



genapta and GSK Collaborate in New Screening Platform

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Cambridge company genapta have completed the first stage development of a next generation optical screening platform in collaboration with GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). Genapta, a spin out from Cambridge University and investee company of the Cambridge University Challenge Fund, has been working with GSK's technology development team on the programme since March 2003.

This collaboration has delivered a novel equipment configuration necessary to quantify the transient binding of potential drug compounds to protein targets within the challenging circumstances of the pulsed flow environment of a developmental drug discovery platform. Julian White, CEO of genapta commented, "We are delighted to be closely involved in a strategic program within GSK. Over the last eighteen months we have worked closely to deliver new platform technologies to match their needs. We are pleased to be able to say that this has been successful and the customer is now able to assess compound potency with our platform."

Using a combination of genapta's novel fiber optic core and industry standard techniques the system measures how well a chemical binds to a protein target. The core of the device is an optical head slightly larger than a box of matches which has many of the functions of a complex confocal microscope. Over the course of the program genapta has also developed the complementary tools needed to exploit its technology and now supplies turnkey biochemistry systems to the end user. With the help of the devices, GSK has been able to accelerate its microfluidic platform development to the point where it can screen compounds with orders of magnitude less reagent than existing systems.

Julian White concluded "We are pleased with the progress so far and in the coming year intend to further strengthen the underlying technology for the benefit of our customers".

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