

## Press release

### German–Chinese consortium to develop new drugs for the treatment of heart failure and cardiac hypertrophy

February, 5<sup>th</sup> 2020, Dortmund – The development of a new drug for the treatment of heart failure and cardiac hypertrophy is a primary goal of “ChInValue – NRW–China Cooperations: GRK5 Inhibitors”. The project is being coordinated by the Lead Discovery Center (LDC) and conducted in cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for Analytical Sciences (ISAS) and two Chinese partners: Shanghai Jemincare Pharmaceutical Co. and Makohs Biotech. The German–Chinese consortium will devote itself to the fight against cardiac insufficiency and hypertrophy until the end of 2022. The German partners are being funded by a grant of around EUR 1 million from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

Research will focus on GRK5, a protein kinase that has so far received little attention in drug development, despite being implicated in the development of heart failure or hypertrophic heart muscle in the vast majority of cases. The aim of the project is to develop low-molecular-weight substances that inhibit the pathological processes mediated by GRK5.

“Our ambitious goal is to develop a drug candidate that is ready to enter preclinical development by the end of this three-year project,” says LDC’s Managing Director and CSO, Dr Bert Klebl.

“We hope to develop an effective new therapy from which heart disease patients can profit in the near future,” explains the ISAS scientific director and head of the Biomedical Research Department, Prof. Kristina Lorenz, a pharmacologist specializing in the treatment of cardiovascular diseases.

Financial support is being provided by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research as part of its funding programme “InterSPIN – internationalization of leading-edge clusters, forward-looking projects and comparable networks”. Within this context, BIO.NRW and BIO Clustermanagement NRW GmbH have conceived and realized the internationalization alliance „NRW-China Cooperations: A strategic perspective for innovative life science SME value chains”, of which this project in the fight against heart failure is a part.

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## 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, Apeiron, Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, Daiichi Sankyo, Grünenthal, Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Merck KGaA, Qurient and Sotio as well as various investors and leading translational drug discovery centres around the globe.

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

## About ISAS

ISAS (Leibniz-Institut für Analytische Wissenschaften – ISAS – e.V.) develops fast, accurate, and cost-effective analytical procedures for health research in order to improve capabilities for the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of diseases. By combining expertise in chemistry, biology, physics, and computer science, we make measurable what cannot be measured yet. The institute was founded in Dortmund more than 60 years ago and has about 200 employees at two sites in Dortmund and one in Berlin Adlershof. Excellent interdisciplinary research, scientific qualification, and the transfer of our research findings to science, economy, and society are our key objectives to implement our mission.

Further information: [www.isas.de](http://www.isas.de)