

## DEBIOPHARM RECOGNIZES PIONEERING JAPANESE CANCER RESEARCH DURING THE 82<sup>nd</sup> JCA-MAUVERNAY AWARD CEREMONY

*Leading Japanese researchers in innovative, disruptive, and translational oncology were rewarded during the 2023 JCA-Mauvernay Award Ceremony. Debiopharm deepens its ties with cancer research in Japan.*

**Lausanne, Switzerland – September 26th, 2023** - Debiopharm ([www.debiopharm.com](http://www.debiopharm.com)), a Swiss-based biopharmaceutical company, today announced the acknowledgement of the two recipients of the 2023 JCA-Mauvernay Award. This prestigious award honored remarkable and breakthrough Japanese oncology research in two categories: **Innovative and/or Disruptive Research – Dr. Daichi Inoue** and **Translational Research – Dr. Hiromichi Suzuki**. At the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the [Japanese Cancer Association](#) (JCA) on September 23rd in Pacifico Yokohama, **Prof. Hideyuki Saya** President of the JCA, **Thierry Mauvernay**, President of Debiopharm, **Bertrand Ducrey**, CEO of Debiopharm, and **Frédéric Lévy**, Senior Executive Director, Head of Search & Evaluation and Scientific Innovation of Debiopharm, jointly awarded this year's winners with trophies and a monetary prize, symbolizing their acknowledgement.

*“We have a strong ambition to support Japanese oncology research in becoming new therapies for cancer patients that need them. This award was inspired by our previous success with the development of oxaliplatin, a standard-of-care now commercialized worldwide to treat metastatic colorectal cancer, pancreatic cancer and liver cancer. This example of success is proof that Debiopharm can play a role in evolving early Japanese innovation into development stage compounds that can eventually become new safe and efficacious standard-of-care therapies for patients battling cancer”, commented Thierry Mauvernay, President of Debiopharm.*

**Dr. Daichi Inoue**, awarded in the disruptive research category for his work at the Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation at Kobe (FBRI), where he focuses on pre-mRNA splicing, a natural and regulated cellular event that removes non-coding regions of genes to produce mRNA that will in turn be translated into proteins. Splicing is controlled by the activity of protein complexes called Splicing Factors. It is frequently dysregulated in cancer cells and produces nonsense mRNAs and non-functional proteins. Dr Inoue made the remarkable discovery that alterations of specific protein components of Splicing Factors, lead to mis-splicing of a key tumor suppressor resulting in cancer development. More recently, Dr Inoue extended his research to other Splicing Factor alterations across various oncogenic pathways and tumor types. His research is innovative and indicates that non-mutated genes can become oncogenic through alterations of the cellular mRNA processing machinery.

**Prof. Hiromichi Suzuki**, awarded in the translational research category for his work at the National Cancer Center Research Institute, more specifically on mutations of human brain tumors through multi-omics sequencing data. Characterization of the mutational landscape across over 700 cases of low-grade glioblastoma led to the identification of distinct, mutationally defined subtypes of glioblastoma with different clinical behaviors. In medulloblastoma, the most common pediatric brain cancer, Dr Suzuki identified a recurrent hotspot mutation in a small nuclear RNA that causes cryptic splicing of many genes, including oncogenes. This mutation is also present in other cancers. This novel discovery demonstrates that access to large cohorts of patient material and large-scale molecular analysis of tumors enables the uncovering of new mutations involved in the pathogenesis of cancers.

### The JCA-Mauvernay Award

Since 2005, the Japanese Cancer Association (JCA) and Debiopharm 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 to recognize the 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 patients**

Debiopharm develops innovative therapies that target high unmet medical needs in oncology and infectious diseases. Bridging the gap between disruptive discovery products and real-world patient reach, we identify high-potential compounds and technologies for in-licensing, clinically demonstrate their safety and efficacy and then select large pharmaceutical commercialization partners to maximize patient access globally.

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

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