

phosphagen kinases present in the mammalian hosts, could constitute a promising therapeutic target.

- 14 Pereira, C.A. *et al.* (2003) Arginine kinase overexpression improves *Trypanosoma cruzi* survival capability. *FEBS Lett.* 554, 201–205

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PI3K and chemotaxis: localized patches make the cell's eyes...

The connections between phosphatidylinositol 3-kinases (PI3K) and chemotaxis have been the subject of fevered research since it was shown that PIP3, their product, is localized to the nascent fronts of turning cells. However, there are still large holes in the story. One particular problem has been the need for

some kind of inhibitor to stop uniform levels of chemoattractant from stimulating PI3K all over the cell surface. Such inhibitors have not been found despite widespread searches.

Postma *et al.* [15] now show that PI3K responses are localized differently to where researchers in the field had presumed. Using a GFP-tagged pleckstrin homology (PH) domain to follow the products of PI3K, they show that sudden stimulation of cells leads to a short-lived activation of PI3K on the cell surface, but within a minute or so this even stimulation resolves into discrete patches on the cell surface. Each patch covers about 10% of the cell, and there can be several (or none) on any cell. The patches are dynamic, with a lifetime of about a minute, and appear to be self-organizing. Formation of PI3K patches also correlates with the formation of new pseudopods.

These results suggest that PI3Ks respond to chemoattractants with a complex,

self-organizing response, which is separate from the process of movement, but guides the formation of new protrusions. PI3K activity is not graded from the front to the back of the cell, but the patches presumably correlate with local chemoattractant concentrations, and thus guide the cell. A new model for PI3K stimulation should also break the deadlock in understanding the precise molecular details of how PI3K activity is regulated.

- 15 Postma, M. *et al.* (2003) Uniform cAMP stimulation of *Dictyostelium* cells induces localized patches of signal transduction and pseudopodia. *Mol. Biol. Cell* 14, 5019–5027

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People

Appointments

Julie Cherrington joins Phenomix Pty as President

Phenomix Pty (<http://www.phenomixcorp.com>), the Australian subsidiary of Phenomix, has appointed Julie Cherrington as President. Cherrington, who was formerly Vice President of preclinical research and exploratory development at SUGEN, will be responsible for advancing drug candidates towards preclinical development.

Prior to her time at SUGEN, Cherrington held several senior positions at Gilead Sciences, culminating in a position as Director of Virology.

Laura K. Shawver, President and CEO of Phenomix, said: 'Julie is an expert at handling the issues that emerge between late-stage preclinical development and the onset of clinical trials... We plan to make the most of her expertise in linking

discovery and clinical development as we develop lead compounds for metabolic syndrome and immune disorders.'

Phenomix uses whole animal technology to rapidly discover and develop new treatments for disease, with programs in immune disease and metabolic syndrome.

Ardais appoints Donald B. Hawthorn as President and CEO

Donald B. Hawthorn has been appointed as President and Chief Executive Officer of Ardais (<http://www.ardais.com>), replacing Gregory D. Phelps. Hawthorn has held leadership positions in the healthcare industry for more than 20 years and has extensive experience in growing emerging companies.

Since 1999, Hawthorne has been a contract-operating partner to the healthcare venture capital community;

formerly he was a Partner and Chief Financial Officer at Ampersand ventures.

William Mills, member of the Board of Directors at Ardais, said: 'The application of human disease to drug discovery – clinical genomics – is a rapidly emerging field. Ardais has already made a significant impact in this area... and we are excited about additional near-term business opportunities, which we are developing.'

Ardais is a privately held clinical genomics company dedicated to enhancing and accelerating biomedical research by the application of human disease as the discovery model in pharmaceutical R&D.

James Alexander named as Senior VP at Pozen

Pozen (<http://www.pozen.com>) have announced the appointment of W. James Alexander as Senior Vice President, Product Development. He will be responsible for leading the company's product development activities, including overseeing toxicology, clinical operations, biostatistics, data management and regulatory affairs.

John R. Plachetka, Chairman, President and CEO of Pozen, said: 'Jim's extensive

experience in clinical development and regulatory affairs will be great assets as we move our product candidates through development... He has contributed to successful NDAs in multiple therapeutic areas, including products for the treatment of migraine, epilepsy, asthma, bacterial infections, HIV and other viral infections.'

Alexander was previously President and Chief Medical Officer (CMO) at PharmaResearch Corporation and most recently he was CMO for Inveresk Research Group.

Pozen is a pharmaceutical company developing therapeutic advancements for unmet medical needs.

Celltech appoints new Director of Development

Celltech Group (<http://www.celltechgroup.com>) has announced the appointment of Grahaem Brown as Director of Development. Grahaem has over 20 years of drug development experience from senior positions at Pfizer, Pharmacia, Novartis and Glaxo, during which time he had responsibility for the successful development of 17 new molecular entities.

Melanie Lee, R&D Director, commented: 'Grahaem has exceptional experience in both innovative drug development and managing organisational change, which will be invaluable in ensuring we maximize the value of our pipeline products.'

Celltech Group is one of Europe's largest biotechnology companies with an extensive late-stage development pipeline, drug discovery capabilities and a leading position in antibody engineering.

Awards

Xceleron wins Wall Street Journal Europe Innovation Award

Xceleron (<http://www.xceleron.co.uk>), the York University (UK) spin-out company, was presented with the runners' up Wall Street Journal Europe Innovation Award in the biotech-medical category.

Professor Colin Garner, Xceleron's Chief Executive Officer, and June Garner, Quality/Operations Manager, received the award on behalf of the company, which was won for changing the way clinical trials of new drugs are conducted by the pharma and biotech industries.

Professor Garner commented: 'This award recognizes Xceleron's introduction of the novel enabling technology of accelerator mass spectrometry, which speeds up clinical trials, reduces the use of animals in drug testing... and makes clinical trials safer.'

Bio-Rad receives ADME-Tox Informatics Product Differentiation Innovation Award

Bio-Rad Laboratories (<http://www.bio-rad.com>) have received Frost & Sullivan's ADME-Tox Informatics Product Differentiation Innovation Award.

Bio-Rad Laboratories is a manufacturer and distributor of life science research, clinical diagnostics and informatics products, whose KnowItAll® Informatics System can enable the generation of *in silico* ADME-Tox profiles for potential lead compounds and accelerate lead generation.

Gregory M. Banik, General Manager of Bio-Rad's Informatics Division, commented: 'This award distinguishes KnowItAll's ADME-Tox environment... Specifically, it recognizes the contributions made by our collaborators... whose outstanding development teams have produced many of the cutting-edge tools that help make KnowItAll a complete *in silico* ADME-Tox solution for the drug discovery community.'

The Biochemical Society honours three

Three of the most famous biochemists have been honoured by the Biochemical Society (<http://www.biochemistry.org>). Sydney Brenner, Sir Philip Cohen and Sir Alec Jeffreys were made honorary members of the Society, which dates from 1911.

Sydney Brenner was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine and Physiology in 2002 for his pioneering contribution to 'discoveries concerning genetic regulation of organ development and programmed cell death'.

Sir Philip Cohen is a Royal Society Research Professor and has made outstanding contributions on the role of protein phosphorylation in human health and disease.

Sir Alec Jeffreys was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1986 and was awarded a Knighthood for services to science and technology in 1994.

People was written by Joanne Clough

Our new Monitor section...

This updated section brings you the hottest developments in the fields of medicinal chemistry, antiviral and antitumour molecules, combinatorial chemistry and drug delivery, but now incorporates our **News in brief** and **People** sections. This will now also include hot topics from recent publications in the fields of genomics and proteomics, neuroscience, gene therapy, cancer biology, new targets and mechanisms, bioinformatics, as well as business developments, new appointments and awards.