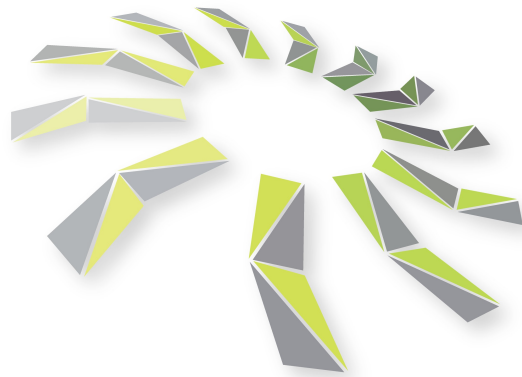# Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Awarded An SBIR from NIH/NIDA to Develop Drugs for Opioid Abuse Treatment

The National Institute on Drug Abuse has awarded a $256,220 SBIR grant to Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

RALEIGH, NC, USA, April 13, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (CPI) are excited to be awarded a Phase I SBIR from the National Institutes of Health / National Institute on Drug Abuse for their project "New therapeutic approaches to identifying molecules for opioid abuse treatment". This is specifically part of the HEAL Initiative: America's Startups and Small Businesses Build Technologies to Stop the Opioid Crisis." said Dr. Sean Ekins, CEO, CPI.

Collaborations Pharmaceuticals logo

The ongoing overreliance on opioids for chronic pain despite their poor ability to improve function has contributed to a significant and alarming epidemic of opioid overdose deaths and addictions in recent years. Despite the overwhelming addiction crisis, few therapies exist, and with low efficacy. Thus, a critical unmet need is an effective and safe treatment for opioid abuse disorders. Recent research has suggested that psychedelics are capable of reducing drug-dependence, including opioid abuse, and that serious adverse effects are extremely rare. This drug abuse cessation is linked to the induction of neuritogenesis and increased neuroplasticity, a hallmark of psychedelics. While the psychedelic experience and neuroplasticity induction appear interlinked, several analogs of psychedelics have been proposed which induce neuroplasticity and drug-avoidance while seemingly lacking the psychedelic experience. Although few in number, these analogs have been named "psychoplastogens" and are promising candidates for treatment of opioid drug abuse. The de-coupling of the psychedelic experience and neuroplasticity induction is linked to receptor specificity.

"We developed our MegaSyn generative machine learning software to generate new molecules

for various drug discovery projects. In this project we will develop analogs of psychedelics that will have improved specificity and drug-like properties to rapidly expand the pool of known psychoplastogens. This will significantly increase potential therapeutic options for opioid abuse treatment" explained Dr. Fabio Urbina, Senior Scientist, CPI.

MegaSyn is our generative machine learning software which is being used for fee for service projects with pharmaceutical and consumer product companies for a range of applications. We also have a vast range of machine learning products such as Assay Central, MegaPredict, MegaTox and MegaTrans which can be leveraged in this project. This research has applications for developing new treatments for this devastating health crisis, building a pipeline of molecules which we can then license to larger companies. We have previously demonstrated that CPI can build software technologies focused on machine learning and identify molecules in other disease areas.

About Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Collaborations Pharmaceuticals, Inc.® has developed software for data curation and machine learning called Assay Central® (www.assaycentral.org) as well as curated model bundles in MegaTox®, MegaTrans® and MegaPredict®. Most recently we have developed MegaSyn and UV-adVISor. CPI performs research and development on innovative therapeutics for multiple rare and neglected diseases and is located in laboratories in the NC State Incubator at Centennial campus. We have considerable experience with preclinical and computational approaches to drug discovery and toxicity prediction. For more information, please visit
http://www.collaborationspharma.com/

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