



A new EU-funded industry-academia drug discovery partnership targets challenging kinases

April 10, 2013 - SARomics Biostructures, Prestwick Chemical and ProQinase together with the University of Turin, Italy, the Israel Structural Proteomics Center (ISPC) at the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel, and the TechMedIII platform of the University of Strasbourg, France, announce today that they have created the Translational Kinase Tumor Inhibitor Discovery Consortium (TAKTIC), funded with €1.1 million by the EU 7th Framework Program "Research for the Benefit of SMEs".

Targeting kinases has become one of the most important therapeutic opportunities for treating cancer, diabetes, inflammatory diseases and more. The TAKTIC Consortium brings together the unique and proprietary technologies of three SMEs and their knowhow in the field of drug discovery. To this are coupled the extensive expertise in medicinal chemistry, kinase biochemistry and biology of the University of Turin as well as the state-of-the-art high throughput platform for protein expression and crystallization of the Israel Structural Proteomics Centre. The merging of the highly complementary capabilities of the six partners within the TAKTIC Consortium enables an efficient and versatile kinase drug discovery platform that will target some challenging and medically important kinases.

"We are excited to coordinate a frontline project of these dimensions, which brings together companies and academic researchers with impressive track records within their respective fields," says Prof. Salam Al-Karadaghi, project coordinator and Director of Business Development at SARomics Biostructures.

"This exciting project fits with our corporate strategy to generate future value through collaborations with top-tiered SMEs and academic groups" added Prof. Thierry Langer, CEO at Prestwick.

"ProQinase is very pleased to join this attractive project since it brings together complementary expertise from biotech industry and academia creating highly promising synergies in the development of novel anti-cancer drugs" explained Christoph Schächtele, Managing Director of ProQinase.

About:

SARomics Biostructures is the leading Scandinavian provider of structural biology and in silico drug discovery services. We accelerate our customers' drug discovery processes by providing structure-based drug design expertise and services, which include protein crystallization, X-ray protein structure determination, computational chemistry, protein

modelling and NMR spectroscopy analyses. Our strategic location close to the MAX IV Laboratory synchrotron radiation facility provides us with instant access to beamlines. For further information please visit www.saromics.com or contact Dr. Björn Walse, CEO, at sales@saromics.com.

Prestwick Chemical is a premium medicinal chemistry company that successfully identifies hits and optimizes these into clinical candidates. Prestwick has developed the capacity to integrate the whole drug research pipeline: Hit identification using smart screening libraries and/or large scale pharmacophore based virtual screening, hit validation, hit to lead expansion, lead optimization and profiling. Prestwick's expertise has led to unprecedented success: seven compounds made by Prestwick are currently in clinical development, from Phase I to Phase III. More information can be found at www.prestwickchemical.com.

ProQinase is a leading contract service provider dedicated to supporting pharmaceutical and biotech companies in the development of novel therapies for cancer treatment. The company offers a comprehensive portfolio of products and services, including biochemical high-throughput screening, cellular testing and *in vivo* studies, thus covering all stages of the drug discovery process in the field of cancer. ProQinase was founded in 2001 as a subsidiary of the Tumor Biology Center Freiburg, Germany, a privately owned hospital for cancer patients. To learn more about ProQinase, please visit the company's web site on www.proqinase.com or contact us at info@proqinase.com.

The University of Turin is involved in TAKTIC with two groups:

The Medicinal Chemistry Unit is coordinated by Dr. Marco L. Lolli and is based in the Department of Science and Drug Technologies (DSTF), founded in 1984. DSTF has established itself as a centre of strong expertise in Medicinal and Organic Chemistry at the University of Turin. To learn more please visit the Marco L. Lolli's web site on www.personalweb.unito.it/marco.lolli or contact at marco.lolli@unito.it.

The Biochemistry Unit is coordinated by Dr. Marco Piccinini, and is based in the Department of Oncology. The Department of Oncology is active in clinical and basic research and has a well-deserved international reputation. For more information please contact Dr. Marco Piccinini, marco.piccinini@unito.it.

The Israel Structural Proteomics Center (ISPC) at the Weizmann Institute of Science, directed by Prof. Joel L. Sussman, was founded in 2002 with the support of the Israel Ministry of Science and the Divadol Foundation. It serves as an Israeli National Center for protein production, biochemical/biophysical studies and structure determination. It is within the Structural Proteomics Unit, headed by Prof. Zvi Livneh, Dean of the Faculty of Biochemistry. The ISPC provides a service for the determination and analysis of protein structures for scientists both at the Weizmann and at other academic institutions and biotech/pharma companies in Israel and abroad. The ISPC is now one of the six core centers in the Integrated Structural Biology Infrastructure in Europe (Instruct) project. For more information please visit <http://www.weizmann.ac.il/ISPC>.

TechMedIII of the University of Strasbourg is an ISO 9001 certified academic platform of the University of Strasbourg, which provides services in preclinical ADME (absorption, distribution, metabolism, excretion) and toxicity. The platform offers determination of physicochemical properties of molecules (development of analytical methods, determination of solubility, ionization, partition coefficients, binding to plasma proteins etc.) as well as metabolic stability, plasma protein binding, permeability assays, cytochrome P450 sensitivity or inhibition, cellular toxicity of compounds or of their metabolites, distribution in tissues, pharmacokinetic measurements. For more information please contact Dr. Jean-Luc Galzi, galzi@unistra.fr.