

panel of quantitative binding assays provides a significantly more efficient means to characterize compounds and compound libraries and identify potentially interesting interactions for additional study. We would not suggest that our method be used as a complete substitute for *in vitro* and cell-based inhibition assays, and that is not how we use it for our own discovery and development efforts. We agree with O'Hare and Druker that our new method is "useful both for quickly evaluating kinase specificity and as an initial screen to identify unanticipated inhibitor targets," and that

novel interactions of particular interest should be followed up with "assays that directly measure inhibition."

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Decentralization key to ScanBalt

To the editor:

A news article by Sabine Louët in the June issue (*Nat. Biotechnol.* **23**, 640, 2005) highlights some of the important challenges facing European biotech 'metaclusters.' In

discussing various European initiatives, Louët described ScanBalt as a "metacluster of states in northern Europe." ScanBalt has never seen itself as a metacluster; instead, we prefer to define ourselves as a 'metaregion' comprising a collaboration of microregions (e.g., the Öresund region) within a macroregion (e.g., the European Union). The distinction is important because we are fully aware that the mechanisms working positively and creating added value in a regional cluster can not just be transferred to a 'metalevel' in the form of a metacluster.

The arguments for creating a metaregion are also somewhat different. In the case of ScanBalt BioRegion these are mainly:

- Create corporate identity for ScanBalt BioRegion
- Develop visibility for ScanBalt BioRegion and the members of ScanBalt
- Attract human, industrial and financial resources
- Coordinate joint efforts in research, education, technology transfer, innovation and economic development
- Provide a platform to facilitate dialog and collaboration between networks, academia, hospitals, public authorities, private companies and individuals
- Create a platform to facilitate dialog with supranational institutions

I would like to point out in particular the need to create critical mass in research, education and innovation. One concrete example of how this can be achieved is the project ScanBalt Campus, which has 31

partners and is cofinanced by European Union Interreg IIIB. Through discussion, dialogue and coordination, several ScanBalt 'Centers' or 'Faculties' are now being set up in the ScanBalt BioRegion, combining transnational forces in a strict bottom-up manner in specific areas such as regenerative medicine, molecular diagnostics, intellectual property and

entrepreneurship, sustainable biotech, process analytical technology, forensic science and the training of industry managers.

By promoting transnational collaboration when it is needed, ScanBalt promotes the establishment of metaregional competencies that allows the participants to compete at the global level. At the same time, ScanBalt Campus promotes human mobility within the ScanBalt BioRegion and assists institutions to adapt more swiftly to market demands for competencies. Of equal importance, ScanBalt always aims to work in a very decentralized way, thereby avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy and promoting direct involvement of the participating members.

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