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UK advances key tools for Monkeypox vaccine research

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Vaccines against Monkeypox are already licensed in some countries including e.g., the US and Canada by virtue of the development and licensure of a vaccine against the closely related pathogen, Smallpox, due to substantial and sustained prior investment in Smallpox R&D



The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Norway has announced funding of up to $375,000 to the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to support the development of key laboratory tools to advance and standardise assessment of vaccines used to protect against Monkeypox, including the currently approved Smallpox vaccines.

The tools CEPI is supporting the development of are:

Assays, with the UKHSA, to test for the presence of specific antibodies, indicative of an immune response to Monkeypox following either natural infection or vaccination.

A **reference antibody standard**, with the UK MHRA, to harmonise how different laboratories assess the strength and duration of immune responses generated by current vaccines and those in development against Monkeypox.

The tools will be made freely available excluding admin fees to the global scientific community to provide a common standardised assessment between laboratories in different countries documenting vaccine performance against Monkeypox. Data generated from their use will help to inform current vaccine development and deployment strategies, while also supporting the development and evaluation of Monkeypox diagnostics.