

GT Healthcare Capital Partners launches AI-driven drug development company

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Developing breakthrough investigational medicines by harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to increase the efficiency of the Drug discovery process



GT Healthcare Capital Partners, a life science-focused private equity partnership which specializes in capital investments and market scalability in Asia/ Greater China region, has launched an AI-driven drug development company in Shanghai with \$27 million financial backings on 11 June 2019.

GT Apeiron Therapeutics (Apeiron), a novel biotechnology company, was launched with the backing from GT Healthcare and associated investors. The company also entered into a drug discovery collaboration with Exscientia, which utilizes artificial intelligence for drug discovery. Working with Exscientia' state-of-the-art automated AI drug discovery platform and other emerging technologies, Apeiron aims to accelerate the development of novel drugs via new pathways to tackle high impact therapeutic targets, with an initial focus on oncology.

"Though pharmaceutical R&D productivity has been a challenge for the industry, we have seen positive trends such as breakthroughs in biology, novel approaches, and acceleration of technology advances. Apeiron will leverage such emerging technologies to significantly improve drug R&D productivity to benefit patients" said, Dr Mingxi Li, partner at GT Healthcare and a board member of Apeiron.

Led by a team with extensive drug discovery expertise, Apeiron intends to develop breakthrough investigational medicines by harnessing the power of artificial intelligence, which drastically increases efficiency throughout the drug discovery process, from target selection, hit identification, lead optimization to pre-clinical studies and clinical trials.

"We are launching GT Apeiron at a time of rapid AI-powered tools development underpinning new drug development," said Dave Norwood, Advisory Board Chairman of Apeiron. "I am delighted to see a highly-devoted team, leveraging on the latest technologies to efficiently develop new drugs tackling difficult-to-drug targets and to address huge unmet medical needs globally."

Professor Andrew Hopkins, Exscientia's CEO, commented: "This is an exciting time for pharmaceutical research, with innovative approaches to drug discovery as well as the development of new commercial markets. Both are strongly evident in China, already the second largest national pharmaceutical market in the world, where we are delighted to join our expertise and technology with GT Apeiron to initiate our first discovery opportunity in the country. The medicines we generate by applying our AI platform and GT Apeiron's experimental expertise will focus on areas of significant unmet need with global potential."