



PRESS RELEASE

Debiopharm S.A.
Rue des Terreaux 17 - Case Postale 211
CH-1000 Lausanne 9 – SUISSE
Tél. : +41 21 321 01 11
Fax : + 41 21 321 01 69
www.debio.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEBIOPHARM S.A. PROVIDES FUNDING TO TULANE UNIVERSITY TO ESTABLISH THE MAUVERNAY RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FUND

Lausanne, Switzerland, January 16, 2003 -- Debiopharm S.A. (Debiopharm) announced a collaboration today with the Tulane University (Tulane) of New Orleans, USA to whom it will provide funding, for the next three years, to establish the Mauvernay Research Excellence Fund, for the discovery of new therapeutic agents, which can be used in cancer treatment. Debiopharm will also finance an Annual Educational Seminar to take place at the University. The annual seminar, an exchange forum between oncology scientists and Debiopharm, will offer both parties networking opportunities with experts in the field and provide an exchange of cutting-edge information on the latest drug research accomplishments in oncology at Tulane.

Under the terms of the collaboration, both parties may mutually agree to extend the Mauvernay Research Excellence Fund beyond the initial three year period. The first Annual Educational Seminar will be held at Tulane University this October 2003 and for two years thereafter. In conjunction with this seminar, the Mauvernay Research Excellence Award, sponsored by Debiopharm, will be presented to a member of the Tulane faculty to recognise and honor outstanding and innovative research in oncology. Both parties are responsible for the election of a pan-continental panel of world-renowned oncology experts to serve as judges.

“I am enthusiastic about our future collaboration with Tulane University,” said Dr. R.-Y. Mauvernay, founder and CEO of Debiopharm. “And I believe this interaction with the top scientists at Tulane will further enhance our competence in oncology drug development. Debiopharm’s strength lies in its commitment to long-lasting and mutually beneficial relationships with its partners and we are proud to be associated with one of the leading universities in the United States.”

The on-going relationship between both companies started in 1982, when they signed their first agreement for the licensing of triptorelin. The product was developed as a sustained-release formulation by Debiopharm and subsequently marketed as Decapeptyl® in Europe and Trelstar® in the US.

“Tulane University is pleased at the opportunity to work with Debiopharm, a very successful company well-known as a leader in the drug development field,” said Scott S. Cowen, president of Tulane. “Our Health Sciences Center has an extremely focussed mission of education, patient care and research, and we believe our collaboration with Debiopharm will help us reach several of the goals associated with that mission.”

About Debiopharm S.A.

Debiopharm, Debio R.P. and Debioclinic are an established and proven group of three synergistic and complementary companies, that have a successful track record in developing, registering and ensuring that new chemical entities are brought to market both in Europe and in the United States. Products successfully registered and launched include oxaliplatin for advanced colorectal cancer and triptorelin pamoate for prostate cancer, both market leaders in their therapeutic areas. Specialized in oncology, hormonal and niche products for serious medical conditions, Debiopharm is a partner of research institutions, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies who seek to develop and register their drugs. Debio R.P., Debiopharm's sister company, is a leading world player in the research, development and manufacturing of polymer-based controlled release injectable formulations for peptides and proteins, including proprietary technologies suitable for other therapeutic modalities such as soluble polymer cytotoxic-drug conjugates for parenteral administration. Debio R.P. also carries out scale-up under current good manufacturing practice (cGMP) and has an FDA-inspected plant. Debioclinic, the third Debio company, is a contract research organisation fully dedicated to clinical development.

About Tulane University

Founded in 1834 as the Medical College of Louisiana, Tulane University is a private, non-sectarian research university with 11 schools and colleges. Located in New Orleans, Tulane offers undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees in law, medicine, public health and tropical medicine, architecture, business, engineering, social work and the liberal arts and sciences. The University's strength lies in its multidisciplinary approach to research. In keeping with the diversity of its missions—education, research and patient care—Tulane University Health Sciences Center continually is developing centers and programs of excellence, including the Center for Gene Therapy, Center for Infectious Diseases, Hayward Genetics Center, Hypertension and Renal Center, Center for Clinical Effectiveness and Prevention, Tulane-Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research, Center for Cardiovascular Health and the Tulane-Xavier National Center of Excellence in Women's Health.

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For more information please contact:

Mrs Kim Bill
Vice President, Business Development & Licensing
Debiopharm S.A
Tel: +41 21 321 0111
Fax: +41 21 321 0169
E-mail: kbill@debio.com

Deborah L. Grant
Assistant Vice President of University Communications
Tulane University
Tel: 1-504-865-5210
Fax: 1-504-862-8777
E-mail: dgrant@tulane.edu