Conscience Announces AI-Driven Medicines Program to Support Computational Approaches in Drug Discovery and Development

AIM program seeks applications for AI and digital tools to address critical challenges in areas of unmet medical or technological need

Toronto, ON, Canada, March 30, 2026 — Conscience, a Canadian non-profit dedicated to enabling drug discovery through collaboration for the advancement of accessible treatments, is pleased to announce a new program to further support innovative methodologies and artificial intelligence (AI) tools to address challenges in the development of accessible and affordable medicines. Launched today, the AI-Driven Medicines (AIM) Program seeks to drive transformative research using computational or digital-based methods to accelerate the drug discovery and development pipeline, with the intent of making advancements in computational theory toward practical therapeutic applications.

"While Conscience already supports programs focused on specific therapeutics development, progress in drug discovery also depends on the tools that make those advances possible. This initiative is designed to strengthen the methodologies and technologies researchers need to move discoveries forward," says Anne Fortier, VP of Drug Discovery and Development at Conscience. "As a non-profit focused on developing accessible medicines, we encourage the open collaboration, and support the development and responsible use of AI in drug discovery and development"

Through AIM, Conscience will provide one year of milestone-driven, reimbursed funding, covering up to 33 per cent of eligible costs for Canadian researchers, academic institutions, and large enterprises, and up to 50 per cent for Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The maximum funding per project is $1M CAD, though additional funding may be considered if the proposed scope and technical complexity warrant a higher budget.

The AIM program is currently inviting applications proposing computational-based approaches, devices, tools, or digital health technologies that address critical challenges in areas of unmet medical or technological need, including:

- **Discovery & Translational Science:** target or lead identification, biomarker integration (multi-omics, imaging), surrogate endpoint validation, disease pathway elucidation, and disease diagnosis.

- **Manufacturing & Formulation:** predicting high-yield or green manufacturing processes, cost-optimized synthesis, and developing field-stable formulations.
- **Clinical Development & Trial Optimization:** patient recruitment and stratification, adaptive trial design, virtual cohorts (Digital Twins, Synthetic Control Arms), and remote monitoring (wearables, RWD analysis).

Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis, until all funding is awarded.

“As Canada continues to lead in innovation and health research, our government is proud to support programs like Conscience’s AI-Driven Medicines initiative. By empowering researchers, academic institutions, and businesses across the country to harness the power of artificial intelligence, we are accelerating discoveries that will make medicines more accessible and affordable for all Canadians. This is a step forward not only for science, but for equity and public health,” says The Honourable Evan Solomon, Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

AIM is the latest of several initiatives that Conscience supports to advance drug discovery through open science. Through initiatives such as its Developing Medicines through Open Science (DMOS) program and the Critical Assessment of Computational Hit-finding Experiments (CACHE) Challenges, Conscience helps mobilize researchers, technologists, industry partners, and policy experts to collaboratively identify and develop promising drug candidates. Conscience also supports BEACON (the Benchmarking, Evaluation, and Assessment Consortium for Science), which is working to establish shared benchmarking frameworks so emerging computational and AI-driven approaches in drug discovery can be evaluated transparently and rigorously.

More information about AIM and the application process can be found on the Conscience website: conscience.ca/ai-driven-medicines-aim/

About Conscience
Conscience is a non-profit focused on enabling drug discovery and development in areas where open sharing and collaboration are key to advancement towards accessible treatments. It does so by encouraging and funding the open sharing of knowledge and tools, the use and improvement of artificial intelligence, and the development of policies that break down barriers of traditional drug development. Powered by a network that includes academics, industry, technologists, policy experts, and public support, Conscience seeks to drive innovation by turning drug discovery and development into a team sport. Its open science model brings unique value in areas where market solutions are limited, offering alternatives to traditional intellectual property models to make new accessible medicines so no one is left behind. Through key initiatives, such as its DMOS (Developing Medicines through Open Science) program and CACHE (Critical Assessment of Computation Hit-finding Experiments) Challenges, Conscience is accelerating the path to treatments for those who need them most. For more information, visit conscience.ca.

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