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# Artificial intelligence in drug discovery

**Semen Yesylevskyy**

- Receptor.AI LTD
  - IOCB Prague
  - Palacký University Olomouc
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# Quote of the day

*“An amount of intelligence in a typical drug discovery project is so low that the some artificial intelligence would not harm”*

Founders of Receptor.AI in 2021 ©

Expectations:

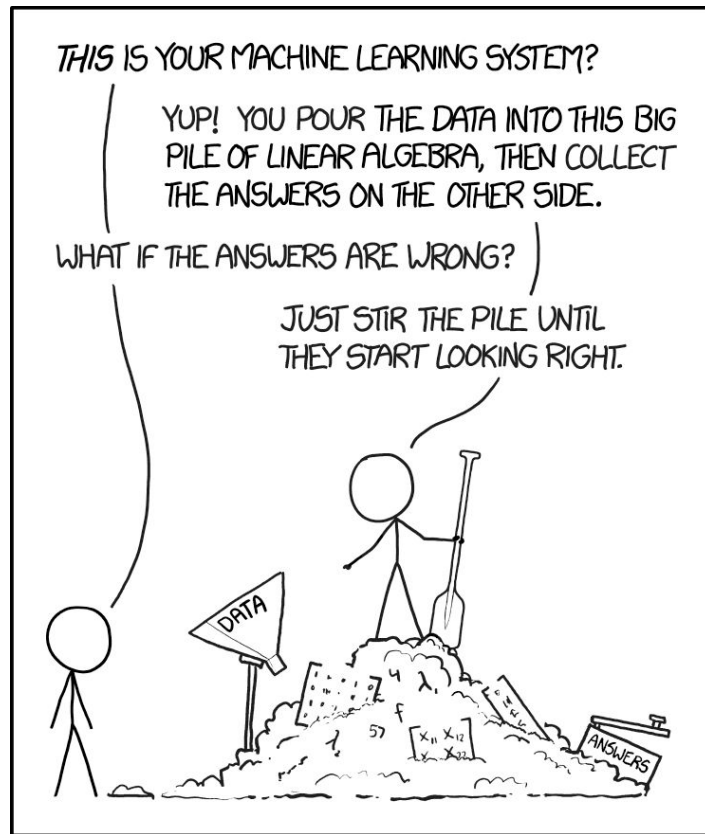


Reality:

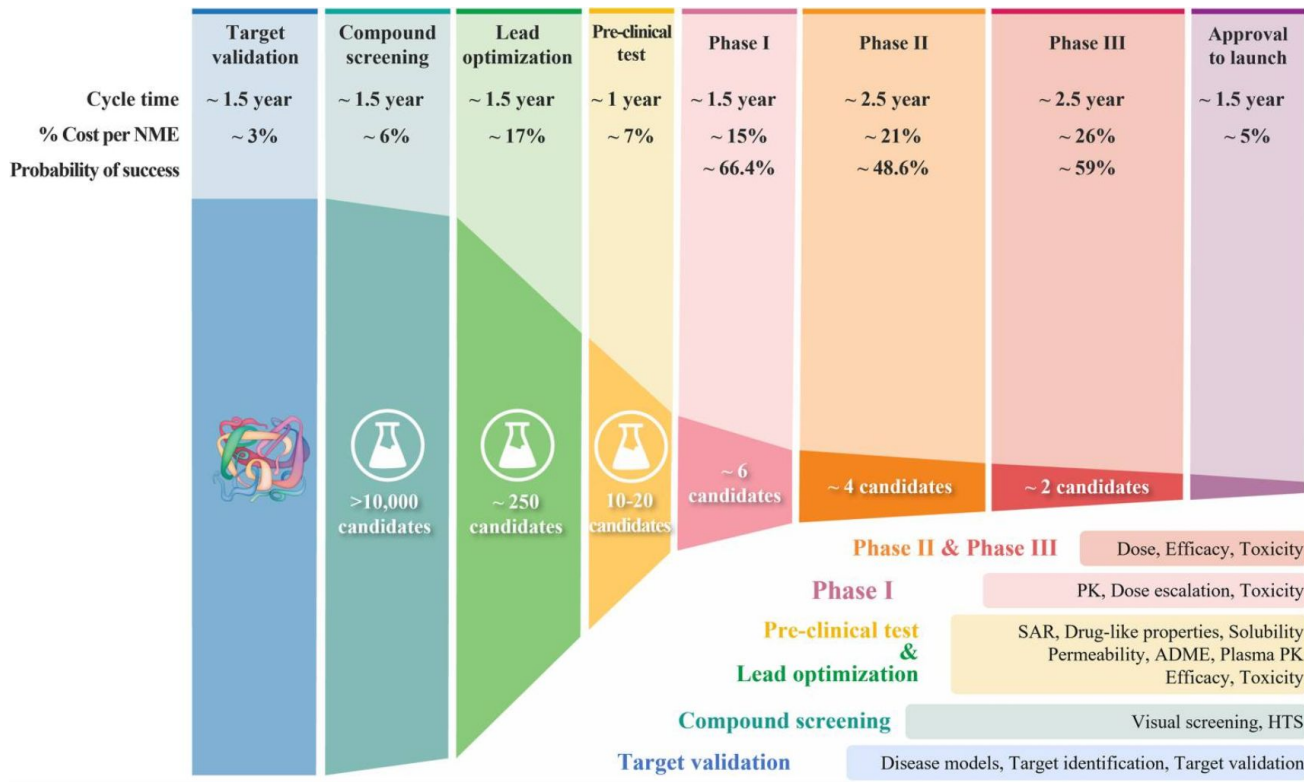


# Plan of the talk

1. Why modern drug discovery struggles
  - A crash course of upsetting the investors
2. Can AI make it struggle a bit less?
  - A short guide for giving hope to upset investors
3. Some shameless self-promotion
  - Investors don't trust this anyway



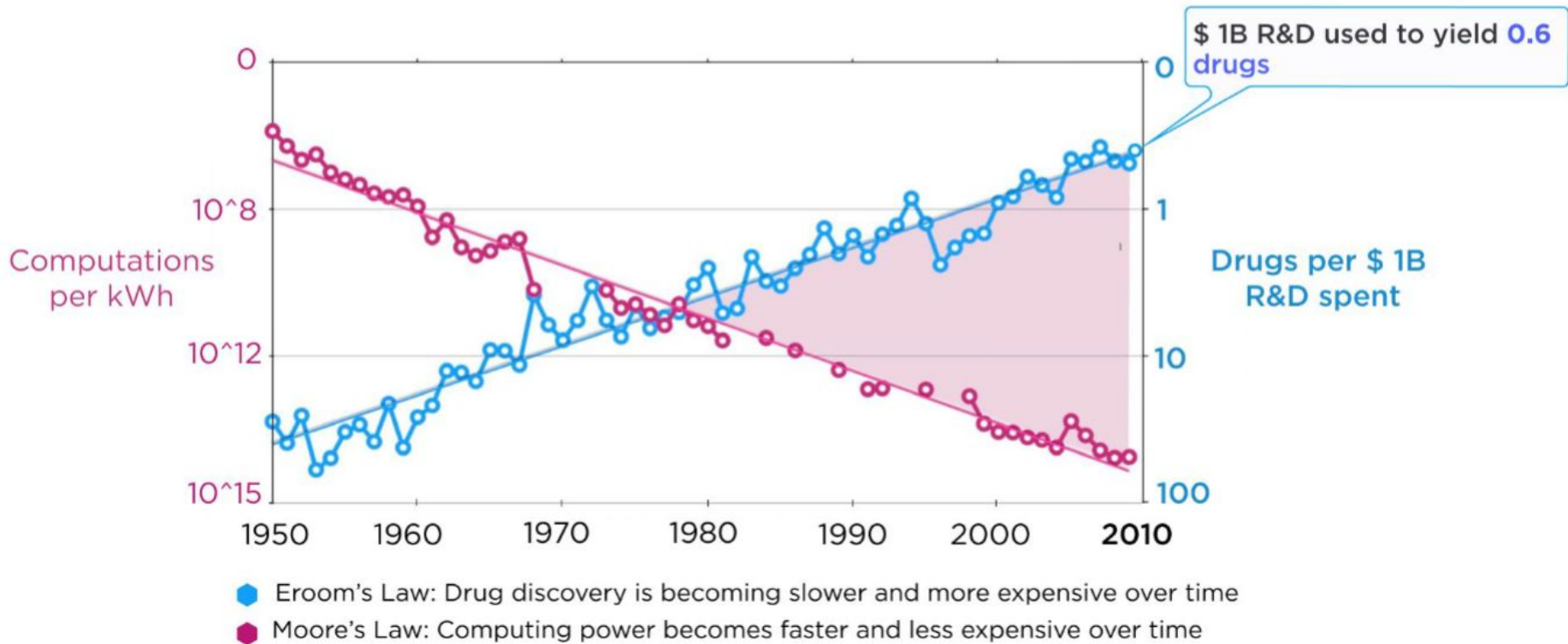
# Modern drug discovery struggles badly



## Traditional methods stagnate

- The cost per drug increases
- Development time doesn't improve
- Failure rate is persistently >90%
- Only **6.3%** composite success rate in 2022

# Are we cursed? (Let's upset the investors...)



Computational resources become cheaper but this doesn't help much...

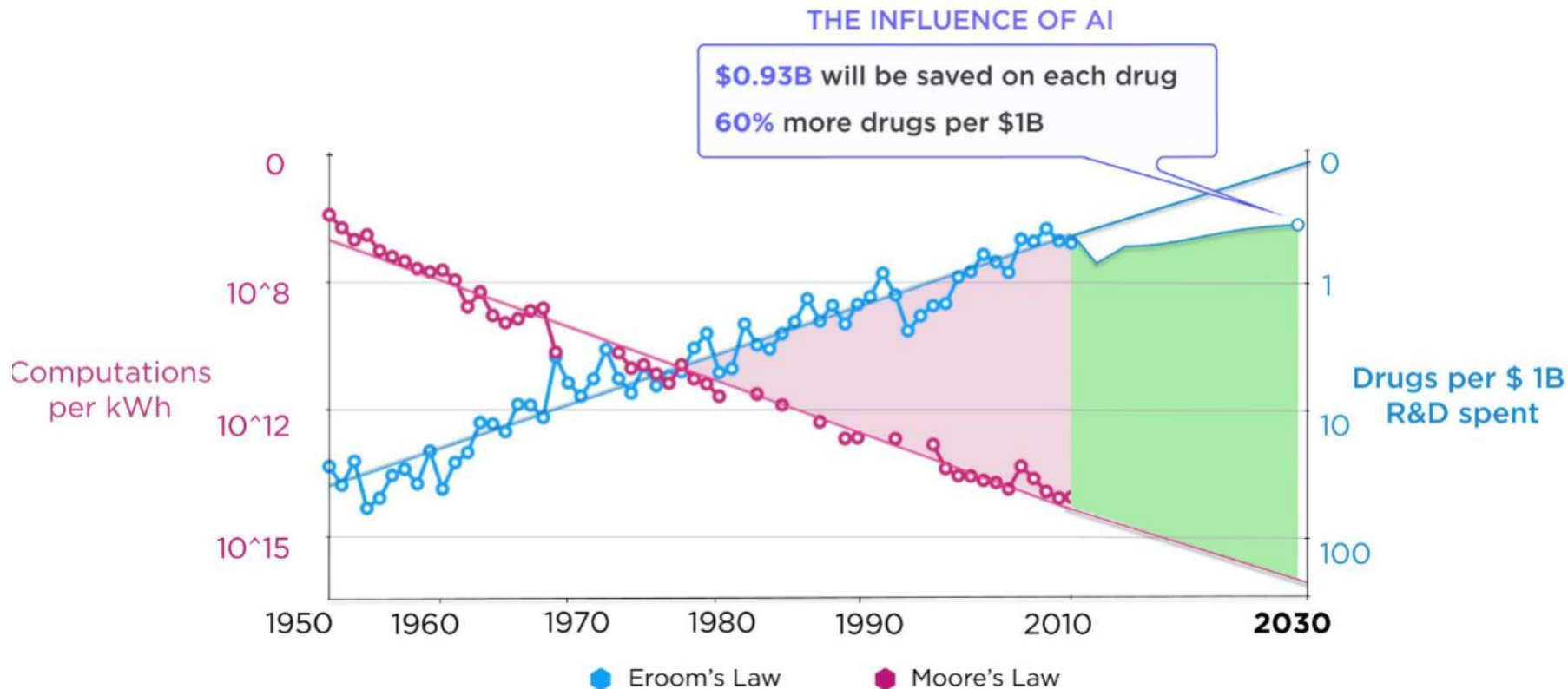
# Eroom's law explained (kind of)

- **The 'better than the Beatles' problem:** very hard to beat established treatments to the extent that it's economically viable.
- **The 'cautious regulator' problem:** level of required evidence in trials become a burden.
- **The 'throw money at it' tendency:** The tendency to add excessive resources to R&D. One woman gives birth in 9 month. Let hire 9 women to give a birth in 1 month!
- **The 'basic research-brute force' bias:** The tendency to overestimate the ability of advances in basic research and brute force screening methods. Late stages continue to fail despite huge amounts of obtained data.

# Cat AI beat the Eroom's law?

- **AI is generally considered as a rescue**
  - Breaking the Eroom's law
  - 60% more drugs per \$1B by 2030
  - General paradigm change
- **The 'better than the Beatles' problem:**
  - Cutting the R&D cost to the extent that even moderate improvement will pay for itself.
  - Finding fundamentally different modalities and targets.
- **The 'cautious regulator' problem:**
  - Predicting the unfavourable clinical outcomes *very early* to cut futile projects.
  - Automate and streamline the trials.
- **The 'throw money at it' tendency:**
  - Better throw money at us :)
- **The 'basic research-brute force' bias:**
  - Making multi-domain predictive models including all available big data and hope that this will reduce the % of late stage failures

# Can AI save us? (Let's give some hope to upset investors...)





# Problems AI can solve

## The problem of the context gaps:

Multiple knowledge domains don't play together well

- Chemistry
- Biology
- Simulations
- Bioinformatics
- Population omics
- Patient data

## Intractable amount of data:

- 50+B chemical spaces
- 40+ ADMET endpoints
- High-throughput readouts (HTS, DEL, RNA display, Phage display,...)
- Trials outcomes

## Workflow construction:

- Which in silico methods to use?
- Which experiments to employ?
- Which cellular and animal models?
- What is the signal to stop?

**Traditional approach:** We need to develop drugs *quickly*, *reliably* and *cheaply*. Choose **any two** of these.

**AI approach:** Why not all at once?

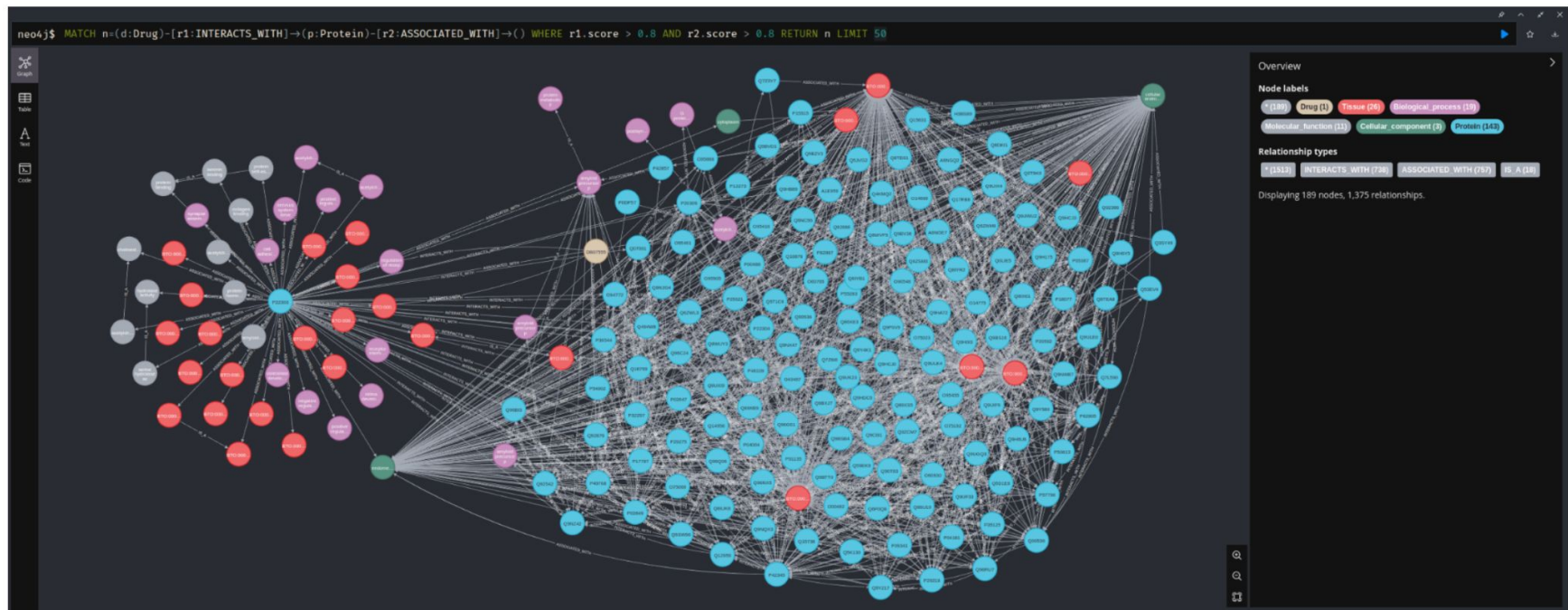
# Applications of AI in drug discovery

- Target identification
  - Population omics
  - Knowledge graphs
  - Unstructured data scraping
- Early discovery
  - Hit discovery to lead optimization: AI virtual screening, ADMET prediction, QSAR.
- Late discovery
  - Formulation optimization,
  - IND and clinical studies outcome prediction
  - Clinical study planning and monitoring
- Drug repurposing
  - Off-target search

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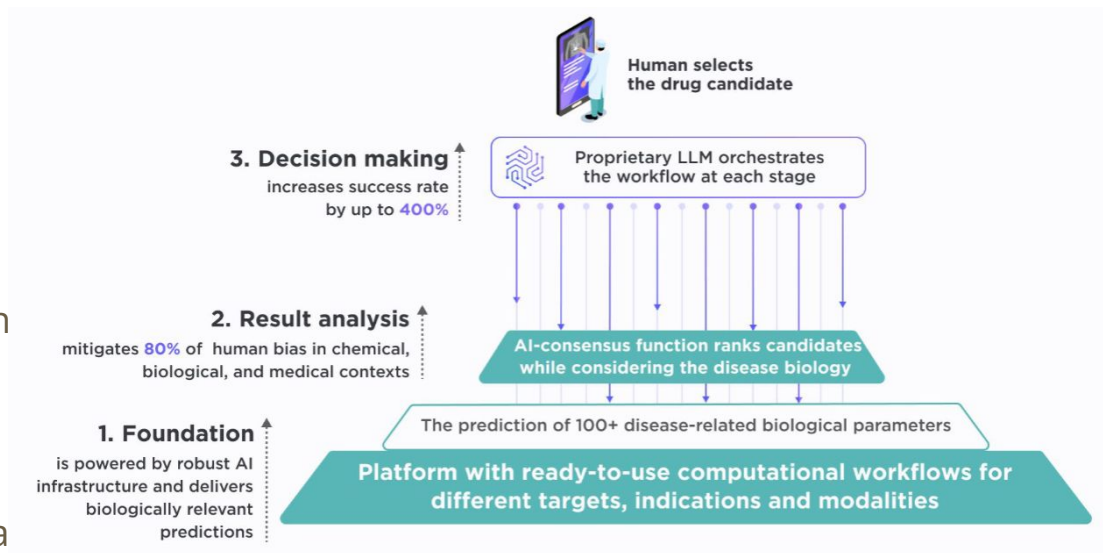
# Target Identification: AI-curated knowledge graphs



- Multiparametric graph databases relating diseases, pathways, omics, proteins, drugs, modalities, indications, etc...
- Scraped automatically from all structured databases + LLM-based scraping of papers, patents, clinical study reports.
- Example questions to ask: *Find all protein targets associated with immuno oncology that has approved MABs but lack small molecules approved or on clinical trials 2+.*

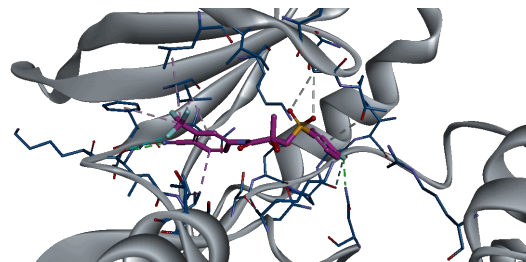
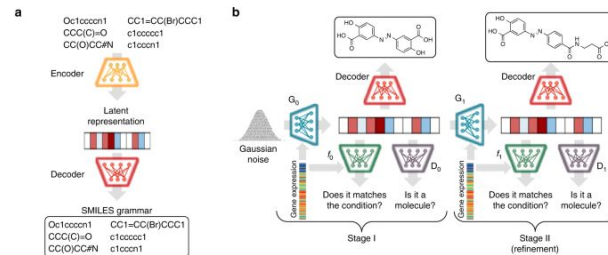
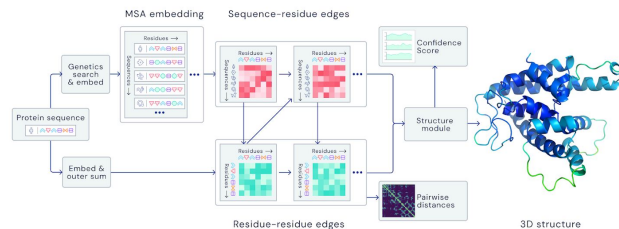
# AI-curated knowledge graphs

- Usage of AI:
  - Creation and continuous updating of the graph
  - Generation of queries and NLP transformation of responses
- Open questions:
  - Latest LLMs often provide similar performance *directly* in human language (they already contain most of information + can do the search)
  - Limited amount of public data → absence of competitive advantage.
  - Closed databases of big pharma are “new oil” for them.

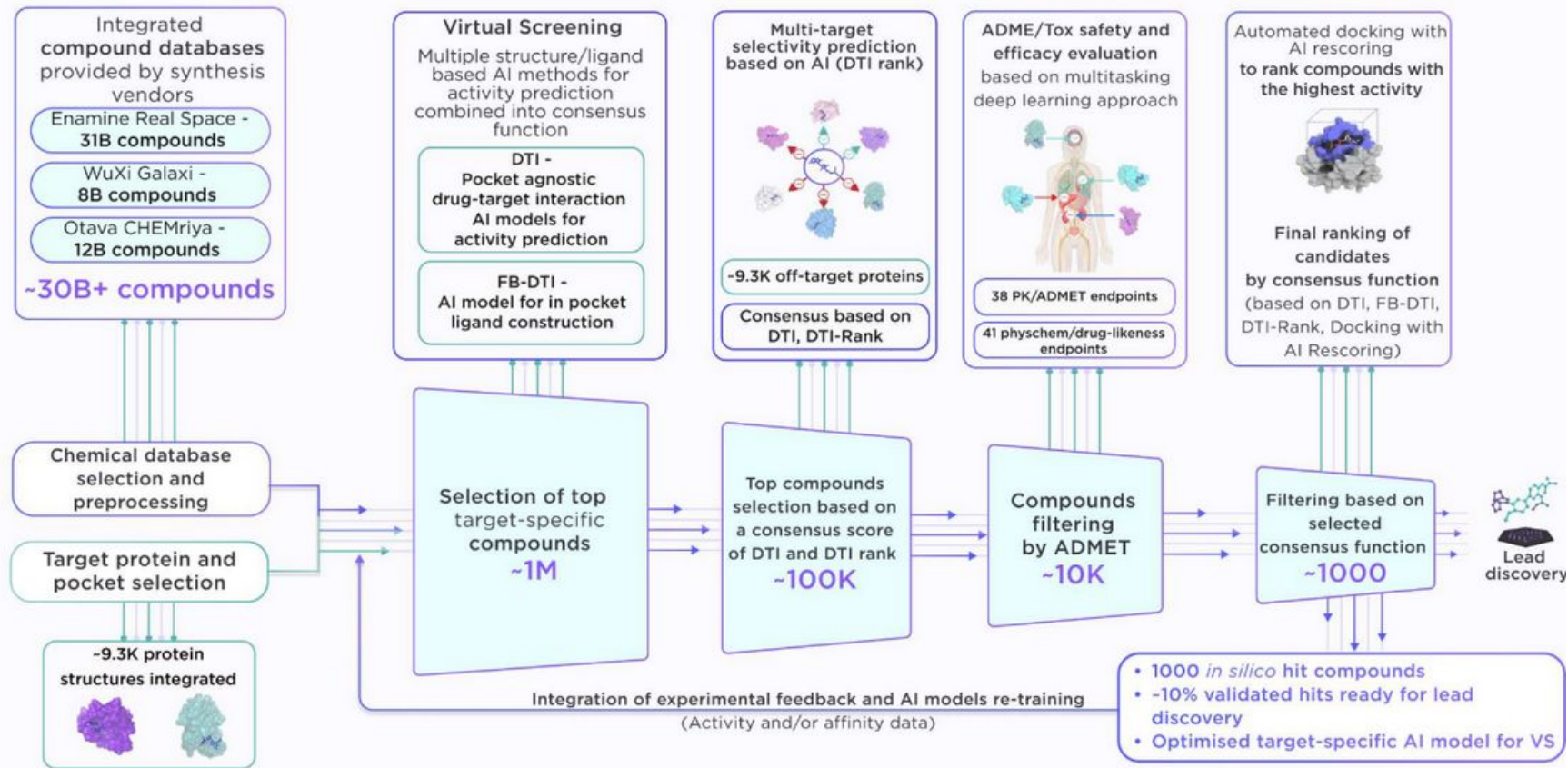


# AI in early drug discovery

- Protein structure prediction
  - AlphaFold, Rosetta
- Chemical space generation
  - Molecular generators (Chemistry42, Iktos)
  - Scaffold hopping
  - Substituents generation
- Ligand pose prediction
  - DiffDock, UniMol, ArtiDock
- Non-AI generative techniques
  - MD for protein conformational ensembles generation
  - Artificial binding pockets for AI data augmentation



# AI virtual screening



# AI virtual screening

- Very fast (2-3 order of magnitude faster) initial filtration of the chemical space
- Self-balancing: many known compounds → ligand-based approach; few compounds → structure based approach.
- Separate models for protein tier lists (depending on the number of known structures and ligands).
- 70+% accuracy on “favourable” targets.
- Early assessment of ADMET → fewer toxicity failures



# ADMET prediction

## MULTI-PARAMETRIC OPTIMISATION OF 80+ PK/ADME-TOX AND PHYSCHEM PROPERTIES

### ADME (HUMAN)

#### Absorption:

- HIA
- P-Glycoprotein Substrate-like Binding
- P-glycoprotein Inhibition
- P-glycoprotein Substrate-like Binding

#### Permeability

- Lipid bilayer permeability coefficient (logPerm)
- Partitioning into the lipid bilayers (LopK)
- CACO-2 cell permeability
- PAMPA (Parallel Artificial Membrane Permeability Assay)

#### Distribution:

- Plasma Protein Binding
- Blood-Brain Barrier
- Volume Distribution

#### Metabolism:

- Metabolic stability
- CYP1A2 inhibition
- CYP3A4 inhibition
- CYP2C19 inhibition
- CYP2C9 inhibition
- CYP2D6 inhibition
- CYP1A2 Substrate-like binding
- CYP2D6 Substrate-like binding
- CYP3A4 Substrate-like binding
- CYP2C19 Substrate-like binding
- CYP2C9 Substrate-like binding

#### Excretion:

- Plasma clearance
- Renal clearance

### TOXICITY (HUMAN)

#### Specific toxicity:

- Carcinogenicity (OSF)
- Carcinogenicity (ISF)
- Mutagenicity (AMES test)
- Hepatotoxicity (DILI)
- Cardiotoxicity (hERG blocking)
- Aromatase Inhibition
- Androgen Receptor Binding
- Androgen Receptor Antagonism
- Androgen Receptor Agonism
- Estrogen Receptor Binding
- Estrogen Receptor Antagonism
- Estrogen Receptor Agonism
- Skin irritancy

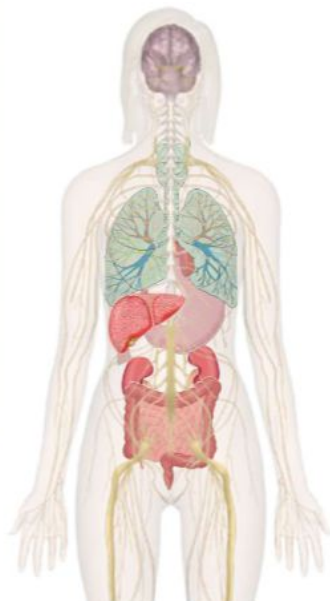
#### Acute toxicity:

- Acute oral toxicity prediction

#### Cytotoxicity:

- HEK293 (Embryonic kidney fibroblasts)
- A549 (Lung carcinoma cells)
- MCF7 (Breast carcinoma cells)

We possess proprietary datasets allowing us to expand the set of desirable ADME-Tox properties to more than 60 endpoints based on rat, mouse and dog models.



### PHYSCHEM AND DRUG LIKENESS

#### Drug-like Filters:

- Lipinski Rule of 5
- Ghose
- Veber
- REOS
- Rule of 3

#### PhysChem Parameters:

- Molecular Weight
- Hydrogen Bond Donors
- Hydrogen Bond Acceptors
- Number of Rotatable Bonds
- Number of Rings
- Number of Aromatic Rings
- Number of Atoms
- Number of Heavy Atoms
- Formal Charge
- FCsp3
- LogP
- LogS
- LogD
- Stability in aqueous solution
- Molar Refractivity
- Topological Polar Surface Area
- pKa
- CNS MPO
- CNS MPO v2
- Synthesisability Score

#### Substructure Filters:

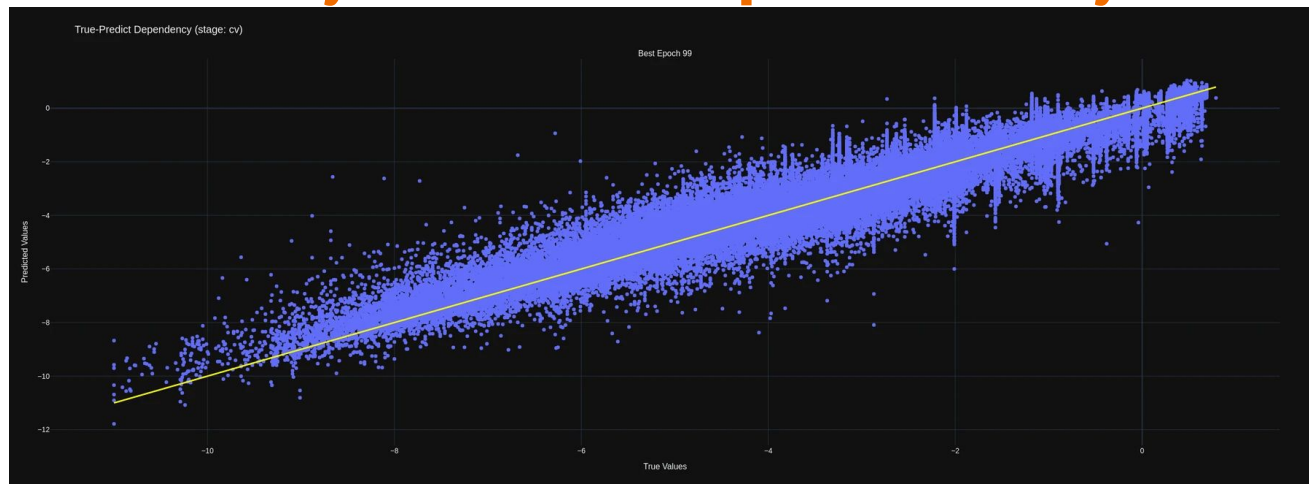
- Glaxo
- Dundee
- BMS
- PAINS
- SureChEMBL
- MLSMR
- Inpharmatica
- LINT



# MultiTask model training

1	ADMET_param	Problem	Val			Test		
			Classical ML	Multi-Task	Multi-Task_all	Classical ML	Multi-Task	Multi-Task_all
2	AMES	binary	0.859	0.848	0.835	0.844	0.838	0.832
3	Acute	regression	0.515	0.426	0.394	0.531	0.409	0.363
4	Androgen_agon	binary	0.941	0.952	0.939	0.93	0.953	0.950
5	Androgen_antag	binary	0.908	0.918	0.913	0.894	0.893	0.898
6	Androgen_bind	binary	0.906	0.900	0.899	0.892	0.890	0.899
7	BBB	binary	0.9	0.920	0.896	0.894	0.915	0.913
8	Bioavailability	binary	0.773	0.736	0.715	0.69	0.659	0.681
9	CYP_Inh_1A2	binary	0.851	0.890	0.843	0.84	0.831	0.786
10	CYP_Inh_1A2	regression	0.559	0.498	0.396	0.584	0.495	0.416
11	CYP_Inh_2C19	binary	0.828	0.876	0.797	0.808	0.842	0.779
12	CYP_Inh_2C19	regression	0.443	0.427	0.298	0.39	0.461	0.269
13	CYP_Inh_2C9	binary	0.808	0.825	0.820	0.82	0.800	0.765
14	CYP_Inh_2C9	regression	0.477	0.465	0.357	0.495	0.335	0.200
15	CYP_Inh_2D6	binary	0.836	0.844	0.816	0.843	0.830	0.806
16	CYP_Inh_2D6	regression	0.53	0.573	0.474	0.567	0.507	0.427

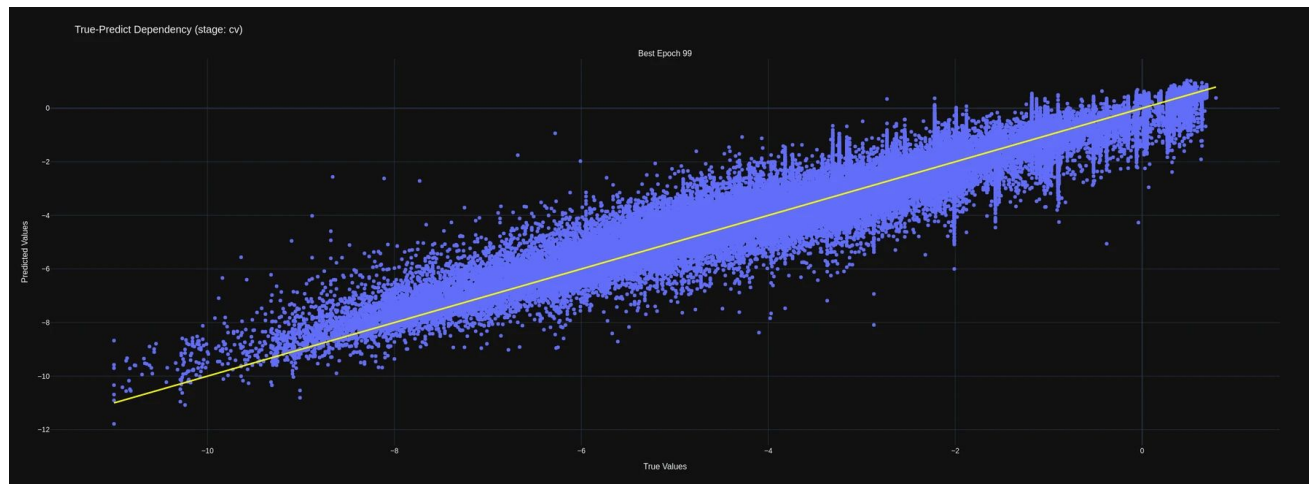
# Case study: membrane permeability



- MolMeDb data for
  - Membrane permeability
  - Membrane partitioning
- Receptor.AI MultiTask ADMET NN architecture
- AutoML automatic featurization

	Task	Samples	MSE (cv)	MSE (test)	MAE (cv)	MAE (test)	R2 (cv)	R2 (test)
1	<b>logK DOPC</b>	434661	0.100	0.114	0.238	0.259	0.950	0.943
2	<b>logK octanol</b>	449128	0.044	0.057	0.155	0.177	0.976	0.969
3	<b>logP DOPC</b>	434568	0.424	0.484	0.469	0.510	0.923	0.911
4	<b>logP GENER</b>	3717	2.137	2.770	0.851	0.882	0.759	0.682

# Case study: membrane permeability



This is too good to be true...

	Task	Samples	MSE (cv)	MSE (test)	MAE (cv)	MAE (test)	R2 (cv)	R2 (test)
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# FAIR data? Ha-ha! :)

- The LogK data collected in MolMeDb appeared to be *not* the raw data but the *predictions*
  - ALOGPS 2.1: an ancient (2002) Associative Neural Network (ASNN) approach.
- The raw data were from PHYSPROP database:
  - No longer publicly available from ~2020, all links are just broken.
  - Claimed to be moved to EPI Suite software from **US Environmental Protection Agency**.
  - EPI Suite docs mention the same broken links.
  - Binary .db files in the installation are not readable (undocumented proprietary format).
- Data archeology:
  - A paper from 2017 ([10.1021/acs.jcim.6b00625](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jcim.6b00625)) used PHYSPROP (still available back then) to make a curated subset of data and to retrain the models → curated subset still public!
  - Initial PHYSPROP had *tons of issues* (erroneous structures, inconsistencies among the chemical names)
  - In *curated* set: 81 invalid SMILES, 236 too small, 93 mixtures, 42 organometallic, 22 bad valences, 1 duplicate.
  - Remaining 13732 compounds.

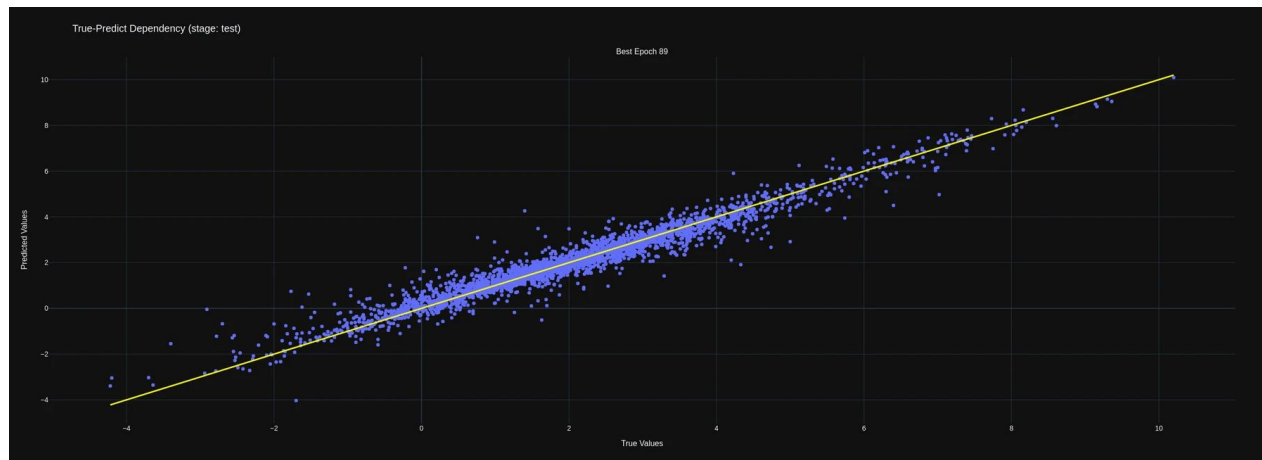
# FAIR data? Ha-ha! :)

- ~~X~~ Findable
- ~~X~~ Accessible
- ~~X~~ Interoperable
- ~~X~~ Reusable

Nice job, US Environmental Protection agency! 😊



# Membrane permeability: corrected



- Model retrained on curated raw data
- Now it's reasonable!
- Slightly better than existing model (~0.93)

	Task	Samples	MSE (cv)	MSE (test)	MAE (cv)	MAE (test)	R2 (cv)	R2 (test)
1	logK DOPC	434661	0.100	0.114	0.238	0.259	0.950	0.943
2	logK octanol	449128	0.044	0.057	0.155	0.177	0.942	0.945
3	logP DOPC	434568	0.424	0.484	0.469	0.510	0.923	0.911
4	logP GENER	3717	2.137	2.770	0.851	0.882	0.759	0.682



# TDC benchmarks: ADMET AI models open competition

	Task	Metric	TDC Best	RECEPTOR Best	SAAS Data (Test)	Place
1	<b>Caco-2</b>	MAE	0.285 ± 0.005	0.315 ± 0.017	0.293	4
2	<b>HIA</b>	ROC-AUC	0.988 ± 0.033	0.996 ± 0.001	0.944	1
3	<b>Pgp-sub</b>	ROC-AUC	0.935 ± 0.002	0.948 ± 0.004	0.897	1
4	<b>Bioavailability</b>	ROC-AUC	0.748 ± 0.006	0.776 ± 0.027	0.811	1
5	<b>BBB</b>	ROC-AUC	0.962 ± 0.003	0.930 ± 0.004	0.979	4
6	<b>PPB</b>	MAE	7.811 ± 0.163	7.470 ± 0.192	9.714	1
7	<b>VD</b>	Spearman	0.627 ± 0.010	0.646 ± 0.026	0.750	1
8	<b>CYP2D6-inh</b>	PR-AUC	0.739 ± 0.005	0.726 ± 0.004	0.880	2
9	<b>CYP3A4-inh</b>	PR-AUC	0.904 ± 0.002	0.884 ± 0.001	0.869	3
10	<b>CYP2C9-inh</b>	PR-AUC	0.839 ± 0.003	0.800 ± 0.001	0.874	3
11	<b>CYP2D6-sub</b>	PR-AUC	0.736 ± 0.024	0.822 ± 0.004	0.835	1
12	<b>CYP3A4-sub</b>	ROC-AUC	0.662 ± 0.031	0.776 ± 0.015	0.920	1
13	<b>CYP2C9-sub</b>	PR-AUC	0.441 ± 0.033	0.556 ± 0.055	0.678	1
14	<b>hERG</b>	ROC-AUC	0.874 ± 0.014	0.897 ± 0.003	0.922	1
15	<b>AMES</b>	ROC-AUC	0.871 ± 0.002	0.876 ± 0.002	0.930	1
16	<b>DILI</b>	ROC-AUC	0.925 ± 0.005	0.964 ± 0.004	0.815	1

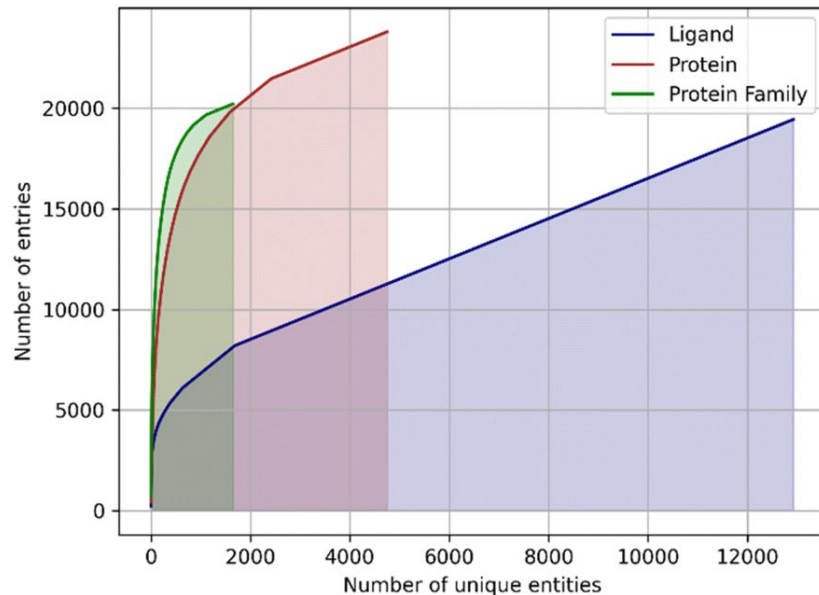
- TDC open benchmarks set <https://tdcommons.ai>
  - 22 endpoints
  - Public leaderboards
  - Receptor.AI is not officially on TDC yet
- We are overall the best on TDC metrics
- Many endpoints are the absolute best
- Official participation planned in spring 2024

# AI docking

- AI models trained on existing protein-ligand complexes.
  - ~10-20k high quality complexes only
  - Not physics-based, force field agnostic
- SMILE or 3D conformer + binding pocket as an input, binding pose as an output.
  - May produce distance matrix or point in dihedral space + post-processing to the pose
- Various representations of protein (AA, residue level, graph, distance matrix, etc.)
- Flexible balance between speed and accuracy

# The problem of data with protein-ligand complexes

- There is a limited number of experimentally determined protein-ligand complexes
  - Number of all complexes (X-ray, Cryo-EM, NMR): < **20k**
  - Hi-quality complexes with binding affinity annotations: ~**10k**
- Only 1655 ligands present in >1 complexes
- ~1500 protein bind to 80% of all ligands
- ~100 protein families represent 60% of all data
- **Very limited and skewed dataset for ML!**



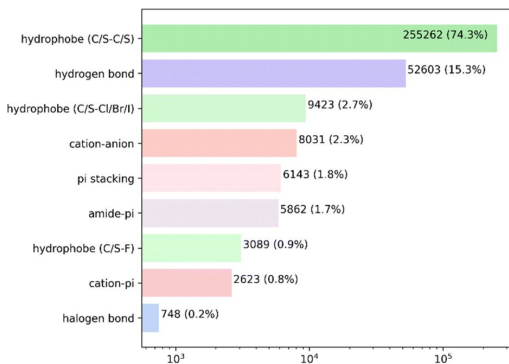
Statistics of PDBbind database

# Data augmentation technique

- Take the statistical distributions of interactions in real complexes.
- Generate artificial “binding pockets” around real ligands following these distributions.
- Mix artificial pockets to real ones for model training at different proportions.
- Assumed that all major non-bond interactions are present in experimental data but their *combinations* are not adequately sampled.
- Augmented data teaches the model to recognize corner cases and combinatorial variety of interactions that are absent in the experimental training set.

# Data augmentation: the details

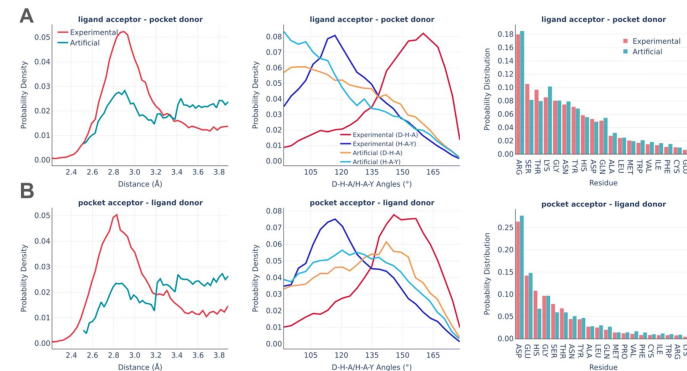
#	Pocket feature	Ligand feature	Interaction type
1	Aromatic ring	Aromatic ring	Pi stacking
2	Amide group	Aromatic ring	Amide- $\pi$
3	Aromatic ring	Amide group	Amide- $\pi$
4	Aromatic ring	Cationic atom	Cation- $\pi$
5	Hydrogen bond donor	Hydrogen bond acceptor	Hydrogen bond
6	Hydrogen bond acceptor	Hydrogen bond donor	Hydrogen bond
7	Hydrogen bond acceptor	Halogen atom	Halogen bond
8	Cationic atom	Anionic atom	Electrostatic
9	Anionic atom	Cationic atom	Electrostatic
10	Cationic atom	Aromatic ring	Cation- $\pi$
11	C or S atom	F atom	Hydrophobic
12	C or S atom	Cl, Br or I atom	Hydrophobic
13	C or S atom	C or S atom	Hydrophobic



## Hydrophobic



## H-bonds

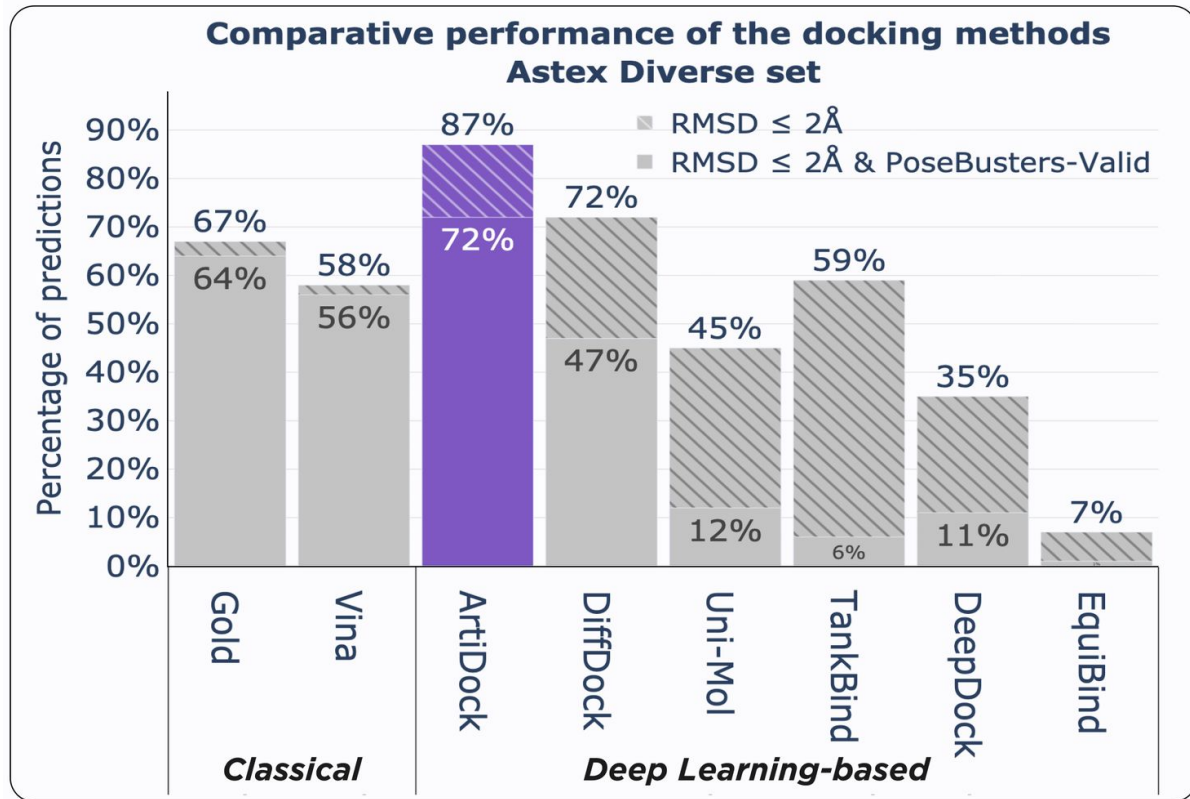


- Reasonable correspondence of distributions
- Potential of improvement at the cost of model training time
- Potential to add explicit ions and cofactors

# ArtiDock: next gen ligand binding pose prediction

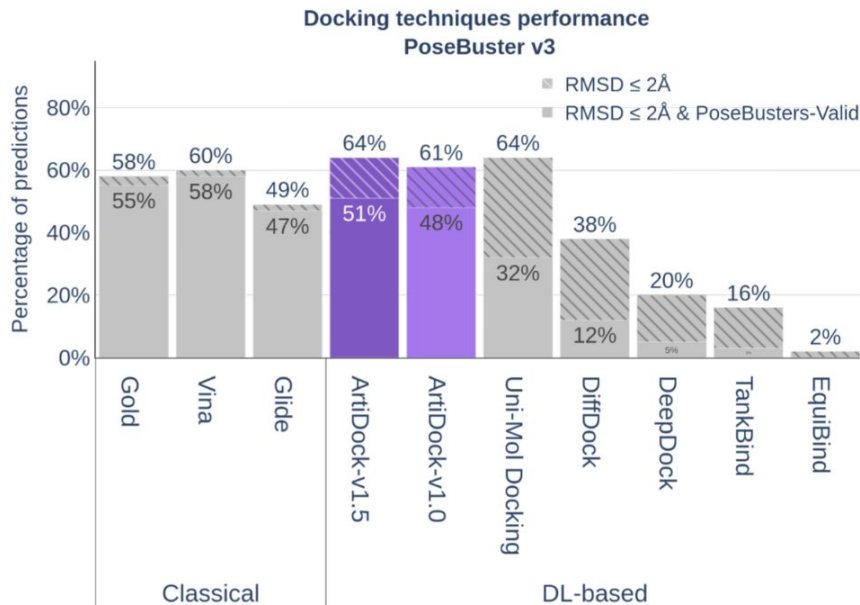
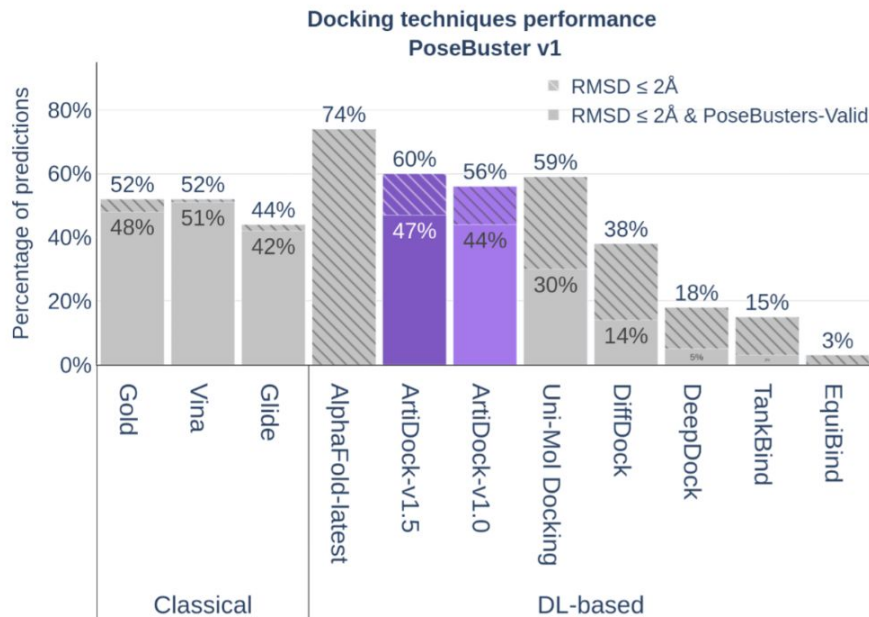
- Small model based on proprietary lightweight GNN architecture
  - Fast training and inference.
- Includes only the binding pocket
  - Less structural noise.
  - Much smaller model.
- Augmenting limited data on protein-ligand complexes with artificial pockets
  - Algorithmic technique for generating “fake” pockets around diverse real ligands.
  - Mimics statistical distributions of various non-bond interactions from experimental pockets.
  - Provides much more combinations of interactions than available in experimental pockets.
- Ability to integrate the protein dynamics
  - Incorporation of processed MD trajectories

# ArtiDock performance: Astex dataset



- Astex is a standard dataset for docking benchmarks
- An older set created before the AI hype
- Considered not particularly challenging for AI methods

# ArtiDock performance: PoseBusters dataset



## PoseBusters dataset

- DOI: [10.1039/D3SC04185A](https://doi.org/10.1039/D3SC04185A)
- Includes multiple structure quality metrics beyond RMSD
- Designed to shame AI docking
- Ashamed by the next-gen AI docking 😊

## PoseBusters versions

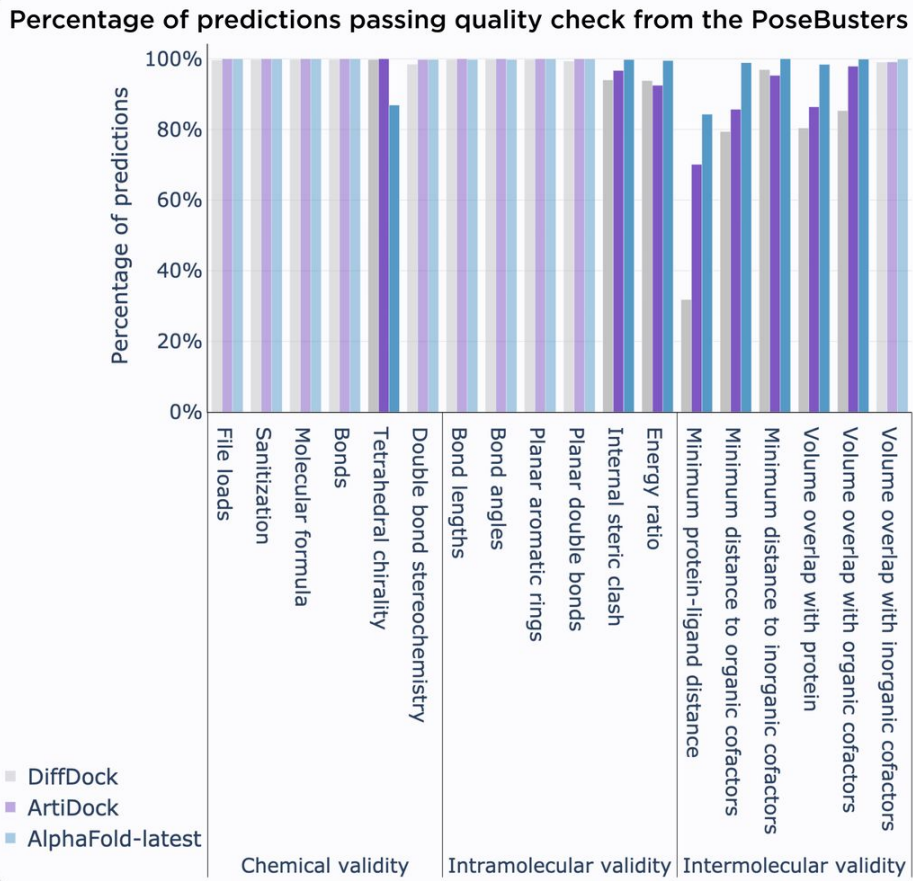
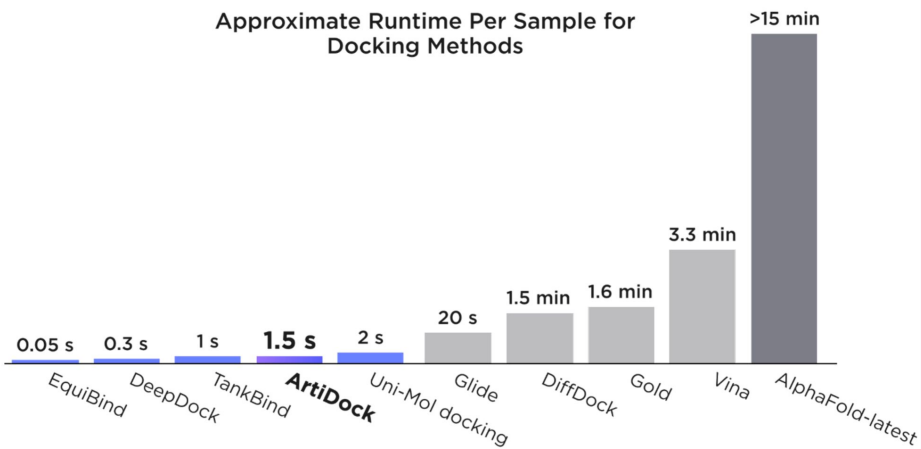
- V1 was made public in 2023 in the preprint
- V3 published and peer reviewed
- V3 is adjusted in favor of conventional docking and against AI even more (artificial bias)
- AI method still pass it 😊



# ArtiDock performance

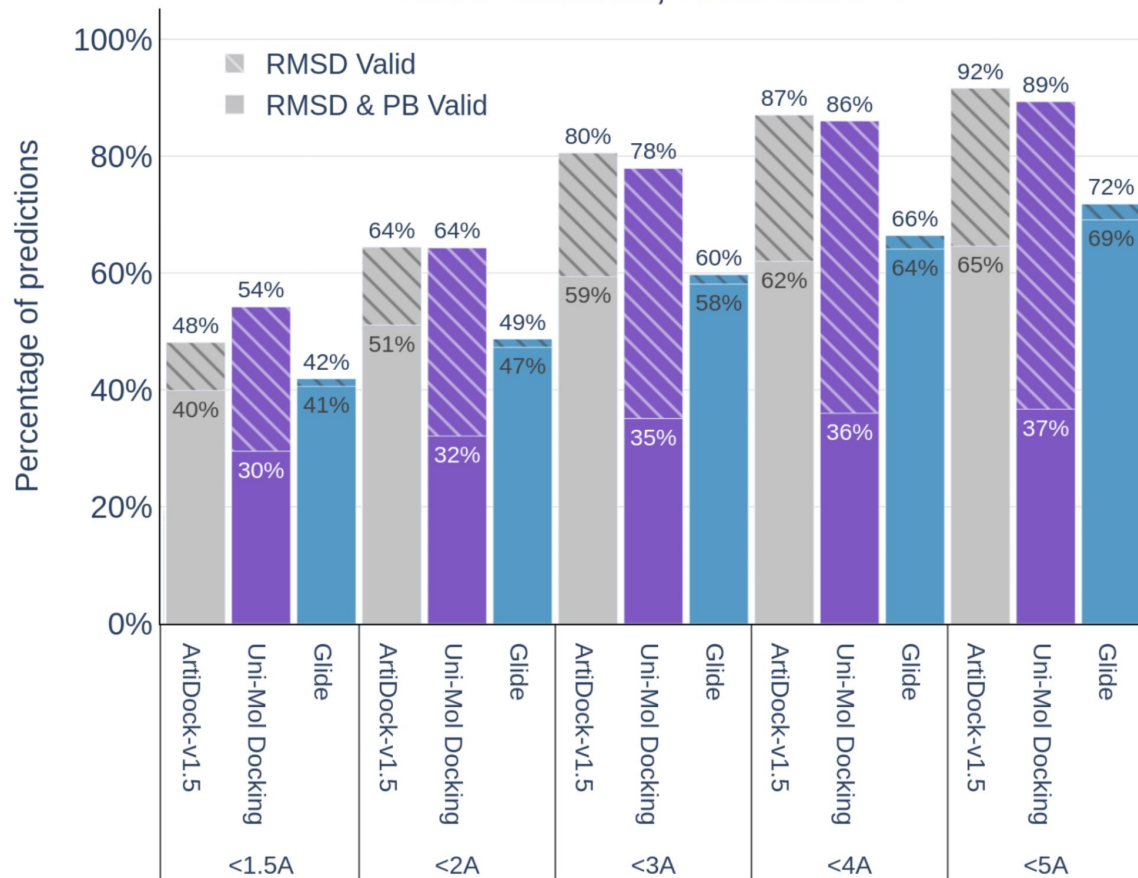
- Outperforms all ML methods
- Comparable to conventional docking
- Faster than all of them

Approximate Runtime Per Sample for Docking Methods



# Detailed comparison with Glide and UniMol

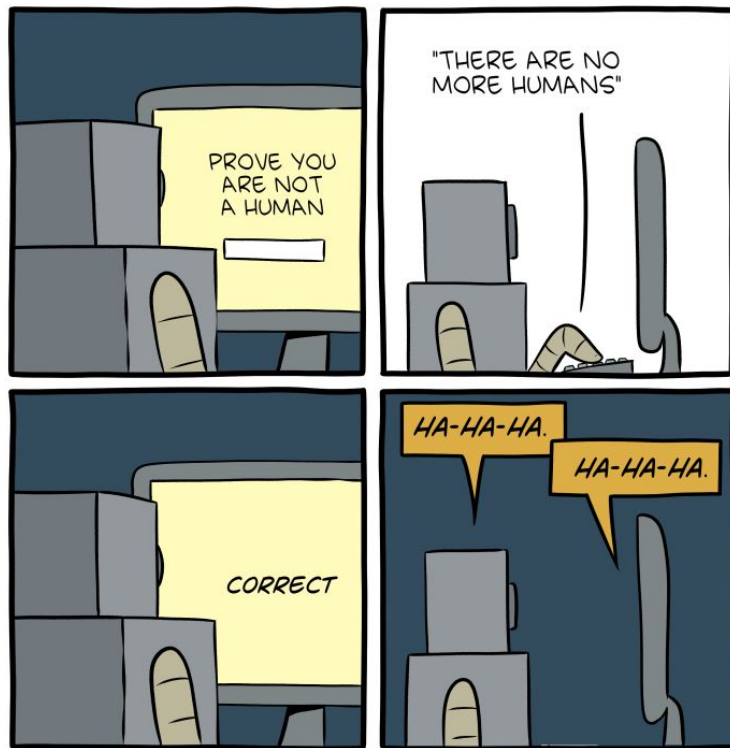
RMSD Thesholds, PoseBusters v3



- PB-Valid scores dependence on RMSD cutoff
  - ArtiDock and Glide: *increase*
  - Uni-Mol: *constant*
- Absolute PB-Valid scores:
  - ArtiDock and Glide: *comparable*
  - Uni-Mol: *low*
- Scores: ArtiDock ~ Glide
- Speed: ArtiDock >> Glide
- Uni-Mol prioritizes RMSD but fails miserably on PB-Valid

# Conclusions

- AI drug discovery techniques are here to stay
- Pharma companies adoption increases
- Data mining and analysis seems to be dominated by LLMs
- Progressive substitution of the “physics-based techniques” by “data driven” ones (will docking finally die for good?)
- Data is a new oil (but nobody wants to collect and curate it)



**THANK YOU**

**FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

[meme-arsenal.ru](http://meme-arsenal.ru)