

UCSD Research Complex to Use Industry Partnerships as Catalyst for Cures

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By Brittany Meiling



*A rendering of the Center for Novel Therapeutics at UCSD. Photo courtesy of BioMed Realty.*

The University of California, San Diego is bringing the pharmaceutical industry onto its campus, giving entrepreneurs and corporations more access to the university's market-worthy research and advancing public-private collaboration.

To do this, the school is building a new research complex in partnership with BioMed Realty that will house pharmaceutical firms along with the university's own researchers.

The new building will be called the Center for Novel Therapeutics, spanning 110,000 square feet in the university's Science Research Park (adjacent to the Moores Cancer Center). The focus of the new research hub will be on cancer and other chronic diseases.

"This project will give researchers and entrepreneurs unique access to academic and institutional resources at the University and Moores Cancer Center and the ability to be part of one of the nation's most vibrant life science communities," said Tim Schoen, CEO and president of BioMed Realty, in a statement.

Jeff Graham, the university's executive director of real estate, said UCSD will take about a quarter of the building for its own research, while BioMed Realty will lease out the remainder of the building to "like-minded entities."



Graham said space in the building won't be restricted to oncology companies, but any company doing collaborative research with UCSD researchers.

BioMed said the design for the new center will create an "environment of collaboration throughout the building," with amenities for tenants and their employees, including a conference center, auditorium, fitness center and café.

Construction on the development will start in the second quarter of 2017 and to be completed in early 2019.

#### From Labs to Markets

The move reflects the general shift — long in the making — in San Diego's research community to focus more efforts on "translational research" (research that can be commercialized into treatments, therapies, and ultimately cures).

Years of insufficient federal funding have led the research community to seek new ways to stay afloat, said Greg McKee, president of innovation-focused nonprofit CONNECT. Last year, he saw a trend of many local institutes looking for new ways to commercialize their research.

The Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute, for example, started a program with global drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline Plc that will help the institute translate its research into medicines or other products that can be commercialized. The La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology launched an incubator to spin out startups that will commercialize its technology. In 2016, The Scripps Research Institute signed a strategic affiliation with the California Institute for Biomedical Research (Calibr), which integrates TSRI's basic research with Calibr's ability to translate that research into medicine and other products that can be commercialized.

The latest integration of industry players will likely spur more innovation — and collaboration — on UCSD's campus.

"The Center for Novel Therapeutics is a unique example of an academic-industry collaboration that will bring brilliant minds together to collaborate on groundbreaking research," said Pradeep K. Khosla, chancellor of UC San Diego, in a statement.

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