

North Carolina SBIR/STTR Successes

Endacea, Inc.

A Multiple Award Recipient from RTP

Endacea, Inc. is a development-stage biopharmaceutical company in Research Triangle Park that targets purinoceptors. Purinoceptors are protein switches on cells that play important roles in many different disease processes, including asthma, inflammation, cancer, Gram-negative septicemia, and reperfusion organ injury. Endacea has been successful in receiving funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) SBIR/STTR program for the development of its products. Without the support of SBIR/STTR grants, Endacea would most likely be out of business. In 1997, Endacea (formerly known as Link Technology, Inc.) received its first SBIR Phase I grant (\$100,000) from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) to fund *in vitro* feasibility studies for the development of a diagnostic for endotoxin. There is a huge, unmet medical need for sensitive, reliable sepsis markers and for clinical diagnostics which can be used to stratify patients for specific anti-endotoxin and anti-sepsis therapies.

In 1998, following demonstration of proof of concept for this endotoxin diagnostic, Endacea received an SBIR Phase II grant (\$1,200,000) from the NIAID to fund clinical trials. In a 43-patient pilot clinical trial, Endacea demonstrated that this diagnostic is a specific and sensitive sepsis marker for patients with suspected Gram-negative septicemia. Endacea expects to attract a strategic partner to continue the development and commercialization of this endotoxin diagnostic in the near future. Endacea, Inc., was the recipient of a Certificate for Commendation (March, 1999) from the State of North Carolina and Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) for receiving these SBIR Phase I and Phase II awards from NIAID.

“Endacea is grateful for the continuing support of the SBTDC...”

— Connie Wilson, MD
Endacea, Inc.

Endacea considers the SBIR/STTR program a valuable source of funding for the development of products in its pipeline. Dr. Constance Neely Wilson, Endacea’s Founder and Chief Scientific Officer, believes the process of preparation of the grant, as well as the peer review and endorsement of the project (if funded) by scientific and industry experts associated with NIH, such as NCI, NIAID, and NHLBI, Department of Defense, and other Federal governmental agencies (where SBIR/STTR funding is available) adds value to the project.

Endacea is grateful for the continuing support of the SBTDC, which has played an important role in Endacea’s access to SBIR/STTR funding. By sponsoring conferences such as the [Southeastern Biotechnology SBIR Conference](#) and the recent SBIR/STTR Phase II proposal development workshops, the SBTDC has introduced Endacea to many funding opportunities and provided valuable information on how to prepare and manage SBIR/STTR grants. Moreover, by providing a comprehensive and thoughtful review of Endacea’s grant applications, John Ujvari and the SBTDC’s SBIR program have strengthened Endacea’s grant proposals.

Endacea continues to receive funding from the STTR/SBIR program for products in its pipeline. In September 2002, Endacea received an STTR Phase I grant (\$160,000) from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to fund the testing of its lead molecule, L-97-1, as an oral treatment for asthma in an allergic animal model. Positive data from the laboratory of Dr. Jamal Mustafa (Professor of Pharmacology at East Carolina University), developed with funding from this grant, was presented at the recent American Thoracic Society meeting (Seattle, WA, May 2003).

For more information about Endacea, please contact Connie Wilson, MD at: cwilson@endacea.nctda.org

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