

Press Release

Lead Discovery Center and Bayer enter into license agreement covering a novel pharmaceutical lead structure.

Out-licensing of the first pharmaceutical lead structure generated at the Lead Discovery Center for further development into a cancer therapy.

Dortmund, April 18, 2011 --- The Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC), based in Dortmund, Germany, a spin-off from Max-Planck-Innovation GmbH (MI) in Munich, with expertise in small molecule pharmaceutical drug discovery, has successfully licensed its first lead structure to a pharma partner. The agreement grants Bayer Schering Pharma AG, Germany (Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals) a world-wide and exclusive license to intellectual property rights and know-how. Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals will work on the lead structure with the goal to advance a product into clinical development and a marketed product in the field of oncology.

The licensed lead structure belongs to a series of novel and highly selective kinase inhibitor compounds that have been developed by LDC in a project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Max-Planck-Foundation. This project emerged from a collaboration of LDC 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).

Kinases are key components of biochemical signalling pathways that control cellular growth, metabolism and differentiation. They have therefore become prime targets of drug discovery and development for the treatment of many diseases, especially in oncology. „Our lead structure is a highly selective and potent inhibitor of a certain kinase that is known to play a crucial role in multiple indications. The *in vivo* efficacy proven in several animal models emphasizes the quality of the lead structure and its potential for further development into novel therapy options“ says Dr. Peter Nussbaumer, one of the two managing directors at the LDC. „The partnership between LDC and Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals provides a perfect match to advance our findings into therapeutic application“, adds the other managing director, Dr. Bert Klebl.

LDC will receive a significant upfront payment and milestone payments under the terms of the agreement. Milestone payments to LDC may aggregate to 82.5 million Euros in development milestones and 55 million Euros in sales milestones. In addition, LDC is eligible to receive royalty payments on net sales of products once marketed.

„We are highly pleased that Bayer HealthCare Pharmaceuticals, the largest German pharmaceutical company with a focus on innovative cancer therapies, will develop the licensed lead structure further to bring it to the patients. This agreement demonstrates that the LDC is capable to deliver the aimed high quality standards and that LDC's lead structures are attractive licensing assets for pharma.“ states Dr. Dieter Link, licensing manager at Max-Planck-Innovation GmbH. „As a translational drug discovery entity, it is LDC's ultimate mission, to fill the gap between excellent basic academic research and industrial application to provide novel therapeutic drugs. This first licensing deal is an important milestone reached by the LDC and its dedicated staff. It clearly confirms LDC's business model.“

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Background Information

About the LDC

The Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC, www.lead-discovery.de) was jointly developed by Max Planck Innovation and the Max Planck Society as a novel approach to advance findings from excellent basic research into the development of medicines.

With a world-class team of drug discovery experts and seasoned managers, the LDC offers the full scope of drug discovery services – from target to lead – according to the highest industry standards. As an independent enterprise with an entrepreneurial outlook, it is positioned as a translational research center specialized in small molecule drug discovery. LDC collaborates with research institutions and universities as well as with industry. The aim is to transform promising and early-stage projects into pharmaceutical leads that reach initial proof-of-concept in animals and that meet the increasing need for novel therapeutic agents.

About Max Planck Innovation

Max Planck Innovation (MI) is the technology transfer organization for the renowned Max-Planck-Society (MPG), Germany's largest basic research organization. MI markets patents and technologies to industry and advises scientists to establish new companies based on research results, emerging from the more than eighty different Max-Planck-Institutes spread throughout Germany.

Every year, Max Planck Innovation evaluates about 150 inventions, of which about half lead to patent applications. Since 1979, almost 3,200 inventions accompanied and completed nearly 1,900 marketing deals. Since the early 90's about 90 spin-off companies were created.