

Ginny Zhao won the 2025 C-IDEA Design Award for MELABase



New York City, New York Nov 3, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Senior Product Designer Ginny (Yuanfei) Zhao has been recognized as a Winner of the 2025 C-IDEA Design Award for her groundbreaking project “MELABase,” a data platform that revolutionizes the way melanoma treatment and research are integrated.

Zhao’s project stands out for its profound contribution to healthcare innovation, combining design thinking with medical data science to streamline workflows between clinicians and researchers. At Case Western Reserve University Hospital, oncologists hold weekly tumor board meetings to review melanoma cases and develop individualized treatment plans. These sessions are vital for patient outcomes but are often hindered by the disconnection between clinical practice and academic research.

Previously, tumor board coordinators manually compiled case reports from scattered records, charts, and physician notes, while researchers repeated similar data-gathering tasks for studies. This duplication of effort was time-consuming and slowed down innovation in cancer research.

Under Zhao’s leadership, MELABase was designed to address these challenges. The platform consolidates patient data into a unified, structured system and creates a seamless workflow that supports both clinical decision-making and academic research. With predefined data fields and a user-friendly interface, coordinators can efficiently input and manage patient information without navigating lengthy, unstructured forms.

Beyond simplifying data entry, Zhao’s design redefines how medical teams collaborate. MELABase provides an intuitive “tumor board view” that visually organizes patient discussions, allowing physicians to evaluate, update, and prioritize cases with clarity and ease. This systematic approach ensures consistency across departments while reducing cognitive load.

MELABase also serves as an intelligent research companion. Its advanced search and filtering capabilities allow users to compare patient data based on demographics, clinical characteristics, or treatment outcomes. Enhanced pathology report functions—such as keyword linking and contextual search—enable medical teams to uncover hidden patterns and insights that could lead to breakthroughs in melanoma care.

“We’re not just enhancing workflow efficiency—we’re giving researchers and doctors the ability to turn raw medical data into meaningful, actionable knowledge by creating a unified, accessible platform,” Zhao said. “By bridging the gap between research and practice, MELABase allows progress in one field to immediately inform advancements in another.”

MELABase’s influence reaches far beyond usability. In oncology, where timely, data-driven decisions can mean the difference between life and death, the platform fosters real-time collaboration between tumor boards and research teams. This ensures that the latest findings and treatment outcomes are consistently shared and applied.

The project exemplifies how thoughtful, human-centered design can drive medical innovation. It highlights Zhao’s belief that design is not merely about aesthetics, but about creating systems that empower people to perform critical tasks more effectively.

A spokesperson from the C-IDEA Design Award committee commented, “MELABase shows how a well-designed digital infrastructure can help bridge silos in healthcare. Ginny Zhao’s work demonstrates remarkable clarity of purpose—transforming complex data workflows into a unified, user-friendly experience that directly improves patient outcomes.”

Ginny (Yuanfei) Zhao is a Senior Product Designer at Kensho Technologies, the AI innovation hub of S&P Global, headquartered in New York City. At Kensho, she leads initiatives that leverage technology to enhance human creativity and insight, exploring the intersection of artificial intelligence and the human experience. Her recent work has made a lasting impact on healthcare and enterprise innovation through AI-powered transcription tools, LLM-based chat systems, and data platforms for cancer research.

Zhao earned her degrees in Human-Computer Interaction and Statistics & Machine Learning from Carnegie Mellon University, where she developed her ability to combine analytical precision with empathetic, user-centered design. Her philosophy emphasizes human-machine collaboration—imagining a future where intelligent systems amplify human judgment rather than replace it.

The C-IDEA Design Award, organized by the C-IDEA Union, is an international honor that celebrates innovation and originality across diverse design fields including digital, industrial, product, fashion, and graphic design. The award recognizes projects that demonstrate both artistic excellence and significant social or technological impact.

Through MELABase, Zhao exemplifies how design can unite technological sophistication with human compassion. Her award-winning project transforms fragmented medical data into a transparent, collaborative system that saves time, improves coordination, and ultimately empowers physicians to provide better care. “Design,” Zhao reflects, “is about establishing clarity where there is confusion—and in healthcare, that clarity can quite literally save lives.”

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