

## UCB's Antibody Technology Platform Access programme: A collaboration with the University of Oxford

UCB's core Antibody Discovery Platform represents a highly efficient method to sample a natural immune repertoire, and the application of automation to some of the early stages of the process has improved reproducibility, accelerated timelines and increased capacity.

In order to enhance its collaborative networks and to stimulate research for the academic community, UCB subsequently launched a 'Technology Platform Access' programme, offering researchers the opportunity to access

the platform to generate potential therapeutics or proof-of-concept tool reagents to further their research on potential antibody targets.

One of the first projects to enter the programme was a collaboration between two leading groups at the University of Oxford, one of UCB's long-standing academic partners: the research groups of Alain Townsend, Professor of Molecular Immunology at the Weatherall Institute; and Simon Draper, Professor of Immunology and Infectious Disease at the Jenner Institute.

“UCB is committed to increasing our collaborative networks to accelerate scientific discovery. The Ebola partnership with the University of Oxford demonstrates the potential of our Technology Platform Access programme to facilitate industry-academia interaction, generating tools and potential therapeutics to benefit patients suffering with severe disease.”

Dr Neil Weir, Head of Discovery Research, UCB NewMedicines™

“Gaining access to UCB's antibody discovery technology allowed us to investigate a broader spectrum of Ebola antibodies than would have previously been possible. By identifying a significant amount of antibodies we have been able to expand our research efforts, including sponsoring a PhD student, to try and identify a therapy for Ebola”

Professor Simon Draper, Professor of Immunology and Infectious Disease at University of Oxford

Following recent ebola virus outbreaks in West Africa, there has been considerable interest in generating new therapies, both vaccines and monoclonal antibody mixtures, directed against the ebola virus glycoprotein (EGP). UCB have been working with the teams at Oxford to produce large and diverse panels of anti-ebola virus neutralising antibodies.

Together more than 80 anti-EGP antibodies have been identified, from which a number of 'cocktails' are being tested with the help of Public Health England. The success of the project has led to further research into the discovery of antibodies which exhibit enhanced and

broader strain neutralisation activity. This is being explored as a joint Oxford-UCB PhD.

*For more information about the Technology Access Platform, visit: <http://www.ucb.com/our-science/our-science/tpap>*

*For more information about accessing equipment belonging to a pharmaceutical company, search "Equipment/Resources" in ABPI LINC: <https://www.linc.abpi.org.uk>*