

Hybrigenics and Servier renew research contract for USP validation in oncology

Paris, June 4, 2008--Hybrigenics, a bio-pharmaceutical company with a focus on research and development of new cancer treatments and specialized in protein interactions, today announces the renewal of a scientific contract with Servier Laboratories. The contract covers the validation of a confidential ubiquitin-specific protease (USP) involved in the regulation of a protein of special interest for Servier Laboratories in the field of oncology.

This contract renewal underscores Hybrigenics' pioneer position at the forefront of research in the field of ubiquitin-specific proteases involved in cancer. The identification of this specific USP from genome-wide screening of the catalytically active human USPs in cancer-relevant cellular models was successfully performed under previous contract agreements in 2006 and 2007. If the current validation is successful, Hybrigenics will develop an assay to screen small molecules for inhibition of this specific USP. Discussions on next steps are due to take place with Servier Laboratories before the end of 2008. They could involve the setting up of a High Throughput Screening (HTS) campaign to discover original chemical series and the profiling of hits using the Hybrigenics specificity panel comprising additional USPs as well as non-related proteases.

"We are grateful to Servier Laboratories for their faithful trust and support over the years. Furthermore, this contract renewal shows that Hybrigenics' choice of USPs as original targets clearly differentiates us out from competition in the cancer research environment," said Rémi Delansorne, CEO of Hybrigenics. "This contract with Hybrigenics, a key player in this research field in the world, provides Servier Laboratories with the opportunity to explore an alternative mode of pharmacological intervention on a protein we have identified as of special interest in our own drug discovery program in oncology," said Bernard Marchand, Head of Research at Servier Laboratories.

USPs are involved in the recycling of normal as well as abnormal proteins, such as oncoproteins, which are proteins involved in cancer. This means that preventing the recycling of oncoproteins by inhibiting their corresponding USPs, could prove an efficient strategy to force their degradation, thereby impairing cancer progression. Small molecules capable of inhibiting such USPs may therefore become original cancer drug candidates.

About Hybrigenics

Hybrigenics is a bio-pharmaceutical company focusing its internal R&D programmes on innovative targets and therapies for the treatment of cancer through its Hybrigenics Pharma unit. Hybrigenics Pharma's development programme is based on inecalcitol, a vitamin D analogue more powerful and less toxic than calcitriol, the naturally active form of vitamin D. Inecalcitol is being developed for the treatment of hormone-resistant prostate cancer in combination with Sanofi-Aventis' Taxotere(R), which is the current gold-standard chemotherapeutic treatment for this indication. Hybrigenics Pharma's research programme explores the role of enzymes known as ubiquitin-specific proteases (USP) in the degradation of oncoproteins, and the effectiveness of proprietary USP inhibitors in treating various types of cancer.

Hybrigenics also offers a range of services to identify, validate and inhibit protein interactions to researchers in all areas of life sciences through its Hybrigenics Services unit, using its ISO 9001-certified high-throughput Yeast-Two Hybrid (Y2H) screening platform, its sophisticated bioinformatics tools and extensive database, along with its chemical library and chemical screening platform. More information is available at: www.hybrigenics.com.

About Servier

Servier is the leading independent French pharmaceutical company, established in 1954 by its founder, Jacques Servier, M.D., Pharm.D. The group is established in 140 countries and 82% of Servier products are prescribed out of France. Sales turnover in 2007 rose to 3.5 billion euros. Almost 25% of Servier's turnover is invested in Research and Development. The Servier Group counts 19 International Centers of Therapeutic Research, and its principal therapeutic research orientations are cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, neuropsychiatric disorders, cancer, and osteoarticular diseases. More information is available at: www.servier.com.

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