



LDC, Novo Nordisk, and Heidelberg University Hospital to Collaborate on New Treatment for Heart Failure

Dortmund, Germany– March 22nd, 2021 –The Lead Discovery Center GmbH (LDC) announces today that they have entered into a collaboration with Heidelberg University Hospital and Novo Nordisk to develop a new therapy against heart failure.

Cardiac Ca²⁺/Calmodulin-dependent Kinase II (CaMKII) plays a central role in maladaptive processes in the diseased heart. The partners aim to develop a new class of CaMKII modulators by using an innovative strategy, expected to block the aberrant effects of CaMKII while preserving physiological CaMKII functions.

The approach was discovered and validated by Prof. Johannes Backs and his team at the Heidelberg University Hospital, and further advanced together with the LDC. During this phase, Prof. Backs' research was supported by the German Centre for Cardiovascular Research (DZHK) with a programme that promotes the translation of approaches from basic research into clinical application. In their year of collaboration, the partners succeeded in generating a range of promising hit compounds.

"It is a great pleasure for us to continue working with the excellent team around Prof. Backs and to welcome Novo Nordisk on board for the second phase of our collaboration, focusing on hit-to-lead development. We very much appreciate their early involvement and look forward to their input which will be extremely valuable in guiding project progress", says Bert Klebl, CEO & CSO of the LDC.

"Heart failure is one of the most prevalent and deadly diagnoses upon hospital admission, and despite therapeutic progress we still see high rates of mortality and morbidity", adds Prof. Johannes Backs. "Our approach has the potential to offer a new, effective and safe treatment, and we are thrilled to be working with the LDC and Novo Nordisk to advance it towards application".

"We are very excited to enter this collaboration leveraging on decades of research supporting CaMKII as a target in heart failure. This is a unique opportunity to enter a partnership with deep biological understanding and excellent technical skills aiming at discovering novel treatments for patients living with heart failure. This in addition, supports the ambition of Novo Nordisk to deliver disease modifying treatments for patients suffering from this condition", says Karin Conde-Knape, SVP of Global Drug Discovery at Novo Nordisk.

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About LDC

Lead Discovery Center GmbH (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 and antibodies that reach robust 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 drug candidate compounds with exceptional medical and commercial potential.

The LDC has formed alliances with e.g. AstraZeneca, Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim, Merck KGaA, Daiichi Sankyo, Qurient, and sustains a long-term partnership with the Max Planck Society and KHAN-I GmbH & Co.KG. In addition, LDC also works with leading translational drug discovery centers and with various investors to provide its assets for company creation.

For more information, please visit: www.lead-discovery.de



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Press Release

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