

# Sophic

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## Press Release

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### **Sophic Wins NIH-NCI Phase I SBIR Award To Develop a Cancer Biomarker Knowledge-Base Prototype**

November 11, 2008, Falmouth, MA: Today, Sophic announced the company has received a NIH-NCI Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) Phase I Award funding the development of a cancer Integrated Biomarker Knowledge-Base (IBK) prototype. During the six-month Phase I project, Sophic scientists will analyze sample NCI databases, identify biomarker common data elements and design a cancer Biomarker Object model with controlled vocabularies. The Biomarker Object will become the backbone for integrating the numerous disparate global biomarker databases into one Integrated Biomarker Knowledge-Base.

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program is intended to insure that the nation's small, high-tech, innovative businesses are a significant part of the federal government's research and development efforts. Sophic participated in a competitive process with other small businesses who submitted proposals to perform the Biomarker Research and Development Project. After a detailed peer review by teams of scientists, Sophic won the Phase I Award to proceed with the study and development of the Biomarker Knowledge-Base prototype.

"The cancer research community uses biomarker information for a variety of applications. Unfortunately this information is unstructured and scattered around the world in many databases," said Pat Blake, CEO of Sophic. "Because there is no single cancer biomarker repository, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for researchers to efficiently and effectively use valuable biomarker information. Our goal is to provide cancer researchers and physicians a comprehensive, high quality, up-to-date, single source for all public information on cancer biomarkers. This Knowledge-Base will support translational medicine, as well as the discovery, development and implementation of early detection tests and help find potential "targets" for cancer drugs. Scientists from government, academic institutions, commercial biotechs, pharmaceutical companies and hospitals will be able to access integrated biomarker information stored and maintained in the IBK."

Dr. Richard Zhang, Sophic's Principal Investigator for the project, said: "Structure, quality and accuracy vary widely in public biomarker databases around the world. Our first step is to evaluate sample NCI databases to gain insight into the best way to mine these disparate databases. The scientific elements in these databases will help us identify common data elements and controlled vocabulary terms that will be included in the first version of the Biomarker Object model. This model will then provide the key for extracting information from global biomarker databases for inclusion in the central cancer IBK."

NCI's SBIR Project Officer, MDs and Principal Investigators from the Center for Cancer Research (CCR), and researchers from other institutes will mentor the Sophic project team through the development and commercialization process. "We will rely on our team's breadth and depth of cancer knowledge in

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defining the cancer Biomarker Object. Close collaboration with the cancer community will help us design and deliver a valuable resource for Oncologists," said Dr. Zhang.

Sophic is an integrator of Biomax Enterprise Knowledge Management Software developed in Martinsried, Germany. The Sophic project team will use the Biomax linguistic, database integration and knowledge management tools as a single user interface. When the project is completed, IBK will be delivered to NCI researchers as an addition to the current configuration of the Integrated Common Knowledge Environment implemented by Sophic at NCI's Center for Cancer Research.

"We are excited about this opportunity to perform the IBK study, build a successful prototype, and participate in the SBIR Program," said Pat Blake. "The cancer Integrated Biomarker Knowledge-Base project expands our complex disease strategy to support research and help find cures for cancer, cardiovascular, diabetes, Alzheimer's, HIV and other deadly diseases."

"100% of this \$150,000 project has been funded with Federal Funds from the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, under Contract No. HHSN261200800041C."

**About Sophic:** Sophic Systems Alliance Inc. (Falmouth, MA and Rockville, MD) is life science software and services integrator founded in 1993. The company provides a broad range of software and services to research scientists and MDs in government, commercial and medical sectors. Sophic's cancer-related projects include the NCI Cancer Gene Index Project, now in the fifth year, the cancer ATLAS project focused on brain, ovarian and lung cancer, and the implementation of Biomax software at NCI to deliver the CCR Integrated Common Knowledge Environment. Sophic's strategy is to focus on supporting research to fight complex diseases including cancer, cardiovascular, diabetes, Alzheimer's and HIV. Additional information about Sophic can be found on the World Wide Web at [www.sophicalliance.com](http://www.sophicalliance.com).

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