

Debiopharm and the Japanese Cancer Association Announce Winners of the 2020 JCA-Mauvernay Award

For its sixteenth edition, the JCA-Mauvernay Award was awarded to Doctor Hideaki Ogiwara and Doctor Keisuke Kataoka

Lausanne, Switzerland – October 5, 2020 – Debiopharm (www.debiopharm.com), a Swiss-based global, biopharmaceutical company, presented the JCA-Mauvernay Award on October 3rd to **Dr. Hideaki Ogiwara** from the Division of Cancer Therapeutics of the National Cancer Center Research Institute for his work on the “**Development of Synthetic Lethal Therapy for Chromatin Regulator Deficient Cancers**” and **Dr. Keisuke Kataoka** from the Division of Molecular Oncology of the National Cancer Center Research Institute for his work on the **Genetic dissection of molecular pathogenesis in human cancer**.

Doctors Ogiwara and Kataoka received their Award during the hybrid (virtual/live) meeting of the 79th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Cancer Association (JCA) that was partially held in Hiroshima on the following theme: “Confronting the solid truth of cancer and working together”. As Mr. Thierry Mauvernay, President of Debiopharm, was unable to join the ceremony due to the pandemic situation, **Dr. Hitoshi Nakagama President of the JCA** and **Dr. Takato Noumi, Debiopharm’s representative** in Japan, were able to present trophies to both winners.

The work of Dr. Hideaki Ogiwara focuses on synthetic lethality, an occurrence when cancer cells become exquisitely sensitive to a therapeutic agent only because they carry a genetic perturbation that renders them dependent on the target of the therapeutic agent for survival. Inhibition of this target with the agent will thus kill the mutated cells but have no effect on cells that do not carry the genetic perturbation.

Dr. Keisuke Kataoka has been working on large-scale determination of genetic alterations in human cancers and has identified some that could account for tumor immune evasion. Dr. Kataoka has also identified multiple mutations within single oncogenes that can be found across several cancer types. Some of these multiple mutations could contribute to shaping the clonal selection of tumors.

“We are proud to reward Dr. Hideaki Ogiwara and Dr. Keisuke Kataoka for their commitment and hard work in cancer research. I regret not being able to travel to Japan, but this year’s events have shown us how key global scientific collaboration and research are to the development of tomorrow’s treatments. We have always been impressed by the high quality of scientific innovation that is coming from Japan and we look forward to continuing this close relationship with the Japanese Cancer Association.”

- Thierry Mauvernay, President of Debiopharm.

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.

Debiopharm’s commitment to cancer patients

Debiopharm aims to develop innovative therapies that target high unmet medical needs in oncology. Bridging the gap between disruptive discovery products and real-world patient reach, we identify high-potential compounds for in-licensing, clinically demonstrate their safety and efficacy and then select large pharmaceutical commercialization partners to maximize patient access globally. Recently recognized as Swiss Biotech Success Story 2020 for our achievements over the last 40 years, Debiopharm continues its quest to research innovative cancer therapies such as the recently launched phase III trial TrilynX for high-risk head and neck cancer patients with the FDA Breakthrough Designated Therapy xevinapant (Debio 1143).

For more information, please visit www.debiopharm.com

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