

News Release

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MOST Trust-U Program achieved another great success A treatment on Alzheimer's disease shows promise

Taiwan's new drug in development targeting at billions of USD global market

MOST promotes the commercialization of professors' research and development (R&D) results and the establishment of high valuation startups by providing funding via Trust-U Program and liaising with industrial professionals and experts. One of the project teams, “Drug Development of Formulated Curcumin Derivatives for the Treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease”, led by Chair Professor Ih-Jen Su’s at Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology (STUST), adopts curcumin to develop a new treatment of Alzheimer's disease (AD). The new drug has the potential to become the first successful treatment of AD, which has the market potential of billions of USD. The project team will raise TWD120M with a startup company named “Merry Life Co., Ltd” (Merry Life). Merry Life plans to apply for Investigational New Drug (IND) in the United States as the strategy to enter global markets.

The great potential of curcumin drugs for AD’s treatments

The studies show that the causes of AD are extremely complicated and the previous and current treatments usually focused on single pathogenic mechanism, leading to the unsatisfactory outcomes. Since 2010, Professor Su and his team have worked on the development of AD biomarker platform, searched for potential

therapeutic drugs, and screened out 15 patented small molecule compounds of curcumin derivatives. The team, as a consequence, developed a new drug that can inhibit multiple AD pathogenic mechanisms, which attracted the international attention and interest.

The team was selected to be part of MOST's Trust-U Program in 2017, which helped to accelerate the development of new drug, complete the efficacy of new drugs, operation mechanism, pharmacokinetics, pharmacology and toxicology, etc. With the establishment of Merry Life, the company will continue to conduct clinical trials with the funding from investors in order to meet the milestones for new drug certification.

MOST comments that Taiwan has outstanding medical technologies and world class research talents, which attract the attention from international biotechnological and pharmaceutical giants. Trust-U Program recruits teams from universities with high commercial value and market potential, and accelerates the commercialization by liaising with industrial resources, potential investors and business professionals. As a result, Taiwan will become a global market player in the biomedical field.

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