

CiRA, Takeda collaborate to develop clinical applications of iPS cells

Published on April 17, 2015 at 12:54 AM

Center for iPS Cell Research Application (CiRA) of Kyoto University and Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited (Takeda) announced today that they will work together to develop clinical applications of induced pluripotent stem cells in areas such as heart failure, diabetes mellitus, neurological disorders and cancer immunotherapy. The "Takeda-CiRA Joint Program for iPS Cell Applications" (T-CiRA) is designed to expedite multiple research projects for drug discovery and cell therapy using iPS cells. CiRA Director Shinya Yamanaka, a Nobel laureate for his work on iPS cells, will direct the Program, while Takeda provides long-term funding, recommendations on research management, and facilities at its Shonan Research Center, Fujisawa, Japan.

iPS cell technologies have the potential to bring about ground-breaking transformations to future medical treatments, and their applications span a variety of fields, including drug discovery, cell therapy and drug safety assessments. During a period of 10 years, Takeda and CiRA will jointly run projects led by research experts invited from CiRA. The collaboration is expected to make significant contributions to the science and application of iPS cell technology into clinical practice, which requires a significant amount of time, effort and investment.

"This 10-year joint program with Takeda, Japan's largest pharmaceutical company, will become a powerful engine to realizing medical applications using iPS cells," said Yamanaka. "We sincerely thank Takeda's commitment to iPS cell research. This partnership will contribute to the development of new therapies to cure not only major diseases but also rare ones."

"I am excited that we will be able to collaborate with CiRA, the world's leading institute dedicated to pioneering iPS cell research," said Christophe Weber, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Takeda. "Through this partnership, our company will provide significant assistance over a long period to CiRA's research into iPS cell technology applications, which is a vital part of Japan Revitalization Strategy. It is our hope to deliver innovative treatments that meet patient needs as soon as possible through this collaboration between Takeda and CiRA."

This collaboration is aligned with the purpose of National Projects of Japan on clinical applications of iPS cell technologies. Takeda will provide research facilities at its Shonan Research Center and collaborative funding of 20 billion yen over a 10-year period. In addition, Takeda will provide more than 12 billion yen worth of research support (facility, equipment, Takeda researchers and various research services) over the 10-year collaboration period. About 100 researchers including new researchers recruited globally are to be based at Takeda's Shonan Research Center engaged in joint research, with each contributing about 50 researchers. Also, the access to special research assets, such as Takeda's compound libraries, will be provided for the collaboration.

Potential initial research projects include heart failure, diabetes mellitus, neuro-psychiatric disorders, and cancer immunotherapy. Additional projects will be included as the collaboration moves forward. Once set up, around 10 projects will be pursued concurrently.

Source:

Takeda Pharmaceuticals Company Limited
