PRESS RELEASE

New IMI project »COMBINE« launched to accelerate the fight against antimicrobial resistance

COMBINE will support the coordination of the Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Accelerator Programme to progress a pipeline of medicines for the treatment or prevention of resistant bacterial infections.

Hamburg, GERMANY, December 3, 2019 – 11 European partners today announced that they are launching a new project, The Collaboration for Prevention and Treatment of Multi-Drug Resistant Bacterial Infections (COMBINE), under the IMI AMR Accelerator Programme. COMBINE will support projects in the AMR Accelerator with effective management, communication, and data capture capabilities, and carry out research to strengthen the scientific basis in the AMR field. COMBINE is funded by IMI, a joint initiative between the European Commission (EC) and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). COMBINE receives EUR 8 million from the EC; EFPIA in-kind contributions total EUR 17 million.
The AMR Accelerator is a Public-Private Partnership initiated by IMI. With a total budget of EUR 295 million, six consortia aim to progress a pipeline of potential medicines targeting tuberculosis (TB), nontuberculous mycobacteria (NTM), Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria. If successful, the projects in the AMR Accelerator are expected to deliver up to 10 new preclinical candidates and up to 5 'Phase II-ready' compounds over a six-year period.
COMBINE will support the projects in the AMR Accelerator with effective management, and work to establish data management guidelines, improve and standardise animal infection models and facilitate optimised design for new clinical trials. To achieve these objectives, 11 partners with expertise in the field of antibiotic resistance from seven European countries have joined forces: 4 European academic partners (Uppsala University, Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Paul-Ehrlich-Institut, Statens Serum Institut), 4 small and medium-sized enterprises (Asclepia, BIOCOM, grit42, BEAM Alliance) and 3 pharmaceutical companies (GSK, Evotec, Janssen Pharmaceutica N.V.). Their work will include the development of innovative methodology facilitating preclinical and clinical development through analyses of aggregated preclinical and clinical trial data and initiation of a database with protocols, reference strains and antibiotic compounds to be used for standardization of preclinical models.
»We need a broad innovative antibiotic pipeline to address the increasing rate of antibiotic drug resistance. Impactful Public-Private Partnerships like the AMR Accelerator are critical for developing this pipeline – they allow the few remaining companies in the field to make the most of their limited resources and strengthen the ties between SMEs and big pharma«, said Graham Somers, IMI Portfolio Director at GSK.

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To ensure the smooth operation of the AMR Accelerator, COMBINE will set up a Coordination and Support Office to provide support with project management, data management and communication. »A forward looking, responsive and synergy-focused management group is essential to support all individual projects, communicate results and link the AMR Accelerator to existing AMR drug development initiatives«, said Anders Karlén, Professor at Uppsala University and Coordinator of COMBINE.
The discovery of antibiotics was one of the greatest and most valuable scientific and public health achievements of the 20th century. The AMR Accelerator has been initiated to help continue this achievement and to progress a pipeline of potential new medicines to treat and prevent infections caused by resistant bacteria.

About COMBINE

This project has received funding from the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 Joint Undertaking under grant agreement No 853967. This Joint Undertaking receives support from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and EFPIA companies' in kind contribution.

About the Innovative Medicines Initiative

The Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI) is working to improve health by speeding up the development of, and patient access to, the next generation of 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, pharmaceutical companies, and other companies active in healthcare research, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), patient organisations, and medicines regulators. This approach has proven highly successful, and IMI projects are delivering exciting results that are helping to advance the development of urgently-needed new treatments in diverse areas.

IMI is a partnership between the European Union and the European pharmaceutical industry, represented by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA).

About the AMR Accelerator

The aim of the IMI Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Accelerator is to progress the development of new medicines to treat or prevent resistant bacterial infections in Europe and worldwide. The programme comprises three pillars: a Capability Building Network, a Tuberculosis Drug Development Network; and Portfolio Building Networks. The scope of the AMR Accelerator is broad; under one structure, it addresses many of the scientific challenges of AMR, and it supports the development of new ways to prevent and treat AMR. More broadly, the IMI AMR Accelerator contributes to the European action plan on AMR.