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Korea's SK Biopharmaceuticals eyes innovative small protein-based radiopharmaceuticals

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SK Biopharmaceuticals, ProEn Therapeutics aim to advance up to 2 preclinical radiopharmaceutical candidates by 2027

SK Biopharmaceuticals, a biotech company focusing on the research, development and commercialisation of treatments for disorders of the central nervous system and oncology worldwide, has announced a research collaboration agreement with Korean startup ProEn Therapeutics, to further extend its oncology research capability and expand its pipeline of radiopharmaceutical therapies (RPT).

Under this agreement, both sides seek to advance up to two preclinical candidates for the development of novel radiopharmaceutical drugs by 2027 – the year when SK Biopharmaceuticals aims to become a global leading RPT player, via strengthened internal and external resources.

This joint research builds on a series of SK Biopharmaceuticals' global strategic partnerships, including the in-licensing of a radiopharmaceutical compound, and a supply agreement to secure actinium-225, an alpha-particle emitting radioisotope, since the company unveiled its "RPT Roadmap" to gain a competitive edge in the rapidly growing field of nuclear medicine.

SK Biopharmaceuticals will leverage ProEn Therapeutics' ArtBody platform, a dual-target binding technology that incorporates small proteins to identify and target specific tumour antigens, enhancing tumour selectivity, for the development of potential cancer treatments, while minimising damage to healthy tissues. ArtBody, which has intrinsic advantages of high stability and structural robustness, can be mass-produced using bacteria, making it ideal for industrial applications.