

## Food Allergy Nonprofit, FARE Announces ATANIS Biotech AG as the Winner of Phase 2 of its Innovation Award Diagnostic Challenge

**McLean, Va.; Bern, Switzerland — Feb. 20, 2025** — [FARE \(Food Allergy Research & Education\)](#), the leading charity that supports those impacted by food allergy through advocacy, research, and education, with a unifying commitment to health equity, today announced [ATANIS Biotech AG](#), a Swiss company specializing in functional allergy tests, as the winner of phase 2 of its [Innovation Award Diagnostic Challenge](#).

First introduced in 2022, the Innovation Award Diagnostic Challenge was created to support the development of a safe, effective, accessible alternative to the oral food challenge (OFC), the current standard for diagnosing food allergy.

“While OFCs play a critical role in developing new treatments in research settings and diagnosing food allergy in clinical settings, they involve supervised ingestion of a suspected allergen and therefore carry some risk of anaphylaxis for the patient,” said Sung Poblete, PhD, RN, CEO of FARE. “In addition, they are time- and resource-intensive to complete which limits patient access and slows research progress. By supporting the development of innovative diagnostic options, FARE and its generous donors aim to remove these barriers and accelerate solutions for the food allergy community. We are pleased to announce ATANIS Biotech as the newest winner of the Innovation Award Diagnostic Challenge.”

After rigorous scientific review of multiple high-quality submissions by external experts and FARE’s Scientific Advisory Council, ATANIS’ proposal has been selected to receive the \$2 million grant, to be used in furthering commercialization efforts of FAST-PASE®.

FAST-PASE® is a novel functional test to help diagnose allergy based on a proprietary engineered mast cell line. Mast cells are immune cells that play a role in the allergic reaction. Using standardized protocols, ATANIS is able to grow a virtually unlimited number of mast cells in their laboratory. When combined with patient-derived blood serum, these cells bind to the patient’s allergy-causing IgE antibodies. Upon subsequent challenge with the suspected culprit allergen, the mast cells degranulate the way they do in the body during an allergic reaction, and this can be measured. FAST-PASE® has recently shown [accuracy](#) greater than 95% in a clinical utility study for peanut allergy. FARE’s funding will support the development and commercialization of FAST-PASE® in multiple allergy indications.

To study the efficacy of FAST-PASE® and support its future implementation, ATANIS is collaborating with world-renowned experts in the field including Profs. Hugh Sampson (Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, NY, USA), Thomas Eiwegger (Universitätsklinikum St. Pölten, Karl Landsteiner University Krems, Austria), Julia Upton (The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada), Aikaterini Anagnostou (Baylor College of Medicine, TX, USA), Thomas Platts-Mills (University of Virginia, VA, USA), Thomas Kaufmann and Alexander Eggel (both from University of Bern, Switzerland).

Prof. Jean-Pierre Kinet, CEO of ATANIS said about the award: “I am delighted to partner with such a highly reputed organization as FARE and such high-caliber scientists and physicians in pursuing our mission of bringing safer tests to allergy patients throughout the world.”

The FARE Innovation Award Diagnostic Challenge is made possible through generous support from the Naddisy Foundation, the Carter Family, Nestlé Health Science, the Trachte Family, the Hittman Family Foundation, Dr. Louise Matthews and Thomas Flickinger, Wende Fox Lawson and Jim Lawson, Stacy and Ron Klein, and an anonymous donor.

**About FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education):**

FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) is the leading nonprofit organization that empowers the food allergy patient across their journey of managing the disease. FARE delivers innovation by focusing on three strategic pillars—advocacy, research, and education—united by the through line of health equity. FARE’s initiatives accelerate the future of food allergy through effective policies and legislation, novel strategies toward prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, and building awareness and community. To learn more, visit [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org).

**About ATANIS Biotech AG:**

ATANIS was incorporated as a spinoff of the University of Bern and is a company focused on revolutionizing allergy diagnosis. Current diagnostic procedures for allergy rely on risky, uncomfortable, cumbersome, and outdated functional *in vivo* allergen exposures. ATANIS has developed a novel, functional *ex vivo* mast cell activation test, named FAST-PASE®. The assay uses patient serum, which enables scalability. In recent diagnostic accuracy studies FAST-PASE® has outperformed other established clinical methods and procedures to identify allergies.

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