

## **Johnson & Johnson Innovation and Janssen Announce the Awardees of the World Without Disease Call-for-Proposal**

*Five Japan-based awardees will receive grant funding, mentorship and incubation space to support their research to prevent, intercept and cure diseases in the areas of lung cancer, myopia, healthy aging, infant/child health and neuroscience*

**TOKYO, Japan, 27 August 2020** – Johnson & Johnson Innovation<sup>1</sup> and Janssen Research & Development, LLC, one of the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson, in collaboration with Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited and Shonan Health Innovation Park (Shonan iPark), today announced the five awardees of the World Without Disease Call-for-Proposal.

Launched in January 2020, the World Without Disease Call-for-Proposal engaged the innovation ecosystem of Japan to identify breakthrough technologies and solutions in the areas of lung cancer, myopia, healthy aging, infant/child health and neuroscience which are areas of significant unmet medical and patient need in the country.

Each awardee will receive up to three years of grant funding totaling up to JPY10,000,000 (approximately US\$93,940<sup>2</sup>) per year<sup>3</sup>; mentorship and coaching from Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Janssen R&D and Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited; and incubation space at Shonan iPark. Out of 79 highly qualified proposals from across Japan, the awardees demonstrated a forward-thinking approach and novel solutions in the following areas:

### **Lung Cancer**

- **National Cancer Center** – A team led by Susumu Kobayashi, Chief, Division of Translational Genomics, Exploratory Oncology Research & Clinical Trial Center, National Cancer Center, is identifying and validating circulating miRNAs as a biomarker related to lung tumorigenesis and early-stage lung cancer.

### **Myopia**

- **University of Tsukuba** – A team led by Takahiro Hiraoka, Associate Professor, Department of Ophthalmology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Tsukuba, is developing a prediction algorithm for myopia progression across teenagers and young adults using artificial intelligence.

### **Infant/Child Health**

- **The University of Tokyo** – A team led by Takahisa Murata, Associate Professor, The University of Tokyo, is developing and validating an at-home biosensor for PDGM, a metabolite of PGD2 secreted from mast cells in the circulation, as a predictable biomarker for childhood food allergies.

### **Neuroscience**

- **Nexuspiral Inc.** – Led by CEO Naoyuki Masuda, Nexuspiral Inc. is developing a novel genome design technology that utilizes single-strand oligonucleotides to target and repair the mutation of the genes responsible for rare genetic diseases.

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<sup>1</sup> Division of Johnson & Johnson (China) Investment Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> Figures are based on an average exchange rate of JPY106.45 = USD1 (Source: [Bank of Japan](#) for Aug 26, 2020)

<sup>3</sup> Amount and duration of funding subject to change for each team based on mutually approved research budget and progress against milestones.

- **ExTherea Inc.** – Led by CEO Aya Imafuku, ExTherea Inc. is developing an oral keratinocyte-derived exosomes intranasal therapy that aims to prevent the progression of neurodegenerative diseases.

“We were impressed by the quality of the applications received and the progressive approaches that are being taken to accelerate truly novel solutions to improve health,” said Ben Wiegand, Ph.D., Global Head of World Without Disease Accelerator, Janssen Research & Development, LLC. “We look forward to supporting these innovators on their journeys to transform cutting-edge ideas into feasible, viable healthcare solutions that may prevent, intercept or cure disease.”

The World Without Disease Call-for-Proposal is one of the latest strategic collaborations made in Asia Pacific to unleash the enormous potential of healthcare innovations in the region. The World Without Disease Accelerator is a unique R&D group working across Johnson & Johnson’s pharmaceutical, medical devices and consumer strategic areas focused on the discovery, development and delivery of disruptive products/technologies, business models and collaborations to advance the elimination of disease.

“Since its establishment nearly six years ago, the Asia Pacific Innovation Center has been working closely with our strategic partners in Japan to identify and nurture the best in-class science to treat, cure, prevent and intercept diseases,” said Dan Wang, M.D., Head of Johnson & Johnson Innovation, Asia Pacific<sup>1</sup>. “The Call-for-Proposal has highlighted the country’s strong capabilities and we’re excited to take that forward over the next three years.”

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### **About Johnson & Johnson Innovation LLC**

Johnson & Johnson Innovation focuses on accelerating all stages of innovation worldwide and forming collaborations between entrepreneurs and Johnson & Johnson’s global healthcare businesses. Johnson & Johnson Innovation provides scientists, entrepreneurs and emerging companies with one-stop access to science and technology experts who can facilitate collaborations across the pharmaceutical, medical device and consumer companies of Johnson & Johnson. Under the Johnson & Johnson Innovation umbrella of businesses, we connect with innovators through our regional Innovation Centers; Johnson & Johnson Innovation - JLABS; JJDC, Inc.; and our business development teams to create customized deals and novel collaborations that speed development of innovations to solve unmet needs in patients. JLABS provides the laboratories, expertise, education, tools and resources needed to help life science startups thrive, all with no strings attached. A Johnson & Johnson Innovation Center for Device Innovation at the Texas Medical Center (CDI @ TMC) has been established to accelerate the development of medical devices. For more information about Johnson & Johnson Innovation, please visit: [www.jnjinnovation.com](http://www.jnjinnovation.com).

### **About the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson**

At Janssen, we’re creating a future where disease is a thing of the past. We’re the Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson, working tirelessly to make that future a reality for patients everywhere by fighting sickness with science, improving access with ingenuity, and healing hopelessness with heart. We focus on areas of medicine where we can make the biggest difference: Cardiovascular & Metabolism, Immunology, Infectious Diseases & Vaccines, Neuroscience, Oncology, and Pulmonary Hypertension.

Learn more at [www.janssen.com](http://www.janssen.com). Follow us at [www.twitter.com/JanssenGlobal](https://twitter.com/JanssenGlobal). Janssen Research & Development, LLC is part of the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson.

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**Media Contact:**

Jieying Wu  
Johnson & Johnson Innovation  
[jwu55@its.jnj.com](mailto:jwu55@its.jnj.com)