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Singapore: French drug maker Sanofi recently announced the opening of its first research hub in Asia in Shanghai, China. Sanofi's fifth big R&D hub aims to integrate work being done on biopharmaceuticals, rare diseases, vaccines, and animal health.

The new research center will create 1,400 jobs integrating Sanofi's existing expertise in lifesciences from 12 countries in the region. Dr Jiang Ningjun, president of Sanofi's Asia R&D headquarters, said, "The new facility would allow the company to be more flexible and strengthen its regional links with external research partners."

Sanofi also announced that it will be working with the GPCR Institute on new diabetes "breakthroughs" and also collaborate with ZAI Lab on respiratory ailments. Mr Frank Jiang, VP, head of the Asia-Pacific R&D hub, told Shangai Daily, "Asia Pacific is home to a wide spectrum of healthcare needs and we are excited to enhance our ability to capture opportunities and to respond to the changing market demands."

Sanofi already has 50 collaborative projects in the Asia Pacific region and the company plans to take advantage of the lucrative Chinese market by introducingÃ?Â novel and innovative drugs.