



CENIX BIOSCIENCE Announces Collaboration with Bayer HealthCare AG to Discover and Validate Novel Therapeutic Targets using Genomic High Throughput RNAi in Human Cells

Dresden, Germany, December 15, 2003 – Cenix BioScience GmbH (Dresden) today announced a research collaboration with Bayer HealthCare AG (Leverkusen) to rapidly screen through all known human druggable genes using RNA interference (RNAi) to identify and validate new therapeutic drug targets for several disease indications. Using cell-based assays co-developed with Bayer research teams in Wuppertal (Germany) and West Haven (USA), Cenix will apply its proprietary genome-based high throughput (HT) RNAi screening platform over 6,000 genes in less than 9 months.

“Having launched these HT-RNAi research offerings only this summer after years of careful R&D, we have been particularly gratified by the overwhelming market interest, of which this agreement represents a first, important milestone” said Dr Echeverri, CEO and CSO of Cenix BioScience GmbH.

The project will make use of the genome-wide library of siRNA molecules designed by Cenix using its industry-leading algorithms and produced by Ambion, Inc. (Austin, TX, USA). Under the deal, Cenix will receive upfront payments and research funding, and is eligible for downstream milestone payments. Bayer will have the option to obtain all rights to new intellectual property generated by the project.

Cenix BioScience GmbH

Cenix BioScience GmbH is a pioneering leader in genome-based high throughput (HT) applications of RNA-mediated interference (RNAi) for the discovery and validation of new therapeutic drug targets. Founded in 1999 as the first biotechnology company specializing exclusively in HT-RNAi, Cenix has accumulated unparalleled depth and breadth of experience in this field, combining high content phenotypic analyses with proprietary genome-wide RNAi libraries for use in key experimental systems including human cells, *Drosophila* and *C. elegans*. Cenix is now making its unique expertise accessible to industry and academic researchers through fully customized research service offerings. Please contact Cenix or visit the company's web site www.cenix-bioscience.com for more information.

Bayer HealthCare AG

Bayer HealthCare AG, a subgroup of Bayer AG, with sales of approximately 9,4 billion Euro in 2002, is one of the world's leading, innovative companies in the health care and medical products industry. The company combines the global activities of the divisions Animal Health, Biological Products, Consumer Care, Diagnostics and Pharmaceuticals. More than 34,000 people are employed by Bayer HealthCare worldwide. Our aim is to discover and manufacture innovative products that will improve human and animal health worldwide. Our products enhance well-being and quality of life by diagnosing, preventing and treating disease.

RNA interference (RNAi)

RNA interference (RNAi) is a powerful new approach for achieving targeted silencing of genes of therapeutic interest using double stranded RNA (dsRNA) as the triggering agent. Discovered in 1998, this technology has been shown to work in a wide range of animal models, and was voted the top scientific achievement of 2002 by Science Magazine. RNAi is a naturally occurring, highly catalytic gene regulation system, thought to have evolved partly as a defence mechanism against

molecular pathogens. Used as a research tool and potential therapeutic, RNAi offers an unprecedented combination of:

- High potency, specificity and scalability,
- Wide cross species applicability,
- Excellent experimental reproducibility.

As a result, RNAi has rapidly become the new method of choice, replacing conventional antisense and ribozyme technologies, to determine gene functions for a wide range of biomedical applications. Its genome-scale application arguably offers the best tool available to date for realizing the full promise of the Human Genome Project.

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