



Helmedix Launched with Start-up Investment from the MRCF to Develop Potential Treatment for Autoimmune Disease

Sydney, Australia, 14 February 2013 - Helmedix Pty Ltd, an early stage biopharmaceutical company developing novel therapies for autoimmune and inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, colitis, psoriasis and multiple sclerosis, was launched today with start-up financing from Australia's Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF).

Based on intellectual property from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS)'s ithree institute, Helmedix will develop therapeutic peptide drugs for the prevention and treatment of autoimmune disease.

The ithree Institute research team led by Dr Sheila Donnelly has identified a number of immune modulating peptides derived from helminth parasites, one of which is effective in suppressing the inflammatory response of the host and has shown therapeutic potential in a mouse model of type 1 diabetes. The immune modulating activity of these peptides indicates potential broader application in a variety other autoimmune diseases.

The MRCF has committed AU\$1.25 million to progress lead optimisation and pre-clinical development of the immune modulating peptides over the next two years. Subject to meeting milestones, Helmedix will seek further investment or industry partnerships to move the helminth-derived peptides through clinical development as a treatment for autoimmune and inflammatory diseases.

Commenting on the new company, Stephen Thompson, Director of Helmedix and Partner at Brandon Capital, the venture capital firm that manages the MRCF, said "Helmedix is a great example of the type of early stage opportunity that the MRCF is set up to support. Its discoveries have broad potential to impact a number of autoimmune diseases and we look forward to working with the team to progress the technology further towards commercial development."

Professor Ian Charles, Director of the UTS ithree institute, said that the institute's significant expertise in infectious diseases caused by bacterial, viruses and parasites was helping understand the way in which the helminth parasite evades the sophisticated immune defence systems of its host, continuing "Understanding the mechanism by which the helminth parasites can persist in their host by regulating the immune system, and applying these mechanisms to the development of therapeutics for the prevention or treatment of autoimmune and inflammatory diseases, has huge potential."

This is the first investment by MRCF in technology emerging from the ithree institute. The institute was launched in 2010 and joined the MRCF in 2011. Commercialisation of ithree's technology is managed by UTS's commercialisation partner UniQuest, who led the effort to attract investment by MRCF into Helmedix.

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Notes for editors

About Helmedix

Helmedix Pty Ltd, formed in 2012 as a start-up company from the ithree institute at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), is an early stage biopharmaceutical company developing novel therapies for autoimmune diseases based on novel peptides derived from a helminth parasite. Helmedix will be managed as a virtual company, based in Sydney, with research contracted to Dr Donnelly's team at the ithree institute.

www.mrcf.com.au/portfolio/helmedix-pty-ltd

About the ithree institute

The ithree institute at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) brings together an internationally competitive team focused on addressing key challenges in the understanding and control of infectious diseases in humans and animals. The institute's innovative science uses a systems biology approach to develop a greater insight into basic biology and its application to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases.

www.ithreeinstitute.uts.edu.au

About The Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF)

The \$51 million Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF) Collaboration is an innovative investment collaboration established in 2007 and managed by Brandon Capital Partners (www.brandoncapital.com.au). The MRCF invests in early stage development and commercialisation opportunities emanating from its membership of 32 Australian medical research institutes and allied research hospitals, which includes the ithree Institute at UTS. The MRCF IIF, LP fund is supported by AustralianSuper, StatewideSuper and the Australian Government under its IIF program. The MRCF also acknowledges the support of the State Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland.

www.mrcf.com.au

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