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[\[International Cooperation\]\[Medicine\] Academia Sinica to Collaborate with the Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative on Tuberculosis](#)

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Academia Sinica Newsletter (2009/09/29) Academia Sinica signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI) on behalf of The Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative, a not-for-profit organization based in Seattle, pledging to collaborate in target-based screening for the discovery of new tuberculosis (TB) drugs on 29-September, 2009. The Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative's most important goal is filling the pipeline for TB drug development.

In recent years the incidence of TB, especially multi-drug resistant (MDR-TB) and extensively drug resistant (XDR-TB) TB, has increased alarmingly. The 2009 World Health Organization (WHO) report on tuberculosis states that globally there were an estimated 9.27 million incident cases of TB in 2007. This is an increase from 8.3 million cases in 2000 and 6.6 million cases in 1990.

By signing the MOU, Academia Sinica agrees to join The Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative, among whose primary members are Eli Lilly and Company and IDRI. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the U.S. National Institutes of Health also has an agreement with Eli Lilly and Company and IDRI to participate in the TB drug discovery initiative. Academia Sinica will join the initiative as a Contributing Member and contribute to the research, development, and discovery of new therapeutic TB drugs.

Even under the best of circumstances 30-40% of XDR-TB cases are untreatable. Treating TB, like HIV, requires a cocktail or combination of drugs, rather than a single agent. Thus there is an urgent need for new drugs. TB drug development is difficult and no single company or institution has the resources or expertise to do it alone.

Academia Sinica will provide its high throughput screening technology for drug discovery using Academia Sinica's proprietary compound library; use its chemistry expertise to follow-up the screens; and conduct genome sequencing and annotation of TB strains in order to identify new targets for diagnosis and drug discovery.

"The Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative is founded on the belief that public-private partnerships make the impossible possible," said Dr. Gail Cassell, Lilly's vice president of scientific affairs and distinguished research scholar. "The addition of Academia Sinica to these efforts is significant. Their proprietary library of more than 2 million compounds adds critical chemical diversity. This coupled with their providing access to some of the world's most advanced technologies in high-throughput-screening and genomic sequencing enhances our chances for success. But perhaps of greatest importance, Dr. Chi-Huey WONG, president of Academia Sinica, is one of the most outstanding chemists in the world. He will join the Steering Committee of the Initiative and will provide invaluable guidance to our efforts."

"Since its creation in 2007, the Lilly TB Drug Discovery Initiative has made substantial progress toward the identification of novel drugs against TB," said Curt MALLOY, senior vice president of operations and general counsel at IDRI. "We are excited to join forces with an institution that has demonstrated such an excellent track-record in scientific research as Academia Sinica."

"I am pleased that Academia Sinica has the opportunity to participate in this important project, and I hope that we can make contributions in the areas related to genome sequencing and high-throughput drug discovery" said President Chi-Huey WONG of Academia Sinica.

About Academia Sinica

Academia Sinica, the most preeminent academic institution in Taiwan, was founded in 1928 to promote and undertake scholarly research in sciences and humanities, and to nurture new talent. More information about the academy is available at : www.sinica.edu.tw.

Many of the twenty-four research institutes and seven research centers are now headed by world-renowned

scholars and staffed by highly trained, motivated, and creative young investigators. Major strides have also been made toward raising the standards of academic research, to meet new challenges in the new century. Aside from placing greater emphasis on opening up new areas of intellectual endeavor, Academia Sinica is also taking a leadership role in launching new initiatives in applied areas to meet a broad spectrum of social needs in Taiwan.

About Lilly

Lilly, a leading innovation-driven corporation, is developing a growing portfolio of pharmaceutical products by applying the latest research from its own worldwide laboratories and from collaborations with eminent scientific organizations. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., Lilly provides answers — through medicines and information — for some of the world's most urgent medical needs. Additional information about Lilly is available at www.lilly.com.

For this Initiative, Lilly has opened access to its greatest assets, a library of 500,000 compounds. The company also is lending its immense drug discovery expertise and organizational savvy, and is contributing the latest, most innovative technologies used in drug discovery to be applied to the search for new drugs to fight TB. The \$15 million Lilly has given to support this historic undertaking is part of Lilly's \$135 million commitment to control MDR-TB through The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership, which mobilizes 18 partners on five continents to stop the spread of the disease and save lives. Additional information can be found at www.lillymdr-tb.com.

About IDRI

IDRI is a Seattle-based not-for-profit organization committed to applying innovative science to the research and development of products to prevent, detect and treat infectious diseases of poverty. By integrating capabilities, IDRI strives to create an efficient pathway bringing scientific innovation from the lab to the people who need it most. For more information, go to www.idri.org.

For this Initiative, IDRI is providing substantial expertise in microbiology, molecular biology and chemistry, as well as managing the Initiative's laboratory. IDRI serves as the principal coordinator for all partnership efforts.

Related Website:

WHO 2009 Report on Tuberculosis Control:

http://www.who.int/tb/publications/global_report/2009/key_points/en/index.html

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Reference:

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