Kansas Institute for Translational Chemical Biology
Promoting drug discovery and development while growing the Kansas economy

The University of Kansas seeks state funding to support crucial infrastructure for a Kansas Institute for Translational Chemical Biology. The institute, which will be centered in Lawrence, will promote and conduct research in translational biology and early stage drug development, which includes interacting with other universities and corporate partners to promote drug discovery.

In addition to improving human health, the new technologies and drugs produced by this research will benefit the Kansas economy by fostering KU collaborations with pharmaceutical firms, encouraging companies to locate in Kansas, and creating new startup companies to spur Kansas' human health industry.

State funding is necessary for key infrastructure, which includes researchers, support staff, pilot projects and some equipment.

Building on a national reputation
KU has been a national power in pharmaceutical science for 50 years, contributing to economic growth and major advances in the care of cancer, neurological conditions, and infectious disease. This translational research success was a key component of the KU Cancer Center’s successful bid for National Cancer Institute designation. It’s a key contributor to KU’s overall research excellence, especially to its status as a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

But KU’s competitive advantage in this area faces major challenges. Competing universities have made significant investments in this area, and continued success requires basic infrastructure investments. Thus, it is imperative that we provide the basic infrastructure to continue this strong research area at the heart of drug discovery.

Translating discoveries into cures, prosperity
Last year, KU’s pharmacy program was again ranked No. 2 nationally among all pharmacy schools in federal research funding at the National Institutes of Health, bringing $25 million into Kansas. This achievement marks KU as one of the top research universities finding new treatments for acute and chronic human diseases — such as cancer, Alzheimer’s, AIDS, and tuberculosis — that are a scourge of human populations globally.

Again, the technologies and drugs produced by this research will benefit the Kansas economy by encouraging collaboration with pharmaceutical firms, attracting companies to Kansas, and creating new startup companies.

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