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CEPI boosts 'Coronavirus X' vaccine search with expanded VBI Vaccines deal

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The vaccine platform presents multiple antigens to expand the portfolio of potential variant-proof coronavirus vaccines



Norway-based Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is expanding its world-leading portfolio of potential variant-proof coronavirus vaccines in a deal with US-based VBI Vaccines Inc. to advance the development of multivalent coronavirus shots that could be deployed against COVID-19 as well as a future 'Coronavirus X'.

The candidate vaccines will be developed using VBI's proprietary enveloped virus-like particle (eVLP) technology platform and aim to provide broad and durable protection against multiple variants of the COVID-19-causing coronavirus, as well as against other coronaviruses – both known and as-yet unknown – that harbour pandemic potential.

The renewed partnership expands the scope of a previously launched collaboration in which CEPI committed up to $33 million for VBI to develop an eVLP vaccine candidate targeting the Beta (B.1.351) COVID-19 variant.

Application of this funding will now be directed into the broader development of the VBI-2900 coronavirus vaccine program to explore the 'Coronavirus X' potential of VBI's technology. As part of this new agreement, CEPI will support the further optimization of VBI's eVLP platform, including the next stages of manufacturing scale-up