

News release

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology chooses Hewlett Packard and KOOPrime as key technology partners to accelerate genomics and Chinese medicine research and discoveries

Hong Kong, September 4, 2006 – The Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (HKUST) announced today the setting-up of a Bio-informatics facility using HP's Proliant DL580 server with the Linux operating system and KOOPrime's integrated bio-software solutions. This shared facility will focus mainly on genomics and Chinese medicine research and discoveries.

Through this collaboration HKUST, HP and KOOPrime are coming together to address the requirements of important life science issues in Hong Kong and beyond.

With the declaration of the first draft sequence of the human genome in 2000, the three organizations have been pioneering development that are critical to the growth of the life sciences industry.

HKUST is strong in research dedicated to eliciting new knowledge on human diseases via genomics and bio-molecular development. Commercially, both HP and KOOPrime have been providing technological infrastructures that help accelerate applied research.

By forming a strong alliance, a comprehensive platform will be established to develop core competencies and to tap on resources and expertise within Hong Kong and beyond to meet its objectives. The facility aims to be the leading bioinformatics hub to accelerate scientific advancement in the application of genomics to Chinese medicine and various life science initiatives.

The HKH Bioinformatics Center serves the fundamental HKUST mission: "To advance learning and knowledge through teaching and research, and to assist in the economic and social development of Hong Kong."

MISSION STATEMENT

The facility with the state-of-art bioinformatics solutions coupled with research expertise will be a significant step to meet the growing demands in Hong Kong, China and beyond.

HP will provide scalable high-performance computing hardware initially with the HP Proliant DL580 compute server, and KOOPrime of Singapore will provide their integrated bio-software systems to HKUST for their applied research and development in TCM and genomics.

HKUST through their understanding of critical biomedical research issues will utilize the bio-informatics platform to enhance their research and extend their collaboration with mainland Chinese and international research institutions and enterprises.

Besides the opportunity to enhance the competitiveness of the life sciences industry, another significant objective of this collaboration will be to train and develop a talent pool that can help nurture creativeness and collaboration amongst the research institutions and industries in Hong Kong and beyond.

“KOOPrime provides informatics services and products that accelerate biomedical R&D for bioresearch, clinical and pharmaceutical organizations. Given our roots in natural products screening at Singapore, we have interest to leverage on HKH to further our competence in Chinese medicine. Together with HKUST and HP, KOOPrime aims to make Hong Kong a leading knowledge-based Chinese medicine hub across the region” said TeckSin Lim, CEO for KOOPrime.



Left to Right: Prof Hannah (HKUST), Dr Lionel Binns (HP), Prof Ronald (HKUST) and Mr Lim Teck Sin (KOOPrime) at the plaque relevation.

DIRECTIONS

The partnering organisations have extensive track records that have made significant scientific advancement in life sciences. They include

- Delivery of powerful computing platform to facilitate the sequencing of human genome (US, Celera)
- In-silico drug design for the delivery of cancer drugs (Switzerland)
- Building of a Haplotype Map of the Human Genome (Hong Kong, China, USA)
- SNP discoveries for schizophrenia (Hong Kong, Germany, Japan)
- High throughput screening systems for plants, marine organisms, bacteria (Singapore)
- Clinical data exchange for disease surveillance (Singapore)

These projects are delivered to comply with international standards and requirements for Good Laboratory Practice.

Some of the key areas that will be undertaken by HKH Bioinformatics Center will be as follows:

- Work closely with commercial TCM companies to lower the cost and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the manufacturing process. A proposed area of focus is in the application of molecular fingerprinting techniques that will facilitate and validate sample preparation, thus speeding the growth of the TCM sector into a high value-added industry that addresses up-and-coming manufacturing requirements from Hong Kong, China and beyond.
- Engage in niche studies of marine life that will facilitate drug discovery and development and widen the knowledge base of Chinese medicine through the expertise of the marine science researchers at HKUST.
- Share the results of interesting bioinformatics development, e.g. bio-domain driven classification systems that will allow more precise searching of bio-information.

The three partners will cooperate closely in the identification and execution of suitable projects and enlist other potential collaborators and industry partners. Such collaboration will facilitate project funding as well as the possible commercialization of exciting intellectual properties resulting from the research and development.

“HP is excited to be part of this meaningful collaboration with HKUST and KOOPrime to help develop Bio-informatics opportunities in this region. HKUST can now accelerate the pace of innovation in TCM research and Genomics discoveries through the powerful combination of HP’s proven computing solutions, KOOPrime’s integrated suite of bio-software and the research expertise in HKUST” said Lionel Binns, HP’s World-Wide Life Science Manager.

About HKUST

The Applied Genomics Laboratory of HKUST is a world leader in its discoveries in the genomics of schizophrenia, discoveries from Chinese medicinal herbs of agents for the potential treatment of anxiety, and fundamental advances in the evolution of the three living domains.

About KOOPrime

KOOPrime is the leading provider of IT services and products that address biomedical informatics requirements for biological research, pharmaceutical development and medical research purposes. Headquartered in Singapore, KOOPrime has business operations in Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, China, Norway, Sweden, US and Australia.

About HP

HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. The company’s offerings span IT infrastructure, global services, business and home computing, and imaging and printing. For the four fiscal quarters ended July 31, 2006, HP revenue totaled US\$90.0 billion. More information about HP (NYSE, Nasdaq: HPQ) is available at <http://www.hp.com>.