

Pharma firm, labs share tech for COVID research equity: WHO

August 29 2023



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

A global COVID-19 knowledge-sharing platform has secured three new licensing agreements to transfer vaccine technologies, including one with the first private manufacturer to join the initiative, the World Health

Organization said Tuesday.

The UN health agency's COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP) was founded in May 2020 as a platform to share knowledge and [intellectual property](#) and ensure a more equitable distribution of COVID-fighting tests and vaccines.

C-TAP had until now secured licensing agreements with just two institutes: one with the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) for a COVID-19 antibody test, and two with the US National Institute of Health (NIH) for the development of therapeutics, early-stage vaccines and diagnostic tools.

But on Tuesday, the WHO said the number of agreements had doubled, with CSIC providing a second one—this time for a COVID-19 [vaccine](#) prototype—and the University of Chile providing one for a test of COVID antibody neutralization levels.

Taiwan-based Medigen Vaccine Biologics Corp, the first private manufacturer in the program, is offering its patent and know-how for a COVID vaccine that has seen three million doses administered across seven countries, the WHO said.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus hailed the agreements, acquired through the agency's Medicines Patent Pool.

"COVID-19 is here to stay, and the world will continue to need tools to prevent it, test for it and treat it," he said, stressing the commitment to "making those tools accessible to everyone, everywhere".

"I am grateful to the leadership shown by those license holders who have contributed technology."

The information pool was intended as a voluntary global bank for intellectual property and open-sourced data as part of a common front against COVID-19.

However, as it turned out, [pharmaceutical companies](#) have largely kept their findings to themselves rather than sharing them as global public goods.

But the WHO said it believed the fresh agreements would provide "an important boost to the overall effort."

The NGO coalition People's Vaccine Alliance also hailed the shift seen in Tuesday's announcement.

"This is a [victory](#) for [scientific collaboration](#) and human rights—and a significant step towards securing a people's vaccine," it said in a statement.

"By sharing technology with C-TAP, these organizations are placing the needs of humanity over the narrow perception of profit and self-interest that has so far plagued the [pharmaceutical industry](#)."

WHO said all the licenses were "global, transparent and non-exclusive to all manufacturers" and accessible through the C-TAP website.

It highlighted that the licenses could make a true difference, pointing out that the first CSIC license for a serological test had resulted in a sub license to Biotech Africa to develop their diagnostic technology.

© 2023 AFP

Citation: Pharma firm, labs share tech for COVID research equity: WHO (2023, August 29) retrieved 2 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-08-pharma-firm-labs-tech-covid.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.