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China's ZerunBio vaccine to cross protect against some new variants of SARS-CoV-2

July 22, 2021 | News

CEPI will provide $13.1 million to support phase I clinical trial



Shanghai Zerun Biotechnology (ZerunBio) and its parent company Walvax Biotechnology have partnered with Norway-based CEPI, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, to advance development of both COVID-19 prototype and variant vaccine candidates.

CEPI will provide $13.1 million to support phase I clinical trial, process optimisation and scale-up of the prototype vaccine, and preclinical studies and phase I clinical trial of the variant vaccine.

Potential advantages of this candidate include scalability, thermostability, and the ability to cross protect against some of the new variants of SARS-CoV-2. The prototype COVID-19 vaccine based on this technology has recently entered Phase I/II clinical trials in Henan Province, China.

Previous preclinical studies of this vaccine candidate, carried out by ZerunBio, have shown that it induces very high titres of neutralising antibodies and robust T-cell immune responses.

"The grant reflects the recognition of CEPI on our vaccine development platform and knowledge and dedication of our team, which have been working tirelessly with a firm determination to contribute to fighting this global pandemic. Partnering with CEPI, we can surely accelerate the development to achieve our goal of making a safe, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccine to the world", said Jiankang Zhang, Vice President of Walvax, CEO & President of Zerun Bio.