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Ferrer Taps Hypha's Fungal Metabolites Library for Antimicrobial Compound Search

Firm claims library contains high proportion of novel small molecular weight compounds.

Spanish firm Ferrer Grupo is tapping into Hypha Discovery's MycoDiverse™ library in the search for low molecular weight natural products against microbial infections. Ferrer says Hypha's natural products expertise will represent an ideal fit with its own focus on the discovery of antimicrobials. "We expect this complementarity to be especially fruitful in the discovery of new niche antimicrobial cures, a therapeutic area to which Ferrer is highly committed," comments Antonio Guglietta, Ph.D., Ferrer's R&D director.

Hypha's MycoDiverse natural products screening library comprises a collection of low molecular weight fractions from the fermentation of higher temperate and tropical basidiomycetes and higher ascomycetes fungi, generated using a technology that stimulates the production of secondary metabolites and macromolecules. The library currently comprises about 10,000 refined fractions, with about 50% of the collection represented by novel structures, the firm claims. The average molecular of the compounds is about 200–400 da.

U.K.-based Hypha is leveraging its technologies and libraries through drug discovery collaborations and agreements, and also through services including the production of DMPK/degradation metabolites, contract fermentation, antibacterial/antifungal/antitumor bioassays, and small molecule purification and identification.

In May the firm joined the EU-funded Marine Fungi consortium, focused on the development of anticancer agents derived from marine organisms, including fungi sourced from habitats including tropical coral reefs and Mediterranean macroalgae and sponges. Hypha in addition has drug discovery collaborations ongoing with companies including Domainex and Evotec, and a partnership with European ScreeningPort, which aims to evaluate use of the MycoDiverse natural products library in ESP's in-house epigenetic target assay panel. ESP had previously been providing access to Hypha's MycoDiverse screening library to customers as part of its academic screening services business.