

Chinese Billionaire Joins Milner Life Science Prize Fund

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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WASHINGTON — A Chinese Internet billionaire has agreed to sponsor a multimillion-dollar life science prize whose founders include Russian entrepreneur Yuri Milner and Russian-American Google co-founder Sergey Brin, the prize founders said in a statement Friday.

Jack Ma, former chief executive officer of Chinese Internet giant Alibaba, and his wife Cathy Zhang have joined as sponsors of the Breakthrough Life Sciences Prize, which will now award a \$3 million prize to each of the six winning scientists.

Launched in February with 11 scientists from the U.S., Italy, the Netherlands and Japan as winners, the initiative recognizes scientists for "achievements in the field of life sciences, with the aim of providing the recipients with more freedom and opportunity to pursue even greater future accomplishments."

Previous winners of the prize give input on selecting new winners, who can also be nominated

by the general public via the Internet.

The prize's other co-founders are Brin's wife, Anne Wojcicki, as well as Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan. Apple chairman Art Levinson serves as chairman of the prize foundation.

Milner, who has invested widely in social networking companies, was the driving force uniting the tech mogul rivals behind the prize, Levinson told the Guardian earlier this year.

The New York Times reported Friday that the prize has a personal aspect for Milner — his father died from colon cancer this year.

"There was no technology in the world he could use to get cured," Milner said, The Times reported.

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