

CEPI partners with Korean biotech startup Lemonex to advance mRNA vaccine delivery

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With \$4.6 million in funding to evaluate the safety of the DegradaBALL mRNA vaccine platform in a Phase I clinical study



Norway-based Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) has partnered with Lemonex Inc. (Lemonex), a biotechnology company in the Republic of Korea, to advance their mRNA drug delivery technology, DegradaBALL, which has the potential to both minimise post-mRNA vaccination side effects and improve access to future mRNA vaccines.

CEPI is providing Lemonex up to \$4.6 million in funding to evaluate the safety of the DegradaBALL mRNA vaccine platform in a Phase I clinical study taking place at Seoul National University Hospital. The funding will also support the development of a freeze-dried formulation which could reduce complex-cold chain vaccine storage requirements and increase the use of mRNA vaccines in the Global South.

The new partnership forms part of CEPI's plan to expand the use of and access to novel RNA innovations for potential use against a future epidemic or pandemic threat, including unknown or as-of-yet unidentified pathogens (Disease X), in alignment with the 100 Days Mission.

The ambitious goal spearheaded by CEPI, and embraced by the Republic of Korea as part of their strategic plan against emerging infectious diseases, aims to condense vaccine development to 100 days from virus identification and stop the next pandemic in its tracks.

Biotech startup Lemonex's DegradaBALL is designed to potentially minimise side effects associated with the use of current lipid nanoparticle (LNP)-mRNA vaccines by increasing the drug residual rate at the administration site and improving the stability of mRNA.