

Gene Editing Automation Collaboration

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Oxford Genetics collaborates with Sphere Fluidics, the University of Edinburgh and Twist Bioscience to develop next-generation, microfluidic enabled gene editing workflows.



Oxford Genetics and Sphere Fluidics announce a multi-partner collaboration to expedite the development of automated microfluidic systems for rapid and high-throughput gene editing in mammalian cell lines.

Under the agreement, Sphere Fluidics will act as the lead partner, looking to utilise its extensive expertise in microfluidic systems to produce new products designed to meet the requirements of multiplexed gene editing workflows. Oxford Genetics and the University of Edinburgh will provide input into industrial and application specific requirements, both in relation to standard engineering approaches but also for more difficult host systems, including stems cells and primary cell lines, and in discovery contexts. Twist Bioscience will contribute DNA synthesis capabilities and required reagents for the project.

“Gene editing, particularly CRISPR technologies, have revolutionised the way scientists are able to engineer mammalian cells for a wide-variety of applications. While these technologies are highly efficient, there is a requirement to further optimise the way laboratories deliver the CRISPR tools to cells and interrogate the resultant products. By increasing throughput and reducing timelines in this area, this creates new avenues of research and commercial applications, from our ability to address complex genetics in basic biology to utilising big data to facilitate personalised medicine,” said Tom Payne, CSO at Oxford Genetics. This forms part of Oxford Genetics on-going commitment to automating laboratory processes and facilitating intelligent experimental design and data handling.

“We are very pleased to join forces with a company of the calibre of Oxford Genetics. They bring excellent expertise in cell biology, gene editing and workflow automation. We plan to develop a desktop system that will miniaturise and automate the genome editing of single cells. Such a product is highly innovative and will be disruptive in that sector. This system will enable scientists to easily perform automated genome editing and create new cell lines and valuable biomedical products,” said Frank F. Craig, CEO at Sphere Fluidics.

“This multi-partner collaboration brings together the incredible expertise of different organisations to fuel important and cutting-edge responsible research in the field of gene editing,” commented Emily M. Leproust, Ph.D., CEO of Twist Bioscience. “CRISPR holds tremendous promise to truly improve health and eliminate disease, and we are thrilled to support the scaling of these combined technologies to work toward improved health worldwide.”

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