

TCG Lifesciences

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Providing integrated R&D

TCG Lifesciences' consistent delivery of high value and complex medicinal chemistry solutions has made it a partner of choice. To date, TCG Lifesciences has established collaborations with 15 of the leading 20 global biopharmaceutical companies.



In the 8 short years that it has existed, TCG Lifesciences, formerly known as Chembiotek Research International, has emerged as a significant provider of integrated discovery and clinical research services to global pharma and biotech companies. Indeed, in 2006, Pfizer Inc. nominated the company as "Top Discovery Chemistry CRO in Asia", while this year TCG Lifesciences was recognized by Frost & Sullivan as "Indian Drug Discovery Organization of the Year".

Yet it is clear that the company's management has no intention to rest on its laurels, with ambitions to expand its efforts into providing translational medicine services.

"We can provide innovation-based integrated research services from early stage discovery through to animal pharmacology and kilo-scale production of investigative compounds for preliminary human clinical trials. Since our inception, in addition to our strong chemistry capabilities, we have developed the best biology and computational skills among contract research organizations in India," explained TCG Lifesciences Managing Director, Swapan Bhattacharya.

TCG Lifesciences, which is part of 'The Chatterjee Group', a global investment conglomerate headquartered in New York, delivers its service offerings through three separate but integrated divisions.

Discovery research services, including chemistry, biology and preclinical research solutions for the discovery of new chemical entities, are provided by Chembiotek, especially in inflammation, pain and infectious diseases.

Clinical research services, including translational research, genomics, proteomics, biomarker research and clinical development, are provided by Clininvent Research Ltd.

LabVantage Solutions is responsible for providing enterprise informatics services, including biobanking, bioinformatics, cheminformatics and clinical data management. To strengthened its global leadership position in the laboratory informatics market, TCG Lifesciences has recently acquired SQL*LIMS business from Applied Biosystems, a part of Life Technologies Corporation.

"We are offering partners a cutting-edge drug discovery and development platform whereby the R&D process is seamlessly transitioned from bench to bedside and back, and laboratory data are easily accessed and managed across the whole product development cycle," added Bhattacharya.

"We have the ability to take a project from a nominated gene all the way to the production of active pharmaceutical ingredients used for first-in-man clinical trials. To ensure full understanding of client needs and the fast and timely delivery of collaboration targets, we have stationed senior members of our scientific leadership team in the U.S. and Europe and established joint project management teams," he added.

Earlier this year, Pfizer Inc., the world's largest pharmaceutical company, confirmed the quality of TCG Lifesciences' competence to provide innovation-based integrated research services from early-stage discovery to kilo-scale produc-

tion of first-in-man material when it announced that it was extending its master services agreement beyond discovery chemistry.

"A high-quality and flexible working model is critical to Pfizer's research. Our strong relationships with leading Asian CROs, such as TCG Lifesciences, will enable us to tap into their scientific-talent pool to further the success of our research programs," said Rick Connell, Pfizer Vice President, Head of External Research Solutions.

"We are equipped with state-of-the art chemistry and biology laboratories, coupled with in-house animal facilities that meet global standards," noted Bhattacharya.

TCG Lifesciences has approximately 1100 scientists and technicians, including over 100 PhDs / MDs, many of whom have postdoctoral experience working in top U.S., European and Japanese academic and industrial laboratories. The company has the expertise in place to complete lead discovery, lead optimization and preclinical development, including assay development, complex multi-step syntheses, sophisticated chemistries, pharmacology and scale-up chemistry, as well as clinical trial recruitment and management skills.

In a 2.5 year anticancer program with an undisclosed partner, TCG Lifesciences' researchers synthesized more than 1,000 compounds, optimized a phenylaminopyridine-based lead with nanomolar activity levels, scaled up the lead molecule for further profiling and conducted early pharmacokinetic studies. The candidate molecule has since demonstrated efficacy in animal models and has been progressed to investigational new drug (IND) status.

"Our focus is to partner integrated discovery projects, including translational projects, although this does not preclude us from taking up stand-alone service projects across the drug discovery value chain," Bhattacharya noted.

In future, he added, the company would like to focus on translational-science partnerships which connect basic medical research to new medicines. One such deal is the partnership done with the Indian Government to establish 'The Centre for Genomic Application' a national core share facility.

TCG Lifesciences is flexible in the types of deals it is able to strike with partner companies. "This enables us to adjust to the demands of the market and client in a simple and mutually beneficial manner. The models can range from fee-for-services through to risk-sharing in different formats," Bhattacharya added.

Recent collaborations TCG Lifesciences has signed include a strategic deal with Forest Laboratories Inc. to discover and develop a small-molecule drug candidates for anti-inflammatory diseases. Under the terms of the deal, TCG Lifesciences' Chembiotek unit will use its chemistry, biology, ADME and animal pharmacology capabilities. Forest has full ownership of resulting compounds and will fund all drug development and commercialization.

CONTACT DETAILS:

India

Swapan Bhattacharya
Managing Director
Email: swapan@tcgind.com

USA

Ashis K Saha, PhD
Vice President, Discovery Research
Email: asaha@chembiotek.com

Europe

Dr. Bernd Sundermann
Associate Vice President, Preclinical R&D
Email: bernd.sundermann@tcgls.com

Japan

Hirose Kunihiro
Director, Business Development
Email: hirose.kunihiro@tcgls.com