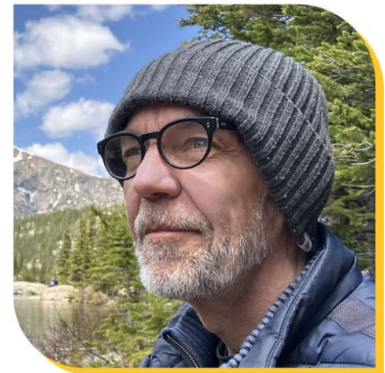


C-Path Awards Translational Therapeutics Accelerator Grant to Advance First-in-Class Antibiotic for Drug-Resistant Lung Infections

TUCSON, Ariz., Aug. 7, 2025 ? Critical Path Institute® (C-Path) announced today that its Translational Therapeutics Accelerator (TRxA) program has awarded a competitive research grant to Hackensack Meridian Health's (HMH) Center for Discovery and Innovation. The grant will support preclinical development of novel rifamycin antibiotics targeting *Mycobacterium abscessus* pulmonary disease (*Mab*-PD), a life-threatening and notoriously drug-resistant lung infection.

The \$339,394 award supports the work of Thomas Dick, Ph.D., and Veronique Dartois, Ph.D., of HMH, in collaboration with Courtney Aldrich, Ph.D., at the University of Minnesota. The team will advance two innovative rifamycin analogs, UMN-120 and UMN-121, with the goal of identifying a preclinical development candidate for eventual IND-enabling studies, a key step toward regulatory submission and clinical trials.

M. abscessus is a pathogen that primarily infects individuals with underlying lung damage or who have compromised immune systems, such as those with cystic fibrosis or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Treatment often requires month-to-year-long regimens involving multiple, poorly tolerated antibiotics, yet no FDA-approved therapy currently exists for this indication.



Dr. Thomas Dick

“*Mab*-PD is among the most difficult bacterial infections to treat,” said Dr. Dick. “Our rifamycin candidates offer a promising path forward as they are orally available, mechanistically validated, and derived from a class of antibiotics with a long-standing safety record in treating *mycobacterial* diseases.”



Dr. Veronique Dartois

This project addresses a critical gap in antibiotic development. “The support from TRxA is invaluable,” said Dr. Dartois. “It enables us to apply translational tools to advance new, targeted treatments for a neglected but increasingly prevalent disease.”

The Translational Therapeutics Accelerator is a program of the Critical Path Institute that provides funding and strategic mentorship to academic researchers working to transform promising discoveries into therapies ready for clinical development.

“This grant exemplifies our mission to advance therapies that address serious unmet medical needs,” said Maaïke Everts, Ph.D., Executive Director of TRxA. “We are excited to support Drs. Dick, Dartois, and Aldrich in their pursuit of a first-in-class therapy for *Mycobacterium abscessus* pulmonary disease. Their collaborative

work holds great promise for patients who today have very few effective options.”

For more information on C-Path, TRxA and its initiatives, please visit c-path.org/trxa.

About Critical Path Institute

Founded in 2005, as a public-private partnership in response to the [FDA's Critical Path Initiative](#), Critical Path Institute® (C-Path) celebrates its 20th anniversary as a vital, independent, nonprofit. C-Path's mission is to lead collaborations that advance better treatments for people worldwide. Globally recognized as a pioneer in accelerating drug development, C-Path has established numerous international consortia, programs and initiatives that currently include more than 1,600 scientists and representatives from government and regulatory agencies, academia, patient organizations, disease foundations and pharmaceutical and biotech companies. With dedicated team members located throughout the world, C-Path's global headquarters is located in Tucson, Arizona and C-Path's Europe subsidiary is headquartered in Amsterdam, Netherlands. For more information, visit c-path.org.

About TRxA

Critical Path Institute's Translational Therapeutics Accelerator (TRxA) is a global drug accelerator focused on supporting academic scientists in advancing novel therapeutics from university-based labs to drug development pipelines of pharmaceutical companies and, ultimately, the clinic. As a nonprofit neutral convener of patient groups, academia, pharmaceutical companies and regulatory agencies, C-Path brings a breadth of scientific and drug development planning not available in other accelerator programs. TRxA is uniquely situated to leverage the expertise available through C-Path's >20 disease-based consortia, as well as regulatory expertise and project management, to empower academic investigators to succeed in bringing safe and effective treatments to patients. For more information, visit c-path.org/trxa or email trxa@c-path.org.

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