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China expands collaboration to develop COVID-19 multi-variant vaccine

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Preclinical studies have shown that the vaccine can induce strong, broad spectrum, and durable neutralizing antibody and cell-mediated immune responses



Norway-based CEPI, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, has announced that it will expand its collaboration with Shanghai Zerun Biotechnology Co., Ltd. (Zerun Bio) and its parent company Walvax Biotechnology Co., Ltd. (Walvax), a public company listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange to advance the development of a COVID-19 variant vaccine.

CEPI will invest up to an additional $8.15 million to support a Phase I/II clinical trial in Mali which will evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of Zerun Bio's prototype and multi-variant vaccine candidates.

This will be the first clinical trial of the multi-variant vaccine, which has the potential to provide protection against a broad range of COVID-19 variants.

Zerun Bio's commercialization plant for COVID-19 vaccines in Daxing District, Beijing, China, is expected to be put into use in 2022, enabling Zerun Bio to produce commercial volumes of COVID-19 vaccine.