

Press Release

April 20, 2005

PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI) Licenses GPCR Peptide Library to Novartis

PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI) announced today, that they have signed an agreement with Novartis to license PharmaGPEP, a GPCR ligand library designed and produced by PDI.

PDI attributes the current successful deal to three major reasons: 1) the library was evaluated to have a high globally competitive quality, 2) the product met a demand of Novartis, which is aggressively seeking new drug targets and 3) the research tool licensing process went smoothly due to the mediation by the Tsukuba Research Institute of Novartis Pharma KK. The GPCR peptide library is expected to help finding drugable target at Novartis. Financial and other terms were not disclosed.

PharmaGPEP is a synthetic peptide library designed by PDI with its unique bioinformatics technologies. PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI) has analyzed the profiles of sequences which are known to be precursors of endogenous peptide ligands of GPCR and extracted predominant characteristics of the precursor sequences. Based on the investigations, potential sequences of the precursors which can contain candidates of GPCR ligands are retrieved from the genomic information. Orphan GPCRs have been drawing attention as new generation of drug design target and it is assumed that about 40% of the orphan GPCRs would bind peptides as their endogenous ligands. However, it is very difficult to purify sufficient amount of intravital peptides from organs or tissues and to provide them to benchwork at wet laboratory to identify true ligands of orphan GPCRs.

PharmaGPEP can be a potential tool to investigate novel ligands of orphan GPCRs.

About PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI)

PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI), <http://www.pharmadesign.co.jp> is a Tokyo based genomic drug discovery company, the first venture company of its kind in Japan, established in 1999. PharmaDesign, Inc. offers a range of proprietary technologies in drug design research by utilizing their expertise in bioinformatics and *in silico* protein science.

Contact:

PharmaDesign, Inc. (PDI)

Sam(Shin) Noda

Division General Manager, Business Promotion

e-mail: noda@pharmadesign.co.jp

tel. +81-3-3523-9630