

## **CiRA Foundation and the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult set to launch new stem cell collaborative research**

**The companies will combine their expertise to explore novel methods to characterize pluripotent stem cells for the manufacture of regenerative medicine products.**

**Kyoto, Japan and London, UK, 12 May 2020** – CiRA Foundation and the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult (CGT Catapult) are launching a new collaborative research project focused on induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell characterization. The project aims to further the application of iPS cell technologies for the manufacture of regenerative medicine products.

The potential of distinct iPS cell lines for differentiation into specific cell types, such as cardiac muscle cells or white blood cells, is usually biased toward some cell line-specificity which is very difficult to predict. In order to select an appropriate iPS cell line for clinical trials, it is currently necessary to differentiate several candidate cell lines, which requires a great amount of time and effort.

By combining their expertise, the companies will explore novel methods of evaluating cell differentiation and aim to establish reliable tests to predict the potential of iPS cell differentiation bias, a capability that would help to advance the use of iPS cells for regenerative medicine products.

### **Shinya Yamanaka, M.D., Ph.D., Representative Director, CiRA Foundation**

*“We are very pleased to start our first collaborative research project since the launch of CiRA\_F with Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, an institution whose world-class expertise in the cell therapy field is dedicated to the stimulation of partnership between academia and industry. We hope that results of this collaborative project aimed at the advancement of the clinical application of iPS cells will result in substantial progress towards commercialization of regenerative medicine.”*

### **Matthew Durdy, Chief Executive Officer, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult**

*“We are honoured to collaborate with CiRA Foundation, an organisation with world-leading capabilities in iPS cell technology, and to be the first group to utilize CiRA’s innovative iPS cell lines outside of Japan. This is a truly exciting project to help further the application and manufacture of iPS cells into cell therapies. We look forward to progressing this promising research together, which has potential benefits for the global advanced therapies industry.”*



The fourth from the left: Matthew Durdy, CEO, CGT Catapult  
Center: Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, Director, CiRA\_F

### **About CiRA Foundation**

The CiRA Foundation (CiRA\_F) is a public interest incorporated foundation that started its activities independently from Kyoto University in April 2020 with the principle of delivering optimal iPS cell technology at a reasonable price. CiRA\_F continues the iPS Cell Stock for Regenerative Medicine Project, started by the Kyoto University's Center for iPS Cell Research and Application (CiRA) since 2013. The aim of this project is to prepare multiple iPS cell lines, manufactured from healthy donors homozygous for human leukocyte antigen (HLA), which expands the number of people who can receive the cells in a therapy without a severe immune reaction, and provide them to academia or industries.

### **About the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult**

The Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult was established as an independent center of excellence to advance the growth of the UK cell and gene therapy industry, by bridging the gap between scientific research and full-scale commercialization. With more than 200 employees focusing on cell and gene therapy technologies, it works with partners in academia and industry to ensure these life-changing therapies can be developed for use in health services throughout the world. It offers leading-edge capability, technology and innovation to enable companies to take products into clinical trials and provide clinical, process development, manufacturing, regulatory, health economics and market access expertise. Its aim is to make

the UK the most compelling and logical choice for UK and international partners to develop and commercialize these advanced therapies. The Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult works with Innovate UK. For more information please visit [ct.catapult.org.uk](http://ct.catapult.org.uk) or visit <http://www.gov.uk/innovate-uk>.

---

Contacts;

Planning Promotion Office, CiRA Foundation (CiRA\_F)

TEL: 075-761-3363

Email: [promotion-g@cira-foundation.or.jp](mailto:promotion-g@cira-foundation.or.jp)

**FTI Consulting for the CGT Catapult:**

Michael Trace +44 (0) 203 319 5674 / [michael.trace@fticonsulting.com](mailto:michael.trace@fticonsulting.com)

George Kendrick +44 (0) 203 319 5674 / [george.kendrick@fticonsulting.com](mailto:george.kendrick@fticonsulting.com)