



Cenix BioScience Publishes Comprehensive Genome-Wide RNAi Screen of *C. elegans* Cell Division Genes and Releases Full Dataset Online

Dresden, Germany, March 24, 2005 – Cenix BioScience GmbH (Dresden), the leading specialist in advanced RNA interference (RNAi)-based research services, announced the publication of its genome-wide RNAi screen for cell division genes in *C. elegans* as a full article in today's issue of Nature magazine.

The study, also reviewed by a News & Views feature in the same issue, represents the culmination of a major research effort originally initiated as an academic pilot project in 1998 by Drs Christophe Echeverri and Pierre Gönczy in the laboratory of Prof. Anthony Hyman, then at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (Heidelberg, Germany). The groundbreaking work, which was also supported in part by funding from the Max Planck Society, the German Human Genome Project (DHGP) and the German National Genome Research Network (NGFN), also involved crucial contributions from collaborators in other institutions, including Dr. Alan Coulson (then at the Hinxton, UK-based Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute) and Dr. Steven Jones (from the BC Cancer Agency's Genome Sciences Centre, Vancouver, Canada). Following the academic pilot, which focused on one of the six chromosomes of *C. elegans*, the completion of the screen over virtually all ~19,500 genes of the worm genome became the founding project of Cenix BioScience as it started operations in 2000.

Led by Dr. Birte Sönnichsen, COO of Cenix and first author on the Nature publication, and Dr. Echeverri, now CEO/CSO of Cenix, the project yielded new functional insights on over 660 genes, and allowed the identification of several novel human therapeutic targets for the treatment of cancer and other proliferative diseases. The screen has also formed the company's main launching pad towards its present focus of carrying out advanced high throughput, high content applications of RNAi in human and rodent cells to accelerate the development of new therapeutic treatments for a variety of human diseases.

Keeping its founders' original promise to the academic research community, Cenix has enabled free online access to the entire dataset by providing web dissemination rights to one of its parent institutes, the Dresden-based Max Planck Institute for Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics (www.mpi-cbg.de). The full depth of screening data from this landmark study, including approx. 40,000 time lapse recordings, still micrographs and text annotations from over 300,000 microinjection experiments, will thereby become freely accessible and searchable online (www.worm.mpi-cbg.de/phenobank2) starting today. The dataset has also been made available for cross-referencing through other public online *C. elegans* databases, including Wormbase.

About Cenix BioScience GmbH

Cenix BioScience GmbH is a pioneer and leader in high throughput (HT), genome-driven applications of RNA 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 a wide range of human and rodent cells. Cenix is now making its unique expertise accessible to industry and academic researchers through highly customizable research services. Please contact Cenix or visit the company's web site www.cenix-bioscience.com for more information.

Contact:

Dr. Birte Sönnichsen
Chief Operating Officer
Cenix BioScience GmbH
Tel: +49 (0) 351 4173 0
Email: info@cenix-bioscience.com
Web: www.cenix-bioscience.com