

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:

Technology

Pharmaceutical company to use Southern Research funding to “challenge status quo”



Image: SCORE Pharmaceuticals

BRUCE JONES



By [Harper Harwell](#) – Tech/Startups/Innovation Reporter, Birmingham Business Journal
Jul 15, 2024



A Huntsville-based pharmaceutical technology company is using recent funding from [Southern Research](#) to develop its antibody therapeutics platform.

[SCORE Pharmaceuticals](#) was one of eight companies that [received a combined \\$2.5 million](#) from Southern Research as part of its Therapeutics Development Fund (TDF). The TDF was established as a result of the Innovate Alabama Tax Credit created in 2023.

SCORE, which is based in Huntsville and recently expanded into a shared office space in the Southern Research Station 41 Incubator, is an early-stage biologics company focused on immuno-oncology therapeutics. It has a patent-pending platform known as CoreXTM, which facilitates the process of taking already established antibody therapies and transforming them into more potent and targeted antibodies.

SCORE was awarded \$200,000 from the fund, which CEO Bruce Jones said was given only six weeks after he applied. He plans to use the money to further develop CoreXTM's antibody technology, which he said "challenges the status quo" in the pharmaceutical industry because it takes a clinically proven product and makes a minor structural change to it that improves the performance of the drug.

"The pharmaceutical industry tends to be a little conservative," Jones said. "We can use our platform, (which) does challenge the status quo, to produce a more effective drug while reducing the drug development costs and improving the probability of success."

Jones said that as SCORE improves upon the CoreXTM platform, other next steps will be meeting FDQ approval requirements like safety efficacy. He expects that, since the antibody therapies they plan to use are already [FDA](#) approved, SCORE should be able to meet those requirements quickly.

"We'll take it through a phase one clinical trial, (which will) then have significant value, but to be able to bring that to market and put it in patients' hands as a pharmaceutical product is way too expensive and way too difficult for a small company like us," he said. "We will license that product to a larger company that has all that infrastructure in place to they can carry it through phase two, phase three, commercialization, marketing

and distribution.”

Jones said having an office in Station 41 provides SCORE with opportunities for networking, industry exposure and professional validation.

“Those particular things are all key to securing the additional funding that's necessary to move the product forward and the ability to say that Southern Research is our first real investor,” he said. “It is turning out to be a very good collaboration and interaction. There’s so much talent ... it’s been very refreshing to take my area of expertise in that pharmaceutical product development and extend it down here to begin to broaden the market.”