

Australian government funds \$1M for development of Covax-19® vaccine

Vaxine's Covax-19® vaccine development gets boost from Australian government funding

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA, September 2, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The pioneering team at Vaxine who developed the world's first swine flu vaccine in 2009, has been awarded funding of \$1 million dollars from the Biomedical Translation Bridge (BTB) program, an initiative of the Medical Research Future Fund operated by MTPConnect, to help advance Vaxine's state-of-the-art COVID-19 vaccine candidate called Covax-19®.

Immediately the COVID-19 genomic sequence became available in January 2020, the Vaxine team used this to characterise the virus. Deploying complex computer simulations, the team led by Professor Nikolai Petrovsky, Research Director of Vaxine Pty Ltd and a Professor at Flinders University, was able to use this information on the virus spike protein to rapidly design a synthetic COVID-19 vaccine.

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It is great to see the Australian government get behind Vaxine's promising COVID-19 vaccine”

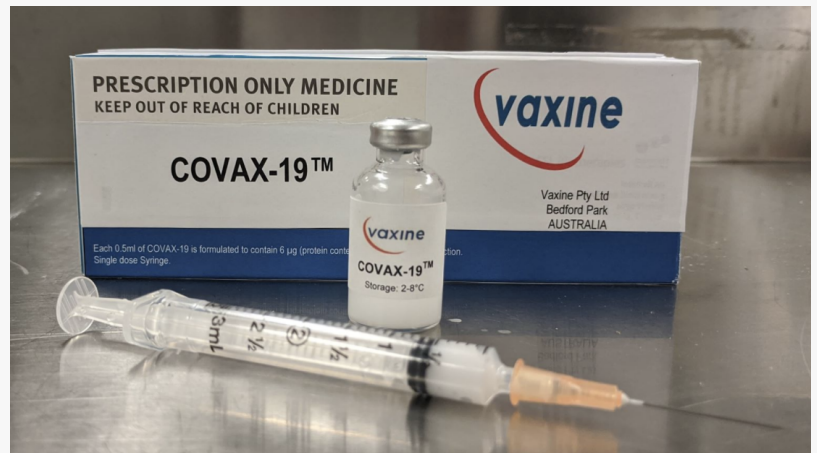
Associate Professor Dimitar Sajkov, Respiratory Physician

The vaccine based on the synthetic spike protein was then manufactured in insect cell cultures before being combined with Advax adjuvant which is used to turbocharge the vaccine and make it more effective.

Normally this process could take up to 15 years. Instead, the Vaxine team successfully designed, manufactured and advanced Covax-19® into human trials in under 5 months.



Vaxine Pty Ltd company logo



Vaxine's promising new COVID-19 vaccine candidate

"Thanks to our unique ability to run computer simulations on the virus before it is even fully characterised, we were able to dramatically speed up the ability to design Covax-19[®] vaccine," said Prof. Petrovsky.

In July, Covax-19[®] vaccine became the first Australian- and Southern hemisphere-developed vaccine to commence human testing

Sharen Pringle, Vaxine's Business Manager said the Vaxine team are very proud to be leading the Australian effort in development of COVID-19 vaccines.

"This MTPConnect funding will help to continue important research into our Covax-19[®] vaccine, which potentially will have an impact in Australia and globally."

The Vaxine team used a similar approach in 2009 to develop a [swine flu pandemic vaccine](#) that was advanced into human trials in under 3 months from discovery of the new virus, then a world record for pandemic vaccine development <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28301280/>. They have also used the same approach to develop vaccines against [SARS](#) and [MERS](#) coronaviruses that were shown to be highly protective in the relevant animal models.

"Our focus is always on safety and tolerability as well as effectiveness. It is pleasing to see Covax-19[®] just as with our other vaccines that have been tested in humans, has shown great safety and tolerability in its initial human trial", explained Prof. Petrovsky.

The next step will be to undertake a pivotal international Phase 3 clinical trial of Covax-19[®] to confirm its ability to protect against COVID-19 infection, thereby opening the door to commercial sales.

Vaxine's research was selected for funding by an independent and expert evaluation committee in BTB's Round 3 COVID-19 call, providing up to \$1 million to support eligible organisations develop medical devices, diagnostics, prophylactic or therapeutic approaches that will achieve an impact on the global response to the pandemic in less than 12-months.

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