden behind locked doors, paywalls, and layers of bureaucracy. Microryza's mission is to share the scientific discoveries that move us forward and to make them accessible to everyone.”