

Interprotein and SPERA PHARMA enter into an agreement for comprehensive collaboration in small molecule and peptide drug R&D

Osaka (Japan), February 16, 2022 – Interprotein Corporation (“Interprotein”) and SPERA PHARMA, Inc. (“SPERA PHARMA”) today hereby announce that we have signed an agreement for comprehensive collaboration aiming at research & development (“R&D”), manufacturing and commercialization of novel small molecule and peptide pharmaceuticals for various diseases with high unmet medical needs.

By the collaboration between the unique basic drug discovery technologies of Interprotein and the advanced technologies and expertise in R&D and manufacturing of small molecule and peptide drugs of SPERA PHARMA and its affiliates, we aim to bring Interprotein's innovative drugs to market as quickly as possible.

Protein-protein interaction (“PPI”), which is a drug target of Interprotein, is expected to be a potential new drug target. However, small molecule compounds that regulate PPI are often relatively complex and difficult to manufacture, and certain structural conditions are required for versatile peptide modalities, including the regulation of intracellular PPI. We expect that our collaboration will solve such challenging problems and contribute to realizing the practical use of efficient PPI-regulating drugs in collaboration with pharmaceutical companies in Japan and overseas.

Masato Hosoda, Chief Executive Officer and President at Interprotein stated that *“I well know that SPERA PHARMA and its affiliates have highly professional expertise in the area of small molecule pharmaceuticals R&D, especially in the synthetic expansion, process development, formulation development, investigational drug manufacturing and IND/NDA supports. Furthermore, SPERA PHARMA and its affiliates have proprietary technologies contributing to manufacturing the peptide drug substance as a new modality with competitive advantages in consideration of high quality, low cost, low solvent consumption, and minimizing its emission amount. Interprotein has a great hope that this comprehensive collaboration between SPERA PHARMA’s outstanding technologies and Interprotein’s approaches aiming at the promotion of orally-available small molecule and peptide PPI modulators will respond to unmet medical needs and contribute especially to ‘Good Health and Well-Being’ of 17 SDGs.”*

Katsuhiko Hatazawa, Chairperson at SPERA PHARMA stated that *“Interprotein has a unique drug discovery platform that uses AI to create innovative new drugs based on highly versatile protein-protein interactions. Through this collaboration, we hope that the experiences and technologies of SPERA PHARMA and its affiliates in drug development and manufacturing, including the CMC field, will be of some help to Interprotein in its drug discovery, and that the new drug will be delivered to the patients who are waiting for it as soon as possible.”*

Based on the idea that the success of our clients is our success, SPERA PHARMA is pleased to have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the comprehensive collaboration from a medium- to long-term perspective with Interprotein, which will support, contribute to, and find intrinsic value in Interprotein.”

About Interprotein

Interprotein is an Osaka University-originated biotech company that was established as Inter Cyto Nano Science Co., Ltd. in 2001, and the former name was changed into the present name in 2007. The current head office is located at 3-10-2, Toyosaki, Kita-ku, Osaka, 531-0072, Japan and CEO & President is Masato HOSODA. Interprotein is mainly focusing on protein-protein interactions (PPIs) with huge potentials as drug targets and conducting drug discovery research for novel small molecule and peptide PPI modulators using two platform technologies, Artificial Intelligence-guided INTerprotein's Engine for New Drug Design (AI-guided INTENDD®) and helix-loop-helix peptide (HLHP), respectively. AI-guided INTENDD is a system that predict activity of small molecules based on a proprietary deep learning and show a high performance in lead generation/optimization as well as hit identification. HLHP is a new therapeutic peptide molarity consisting of two helices and one loop and applicable to many kinds of drug targets including intracellular proteins (<http://www.interprotein.com/>).

About SPERA PHARMA

SPERA PHARMA is a CDMO (Contract Development & Manufacturing Organization) capable of undertaking a wide range of CMC (Chemistry, Manufacturing and Control) activities from early development to post-launch. SPERA PHARMA was established as a spin-out of part of the CMC division of a big pharmaceutical company.

As a core company in the Astena Group's Fine Chemicals business, we are running the business in contract research and development services, including process development and manufacturing of small molecule APIs, formulation development and manufacturing of clinical trial materials, analytical method development, and quality testing.

In addition, our affiliates, including our subsidiaries, SPERA NEXUS, Inc. and Jitsubo CO., LTD., provide one-stop services from R&D to commercial manufacturing of small molecules, peptides and other pharmaceuticals. (<https://www.spera-pharma.co.jp/>)

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