

Accelerating Medicines Partnership Announces Awards to Advance Research in Type 2 Diabetes

Awards will support increased collaboration among research teams

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The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) will award more than \$3 and a half million to further the study of Type 2 Diabetes (T2D) as part of an unprecedented collaboration to develop new ways to diagnose and treat several pressing diseases.

The awards are the first funds to be released from the FNIH for the T2D initiative, which is a component of the Accelerating Medicines Partnership (AMP), a joint venture among the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 10 biopharmaceutical companies and several non-profits to identify and validate promising biological targets of disease. In addition to T2D, AMP will pilot research projects over five years in Alzheimer's disease and the autoimmune disorders rheumatoid arthritis and systemic lupus erythematosus.

The AMP T2D initiative will be used to develop and enhance an online knowledge portal that will allow researchers to integrate disparate genomic, clinical and molecular data on the disease and its complications. The portal, which is expected to launch in the summer of 2015, will connect academic researchers, pharmaceutical industry scientists and clinicians to high-quality human genetic data. The FNIH funding is comprised of several awards, one for development of the portal itself and four for the addition of new data to the portal. This research will be tightly integrated with work funded by several grants from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) in support of AMP.

One of the FNIH awards, for knowledge portal development, will go to a team led by Principal Investigators Michael Boehnke, Ph.D., and Goncalo Abecasis, Ph.D., from the University of Michigan, along with Co-Principal Investigators Nancy Cox, Ph.D., of Vanderbilt University and Jose Florez, M.D., Ph.D., from the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard and the Massachusetts General Hospital. "Our team is excited by the opportunity to enhance and extend the prototype T2D knowledge portal developed by our NIH-funded T2D-GENES consortium, and to partner with the pharmaceutical industry and nonprofit sector through AMP T2D," said Boehnke.

Additional awards, for integration of several large data sets, will be distributed to teams led by Principal Investigators Ruth Loos, Ph.D. and Erwin Bottinger, M.D., from the BioMe Bank at the Mount Sinai Hospital in New York; Timothy Frayling, Ph.D. and Andrew Hattersley, M.D., from the Exeter National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) supported biobanks at the University of Exeter in Devon, England; Michael Boehnke, Ph.D., from the University of Michigan and the

FUSION (Finland-United States Investigation of NIDDM Genetics) Study; Markku Laakso, M.D., Ph.D., from the METSIM (METabolic Syndrome In Men) studies at the University of Michigan and the University of Eastern Finland; and Mark McCarthy, M.D., and Fredrik Karpe, M.D., Ph.D., from the Oxford Biobank at the University of Oxford in England. “It is truly exciting to see such rich and diverse sets of genetic and phenotypic data being made available to researchers via the portal,” said McCarthy.

“The AMP model represents a breakthrough collaborative approach to address diseases that continue to affect the lives of millions of Americans,” said FNIH President and Executive Director Maria C. Freire, Ph.D. “The level of data sharing and integration represented by the AMP T2D portal will enable a communal approach to identifying and validating new targets for diabetes and its complications that will help accelerate the development of new treatments.”

In addition to the NIH and FNIH, the AMP T2D Project brings together, five pharmaceutical companies (Eli Lilly and Company; Janssen Research and Development, LLC; Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp.; Pfizer Inc.; and Sanofi US Services) and the not-for-profit organizations JDRF International and the American Diabetes Association.

For more information about this project and the funding opportunities, please visit <http://fnih.org/what-we-do/current-research-programs/amp-t2d-project>.

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About the Foundation for the NIH

The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health creates and manages alliances with public and private institutions in support of the mission of the NIH, the world’s premier medical research agency. The Foundation, also known as the FNIH, works with its partners to accelerate key issues of scientific study and strategies against diseases and health concerns in the United States and across the globe. The FNIH organizes and administers research projects; supports education and training of new researchers; organizes educational events and symposia; and administers a series of funds supporting a wide range of health issues. Established by Congress in 1996, the FNIH is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. For additional information about the FNIH, please visit www.fnih.org.

About the Accelerating Medicines Partnership

A public private partnership that brings together NIH, biopharmaceutical companies, and not-for-profit organizations, AMP’s mission is to transform the current model for developing new diagnostics and treatments by jointly identifying and validating promising biological targets of disease. AMP’s goal is to generate diverse, high quality, pre-competitive, disease-specific clinical data to be made publicly available for the purpose of accelerating drug development. FNIH raises and distributes private sector funds for AMP, provides central project management to AMP initiatives, and convenes the governing committees that oversee the partnership on behalf of all the stakeholders.