

**NEWS RELEASE****SOLASIA AND EDITFORCE ENTER INTO JOINT R&D AGREEMENT**

Tokyo and Fukuoka, December 26, 2019 - Solasia Pharma K.K. (TSE: 4597, Headquarters: Tokyo, President and CEO: Yoshihiro Arai, hereafter “Solasia”) and EditForce Inc. (Headquarters: Fukuoka, President and CEO: Takashi Ono, hereafter “EditForce”) announced today that the companies have entered into a joint R&D agreement to research and develop pharmaceutical drugs primarily in the field of oncology based on EditForce’s DNA/RNA editing technology.

Solasia and EditForce will design multiple projects (varying by the target disease, target gene sequence, and mechanism of action) based on RNA editing mainly in the oncology field, and through these projects, develop drugs utilizing the pentatricopeptide repeat (PPR) protein platform technology\*.

EditForce will grant Solasia a non-exclusive right to the intellectual property of its core technology and an option to claim exclusive rights to use the above mentioned projects; Solasia in turn will make an upfront payment as well as milestone payments based on the development progress of each project to EditForce. Solasia will have the option to exercise its exclusive rights when the applicable projects reach the pre-clinical study phase.

Solasia specializes in the development and commercialization of pharmaceuticals that address unmet medical needs primarily in the field of oncology. Solasia has already launched several drugs, and it is renowned for its clinical development capabilities. EditForce, on the other hand, is a startup company with a unique, proprietary DNA/RNA editing technology (PPR protein platform technology). Through collaborating with pharmaceutical companies, EditForce is working on R&D toward application of its technology in drug development.

Drawing on each other’s expertise, Solasia and EditForce will jointly design and carry out R&D of specific projects (varying by the target disease, target gene sequence, and mechanism of action) from the early R&D stage to clinical development. Through such joint efforts, the two companies agreed to work on enhancing each other’s drug discovery pipeline and improving efficiency of the R&D process.

Yoshihiro Arai, President and CEO of Solasia, commented as follows:

“EditForce has the globally leading and unique DNA/RNA editing technology, which is expected to enable a novel approach to drug discovery, targeting areas of unmet medical needs, primarily in the field of oncology. Solasia will continue to focus on in-licensing drug candidates that are in the early to late clinical development phases. However, the number of new drug candidates is limited, and there is no guarantee that we will always be able to in-license drug candidates of our choice. Technology has made remarkably rapid strides in recent years, and drug discovery based on these new technologies and findings is also taking place. We believe enhancing our chances of in-licensing new drug candidates in the future, rather than focusing solely on those available at present, is crucial for our long-term business growth; and hence, we have concluded the joint R&D agreement with EditForce. Through our joint R&D scheme, where EditForce will be in

charge of early stage R&D while Solasia leads clinical development of drug candidates that are expected to demonstrate effectiveness in clinical settings, each company will be able to make the best use of its respective strengths. In addition to increasing our chances of securing new drug candidates, we expect to strengthen and improve the efficiency of drug discovery and clinical development processes.”

Takashi Ono, President and CEO of EditForce, commented as follows:

“We have developed an innovative technology which we believe will contribute significantly to the development of pharmaceuticals. However, bringing a drug to market as a new product requires numerous steps. We believe collaborating with Solasia, which has extensive expertise in the processes leading up to drug launches, especially in oncology clinical development will help rapidly advance projects to the development stage; and hence, we have decided to enter into the joint R&D collaboration. Based on the agreement, we will work with Solasia on developing drugs with new modalities.”

## About Solasia

Solasia is a specialty pharmaceutical company based in Asia, with a mission of "Better Medicine for a Brighter Tomorrow". In order to address the unmet medical needs within the oncology area, we develop innovative medicines to contribute to the patient's healthy living and to provide treatment options for the healthcare providers.

For more information, please visit <https://www.solasia.co.jp/en/>

## About EditForce

Launched in Kyushu University, EditForce is a startup with a proprietary DNA/RNA editing technology known as PPR protein platform technology. With the vision of "New Tools Lead to a New World," the company contributes its PPR technology to a wide range of bio-related industries including medical, chemical, and agriculture through offering a new DNA/RNA manipulating tool.

For more information, please visit <https://www.editforce.co.jp/en/>

## \*Pentatricopeptide repeat (PPR) protein platform technology

PPR is a protein that was discovered in plants, which regulates the gene expression by binding RNA or DNA in a sequence-specific manner. PPR proteins are also found in humans and yeasts, and they have similar functions to those of plants. Dr. Takahiro Nakamura (associate professor, Kyushu University, and director of EditForce) and Dr. Yusuke Yagi (director of EditForce) focused on the PPR proteins and elucidated the recognition mode of RNA/DNA by PPR proteins. This elucidation paves the way to a new technology for the rational design of artificial PPR proteins targeted to specific RNA/DNA sequences. Versatile DNA/RNA editing tools can be created by integrating the PPR protein with various enzymes.

For details, please see <https://www.editforce.co.jp/en/ppr/>

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