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## BU prof receives \$600K grant to study breast cancer

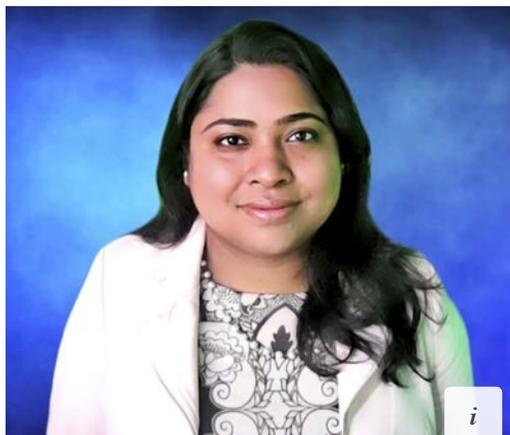
By: The Brandon Sun

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Brandon University professor Mousumi Majumder will receive \$600,000 over five years to support her ongoing efforts to study breast cancer.

According to a recent news release from BU, the university was promised this money on Wednesday after Majumder was named a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Genotoxicology by Navdeep Bains, the federal minister of Innovation, Science and Industry.



Dr. Mousumi Majumder (Submitted)

Following this announcement, Majumder became BU's fourth active Canada Research Chair, joining the likes of Jonathan Allan (Men and Masculinities), Rachel Herron (Rural and Remote Mental Health) and Sarah Plosker (Quantum Information Theory).

"We are delighted to have Majumder join our outstanding group of Canada Research Chairs," said Steve Robinson, BU's Vice-President (Academic and Provost). "They are at the leading edge of innovation in critically important topics."

Outside of this prestige, Majumder will be able to better identify early indicators of breast cancer with this \$600,000 grant in her pocket.

So far, Majumder has already focused a lot of her energy on studying tiny molecules, known as microRNAs, which help tumours secrete proteins that change the character of the tumour microenvironment and enhance the process of metastasis.

Moving forward, Majumder will investigate whether these microRNAs can act as biomarkers, indicating the presence of breast cancer in its early stages.

"Finding biomarkers for cancer detection is one of the top priorities of breast cancer research in Canada," Majumder said in Wednesday's news release.

Majumder has been studying this subject for more than a decade, beginning in 2009 during her post-doctoral training at Western University.

Following the completion of her PhD in Cancer Genetics and Epidemiology in India, Majumder became fascinated with the role of microRNAs and decided to pursue this research further after joining BU in 2016.

Since then, she has collaborated with scientists at CancerCare Manitoba and the Lawson Health Research Institute in Ontario to collect hundreds of plasma samples and breast biopsy tissues.

Majumder's lab is now expanding its sample set as she works to further decipher the function of microRNAs in breast cancer.

"Science is becoming increasingly collaborative, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary as we see the value of tackling problems from every possible angle," said Dr. Bernadette Ardelli, BU's dean of science. "Dr. Majumder's research is an excellent example of the type of collaboration that we do very well at Brandon University, where it is common for

our faculty members across disciplines to work together as well as with experts in the community and at other institutions."

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