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S*BIO and the Genome Institute of Singapore set to collaborate on developing new drugs in the area of cancer

S*BIO Pte Ltd (S*BIO) and the Genome Institute of Singapore (GIS) have signed an agreement to enter a joint collaboration, with the objective of discovering and developing novel anticancer drugs. Through this collaboration, S*BIO and GIS aim to validate novel therapeutic targets[1] for drug treatment. By building up research capabilities in this area, this collaboration will further foster Singapore's leading role in Oncology and strengthen local biomedical science research. This agreement represents the first time that S*BIO and GIS have entered into a scientific collaboration.

Under the agreement, both S*BIO and GIS will perform pharmacological validation of targets, which is a critical step in the drug discovery process. These disease targets are derived from GIS' basic research and gene expression database. Subsequently, therapeutic candidates will be developed to block the detrimental activity of disease-causing proteins that are coded by the "faulty" genes or have escaped cellular control mechanisms. For a more detailed explanation of S*BIO's drug discovery process, please see Annex A.

There are approximately 10 million new incidences of cancer around the world every year[2]. A lack of early detection can lead to high mortality rates. Hence, research for novel cancer treatment constitutes a critical medical need. The

[1] Targets are gene products that may be the cause of a specific disease.
[2] International Association of Cancer Registries, ICAR Press (2001)

world-wide drug discovery market is estimated to reach US$ 32 billion by the year 2006[3].

The scope of the agreement includes collaboration on joint research projects by both parties, and management of the projects, including the commercialisation of any arising intellectual property.

“The collaboration with GIS will certainly complement S*BIO’s oncology research capabilities and will give the both partners the possibility to identify and undertake research on unprecedented targets for tumour therapy. We are very pleased as the agreement affirms the role and importance of S*BIO as an attractive scientific partner for renowned research institutes,” said Dr. Michael Entzeroth, Chief Scientific Officer of S*BIO.

“GIS is excited to work with industry partners, like S*BIO, to translate our basic research findings into downstream products on the market. I hope that through our joint research efforts, we can contribute to the development of better and more efficient therapeutics to improve disease prognosis and quality of life,” said Prof. Edison Liu, Executive Director of GIS.

“We are very pleased to have this research collaboration agreement with GIS in place. By leveraging upon GIS’ comprehensive research expertise, S*BIO will gain an added competitive edge doing research in the oncology area,” said Dr. Simon Campbell, Chairman of S*BIO’s Scientific Advisory Board.

[3] Featherstone and Griffiths, Drug Discov Rev 1, 414 (2002)

About S*BIO

S*BIO is Singapore's first and only fully integrated small molecule drug discovery company, formed though a partnership between the Singapore Economic Development Board Investments (EDBI) and Chiron Corporation. Under a technology license agreement, S*BIO leveraged on Chiron's small molecule drug discovery platform, gene expression database, cancer focused target databases and chemical compound libraries. S*BIO currently has 54 employees and has occupies a state-of-the-art 22,000 sq ft facility at the Singapore Science Park II since January 2002.

S*BIO's R&D capabilities encompass the entire drug discovery process, from target validation, through to early pre-clinical development. S*BIO's international team of researchers, with strong industry backgrounds, are highly experienced in the areas of functional genomics, protein biochemistry, assay development, high throughput screening, combinatorial and medicinal chemistry, computational chemistry, lead optimization biology, pharmacology, in vitro ADMET characterization and drug discovery informatics. For more information, please visit www.sbio.com

About GIS

The Genome Institute of Singapore (GIS) is a member of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR). Established in 2001, the research institute's mission is to be a world-class genomics institute and a centre for genomic discovery. GIS pursues the integration of technology, genetics, and biology towards the goal of individualised medicine. The genomics infrastructure at GIS is utilized to train new scientific talent, to act as a bridge between academic and industrial research, and explore scientific questions of high impact.

For more information on GIS please visit: www.gis.a-star.edu.sg
For more information on A*STAR, please visit: www.a-star.edu.sg

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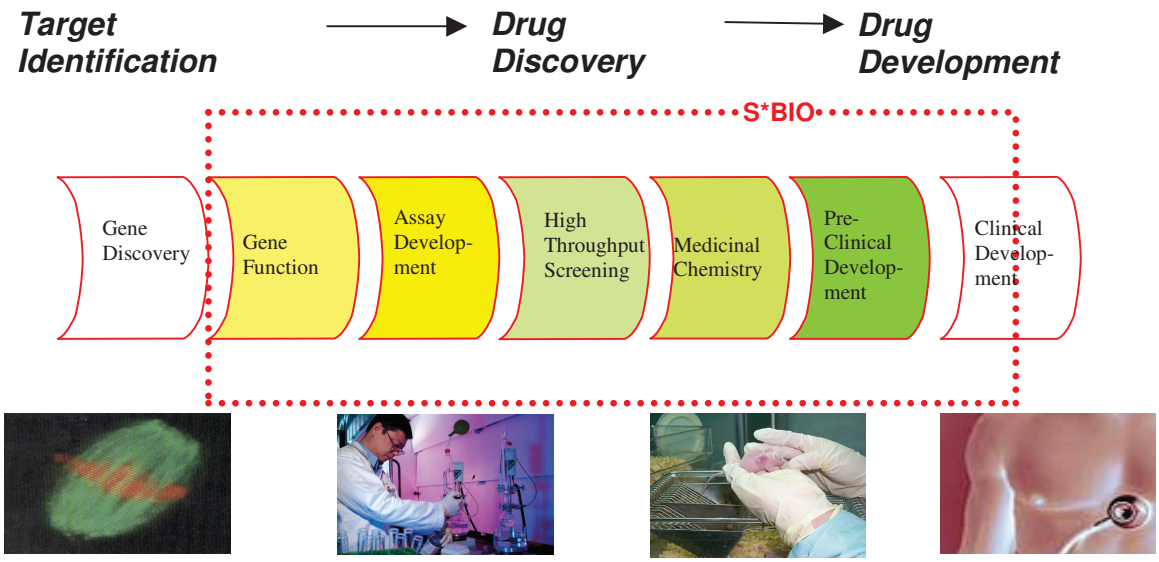
Annex 1 - S*BIO Drug Discovery Process



As a chemically driven, product oriented company, S*BIO identifies validated targets, with the objective of developing small molecule therapeutic leads. S*BIO's R&D encompasses the whole drug discovery process, from target validation, through to lead identification and optimisation. Current research efforts are focused on cancer, with the objective of identifying and developing small molecule anti-cancer drug candidates from its own leading edge research, as well as through joint collaborations with other partners.

S*BIO's focus on research entails the identification of small molecule inhibitors of protein targets that play an important role in the development and progression of cancer. Candidate genes that are suspected to play a role in cancer are validated using antisense and RNA interference technologies. Once validated, the protein product is produced in large quantities, using recombinant DNA technology in either prokaryotic or eukaryotic systems. This enables the development of High Throughput Screening (HTS) assays, to test for inhibitors of the protein function. Small molecule leads that inhibit these targets are identified through both HTS of diverse proprietary chemical libraries and *de novo* drug design, using structural knowledge of the active site of the protein and structure based drug design technologies. Once leads are identified, they are optimised, with respect to potency, selectivity, efficacy and pharmacokinetic properties. S*BIO will then work with interested partners to capitalize on the research and take these leads further down the drug discovery pipeline, eventually resulting in clinical development.