



## Press Release

### LDC and Qurient Close Licence Agreement on Novel Anti-cancer Compound

#### Starting point of a broader drug discovery and development alliance

Dortmund, Germany and Gyeonggi-do, South Korea, June 03, 2015 – The Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC), a renowned translational drug discovery organization established by Max Planck Innovation, and Qurient Co., Ltd have signed a licence deal providing Qurient with exclusive worldwide rights to a series of highly-selective CDK7 inhibitors discovered at the LDC for the treatment of cancer, inflammation and viral infections. The partners will closely collaborate to advance the approach from the validated lead stage into clinical development. Upon successful proof-of-concept in humans they will jointly identify a suitable partner for follow-on licensing.

Under the terms of the agreement LDC will receive an upfront payment and milestone payments upon the achievement of specific development events. In addition, Qurient will fund the future development activities of the collaborative program.

The agreement on CDK7 is the second licensing deal between LDC, Max Planck Innovation and Qurient and the starting point of a broader alliance between the partners. Expanding on the success of their ongoing collaboration on Axl kinase inhibitors initiated in 2013, both sides have agreed to join forces for the development of selected further projects from the LDC's portfolio in the fields of oncology and inflammation. The partners will closely work together, from project identification through to clinical proof-of-concept and subsequent sublicensing, with the LDC leading drug discovery and optimization and Qurient guiding preclinical and clinical development, typically until completion of Phase II.

"It is an exciting moment for Qurient to have LDC as an upstream partner, providing innovative drug discovery programs to our 'lead-to-clinical POC' pipelines," says Dr Kiyeon Nam, CEO of Qurient. "As being shown in the Axl inhibitor program, we will join forces to achieve exceptional science and operational excellence until the program reaches mutually beneficial end point."

"The partnership with Qurient is an essential part of our strategy to create versatile opportunities for accelerating the transfer of our leads into biopharmaceutical development," says Dr Bert Klebl, CEO of the LDC. "Qurient combines first-class development expertise with an exceptional commitment to moving innovative projects forward. Together, we can advance our projects swiftly into the clinic and benefit from the dynamic financial environment for biotech companies in South Korea."

#### About the CDK7 program

Cyclin-dependent kinases (CDKs) play a pivotal role in cell cycle control and transcription regulation and have long been considered attractive therapeutic targets. However, selective inhibitors have been hard to develop because the CDK active sites are highly conserved. Due to their outstanding specificity for CDK7, the LDC's CDK inhibitors have good prospects for overcoming this hurdle. They have demonstrated excellent potency and selectivity *in vitro* and *in vivo*. LDC's CDK7 inhibitors are



non-covalent picomolar biochemical inhibitors. These features may translate into an attractive therapeutic window and clearly set them apart from a recently published and covalently acting first-generation of CDK7 inhibitors, also described as inhibitors of super-enhancer elements.

In two very recent publications, LDC and its collaboration partners described the mechanistic activity of their CDK7 inhibitors as specific transcriptional modulators (Kelsö et al. 2014) and through their transcriptional activity not only as potent anticancer but even as potential safe antiviral agents (Hutterer et al. 2015).

LDC's CDK7 project emerged from a scientific collaboration with research groups from the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Münster (Prof. Dr Michael Meisterernst) and the Max-Planck-Institute for Immunobiology and Epigenetics in Freiburg (Dr Gerhard Mittler). LDC has received generous support for this program from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as well as the Max-Planck-Foundation and its benefactor Dr Klaus Neugebauer.

This transaction was actively supported by Max Planck Innovation, the technology transfer organization of the Max Planck Society.

## **About the LDC**

The Lead Discovery Center (LDC) was established in 2008 by the technology transfer organization Max Planck Innovation, as a novel approach to capitalize on the potential of excellent basic research for the discovery of new therapies for diseases with high medical need.

The LDC takes on promising early-stage projects from academia and transforms them into innovative pharmaceutical leads that reach initial proof-of-concept in animals. In close collaboration with high-profile partners from academia and industry, the LDC is building a strong and growing portfolio of small molecule leads with exceptional medical and commercial potential. The LDC sustains a preferred partnership with the Max Planck Society and has formed alliances with AstraZeneca, Bayer, Merck Serono and Daiichi Sankyo as well as leading academic drug discovery centers around the globe.

Further information at: [www.lead-discovery.de](http://www.lead-discovery.de)

## **Contact**

Thomas Hegendörfer  
T. +49.231.97 42 70 02  
E. [hegendoerfer@lead-discovery.de](mailto:hegendoerfer@lead-discovery.de)  
Lead Discovery Center GmbH  
Otto-Hahn-Straße 15  
44227 Dortmund  
Germany



## **About Qurient**

Qurient started operation in 2009 as a venture capital funded spin-off biotechnology company of the Institut Pasteur Korea (IPK) and is dedicated to bridging gap between innovative sciences and clinical development for unmet medical needs. Qurient operates as a network R&D company with a small pharmacology research laboratory, and has in-house expertise in project management capabilities to facilitate discovery and development outsourcing projects. Qurient is focused on small molecule therapeutics in the oncology and inflammatory diseases areas, and covers the R&D stages from discovery to clinical proof-of-concept.

Further information at: [www.qurient.com](http://www.qurient.com)

## **Contact**

Taehwa Chang  
T. +82.31.8060 1600  
E. [tchang@qurient.com](mailto:tchang@qurient.com)

Qurient Co., Ltd.  
C-dong 8<sup>th</sup> floor, 242, Pangyo-ro,  
Bundang-gu, Seongnam-si, Gyeonggi,  
Korea