

The Michael J. Fox Foundation and Imago Pharmaceuticals Partner to Advance Use of Research Tools to Speed Parkinson's Research

NEW YORK (May 11) – The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) announces the acquisition of a library of research tools around the parkin protein from Imago Pharmaceuticals. The Foundation believes these tools — cell lines, plasmids, compounds and more — will accelerate biological study and drug development against this promising disease-modification target.

Imago purchased the tools as part of a deal with health firm Perrigo in late 2014. These parkin assets originated at now-defunct biotech Elan Pharmaceuticals, where Imago leaders worked on another target: c-Jun N-terminal kinase, or JNK. They are continuing work on JNK inhibitors as potential therapeutics for inflammatory, autoimmune and neurodegenerative diseases, including Parkinson's disease.

MJFF bought hundreds of parkin tools for a cost covering storage and shipment. Foundation staff and advisors are now strategizing where to invest in further testing and replication.

“We're immensely grateful to Imago for offering this valuable library of varied research tools,” said Marco Baptista, PhD, who leads the MJFF Parkin Program. “The availability of these resources will significantly speed parkin research and the field's ability to test new concepts toward a therapy that may have clinical relevance for millions living with Parkinson's disease.”

The research tools deemed most valuable will join the MJFF Research Tools Catalog, a listing of assets from antibodies to viral vectors managed by the Foundation. MJFF makes these tools easily and affordably available to the research community to break down barriers to progress and advance Parkinson's discovery and drug development.

“We believe that there is substantial value in the Parkin Program assets and that The Michael J. Fox Foundation is uniquely positioned to maximize this value,” said Irene Griswold-Prenner, PhD, Co-Founder and CSO of Imago Pharmaceuticals. “The Parkin Program was developed at Elan, where significant time and resources were invested in this program. With MJFF making the parkin reagents broadly available to the Parkinson's disease research community, these reagents can be maximally utilized and increase the probability of benefiting Parkinson's patients.”

The parkin protein is a target of interest for researchers seeking to develop treatments to slow or stop progression of Parkinson's disease, an unmet need. Currently available therapies treat only the symptoms of the disease.

Mutations in the parkin (*PARK2*) gene are associated with young-onset Parkinson's disease and lead to dysfunction of the parkin protein. Scientists believe that the protein plays a role in mitophagy and mitochondrial function and that parkin levels are reduced as we age. MJFF is funding a consortia of investigators studying the biology of parkin and the development of both parkin replacement and activation therapies for those with the *PARK2* mutation and with other

forms of Parkinson's disease (i.e., sporadic, associated with other genetic mutations), respectively.

The Foundation will work with funded researchers to fold the parkin tools into their studies first then roll them out to the greater research community later this year.

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About The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research

As the world's largest nonprofit funder of Parkinson's research, The Michael J. Fox Foundation is dedicated to accelerating a cure for Parkinson's disease and improved therapies for those living with the condition today. The Foundation pursues its goals through an aggressively funded, highly targeted research program coupled with active global engagement of scientists, Parkinson's patients, business leaders, clinical trial participants, donors and volunteers. In addition to funding more than \$450 million in research to date, the Foundation has fundamentally altered the trajectory of progress toward a cure. Operating at the hub of worldwide Parkinson's research, the Foundation forges groundbreaking collaborations with industry leaders, academic scientists and government research funders; increases the flow of participants into Parkinson's disease clinical trials with its online tool, Fox Trial Finder; promotes Parkinson's awareness through high-profile advocacy, events and outreach; and coordinates the grassroots involvement of thousands of Team Fox members around the world.

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About Imago Pharmaceuticals

Imago Pharmaceuticals, a privately held pharmaceutical company, engages in preclinical and clinical development of drug candidates directed against targets implicated in inflammatory, autoimmune and neurodegenerative diseases.

For more information, please visit our website at www.imago-pharma.com.

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