

# Technology Strategy Board

## Driving Innovation

### PRESS RELEASE

9 June 2011

#### **Research and development into tumour profiling will lead to improved cancer care**

Six new collaborative research and development projects are set to receive nearly £6 million of government funding in the latest stage of a major five-year initiative to ensure that the UK is a world leader in the development of personalised medicine.

The projects to receive the funding, from the government-backed Technology Strategy Board ([www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)), will carry out R&D in the areas of tumour profiling and data capture. This will help to improve cancer care by providing cancer specialists with information specific to their patient's tumour, enabling more targeted treatment to be provided.

The investment is the third to be made through the Technology Strategy Board-managed Stratified Medicine Innovation Platform (SMIP), an initiative which will oversee an investment of over £60 million of government funding over five years in innovative research and development. The first investments, totalling £3.7 million, were in the fields of inflammatory biomarkers for more effective drugs and business models & value systems.

The consortia carrying out the projects will be led by Affymetrix UK Ltd, Aridhia Informatics Ltd, IDBS, Life Technologies Corporation, Oxford Gene Technology and Source BioScience UK Ltd.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said:

“Routine comprehensive profiling of tumours upon diagnosis has the potential to open up more effective treatment options and, together with related clinical data, could dramatically increase our understanding of the power of targeted therapies, which could then be applied to drug development. These projects will lead to the development of products or services which can be readily adopted by NHS commissioners, for the improvement of patient outcomes.”

The commercial solutions from these projects will support the aims of Cancer Research UK's own Stratified Medicines Programme, which aims to test up to 9,000 tumour samples in order to demonstrate how molecular diagnosis of NHS patient's tumours could be scaled up to provide a national service, whilst also consenting patients for permission to link their genetic and clinical data to inform research in the future.

James Peach, director of Cancer Research UK's stratified medicine programme, said:

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“We’re delighted to be working alongside the Technology Strategy Board, whose £5.8 million investment in these groundbreaking projects is a vital part of our ambition to make molecular diagnosis of tumours a routine part of care for all cancer patients in the UK.

“Investing in tumour profiling will give us new ways to test tumours in the NHS, and the data capture work will allow us to develop better targeted cancer treatments in future. All of these investments fit with the Cancer Research UK programme, which will demonstrate how these technologies can be used in practice to help cancer patients. This is a great example of national collaboration across the public, private and charity sectors, all working together to beat cancer.”

The partners in the Stratified Medicine Innovation Platform are the Technology Strategy Board, the Department of Health (England), the Scottish Government Health Directorates, the Medical Research Council (MRC), the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), Cancer Research UK and Arthritis Research UK.

**Ends**

#### **Notes to Editors**

1. The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led government body which works to create economic growth by ensuring that the UK is a global leader in innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. For more information please visit: [Technology Strategy Board website](#)
2. Molecular and genomic technologies have the potential to predict in advance, based on an understanding of the underlying disease mechanisms, which patients will respond positively to a given treatment. Identifying and grouping those patients likely to respond to a given treatment is termed *stratification*. **Stratified Medicine** could, therefore, be defined as the management of a group of patients using molecular diagnostic testing to select the optimum treatment to achieve the best therapeutic outcome for that group.
3. The aim of the **Stratified Medicine Innovation Platform**, which was announced in October 2010, is to place the UK at the centre of a new era of molecular-based healthcare by catalysing the commercial application of new technologies for diagnosing and treating disease. This will provide business, health and economic benefits to the UK in a competitive global market. It will also help the pharma industry to develop an increased number of more effective drugs targeted at smaller patient groups, the diagnostics industry to develop further the companion diagnostic tests that underpin this, and the healthcare providers to improve their cost effectiveness. Building on the UK’s commercial and academic strengths, the assets of the National Health Service and the close liaison between research and policy, the Stratified Medicines Innovation Platform will focus initially on therapeutic areas that present a challenge to healthcare providers, are ready for a stratified approach and that provide a significant market opportunity. For further information please visit: [Stratified Medicine Innovation Platform](#)

4. Information about the *Tumour Profiling and Data Capture to Improve Cancer Care* competition can be found at: [Tumour Profiling and Data Capture](#)
5. The offer of funding to these projects is conditional and remains subject to the successful completion of Technology Strategy Board compliance and financial review processes.
6. The projects to be funded are:

**Project Title:** Developing a robust, reliable multiplex clinical tool for guiding tumour therapy  
**Partners:** Affymetrix UK Ltd (lead), ALMAC Diagnostics Ltd, Leeds Institute of Molecular Medicine  
**Contact:** Joyce Davis, Manager Corporate Communications, [joyce\\_davis@affymetrix.com](mailto:joyce_davis@affymetrix.com), +1 408 731 5988

**Project Title:** The Dundee Edinburgh Cancer Informatics Programme: Harnessing Excellent Research [DECIPHER]  
**Partners:** Aridhia Informatics Ltd (lead), University of Dundee, NHS Tayside, University of Edinburgh  
**Contact:** Pamela Brankin, [pamela.brankin@aridhia.com](mailto:pamela.brankin@aridhia.com), 07707 228167

**Project Title:** Acropolis (Advanced Collaborative Research for Oncology Platform for Improved Outcomes, Learnings, Insight and Science)  
**Partners:** IDBS (lead), Quantix Ltd, Kings College London, Manchester University  
**Contact:** Simon Beaulah, [sbeulah@idbs.com](mailto:sbeulah@idbs.com), 0208 237 8440

**Project Title:** Next Generation Sequencing Analysis: A Clinical Study to Implement an Innovative Cancer Care Model in the UK, with Health and Economic Benefits  
**Partners:** Life Technologies Corporation (lead), University of Oxford, AstraZeneca LLC, Johnson & Johnson  
**Contact:** Martin Naley, [martin.naley@lifetech.com](mailto:martin.naley@lifetech.com), 0141 814 5889

**Project Title:** Development of a fully integrated service for sequencing-based tumour profiling including data interpretation and commercialisation of assay panel kit products.  
**Partners:** Oxford Gene Technology (lead), University of Southampton, University of Birmingham, CIS Healthcare  
**Contact:** James Clough, [james.clough@ogt.co.uk](mailto:james.clough@ogt.co.uk), 01865 856800

**Project Title:** Tumour Mutation Profiling Using Illumina Massively Parallel Sequencing  
**Partners:** Source BioScience UK Ltd (lead), Barts Cancer Institute, Illumina Cambridge Ltd  
**Contact:** Janet Acocks, [janet.acocks@sourcebioscience.com](mailto:janet.acocks@sourcebioscience.com), 0115 973 9012

7. Media enquiries **only** should be addressed to the Technology Strategy Board's media relations consultant or manager: Nick Sheppard, Media Relations Consultant - Mobile: 07824 599644, Email: [nick.sheppard@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:nick.sheppard@tsb.gov.uk) or Claire Cunningham, Media Relations Manager - Tel: 01793 442901, Mobile: 07554 115745 Email: [claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk).
8. Companies and other organisations seeking further information about Technology Strategy Board funding opportunities should visit the Competitions page of the Technology Strategy Board website – [competitions](#), email [competitions@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:competitions@tsb.gov.uk), or phone the Competitions Helpline on 0300 321 4357.

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