

Milner, Brin, Zuckerberg Establish \$3M Prize In Medicine

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Those researching ways to cure disease will be eligible for a \$3M award. **Vladimir Filonov**

Mail.Ru co-founder Yuri Milner, Apple chairman Arthur Levinson, and founders of Google and Facebook Sergei Brin and Mark Zuckerberg have established an annual award for outstanding achievements in research into curing disease and prolonging human life.

Winners of the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences will receive \$3 million each — more than twice the amount of the Nobel Prize. The foundation on Wednesday announced its first 11 winners — scientists from the U.S., Italy, Netherlands and Japan.

Anyone can nominate a candidate for the award via the Internet, according to Vedomosti. There will be five awards per year and the prize can be received more than once and shared between many scientists. Each year's winners will join the selection committee to vote in secret on future winners.

Art Levinson will chair the foundation. It will also include Zuckerberg, Milner and Brin's wife Anne Wojcicki.

The fund aims to promote innovations in medical research and support a new generation of molecular biologists and geneticists.

The efforts of more scientists are needed to treat the most severe diseases, compared with fundamental physics, and therefore this requires more sponsors to encourage outstanding achievements," Milner said in comments carried by Vedomosti.

"Unfortunately I have two very close relatives with very bad diseases, one of them has cancer. This is part of my personal connection with this prize," he said in an interview with the Guardian on Wednesday.

For Milner, the award is an effort to invest in the fast-growing medical technology market, a businessman familiar with the Mail.ru co-founder said.

"There is not very much money in the field of medical technologies, but it is a strategically important area, a kind of investment in the future," he said in comments carried by Vedomosti.

Less than a year ago Milner distributed nine prizes for the field of fundamental physics, each worth \$3 million.

Milner graduated from Moscow State University with a degree in theoretical physics in 1985. He has been investing in internet companies for the past 10 years, according to Vedomosti.

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