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CEPI invests $3.5M in Clover Australia for COVID-19 vaccine

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Norway based CEPI, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations has announced a ninth worldwide collaboration to develop a COVID-19 vaccine.

CEPI will invest an initial US$3.5 million in a partnering agreement with Clover Biopharmaceuticals AUS Pty Ltd (Clover Australia) a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sichuan Clover Biopharmaceuticals, Inc (China) (Clover Biopharmaceuticals), bringing the organisation's total investment in COVID-19 vaccine research & development to US$39.6m.

This initial CEPI investment will support Clover Australia in its efforts to initiate a phase 1 clinical trial in Australia of its COVID-19 S-Trimer vaccine candidate. This innovative vaccine candidate is based on Clover Biopharmaceutical's proprietary Trimer-Tag© vaccine technology platform, which is a novel way to produce the spike proteins of the COVID-19 virus in a native trimeric form for use in a vaccine. If successful in clinical trials, Clover Biopharmaceuticals has the capacity to rapidly scale up the production of the vaccine using its in-house biomanufacturing capabilities.

Richard Hatchett, CEO of CEPI said, "We are delighted to partner with Clover Australia on their innovative COVID-19 S-Trimer vaccine candidate. They produced their vaccine within a month of the virus sequence becoming available, and they have rapidly advanced toward a first in human trial. This vaccine candidate is an important new addition to the CEPI portfolio. CEPI has invested in a diverse range of innovative vaccine platforms, as well as more established vaccine technologies, to maximise our chances of success as we pursue our ambition of making COVID-19 vaccines available for broad use."

Joshua Liang, Chief Strategy Officer of Clover Biopharmaceuticals and co-inventor of COVID-19 S-Trimer vaccine candidate said, "At Clover Biopharmaceuticals, we are proud to receive CEPI's funding and support for Clover Australia, which are critical to enabling the ongoing development and acceleration of our COVID-19 S-Trimer vaccine program that utilizes our innovative Trimer-Tag© platform technology. We have been working tirelessly and hope to contribute significantly to global efforts in fighting this pandemic that has affected us all."

This investment is the result of a recent global call for proposals that CEPI issued in early February,6 which invited funding applications for vaccine technology that could be used to rapidly develop a vaccine against the new coronavirus, and most importantly at scale and with the necessary equitable access provisions.