

Advance your discoveries into therapies

with LeapRx

Accelerating early life science by bridging academia and industry

Empire Discovery Institute (EDI) has established a collaborative research alliance with global pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk to accelerate novel drug discovery programs in cardio-metabolic diseases and rare blood disorders. We call this initiative LeapRx.

LeapRx

We believe there is a great deal of break-through therapeutic discoveries getting lost in the academic-industry 'translational valley of death' because of inherent limitations in drug development expertise, resource access and tech transfer bandwidth. When approached by academic tech transfer offices about licensing opportunities, pharma companies usually reply back with "too early-stage", "has insufficient PoC results", "lacks sufficient de-risking activities", or "demonstrates undruggable hits to novel interesting targets".

LeapRx has one simple goal: to cultivate a pipeline of novel treatments for people suffering from diabetes (type 1, type 2), obesity, cardiovascular disease, NASH, chronic kidney disease, and rare blood disorders. Our ambition is to connect early-stage research and competencies from academic teams with expertise from industry.

LeapRx provides:



Access to funding, technical capabilities and guidance from pharmaceutical industry experts



Customized project teams dedicated to ensuring scientific and operational success



Milestone-based workplans co-developed by pharma experts and your institution designed to add patient and commercial value



A clearly defined commercial path and exit strategy

About the initiative

LeapRx's vision draws on each organization's complementary expertise, experience and capabilities to guide academic research teams towards maturing innovative research into viable medicines. EDI is comprised of scientific, technical and business development veterans with a track record of translating discoveries through early stages of development to clinical proof of concept. Novo Nordisk is experienced in the development of therapeutic platforms involving peptide, protein-based and cell-based therapies, and in partnerships that develop gene editing and RNA-based therapeutics. Academic partners will also benefit from Novo Nordisk's strength in regulatory affairs, strategy, translational and late stage clinical development, commercial assessment, and business development to help evaluate, select, and advance programs.

Program eligibility and specifics



We plan to identify and support 3-5 early-stage programs per year over a 5-year period, with 1-3 IND ready candidate(s) that are of direct interest to Novo Nordisk for licensing by year 4-5.

- Therapeutic Focus
- Any Modality

Funding and Timeline

Total funding of up to \$10M for successful projects advancing through the developmental pipeline. The financial commitment expected to support the first year of the project is \$250,000.

Contractual Framework

EDI would license IP from the partner institution, with sub-license rights to Novo Nordisk. At the time Novo Nordisk exercises its sub-license, program development costs would be fully funded by Novo Nordisk. There will be pre-defined opt-in milestones and royalties providing income to the partner Institution and EDI.

Scientific evaluation and program selection

Programs will be evaluated and selected by a multidisciplinary Project Review Committee (PRC) comprised of scientific, clinical, regulatory, business development, and commercial experts drawn from EDI and Novo Nordisk. Projects will be screened based on transparent criteria including therapeutic fit, novelty, mechanism of action, maturity, intellectual property position, time/cost to proof of concept, technical risk factors, clinical & regulatory path, differentiation, and market potential. Selected and non-selected programs will receive timely and transparent feedback.

Once a program is admitted into LeapRx, EDI and Novo Nordisk will form project teams comprised of EDI, Novo Nordisk, the principal investigator(s), and the institution's tech transfer office. These teams will be responsible for developing the program-specific workplan, budget, timelines, and milestone objectives. EDI will coordinate and manage the workplan through its network of contract research organizations (CROs), specialty service providers, pharmaceutical industry experts and consultants. Specific aspects of the project may be conducted in the investigator's laboratory and could receive financial investments assigned to specific workplan-driven milestones. Progress against milestones and advancement to the next level of support will be evaluated annually by the PRC.



For more information, please contact Empire Discovery Institute (EDI):

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About Empire Discovery Institute (EDI)

Empire Discovery Institute (EDI) is a non-profit New York drug discovery and development accelerator created to translate promising scientific discoveries into new break-through treatments and cures, support vital pharmaceutical research efforts, and foster the development of a vibrant biotech start-up community within New York State. EDI has been made possible through a seed grant from New York State and through a research partnership with the University of Rochester, University at Buffalo, and Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. www.discoverEDI.org

About Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. The company is committed to discovering and developing innovative medicines for the treatment of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases including atherosclerosis and heart failure, obesity, NASH, hemophilia, rare blood disorders, rare metabolic disorders, and growth disorders. Within each of these areas, Novo Nordisk has deep scientific and technical expertise in assay development, in vivo pharmacology models, formulation, encapsulation and drug delivery. www.novonordisk.com