This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Assays & screens			
Fluorescent sensor for γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA) and GABA receptor ligands	A fluorescent sensor could be useful for measuring concentrations of GABA and GABA receptor ligands on the cell surface. The sensor system uses a fluorescent fusion protein of a GABA-binding protein and a synthetic ligand that competes with GABA binding to its receptor. The sensor system measured micromolar to millimolar GABA concentrations on the surface of a cultured mammalian cell line. Next steps include determining whether the sensor system can measure GABA concentrations in neural synapses. <i>SciBX</i> 5(44); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.1169 Published online Nov. 8, 2012	Patent application filed covering technology used in the sensor system; licensed to New England Biolabs Inc.	Masharina, A. <i>et al.</i> <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> ; published online Oct. 24, 2012; doi:10.1021/ja306320s Contact: Kai Johnsson, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland e-mail: kai.johnsson@epfl.ch