

## **The Japanese Cancer Association and Debiopharm Group Announce Winners of the 2017 JCA-Mauvernay Award**

*The 'JCA-Mauvernay Award 2017' is awarded to Doctors Yasuhiro Yamada and Hiroyoshi Nishikawa*

**Lausanne, Switzerland – September 29, 2017** – Debiopharm Group™ (Debiopharm – [www.debiopharm.com](http://www.debiopharm.com)), a Swiss-based global biopharmaceutical company, will be presenting the 'JCA-Mauvernay Award' on September 30 to Doctors Yasuhiro Yamada from the Laboratory of Stem Cell Oncology of Kyoto University for his basic research on the dissection of *cancer epigenetics with reprogramming technology* and Hiroyoshi Nishikawa from the Division of Cancer Immunology, Research Institute/EPOC, National Cancer Center / Department of Immunology, Nagoya University Graduate School of Medicine for his applied research on *immune suppressive mechanisms as a target of effective cancer immunotherapy*.

Doctors Yamada and Nishikawa will receive their Awards during the General Assembly of the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Japanese Cancer Association (JCA) in Yokohama which will focus this year on the theme: '*Prevention and Cure of Cancer through Understanding of the Networks*'. Dr. Kohei Miyazono, President of the JCA and Thierry Mauvernay, President & Delegate of the Board of Debiopharm Group, will present the trophies to both scientists.

Epigenetic alterations play a significant role in cancer development both in vitro and in vivo. **Dr. Yamada** has demonstrated that epigenetic regulation affects the development of many cancer types. To dissect epigenetic modifiers caused by genetic abnormalities, he has used reprogramming technologies to actively alter epigenetic regulations while preserving genomic information. With this approach, he has provided in vivo evidence that epigenetic regulations impact the initiation, maintenance and progression of cancers. His recent studies have also shown that cancer cells could be reprogrammed into non-neoplastic cells by targeting driver oncogenic signals and cellular context-associated epigenetic regulators.

**Dr. Nishikawa** has been working on anti-tumor immune responses for many years and has conducted groundbreaking studies to understand the contribution of regulatory T cells to immune dysfunction in solid tumors. His detailed analysis of regulatory T cell subpopulations provided insights into possible means to improve anti-tumor immune responses without causing autoimmunity in vivo and to identify prognostic markers for immunotherapy treatments in colorectal cancers.

"The remarkable scientific achievements of Drs Yamada and Nishikawa are a demonstration of the significance and the global impact of Japanese cancer research and may open new ways of treating cancer in the future and improving patients' quality of life", said Thierry Mauvernay, President & Delegate of the Board of Debiopharm Group.

### **About the JCA-Mauvernay Award**

Since 2005, the Japanese Cancer Association (JCA) and Debiopharm Group have co-organized the 'JCA-Mauvernay Award'. This prize illustrates the curiosity that drives researchers as well as the scientific cooperation between Japan and Switzerland. It aims at recognizing outstanding achievements in the field of oncology amongst Japanese researchers, in both the fundamental and the clinical aspects. The award has a total value of CHF 25'000.

## **About Debiopharm Group**

Debiopharm Group™ is a Swiss-headquartered global biopharmaceutical group including five companies active in the life science areas of drug development, GMP manufacturing of proprietary drugs, diagnostic tools and investment management. Debiopharm focuses on developing prescription drugs that target unmet medical needs. The group in-licenses and develops promising drug candidates. The products are commercialized by pharmaceutical out-licensing partners to give access to the largest number of patients worldwide.

For more information, please see [www.debiopharm.com](http://www.debiopharm.com)

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## **Debiopharm International SA Contact**

Christelle von Büren

Communication Coordinator

[christelle.vonburen@debiopharm.com](mailto:christelle.vonburen@debiopharm.com)

Tel: +41 (0)21 321 01 11