

# 4E Therapeutics Inc. Awarded NIH/SBIR Award Under NIH HEAL Initiative

*Pharmaceutical company, 4E Therapeutics Inc., receives grant award from the National Institutes of Health to further development of non-opioid pain treatment.*

AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, October 14, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 4E Therapeutics Inc., a neuroscience company developing a first-in-class treatment for neuropathic pain, announced that it has been awarded a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) award as part of the NIH HEAL Initiative (The Helping to End Addiction Long-term Initiative, or the NIH HEAL Initiative). The NIH launched the Helping to End Addiction Long-term Initiative, or NIH HEAL Initiative, in April 2018 to improve prevention and treatment strategies for opioid misuse and addiction and enhance pain management. 4E Therapeutics' award is one of 375 grant awards across 41 states made by the National Institutes of Health in fiscal year 2019 to apply scientific solutions to stem the national opioid crisis. "It's clear that a multi-pronged scientific approach is needed to reduce the risks of opioids, accelerate development of effective non-opioid therapies for pain and provide more flexible and effective options for treating addiction to opioids," said NIH Director Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., who launched the initiative in early 2018. "This unprecedented investment in the NIH HEAL Initiative demonstrates the commitment to reversing this devastating crisis."

4E Therapeutics is focused on developing non-opioid therapeutics for neuropathic pain. Neuropathic pain affects approximately 10% of the United States population and is a leading cause of disability. Existing treatments for neuropathic pain are not sufficiently efficacious and often have intolerable side effects. 4E Therapeutics strives to develop neuropathic pain therapies that will improve the quality of life for this currently underserved population.

4E Therapeutics was founded in 2019 in Austin, TX. The company is based on the NIH-supported work of its scientific founder, Theodore Price, PhD, Eugene McDermott Professor and Director of the Center for Advanced Pain Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas. The scientific foundation of the company is centered on the idea of targeting the activity of a protein called eIF4E for neuropathic pain treatment. For over a decade, Price's laboratory has studied eIF4E and demonstrated that this protein plays a key role in regulating the activity of pain-sensing neurons in the peripheral nervous system called nociceptors. These neurons play a crucial role in neuropathic pain. Work on this SBIR award will involve optimizing therapeutic targeting of eIF4E for the treatment of neuropathic pain with the goal of advancing a lead molecule to Investigational New Drug (IND) status within 5 years.

4E Therapeutics is led by President and Chairman Joe Price. Mr. Price formerly led AcademicWorks, an Austin-based technology company. The Principal Investigator for the SBIR grant awarded to 4E Therapeutics is James Sahn, Ph.D. Dr. Sahn is a Medicinal Chemist and previously a Research Scientist at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Sahn is the Vice President of Drug Development at 4E Therapeutics. Drs. Sahn and Price are long-term collaborators with a history of work on drug development for neuropathic pain.

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