



## **NEWS RELEASE - For immediate release**

### **AMORCHEM SPINS OUT ITS CD36 TECHNOLOGY INTO MPERIA THERAPEUTICS, WITH 1M\$ SERIES A INVESTMENT.**

**Montreal, Quebec – September 12, 2016** – AmorChem is pleased to announce the creation of Mperia Therapeutics, a start-up company focusing on a novel immunotherapy approach based on CD36 cell receptor drug-ligands. All rights to the CD36 technology initially held by AmorChem have been transferred to Mperia, with a first Series A investment of 1M\$CAD. This capital will allow Mperia to efficiently pursue the early-stage development of lead candidates for the treatment of dry Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD).

The CD36 technology is the result of almost 20 years of research conducted by Dr. Huy Ong and his collaborators at the Université de Montréal, where the CD36 scavenger receptor has been shown to play a key role in the clearance of oxidized lipids, and more recently, in chronic inflammation. Promising CD36 drug-ligands have been tested in several dry AMD animal models and demonstrated significant efficacy to preserve and restore cell layers at both the retinal and subretinal levels. Dry AMD represents almost 90% of all AMD cases, with five (5) million patients affected by the disease in North America and Europe. Dry AMD remains an unmet medical need with no approved treatments or cure for this disease indication.

“Major achievements have been made with the outstanding CD36 research of Dr. Ong, who pioneered the use of CD36 ligands to treat inflammation-based diseases through macrophage biology”, explains Dr. Elizabeth Douville, Managing Partner at AmorChem. “The close relationship between the pathophysiology of atherosclerosis and dry AMD now make consensus, and our most recent in-vivo data confirm the tremendous therapeutic potential of the CD36 drug-ligands in both indications. With the spinning off of this technology into Mperia and a first seed financing, we believe the company is poised to raise more capital and bring the first CD36 drug-ligand to the clinic in a near future.”

“We are proud of Mperia as AmorChem’s first spin-off company. Mperia serves to validate the model AmorChem put forward back in 2011 in identifying promising opportunities within the local universities, building value around them and spinning them off as companies” adds Dr. Inès Holzbaur, Managing Partner at AmorChem.

### **MPERIA’S MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Upon creation of Mperia Therapeutics, AmorChem appointed Maxime Ranger, PhD, MBA, as President and Chief Executive Office, and Dr. Huy Ong, PhD as Chief Scientific Officer of the company. As serial entrepreneur, Dr. Ranger has shown his great business acumen and extensive drug development skills. He has been entrepreneur-in-residence at Univalor for several months, in addition to ensuring the supervision of Dr Ong’s CD36 research project. In such context, Dr Ranger will thus lead Mperia in steps towards clinical proof of concept of its first product and its next fundraising. As CSO of the company, Dr Ong adds significant scientific value. As a prominent investigator in the field of CD36 receptor biology, he will provide continued expert advice and guidance to Mperia in translating the CD36 technology to early clinical proof of concept.

### **WORLDWIDE, EXCLUSIVE LICENSE SIGNED BETWEEN MPERIA AND UNIVALOR**

Mperia Therapeutics signed an exclusive, worldwide, license with Univalor on a series of CD36 drug-ligands

with the aim of targeting other medical indications where chronic inflammation is induced by pro-inflammatory macrophage infiltration, like dry AMD and atherosclerosis.

“AmorChem’s decision to strengthen the CD36 technology development through a newly-created and focused company such as Mperia has met with the entire support of our organization” states Jacques Simoneau, CEO at Univalor.

“AMD is the first cause of vision loss for the population above 50, and the CD36 technology clearly appears as a glimmer of hope for AMD patients. Our goal is to translate this invention into an efficient non-intraocular treatment for dry AMD” says Maxime Ranger, CEO Mperia Therapeutics.

## **ABOUT MPERIA THERAPEUTICS INC**

Mperia Therapeutics is a Montreal-based biotech company focusing on macrophage-based immunotherapy with the use of novel ligand derivatives with high affinity to the CD36 cell surface receptor. Mperia’s immunotherapies aim to manage and ultimately treat diseases where chronic inflammation is induced by (oxidized) lipid accumulation and the massive infiltration of pro-inflammatory macrophage.

## **ABOUT AMORCHEM L.P.**

AmorChem L.P. ([www.amorchem.com](http://www.amorchem.com)) is a venture capital fund located in Montreal focused on investing in promising life science projects originating from Quebec-based universities and research centres. The principal limited partners of this fund are Investissement-Québec, FIER Partenaires, Fonds de solidarité FTQ and Merck & Co. This fund is the latest addition to the GeneChem portfolio of funds, a fund manager in existence since 1997. AmorChem’s innovative business model involves financing research-stage projects to enable them to reach pre-clinical proof-of-concept (“POC”) in a semi-virtual mode within 18-24 months. The fund seeks to generate returns through a two-pronged exit strategy: sell projects having reached POC to large biotechnology or pharmaceutical companies; or bundle them into new spin-out companies. AmorChem using external resources will manage the projects. To that effect, AmorChem has established a strategic partnership with the Biotechnology Research Institute in order to access its R&D platforms. In addition, to enabling projects requiring small molecules as tools or drug leads, AmorChem has founded NuChem Therapeutics Inc., a medicinal chemistry contract-research company.

## **ABOUT UNIVALOR**

Univalor ([www.univalor.ca](http://www.univalor.ca)) is a university technology transfer organization. Since 2001, it has been commercializing scientific findings and technological innovations emanating from some 2,600 researchers at the Université de Montréal and its affiliated health centres, Polytechnique Montréal and HEC Montréal. Its mission receives the support of the Ministère de l’Économie, de la Science et de l’Innovation (MESI) of Québec. By creating links between the university and the business community, Univalor helps make businesses more competitive, generate revenue for research and, most importantly, enrich society.

## **ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL**

The 66,000 students and professors associated with Université de Montréal ([www.umontreal.ca](http://www.umontreal.ca)) and its affiliated schools for commerce (HEC Montréal) and engineering (École Polytechnique) are recognized for the high volume and quality of their research and for their international profile. Ten per cent of the university’s students are from outside Canada, and 40% of research published by the university’s community involves international collaboration. Within Canada, Université de Montréal’s excellence is recognized by the awarding of half a billion dollars in funding; at an international level, it is consistently placed within the top 150 institutions in major world research rankings.

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