Recursion Pharmaceuticals Receives Grant to Leverage AI-Enabled Discovery Platform in Infectious Disease

May 7, 2018

The grant, awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, represents a collaborative effort between Recursion and the Winzeler Lab at UC San Diego School of Medicine to accelerate the discovery of drugs to treat malaria, and sets the stage for Recursion to further broaden its drug discovery platform into infectious disease.

SALT LAKE CITY, May 7, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Recursion Pharmaceuticals today announced the award of a $546,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to apply Recursion's AI-enabled technology to the discovery of novel drugs with the ability to treat malaria.

"We are proud to contribute to the foundation's goal of a world free of malaria," said Chris Gibson, Ph.D., CEO of Recursion Pharmaceuticals. "Like the foundation, we believe in the value of all human lives. This grant provides us with an opportunity to explore the utility of our discovery platform in one infectious disease, and our hope is that one day soon we'll be capitalizing on our innovations in automation, biology, and machine learning to discover potential new treatments for many infectious diseases."

Facilitating the discovery of a new treatment for malaria will further advance Recursion's goal of finding 100 new treatments by 2025.

"This grant is another step in our long, but massively impactful, mission of decoding biology to radically improve lives," continued Gibson.

Recursion has already established a robust pipeline of therapeutic candidates in genetic diseases, including ataxia telangiectasia and cerebral cavernous malformation, among many others. Through technological development in malaria, Recursion plans to enable drug discovery across dozens of infectious disease indications over the next decade.

"Infectious diseases are extremely burdensome. Malaria alone affects hundreds of millions of people every year, and causes almost half a million deaths annually," said Yolanda Chong, Ph.D., Vice President of Biology at Recursion. "A safe treatment that truly eliminates malaria would have an immense impact. That impact will only increase as we pursue treatments for additional infectious diseases. We are honored to undertake this project and are grateful for the opportunity to begin our work in infectious disease on such an important problem."

The project also includes a subaward to accomplished antimalarial drug discovery expert Elizabeth Winzeler, Ph.D., Professor of Pharmacology and Drug Discovery in the Department of Pediatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine.

"This grant is further evidence of the deepening commitment by key parties to eradicate infectious diseases in general and malaria in particular," said Winzeler. "By working together, leveraging our particular strengths and expertise, we can make a powerful and productive combination."

"This is a very exciting collaboration for us," said Chong. "Dr. Winzeler and her team are true experts in this field. Working together, I'm confident that we will make great progress in the fight against infectious disease."

About Recursion Pharmaceuticals

Recursion Pharmaceuticals is a biotechnology company combining experimental biology and automation with artificial intelligence in a massively parallel system to efficiently identify and de-risk potential drugs for diverse indications, including genetic disease, inflammation, immunology, and infectious disease. Recursion applies causative perturbations to human cells to generate disease models and associated biological image data. Recursion's rich, relatable database of biological images is then probed using advanced machine learning approaches, revealing drug candidates, mechanisms of action, and potential toxicity, with the eventual goal of decoding biology and advancing new therapeutics to radically improve lives. Recursion is headquartered in Salt Lake City. Learn more at www.recursionpharma.com, or connect on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.