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**The Derek Tan Lab**

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Derek Tan, PhD

Chair, Chemical Biology Program, SKI; Tri-Institutional Professor; Eugene W. Kettering Chair

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The identification of small-molecule probes and therapeutic lead compounds to address novel biological targets is a significant current challenge in chemical biology and drug discovery. We are engaged in a two-pronged approach to this problem involving diversity-oriented synthesis and rational design as complementary approaches to ligand discovery. Our work in both of these areas is influenced at multiple levels by insights from natural products. At the core of these efforts is the development of new chemical methodologies to provide flexible, efficient, systematic access to these structures. We leverage multidisciplinary collaborations with biologists to evaluate these

molecules to probe key biological processes and to explore new therapeutic opportunities in cancer and infectious diseases. Our group is strongly committed to promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels and welcomes scientists from all backgrounds!

[View Lab Overview \(https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/labs/derek-tan/overview\)](https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/labs/derek-tan/overview)

## Research Projects

- [Research Projects](#)

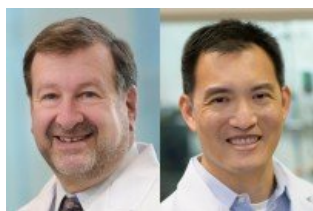
VIDEO | 02:08

Go inside the lab of Derek Tan from SKI's Chemical Biology Program.

[Video Details \(https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/research/meet-derek-tan-lab\)](https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/research/meet-derek-tan-lab)



## Featured News



### [Sloan Kettering Institute Scientists Retool CAR T Cells to Serve as 'Micropharmacies' for Cancer Drugs](#)

These souped-up versions may help overcome some limitations of existing CAR T cells.



### [Science Spotlight: Experience the Drug Discovery Journey with Derek Tan, PhD](#)

The June 15 edition of "MSK Science Spotlight," features Derek Tan, PhD discussing "A Drug Discovery Journey from Tuberculosis to Cancer."



IN THE LAB

### [New Chemical Biology Program Brings Power of Chemistry to Biomedical Research](#)

A new Sloan Kettering Institute program will enhance the use of chemical principles to investigate biological processes.

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## Publications Highlights

Structural basis for transthiolation intermediates in the ubiquitin pathway.

Kochańczyk, T.; Hann, Z. S.; Lux, M. C.; Delos Reyes, A. M. V.; Ji, C.; Tan, D. S.\* ; Lima, C. D.\* *Nature* 2024, 633, 216–223.

[ [Abstract](#) | [PubMed](#) | [PMC](#) ]

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Activation of *N*-formyldipeptide-masked prodrugs by human peptide deformylase.

Geißen, R.; Yildirim, O.; Köhn, M.; Scheinberg, D. A.; Tan, D. S.\* *ACS Chem. Biol.* 2025, 2171–2179.

[ [Abstract](#) | [PubMed](#) | [PMC](#) ]

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## People

## Derek Tan, PhD

*Chair, Chemical Biology Program, SKI; Tri-Institutional Professor; Eugene W. Kettering Chair*

- Derek Tan's lab studies diversity-oriented synthesis and rational drug design of probes and lead compounds for chemical biology and drug discovery.
- BS, Stanford University
- PhD, Harvard University

✉ [tand@mskcc.org](mailto:tand@mskcc.org)

Email Address

↓ [Download CV](#)

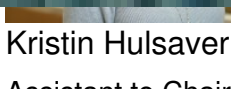
PDF File

## Members

Lab  
Alumni



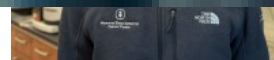
Derek Tan  
Member and Lab Head



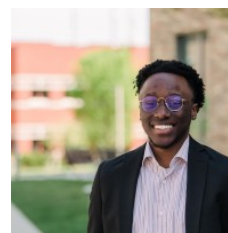
Kristin Hulsaver  
Assistant to Chair



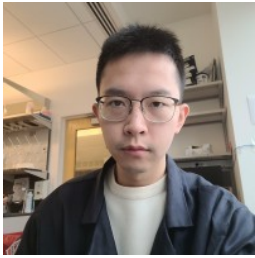
Yaritza Molina  
Administrative Assistant



Christian Cook  
Research Technician



Elijah Mugabe  
Graduate Student



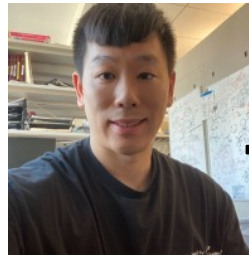
Peijing Jia  
Postdoctoral Fellow



Christopher Nieves-Escobar  
Graduate Student



Pooja Pandya  
Graduate Student



Kun Ho Park  
Postdoctoral Fellow

## Lab Affiliations

## Achievements

- Development of salicyl-AMS, a novel antibacterial agent to treat tuberculosis and other infections

- Louise and Allston Boyer Young Investigator Award for Basic Research, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (2010)



Niklas Rauscher  
Postdoctoral Fellow



Elizabeth Sisko  
Postdoctoral Fellow

- Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring, Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences (2013)

## Open Positions

To learn more about available postdoctoral opportunities, please visit our [Career Center](#)

To learn more about compensation and benefits for postdoctoral researchers at MSK, please visit [Resources for Postdocs](#)

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## Career Opportunities

Training opportunities in the Tan lab.

[Apply now \(https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/labs/derek-tan/career-opportunities\)](https://www.mskcc.org/research/ski/labs/derek-tan/career-opportunities)

## Get in Touch

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Lab Head Email

☎ [646-888-2228](tel:646-888-2228)

Lab Phone

# Disclosures

Members of the MSK Community often work with pharmaceutical, device, biotechnology, and life sciences companies, and other organizations outside of MSK, to find safe and effective cancer treatments, to improve patient care, and to educate the health care community. These activities outside of MSK further our mission, provide productive collaborations, and promote the practical application of scientific discoveries.

MSK requires doctors, faculty members, and leaders to report (“disclose”) the relationships and financial interests they have with external entities. As a commitment to transparency with our community, we make that information available to the public. Not all disclosed interests and relationships present conflicts of interest. MSK reviews all disclosed interests and relationships to assess whether a conflict of interest exists and whether formal COI management is needed.

Derek Tan discloses the following relationships and financial interests:

- **Adjuvance Technologies**  
Intellectual Property Rights
- **Aflac Inc.**  
Equity
- **Amgen**  
Equity
- **Bristol-Myers Squibb**  
Equity
- **CVS Caremark Corp**  
Equity
- **Institute for Research in Biomedicine Barcelona**  
Professional Services and Activities
- **Medtronic**  
Equity
- **Merck & Co Inc.**  
Equity
- **Moderna, Inc.**  
Equity
- **Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.**  
Equity
- **Research Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (CeMM)**  
Professional Services and Activities

- Solventum Corporation  
Equity
- Tri-Institutional Therapeutics Discovery Institute  
Fiduciary Role / Position
- UnitedHealth Group  
Equity

The information published here is a complement to other publicly reported data and is for a specific annual disclosure period. There may be differences between information on this and other public sites as a result of different reporting periods and/or the various ways relationships and financial interests are categorized by organizations that publish such data.

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This page and data include information for a specific MSK annual disclosure period (January 1, 2024 through disclosure submission in spring 2025). This data reflects interests that may or may not still exist. This data is updated annually.

Learn more about MSK's COI policies [here](#) . For questions regarding MSK's COI-related policies and procedures, email MSK's Compliance Office at [ecoi@mskcc.org](mailto:ecoi@mskcc.org) .

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