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AZ announces collaborations to use CRISPR technology

30 January 2015 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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AstraZeneca (AZ) has announced four research collaborations aimed at harnessing the power of CRISPR, a pioneering genome-editing technique, across its entire discovery platform in the company's key therapeutic areas.

The technology will allow AZ to identify and validate new drug targets in preclinical models that closely resemble human disease. AZ will share cell lines and compounds with its partners and work with them to publish findings of its application of CRISPR technology in peer-reviewed journals, contributing to broader scientific progress in the field. The collaborations complement AZ's in-house CRISPR programme and will build on the company's 'open innovation' approach to research and development.

Dr Mene Pangalos, executive vice president, Innovative Medicines and Early Development, AZ, said, "CRISPR is a simple yet powerful tool that enables us to manipulate genes of potential importance in disease pathways and examine the impact of these modifications in a highly precise way. By combining the great science from our labs with these world-renowned academic and industry partners, we will be able to integrate this ground-breaking technology into our research and help accelerate the discovery of novel treatments for patients."

AZ research collaborations are with The Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Broad Institute/Whitehead Institute, and The Innovative Genomics Initiative.

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