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ProQinase participates in EU FP6 Research Program „Protein Kinases – Novel Drug Targets of Post Genomic Era“

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ProQinase GmbH, a 100% subsidiary of KTB Tumorforschungsgesellschafts mbH, has received a grant from the 6th European Framework Program (http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html). The Biotech Company is participating in the “ProKinaseResearch” consortium of 23 partners from eleven countries and is coordinated by the University of Helsinki (www.proteinkinase-research.org). Aim of the research is the development of novel inhibitors of protein kinases. Such substances have applications for the treatment of various diseases such as cancer.

ProQinase was founded in 2001 at Tumor Biology Center Freiburg, one of the largest private cancer hospitals in Germany. The company has established an “integrated Protein Kinase Technology Platform” (www.proqinase.com). In the development of new protein kinase inhibitors it covers all steps from lead identification to preclinical studies. It is one of the world’s largest service companies for the production of protein kinases and related screening services. Currently, ProQinase’s portfolio comprises more than 85 protein kinases for *in vitro* screening assays. These resources will now be used within the EU research program to aid in the development of novel protein kinase inhibitors for the treatment of cancer.

Protein kinases are involved in the regulation of crucial steps in the life cycle of cells, i.e. cell growth, death and differentiation,. Not properly controlled, defective or hyperactive protein kinases are a common cause for cancer and many other disorders. The sequencing of the human genome has revealed more than 500 genes for protein kinases with often still undefined function, but huge potential for drug development.

“Today protein kinase inhibitors are very much in the focus of cancer research, as these substances could arrest or at least slow down the growth of tumors,” explains Dr. Kubbutat, head of the project at ProQinase GmbH. “A very few inhibitors like Gleevec to treat CML (a form of leukaemia) are already approved. Still we are lacking therapeutics for many more kinds of cancer. The EU funding helps substantially to intensify our research on protein kinase inhibitors in collaboration with academic and industrial partners.”

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