

Ludwig Oxford scientist Skirmantas Kriaucionis receives £390,000 research grant from the BBSRC

November 30, 2014 - Congratulations to Ludwig Oxford's Skirmantas Kriaucionis, who received a £390,000 research grant from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). The BBSRC is a British government agency that supports scientists and students across the UK.

Kriaucionis' studies chemical modifications made to DNA that control the expression of genes and play a critical role in everything from embryonic development to cancer. One such modification, 5-methylcytosine (5mC), tends to silence the expression of genes. It also appears to be associated with high rates of DNA mutation, which is linked to aging and many diseases, including cancer. This grant will support Kriaucionis' ongoing study of 5-hydroxymethylcytosine, a new kind of DNA modification discovered by his laboratory. He will be evaluating whether the presence of this modification alters the mutability of DNA in any way, and whether or not its occurrence corresponds with mutational hotspots in the genomes of cancer cells.