

Press Release

Vienna, February 27, 2015

AIT joins Cancer Research UK-Abcodia Consortium for Early Cancer Diagnosis

Cancer research based on an innovative approach

Vienna - The AIT Austrian Institute of Technology recently joined the international 'Early Diagnosis Consortium' (EDC), a collaboration between Cancer Research UK and Abcodia, which aims to discover biomarkers for early diagnosis of cancer. New research approaches should allow cell changes to be detected at the earliest possible stage, even before any symptoms develop and before the tumour forms metastases.

The 'Early Diagnosis Consortium' is testing and researching some completely new concepts and methods for early cancer diagnosis. Various relevant biomarkers are identified which enable cancer to be diagnosed at the earliest possible stage, even before the first symptoms appear. Treatment is most effective at this point in time and increases chances of survival.

Using biomarkers against cancer

Biomarker research at AIT also includes an antibody approach. When tumour cells develop, the body produces proteins which trigger an autoimmune reaction. In response to this process, the body then forms autoantibodies which can sometimes be identified months or even years before clinical diagnosis or illness. The later the cancer is diagnosed, the more difficult it is to treat. This innovative approach may enable signs of a potential illness to be identified at a very early stage based on a blood sample. Experts at AIT have already identified and patented biomarkers for the diagnosis of breast, colon and lung cancer.

"Using these autoantibody techniques, we are able to improve minimally invasive diagnostics using tiny samples of blood or saliva," says Dr. Martin Weber, Head of Business Unit Molecular Diagnostics at AIT.

Leading anti-cancer foundation

The 'Early Diagnosis Consortium' was founded in 2013 by Cancer Research UK, Cancer Research Technology, the charity's commercial arm, and Abcodia, a company specialising in the discovery and validation of biomarkers for cancer screening. The consortium aims to drive forward research into biomarkers to detect cancers before patients develop symptoms, concentrating on cancers which currently have limited screening tests available, such as non-small cell lung cancer.

Validation with a leading biobank

The initial stage, in which AIT is involved, is aimed at identifying relevant biomarkers for the early diagnosis of bowel cancer. The results will be validated using the UKCTOCS Biobank (UK Collaborative Trial for Ovarian Cancer Screening), which contains over 5 million blood and tissue samples and to which Abcodia has exclusive commercial access. These samples have been

collected over several years from over 200,000 initially healthy patients, some of which have gone on to develop cancer.

Notes to editors

About Cancer Research Technology

Cancer Research Technology (CRT) is a specialist commercialisation and development company, which aims to develop new discoveries in cancer research for the benefit of cancer patients. CRT works closely with leading international cancer scientists and their institutes to protect intellectual property arising from their research and to establish links with commercial partners. CRT facilitates the discovery, development and marketing of new cancer therapeutics, vaccines, diagnostics and enabling technologies. CRT is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cancer Research UK, the largest independent funder of cancer research in the world. Further information about CRT can be found at www.cancertechnology.com

About Cancer Research UK

- Cancer Research UK is the world's leading cancer charity dedicated to saving lives through research.
- Cancer Research UK's pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has helped save millions of lives.
- Cancer Research UK receives no government funding for its life-saving research. Every step it makes towards beating cancer relies on every pound donated.
- Cancer Research UK has been at the heart of the progress that has already seen survival rates in the UK double in the last forty years.
- Today, 2 in 4 people survive cancer. Cancer Research UK's ambition is to accelerate progress so that 3 in 4 people will survive cancer within the next 20 years.
- Cancer Research UK supports research into all aspects of cancer through the work of over 4,000 scientists, doctors and nurses.
- Together with its partners and supporters, Cancer Research UK's vision is to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

For further information about Cancer Research UK's work or to find out how to support the charity, please call 0300 123 1022 or visit www.cancerresearchuk.org. Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

About AIT Austrian Institute of Technology

The AIT is Austria's largest non-university research institute and is, among European research institutes, a specialist in key infrastructure issues. The Molecular Diagnostics business unit focusses on biomarkers, assay development, bioinformatics and diagnostic biosensors and has several patents on biomarkers for cancer. The group combines innovative high throughput technologies with their own in-house workflow-based data analysis tools to support partners and customers in the ultimate goal of defining biomarkers for personalized medicine and early disease detection.

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