

DANIOLABS EVALUATING ANABOLICS FOR THE PROSKELIA AND BIOXELL BONE PROGRAM

THE EFFECTS OF VITAMIN D3 ANALOGUES ON BONE MINERALISATION

Cambridge, UK, Romainville France, Milan Italy 15th March 2004... DanioLabs Ltd, the therapeutics company which models human disease through its zebrafish platform, will support the recently announced collaboration between ProSkelia SAS, the French based independent European biopharmaceutical company spun-off from Aventis, and BioXell, the Italian biopharmaceutical company spun-out from Roche, to identify new vitamin D3 analogues. Under this revenue generating agreement, DanioLabs will initiate a pilot programme to evaluate a number of vitamin D3 analogues for the treatment of osteoporosis (OP). DanioLabs will use its proprietary models of osteoporosis and bone anabolism to screen compounds selected within the Proskelia-BioXell collaboration that are believed to have an effect on bone mineralization.

DanioLabs is a therapeutics company that has created a cost effective, high-throughput, *in vivo* model of osteoporosis and bone anabolism using the zebrafish that has been shown to have clinical, pathological and biological relevance to the human disease. The company has also developed a number of other proprietary models of disease including, inflammatory bowel disease, epilepsy, ophthalmic and neurodegenerative diseases.

Derek Jones, Chief Operating Officer of DanioLabs, said, "We are delighted to be working with ProSkelia and BioXell, two recognized biopharmaceutical companies, with significant expertise in their field. Our model of osteoporosis is unique in that it is able to provide a high-throughput readout of bone effects using tiny amounts of compound in 96 well assay format in a *in vivo* model of disease."

Dr Roland Baron, founder and CSO of ProSkelia added, "The support of DanioLabs should significantly accelerate the identification of new vitamin D3 analogues of interest in osteoporosis. We think that going through very early *in-vivo* screening using DanioLabs zebrafish platform should allow to better bridge traditional *in-vitro* screening with regulatory approved *in-vivo* models".

Osteoporosis

In the field of bone diseases, osteoporosis is the most important pathology. With more than 50 million women affected in western countries, osteoporosis is one of the major worldwide health issues of the 21st century. It is recognized clinically by characteristic fractures that occur when abnormally fragile bone is subjected to relatively mild trauma. Osteoporosis is associated with increased mortality and morbidity: for example, women with vertebral fractures have an increased risk of death due to cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases.

Notes to Editors

About DanioLabs Ltd

DanioLabs is a therapeutics company that uses its world leading phenotype driven drug discovery technologies to identify novel treatments for a variety of human diseases. A major part of the DanioLabs' platform involves the use of zebrafish as an experimental species. Using these models, the company is able to identify activity of experimental compounds, and to provide the additional evidence relevant to the treatment of the disease needed to progress such compounds cost-effectively through the drug development process.

DanioLabs build high-throughput disease models that allow 96 well plate format in vivo screening. As well as working with partners to develop new models in a variety of disease areas and to undertake screening campaigns, the company also uses their systems to identify their own novel therapeutics in the specific areas of ophthalmology and neurological disease. As well as identifying novel use opportunities, the Company is also developing chemistry around interesting novel targets. For more information on DanioLabs Ltd, please see www.daniolabs.com

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About Proskelia:

ProSkelia is an independent European biopharmaceutical company spun-off from Aventis in July 2002 and focused on bone and hormone disorders. The company's scientific expertise in the diseases of the skeleton and woman's health, coupled with its integrated cutting-edge pharma technologies, gives it a unique ability to undertake research and development in these two inter-related fields. ProSkelia's big pharma heritage is evident in both the qualities and capabilities of its teams and its pipeline. With three compounds in development for four indications, and 10 pre-clinical programmes, ProSkelia is well positioned for future in- and out-licensing opportunities to grow its business. ProSkelia is backed by two major investors, Aventis SA and Warburg Pincus and was the biotechnology sector's largest private equity investment in 2002. Based in Romainville, a suburb of Paris, France, ProSkelia employs about 100 people. More information on ProSkelia can be found on our site www.proskelia.com

About BioXell:

BioXell is a private biopharmaceutical company focusing on the discovery and development of new treatments for urological disorders. Through its proprietary technology platform based on Vitamin D3 analogues, BioXell has identified a number of promising lead development programmes. Its pipeline includes BXL-628 for benign prostatic hyperplasia - currently in Phase II trials - as well as compounds to treat overactive bladder and other major urological indications. Furthermore, through its unique understanding of the inflammatory process and knowledge of GPCRs and TREM receptor biology, BioXell is undertaking a number of cutting-edge research projects to identify small molecule antagonists and biologicals. These projects are being undertaken in collaboration with TaiGen BioTechnology and Zambon Group to identify treatments for chronic inflammatory diseases. In order to further exploit its Vitamin D3 platform, BioXell is also collaborating with Proskelia to develop drug candidates to cure osteoporosis and secondary hyperparathyroidism. To date, BioXell has raised over € 39 million through world-class specialised health-care VC investors including MPM Capital, Index Ventures, NIB Capital Private Equity and Life Sciences Partners together with a € 7.3 million Government fund from the Italian Research Ministry (MIUR). BioXell currently employs 50 people and has sites in Milan, Italy and Nutley, NJ, USA. More information on BioXell can be found on www.bioxell.com