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Japan's GHIT Fund invests 97.4M yen in drug discovery project for TB

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This new project of the GHIT Target Research Platform aims to identify novel targets for TB drugs



The Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund, in Japan, has announced a total of approximately97.4 million yen ($ 0.88 million) to invest in a drug discovery project for tuberculosis (TB), which will be conducted by an academic partnership comprised of highly skilled experts in bacterial genetics, bacterial physiology, chemical biology, medicinal chemistry and pharmaceutical sciences in Japan and the United States.

This new project of the GHIT Target Research Platform aims to identify novel targets for TB drugs that can rapidly and strongly kill *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb) through two independent antimicrobial mechanisms (i.e., "dual-acting").

The consortium has already identified such dual-acting candidate genes and will characterize the candidate genes in vitro and in vivo by utilizing a newly developed gene silencing technology for Mtb: the mycobacterial CRISPR interference (CRISPRi) system.

At the completion of the project, they expect to identify promising drug target genes to move onto the next stage of drug development.

This awarded project was selected from a number of proposals to the RFP2020-002 for Target Research Platform, which was open for applications from June 2020 to January 2021. The GHIT board conducted in February 2021 approved this new investment.