

Sidhu Chaudhuri

At Sterling, our highly experienced team members and their passion for what they do are central to who we are. This month, we spoke with Sidhu Chaudhuri, Director of Chemistry R&D at Sterling, about his role and the comprehensive early phase research and development services available through Sterling's Cary site.

Can you briefly describe your background and current role at Sterling?

I earned my PhD in Synthetic Organic Chemistry from the National Chemical Laboratory in Pune, India. This provided me a very strong background in chemistry, as I focused on total synthesis of a variety of molecules. I then performed post-doctoral research with the Natural Products and Glycotechnology Research Institute, which is associated with NC State University and Duke University. There, I focused on carbohydrate-based vaccines, glycosidation, and synthesis of oligosaccharides. Afterwards, I joined CiVentiChem in North Carolina, which was acquired by Sterling in 2019, as a Lead Scientist. In this role, I gained significant experience beyond carbohydrate chemistry, including in purification, GMP synthesis and analytical techniques.

Today, I am the Director of Chemistry R&D for Sterling's Cary site. In my current position, I manage a team that handles the synthesis of biologically active small molecules, including GMP synthesis, impurity synthesis and more. My role involves a lot of collaboration within our team to solve complex challenges for our customers. I really enjoy being a part of the Sterling family and working to provide our customers excellent service.

What types of projects do you support in your role?

One of the reasons that I enjoy my role so much is that it has given me the ability to work with a variety of different types of projects, chemistries and customers. I encounter many different project challenges in my role, and my background working across a range of different chemistry fields is quite useful in this regard. I find the day-to-day of my role quite exciting for this reason, as I have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the team to overcome new and complex challenges.

A lot of customers come to us after attempting a particular synthesis without success, either internally or with a different partner. These tend to be highly complex projects that may involve things like carbohydrate chemistry, nucleosides chemistry, aromatic chemistry and others. Many of these projects don't have a lot of literature or background information to draw from, so it is up to our team to get as much information as possible from the customer and work to successfully synthesise the product from there.



Fast Facts

ROLE

Director, Chemistry R&D

JOINED STERLING

February 2010

EDUCATION

PhD in Synthetic Organic Chemistry, National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, India

SPECIALISATIONS

Research and development, nucleosides chemistry, carbohydrate chemistry, synthetic organic chemistry, cGMP manufacturing, drug development

Because no two of these projects are alike and we generally have limited background information, synthesis can be quite challenging. One key example is carbohydrate chemistry. This field is very promising in cancer treatment, COVID-19 therapeutics, and other areas. However, the carbohydrate molecule itself is quite difficult to handle and requires specialisation in that particular field. This is just one example in which our team's expertise spanning a variety of chemistry fields proves to be extremely valuable.

Can you elaborate on the importance of collaboration in your role?

Collaboration is critical in overcoming complex challenges, both externally with customers and within our internal team at Cary.

As far as customer collaboration, it's important for us to maintain consistent communication to gain a strong understanding of the project and its requirements, especially given that many of these challenges are ones we haven't encountered before. We are focused on delivering full transparency throughout the entire project, including if any unanticipated issues arise, so that our customers maintain complete visibility at all times.

Internal collaboration is equally important. We ensure that every department, from analytical, to quality control, to synthesis, to management, is closely aligned in order to maximise project success for our customers. As I mentioned, our team's background spanning a variety of technical areas is extremely useful when we work together to overcome customer challenges. In addition, our entire team meets several times a week to align on projects and ensure that everyone has a clear picture of what the next few days have in store.

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What plans are in store for the Cary site?

The Cary site continues to expand our capacity to support an even broader range of projects. The site was quite small prior to the acquisition in 2019. Since then, we've doubled the size of our team, and we continue to grow by adding new laboratories

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and team members. We've also been focused on enhancing safety measures in order to protect our team members when handling hazardous compounds.

We continue working to bring new customers in, and develop strong, lasting partnerships with our existing customers. We aim to be a trusted partner that pharmaceutical and biotechnology organisations want to work with again and again. By expanding our capabilities and expertise, we instill confidence in our customers that helps us achieve this goal.

Why should a customer work with Sterling for early phase projects?

One of the main reasons customers choose to work with us is a key differentiator I've already mentioned—our team's expertise across different fields of chemistry. We are really leading the way in carbohydrate chemistry, nucleosides chemistry, and others, and our experience and success rate are extremely appealing from a customer's perspective. We can handle highly complex chemistry challenges while putting quality first and adhering to deadlines.

Another key reason customers choose to work with us is one that holds true across each Sterling site; and that is our commitment to partnership and collaboration. We always put our customers first, and we are completely transparent with them throughout every project. This level of responsiveness and honesty, both through challenges and successes, enables us to serve as a trusted partner to each of our customers. At the end of the day, that is truly what sets us apart.



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