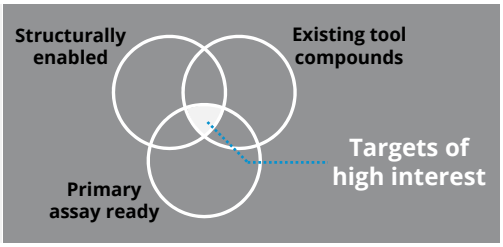
Pfizer's Centers for Therapeutic Innovation

Helpful Tips for Small Molecule Pre-Proposals

Pfizer's Centers for Therapeutic Innovation (CTI) specialize in helping academics bring innovative targets & technologies to patients, but what is it that Pfizer scientists look for in a small molecule pre-proposal? How can you improve the likelihood of success for your pre-proposal?

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

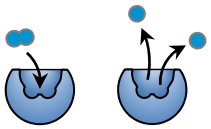
What do Pfizer scientists look for when evaluating small molecule targets?



SMALL MOLECULE AMENABILITY

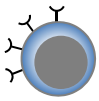
Knowing the target is not necessary but can greatly accelerate drug discovery efforts. Pfizer scientists broadly categorize targets by location, which helps to evaluate small molecule druggability.

Intracellular:



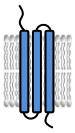
Intracellular targets have proven to be highly druggable. Enzymes such as kinases have been extensively investigated while historically challenging targets such as phosphatases and RNA have more recently shown tractability.

Extracellular/secreted:



Extracellular targets are often the focus of large molecule approaches and differentiation is key. Harnessing intracellularly driven processes such as protein degradation may be challenging.

Membrane bound:



GPCR's and ion channels represent a large percentage of approved small molecule therapeutics. This has been aided by a high level of structural understanding and large number of existing assays.

COMPOUND READY ASSAY

Having a disease-relevant biochemical or cellular assay ready and available is one of the primary means to accelerate the drug discovery process. Collaborators can work with CTI to transfer compounds from Pfizer's internal library for testing, allowing for data generation ahead of any high-throughput-screening or medicinal chemistry.

TOOL COMPOUND

Tool compounds, often with on-target activities in the 1–5 micromolar range, can be instrumental in helping optimize assays and serve as starting points for medicinal chemistry. Whether publicly available or discovered from your in-lab efforts, Pfizer scientists can help to profile existing tools and rapidly identify related compounds from our internal library for follow-up testing.

CRYSTAL STRUCTURE

3D structures are key to helping predict the druggability of a target and can be used to drive both computational screening efforts as well as early medicinal chemistry work. Targets (or homologs) with known structures allow for rational compound design and more targeted screening of Pfizer compound libraries.

If you have any questions that haven't been addressed in this addendum, please ask your technology transfer representative to put you in touch with a small molecule expert from Pfizer and we'd be happy to help guide you through the process.