

February 21, 2024

Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

## **Ono Enters into a Drug Discovery Collaboration Agreement with EME Aiming at the Generation of Novel VHH Antibody Drugs**

Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (Osaka, Japan; President and CEO: Gyo Sagara; “Ono”) today announced that it has entered into a drug discovery collaboration agreement with Epsilon Molecular Engineering, INC (Saitama, Japan; President and CEO: Naoto Nemoto; “EME”), to generate novel VHH antibodies, aiming at the creation of innovative VHH antibody drugs.

Under the terms of this agreement, EME will obtain novel humanized VHH antibodies against multiple targets selected by Ono, by leveraging EME’s proprietary humanized VHH screening platform, “The Month”. Ono will conduct various tests to evaluate the activities (in vitro and in vivo assay) of humanized VHH antibodies obtained by EME to discover and develop antibody drug candidates.

Ono will hold option rights to exclusively develop and commercialize the antibody drug candidates generated through the collaboration worldwide. Ono will pay to EME an upfront payment, and milestone payments based on the progress of research and clinical development.

### **About EME’s VHH screening platform “The Month”**

“The Month” is a high throughput antibody screening platform based on cDNA display technology. By combining that with EME’s proprietary humanized VHH antibody artificial library, PharmaLogical® Library, EME can acquire a large number of VHH antibodies in about one month against tough targets that are difficult to obtain with conventional methods. This library has a vast size ranging from 10 trillion to 100 trillion and is specifically designed to reflect the structural features of VHH antibodies, demonstrating antigen recognition distinct from conventional antibodies.

### **About Epsilon Molecular Engineering, Inc.**

EME is a startup company that has been pioneering the development of innovative biomolecules based on evolutionary molecular engineering since 2016. Leveraging proprietary screening technologies and molecular design methods, EME engages in collaborative research activities primarily in the medical field, focusing on the development of next-generation antibody therapeutics, diagnostic agents, and regenerative medicine reagents. EME will create functional biomolecules essential for the society of tomorrow, contributing to the lives of many individuals.

Website : <https://www.epsilon-mol.co.jp/en/>

#### Contact

Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

Corporate Communications

[public\\_relations@ono-pharma.com](mailto:public_relations@ono-pharma.com)