

CSIRO begins testing COVID-19 vaccines

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The testing is expected to take three months



The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency, has commenced the first stage of testing potential vaccines for COVID-19. The testing, expected to take three months, is underway at CSIRO's high-containment biosecurity facility, the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) in Geelong.

To prepare for disease outbreaks, last year CSIRO partnered with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), a global group that aims to derail epidemics by speeding up the development of vaccines.

In January, CEPI engaged CSIRO to start working on the virus SARS CoV-2, which causes the disease COVID-19. In consultation with the World Health Organisation, CEPI has identified vaccine candidates from The University of Oxford (UK) and Inovio Pharmaceuticals Inc. (US) to undergo the first pre-clinical trials at CSIRO, with further candidates likely to follow.

The latest milestone builds on CSIRO's growing work to tackle COVID-19, which has included scaling up other potential vaccine candidates at its biologics production facility in Melbourne.