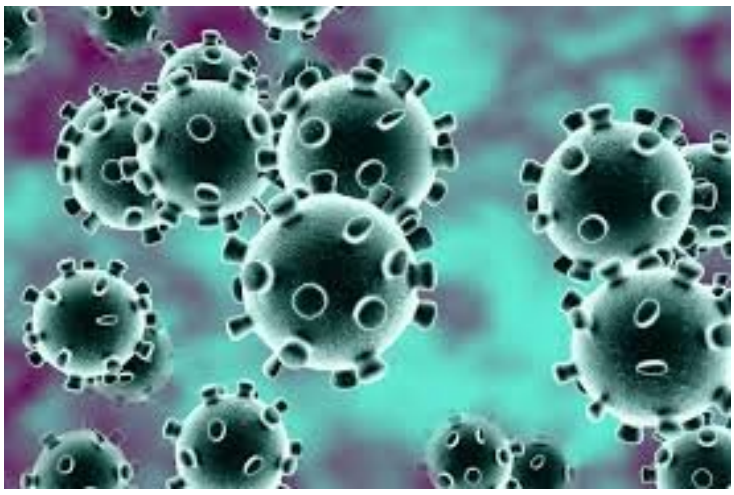
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CEPI grants $9M to Inovio to develop coronavirus vaccine

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CEPI previously awarded Inovio a grant of up to $56 million for the development of vaccines against Lassa fever and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), also caused by a coronavirus



Inovio Pharmaceuticals, USA has announced the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) has awarded Inovio a grant of up to $9 million to develop a vaccine against the recently emerged strain of coronavirus (2019-nCoV). This initial CEPI funding will support Inovio's preclinical and clinical development through Phase 1 human testing of INO-4800, its new coronavirus vaccine matched to the outbreak strain. CEPI previously awarded Inovio a grant of up to $56 million for the development of vaccines against Lassa fever and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), also caused by a coronavirus.

Inovio's participation in this developing effort is based on the ideal suitability of its DNA medicine platform to rapidly develop a vaccine against an emerging virus with pandemic potential, proven vaccine development capabilities and a strong track record of rapidly generating promising countermeasures against previous pandemic threats. Inovio was the first to advance its vaccine (INO-4700) against MERS-CoV, a related coronavirus, into evaluation in humans. Inovio is currently preparing to initiate a Phase 2 vaccine trial for INO-4700 in the Middle East where most MERS viral outbreaks have occurred.

In a recently published paper in Lancet Infectious Diseases, Inovio's Phase 1 study of its MERS-CoV vaccine demonstrated it was well tolerated and furthermore induced high levels of antibody responses in roughly 95% of subjects, while also generating broad-based T cell responses in nearly 90% of study participants. Durable antibody responses to INO-4700 were also maintained through 60 weeks following dosing.

Richard Hatchett, CEPI's CEO, said, "Given the rapid global spread of the 2019-nCoV virus the world needs to act quickly and in unity to tackle this disease. Our intention with this work is to leverage our work with Inovio on the MERS coronavirus and rapid response platform to speed up vaccine development."

Dr. J. Joseph Kim, Inovio's President & CEO said, "We're extremely honored to expand our partnership with CEPI to tackle this new threat to global public health. Our DNA medicine platform represents the best modern day approach to combatting emerging pandemics. We have already demonstrated positive clinical outcomes with our vaccine against MERS-CoV, another coronavirus. Importantly, following the Zika viral infection outbreak, Inovio and our partners developed a vaccine that went from bench to human testing in just seven months – the fastest vaccine development on record in recent decades. We believe we can further improve upon this accelerated timeline to meet the current challenge of the emerging coronavirus 2019-nCoV."

Inovio's collaborators in this coronavirus vaccine development include the Wistar Institute, VGXI, a fully owned subsidiary of GeneOne Life Science and Twist Bioscience.