



Topic

HEALTH-2009-4.3.1-1: Discovery and development of new vaccines or drugs for helminth infections

Funding Scheme

Collaborative Project (Small or medium-scale focused research project)

Project coordinator

Institut Pasteur de Lille, Lille, France

Project Duration

March 2010 –February 2013



iNovacia

SEtTReND project aims to validate targets and discover novel drug leads for the therapy of the major human parasitic disease schistosomiasis (also known as bilharzia or snail fever). iNovacia AB will take the main responsibility in the drug discovery part of the project and will perform both high-throughput screening (HTS) and fragment-based screening (FBS) campaigns against selected *Schistosoma mansoni* enzyme targets. The identified hit compounds will then be developed into lead candidates at iNovacia AB. Finally, in vivo testing of the best candidates will be done in infected mice. The project brings together nine partners, six partners from three different European countries and three partners from Brazil.

Institut Pasteur de Lille	FR	UNI
iNovacia AB	SE	SME
Centre Européen de Recherche en Biologie det Médecine	FR	UNI
Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg	DE	UNI
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro	BR	UNI
University of Freiburg	DE	UNI
Fundação Oswaldo Cruz	BR	UNI
Inserm-Transfert SA	FR	UNI
Universidade de Saõ Paulo	BR	UNI

iNovacia AB is a privately held company founded in 2006 as a spin-out from Biovitrum/Pharmacia, Stockholm, Sweden. The company has a staff of scientists with a strong industrial track-record and proprietary tools for accelerating and de-risking preclinical drug discovery. Since 2006, iNovacia has delivered more than 25 integrated projects, from assay development over screening and medicinal chemistry to patent protected candidate drugs.

How did iNovacia get involved in this project?

Johan Schultz (iNovacia): Since a couple of years we are scrutinizing the FP7 Health Calls in order to identify Topics where small molecule drug discovery capabilities are needed. iNovacia is a machinery that can be employed in any early drug discovery projects and not limited to any therapeutic area. The scientists at iNovacia have long experience and the instruments set up for early drug discovery are normally found only in large pharmaceutical companies. We have worked with all different classes of protein targets within all major therapeutic areas so we are a strong partner in any call where drug discovery is an important part. In this project, personal contacts with scientists at the institute of the coordinator were also very helpful.

What are your future perspectives?

Johan Schultz (iNovacia): To develop IP protected compounds that can be shown to be active against schistosomiasis in an infected mouse model. If we succeed with that, there will most probably be interest from larger pharmaceutical companies to help bring compounds into clinical trials. Hopefully the end result will be a very much needed new drug against schistosomiasis.

Do you have any suggestions for other SMEs/Academia that would like to get involved in such projects?

Johan Schultz (iNovacia): It is important to be visible in databases, like the SMEs go Health database, and they are also very useful to search for potential partners. The National Contact Point (NCP) will be very helpful at all stages

of the process. Also, see to that you activate any network you may have connected to a Topic you find interesting and start to search for partners as soon as possible after the publication of the Call. The writing of the application and the administrative work associated with getting a proposal together (especially if you are the coordinator) could constitute a significant financial burden for an SME. I would recommend SMEs to check if there are any funds available for feasibility/preliminary studies before an application. In Sweden it is possible to apply for such a grant (called SMINT) from Vinnova.