

PRESS RELEASE

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Promising antibiotic programme gets European boost

Innovative Medicines Initiative projects European Lead Factory and ENABLE create pipeline for novel antibiotics from University of Oxford

Utrecht, the Netherlands, 17 November, 2016

Researchers at the University of Oxford have been working with two major EU-funded projects to deliver a novel antibiotic programme for clinical development. The development comes thanks to an alignment between the European Lead Factory (ELF) and the European Gram-Negative Antibacterial Engine (ENABLE) projects, both of which are supported by the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI), Europe's largest public private partnership in life sciences research.

The Oxford team, led by Professor Chris Schofield, kick started the process through his

group's focus on a potential target within gram negative bacteria that could eliminate resistance against the β -lactam antibiotics, so restoring potency of a group key antibiotics that includes the penicillins. He applied to the European Lead Factory project, where the target was screened against the Joint European Compound Library of approximately 300,000 compounds. Small molecule hits with very promising activity against the target were identified. The Oxford and ELF teams worked to improve the hits, resulting in highly potent compounds that create a strong base for further development.

Professor Schofield then turned to ELF's sister project funded through IMI, ENABLE, which has the mission to develop programmes against gram negative pathogens to clinical trials. The application was deemed to have high novelty and potential for development and accepted by the project. The Schofield group are collaborating with ENABLE partners in pharma, small companies and universities from across Europe to develop this early stage hit through to the aim of clinical trials.

Professor Schofield said "EU programmes such as ENABLE and the European Lead Factory are targeting one of our greatest threats, antimicrobial resistance. Through collaborative efforts across Europe, we have been able to take a potential antibiotic target and identify compounds active against it, improve them and start development towards the holy grail of new antibiotics for patients. This is transforming an almost impossible task for an individual academic group into a solid scientific and commercially viable pathway."

Pierre Meulien, Executive Director of IMI commented "This fantastic news demonstrates that through projects like the European Lead Factory and ENABLE, IMI is able to mobilise the stakeholders and resources needed to create high quality research platforms and infrastructures capable of delivering results in key research areas such as antimicrobial resistance."

About IMI

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is working to improve health by speeding up the development of, and patient access to, innovative medicines, particularly in areas where there is an unmet medical or social need. It does this by facilitating collaboration between

the key players involved in healthcare research, including universities, the pharmaceutical and other industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), patient organisations and medicines regulators. IMI is a partnership between the European Union (represented by the European Commission) and the European pharmaceutical industry (represented by EFPIA, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations).

<http://www.imi.europa.eu/>

About the European Lead Factory

IMI's European Lead Factory is a unique, collaborative platform for early drug discovery. It offers unrivalled opportunities to any European academic or SME working in any therapeutic area for the discovery of new diagnostic or drug lead molecules; compounds that can result in the development of novel treatment options for patients. To this end, the European Lead Factory provides a high-quality compound library, industry-standard screening facilities and drug discovery expertise. The European Lead Factory was launched in 2013 and is managed by an international consortium of 30 partners.

www.europeanleadfactory.eu

About ENABLE

Launched in early 2014, ENABLE is a project within the ND4BB program working to advance the development of potential antibiotics against multidrug resistant Gram-negative infections. ENABLE has been highlighted as a potential collaborator in the recent US National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria report issued by the White House in March 2015.

<http://nd4bb-enable.eu/>

About ND4BB

IMI's New Drugs 4 Bad Bugs (ND4BB) program represents an unprecedented partnership between industry, academia and biotech organizations to combat antibiotic resistance in Europe by tackling the scientific, regulatory and business challenges that are hampering the development of new antibiotics. It is made up of seven projects, including ENABLE.

www.imi.europa.eu/content/nd4bb

About the University of Oxford

The Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division (MPLS) is one of four academic

divisions at the University of Oxford, representing the non-medical sciences. Oxford is one of the world's leading universities for science, and MPLS is at the forefront of scientific research across a wide range of disciplines. Research in the mathematical, physical and life sciences at Oxford was rated the best in the UK in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) assessment. MPLS received £133m in research income in 2014/15.

www.mpls.ox.ac.uk

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