

# ULLA Grant Report

**Name:** Zhaosha Li

**Name of home university/department:**

Division of Medical Pharmacology; Leiden/Amsterdam Center for Drug Research (LACDR); Leiden University

**Name of host university/department:**

Department of Pharmacy; Faculty of Pharmacy; Uppsala University

**Grant ID number:** 2007-3

**Period of stay at the host institution:** February 2007 – July 2007

## 1. About study in Uppsala University

As a student in MSc programme Bio-Pharmaceutical Sciences in Leiden University, the Netherlands, I have performed the research project “Functional characterization and inhibition study of genetic variants of human organic cation transporter hOCT1” from February to July 2007 under the Socrates/Erasmus programme in Faculty of Pharmacy, Uppsala University, Sweden, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Per Artursson and PhD student Gustav Ahlin.

In the first 3 weeks after I came into this lab, I learnt the basic techniques rapidly (e.g. cell culture, transporter activity array, kinetic measurement, handling of workstation, etc.). I read lots of articles and reviews, and sorted out a table indicating all compounds (substrates and inhibitors) which interact with hOCT1. I've done a lot of work to perform this project, from pilot assays in the beginning, to the uptake/kinetic measurements and inhibition study of therapeutic drugs. Throughout the project I've kept my experiment progress sticking to time schedule pretty well. From the investigation, I obtained a lot of reliable data, which would be useful for the following studies on this topic. After finishing all experiments, I started analyzing data, writing thesis and pointing out promising clinical implications of this study. To conclude, I've learnt important techniques to work with cell line cultures and modern liquid robotics systems for in vitro transporter study. Both my supervisors and I are satisfied with my accomplishment in this research project, and Prof. Dr. Per Artursson wrote a good recommendation letter for me.

During this project period, my supervisor Gustav Ahlin has taught me a lot. I appreciate all the great instructions and supervision he gave me during my project, and also his great help and support on my study in the six-month time, without which I would not have succeeded in this project. Besides, Prof. Dr. Per Artursson also gave me many precious suggestions on experimental strategies. I'm very grateful for all of these.

## 2. About life in Uppsala

I came to Uppsala University (UU) because I wanted to get to know Scandinavia, the so-called “most happy and peaceful region” in the world. Having just heard that Volvo and IKEA are from Sweden, I never knew anything else about Sweden. I figured I would come here to explore it by myself. Plus, Faculty of Pharmacy in UU is quite reputed in the world. So, I chose it here. My first impression of Sweden was the cold weather and long nights in winter, since I arrived in January. And the expensive standard of living in Sweden also impressed me a lot in the first days, which turned the cheapest supermarket Netto into a shining beacon of hope for my life here. But after several weeks, I got used to it and started to enjoy Uppsala. It's really a pretty and cute city, small in size, but big in events and activities. I walked around the city, “fika” with friends, and joined many trips organized by pharmaceutical student union. Plus, I joined the Stockholm Nation in Uppsala University, and experienced the typical Swedish “gasque” and the exciting “alcohol culture” in nation pubs, which I've never experienced before. Meanwhile, I took a Basic Swedish course for exchange students, and learnt some important Swedish words, such as “rea” (=discount), “öl” (=beer), and “tack så mycket” (=thank you). People here are very polite and organized, quite reflective and introverted, which is just to my taste. I like Swedish attitude towards life, which is calm, kind and grateful. In the past 6 months, I've met tons of new friends, both Swedish and international friends from all corners of the world. We had much fun together. “Happiness is not something you experience; it's something you remember.” (by O.Levant, Ameican pianist). Uppsala experience is just such happiness from which I've got so much to remember and cherish for life, like the laughing moments, touching moments, and the friendship I've met. I've really enjoyed myself a lot in Uppsala, and I love this quiet but cute university town. I will never forget this 6-month great experience in Uppsala.

## 3. About financial status in the exchange period

Brief financial report from February 2007 to July 2007 in Uppsala, Sweden

**Grants received:** 960 EUROS

### **Expenditures:**

Flight: about 1300 SEK (one-way; Stockholm-Amsterdam) \* 2 = 2600 SEK

Accommodation rent: 2700 SEK/month \* 6 months = 16200 SEK

Transportation: Second-hand bike, bus fare.

Books: 200 SEK

Other expenditures: Food, daily necessities, cell phone bill, post fee, etc.