



Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS), Kyoto University

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News Release

U. of Edinburgh MRC-CRM, Kyoto U. iCeMS Sign Agreement on Academic Collaboration

Kyoto, Japan -- The University of Edinburgh MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine (MRC-CRM) and Kyoto University Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS) signed a memorandum of understanding 30 March covering future collaborative research. For the MRC-CRM the agreement will be the first of its kind with an institute in Japan.

Sir **Ian Wilmut** FRS, FRSE, Chairman of MRC-CRM, expresses high hopes for the new partnership. "This has not come about overnight, but rather through a series of mutual visits starting with a trip several of us made to Kyoto last year. We anticipate that this will mark the beginning of substantive joint research projects, contributing to the advancement of regenerative medicine in both countries."

Prof and iCeMS Director **Norio Nakatsuji** echoes these sentiments, adding, "Both institutions are already well known for stem cell research and medical engineering, and with this agreement in place we will now be closely linked internationally and across disciplines."

A joint symposium will take place 25 July in Edinburgh, including five speakers from each institution including Profs **Motonari Uesugi**, **Yong Chen**, **Nakatsuji** and Associate Prof **Shintaro Sengoku** from the iCeMS, and MRC-CRM's Director Prof **Charles ffrench-Constant** and Chief Operating Officer Dr **Gordon McLean**.

This new memorandum further strengthens ties between the University of Edinburgh and Kyoto University, which together signed a university-level academic collaboration agreement in 2005. Additionally, MRC-CRM is part of the Scottish government-endorsed Edinburgh BioQuarter, home to over 1,000 life science researchers. The BioQuarter enhances the cross-disciplinary research of both MRC-CRM and the iCeMS, and has already developed a relationship with the iCeMS through joint participation at an industry-focused seminar in Tokyo.

"It is a great pleasure for me as a Chief Executive of Scottish Development International to support the memorandum of understanding between the iCeMS and the MRC-CRM, designed to promote collaborative research," says Scottish Development International (SDI) Chief Executive **Anne MacColl**. "Scotland has a long trade history with Japan and our two nations have an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship. As a nation, Scotland has significant expertise in stem cells due to our world-class universities and dynamic life sciences industry and we are proud to be in a position to exchange knowledge and best practices in this field with Japan. Stimulating collaborative projects between Scottish and Japanese experts is a key priority of Scottish Development International and will bring benefit to both countries." (10 March 2011)

"This is a perfect fit for the MRC-CRM and the iCeMS, both highly esteemed in the field of regenerative medicine, while also cementing academic ties between the University of Edinburgh and Kyoto University," says Strategic Programs Division Director **Mami Oyama** of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). "It is my hope that this collaboration will lead to groundbreaking research contributing to further advancement of the field." (10 March 2011)

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About the iCeMS

www.icems.kyoto-u.ac.jp

The Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS) was established in October 2007 as one of five World Premier International (WPI) Research Centers selected by the Japanese government. The iCeMS aims to create new cross-disciplinary fields through the integration of cell and material sciences, pioneering the development of stem cell technologies and mesoscopic sciences. These are anticipated to lead to innovations in medicine, pharmaceuticals, the environment, and industry. Its founding director is Prof **Norio Nakatsuji**, Japan's pioneer in the establishment and distribution of human ES cell lines, and a leader in ES/iPS cell-based drug discovery.

About the MRC-CRM**www.crm.ed.ac.uk**

The MRC Centre for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Edinburgh brings together world leading basic stem cell research with established clinical excellence to deliver a “bench-to-bedside” approach. The Centre contributes to the development of new treatments for diseases like multiple sclerosis, liver failure and Parkinson’s. This autumn, the Centre will relocate to a state-of-the-art, purpose built research facility located at Edinburgh’s BioQuarter – adjacent to the hospital clinics of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, the world class research centres in the Queen’s Medical Research Institute and the well renowned University’s Medical School.

About the SDI**www.sdi.co.uk**

Scottish Development International (SDI) is a government organisation which helps overseas businesses tap into Scotland’s key strengths in knowledge, high level skills, technology and innovation. SDI also works to help Scottish companies do more business overseas and to promote Scotland as a good place to live and work. It is jointly operated by the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Its work is guided by the Scottish Government’s strategy for economic development in Scotland. In Asia, SDI has offices in Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, New Delhi, Mumbai, Seoul, Taipei, Singapore and Sydney.