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AMED awards 3 joint projects with A*STAR

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Three projects have been awarded in a grant call on cell therapy

Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) and Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) have jointly selected three outstanding R&D projects in the field of "Cell Therapy – a focus on quality, efficacy and safety". This is the second joint grant call launched under the MoC signed by AMED and A*STAR in March 2016.

This program is conducted as part of the Strategic International Collaborative Research Program (SICORP) of AMED.

Overview

The SICORP program provides support for international joint research projects on the basis of equal partnership in countries, regions, and fields of cooperation that have been designated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), in collaboration with funding agencies in the countries concerned. The program aims to contribute solutions to challenges facing the world today and to bolster Japan's scientific and technological capabilities through collaboration with a broad range of countries.

A*STAR has established numerous links with many Japan public organisations, including AMED, as well as high-technology R&D companies. With this joint grant call, A*STAR continues to extend and deepen partnerships with key Japanese organisations in the area of cell therapy. Early-stage investigators from Japan and Singapore will have the opportunity to leverage the expertise of both nations to tackle shared problem statements in cell therapy.

AMED and A*STAR jointly launched the grant call on May 7th, 2019. 12 proposals were received by the close of applications on July 2nd, 2019. The evaluation committee identified three highly meritorious projects (See "List of Awardees" below).

List of Awardees

Project	Country	Affiliation	Principal Investigator

Developing a safe and potentially efficacious piggyBac-based CAR-T cell strategy for virus-related cancers	Japan	Shinshu University, School of Medicine	Assistant Professor, Shoji Saito
	Singapore	National Cancer Center Singapore	Research Fellow, Timothy Wai Ho Shuen
Large-scale Preparation of Hair Follicle Germs using Hydrogel Bioprinting	Japan	Kanagawa Institute of Industrial Science and Technology (KISTEC)	Researcher, Tatsuto Kageyama
	Singapore	Singapore University of Technology and Design	Assistant Professor, Michinao Hashimoto
Human stem cell-derived pancreatic beta cells for the treatment of diabetes	Japan	Yokohama City University, Graduate School of Medicine	Assistant Professor, Jun Shirakawa
	Singapore	Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IMCB)	Principal Investigator, Adrian Kee Keong Teo