



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OXFORD GENE TECHNOLOGY JOINS EUROSYSYSTEM CONSORTIUM

Oxford, UK - May 21, 2008 - Oxford Gene Technology (OGT) is delighted to announce its participation in the recently formed EuroSyStem Consortium, a framework V11 partnership which aims to drive the generation of new knowledge about the characteristics of normal and abnormal stem cells. The consortium brings together a network of biological and computational expertise from leading international researchers and businesses throughout Europe. It will provide facilities, resources and training to promote interaction throughout the stem cell community, and to accelerate research progress.

OGT's role in the consortium will be to develop its single cell technology for quantitative determination of gene expression in single cells, in order to examine the dynamic range of gene expression.

This technology will then be applied to two separate cell systems in the consortium: erythropoietic stem cells with Professor Tariq Enver's group at the MRC Molecular Haematology Unit at Oxford, and mouse embryonic stem cells with Professor Austin Smith's group at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Stem Cell Research, Cambridge.

Professor Austin Smith, Coordinator of EuroSyStem said, "Increased possibilities for analysing and understanding expression events in single cells is a fundamental breakthrough that will accelerate progress in basic and applied research relating to stem cells. Ultimately this progress could lead to successful regenerative medicine, and along the journey we envision improved drug development processes, enhanced disease modelling, and earlier diagnosis of specific diseases."

Dr John Anson, Research and Development Director at OGT said, "No current method allows easy preparation and analysis of single cell gene expression levels. We are confident that our single cell technology, with its unique 'cell population census' approach, will revolutionise gene expression analysis, and we are excited to be given the opportunity to develop this technology for the EuroSyStem Consortium."

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About Stem Cells

Stem cells play a crucial role in supporting tissues, such as blood, skin, gut and muscle that undergo a continuous turnover and may hold the key to replacing cells lost in devastating non curable diseases e.g. Parkinson's, heart disease and diabetes.

It is thought that the understanding of disease processes could be accelerated using stem cells as obtaining damaged cells in a disease state is often extremely difficult.

The ability to grow large amounts of identical cells could be used by pharmaceutical companies to test drugs. Stem cells could be beneficial in increasing the understanding of plasticity – for example, the possibility of isolated haematopoietic stem cells from blood turning into brain cells or hepatocytes (liver cells) and rescuing fatal liver disease. Haematopoietic stem cells (HSCs) are stem cells that give rise to all the blood cell types and are found in the bone marrow of adults.

Embryonic stem cells (ES cells) are stem cells derived from the inner cell mass of an early stage embryo known as a blastocyst. Embryonic Stem (ES) cells are pluripotent. This means they are able to differentiate into the more than 220 cell types in the adult body.

Understanding gene expression events at the level of single cells today is laborious, difficult to repeat, offers a crude estimate of gene expression and delivers an 'averaged' gene expression result.

About Oxford Gene Technology

- Founded in 1995 by the pioneer of Southern Blotting, Professor Sir Edwin Southern, OGT is based at Begbroke Science Park near Oxford
- OGT offers a comprehensive custom microarray consultancy service, from experimental design through all stages to data analysis and interpretation. It has a strong proven track record in providing custom microarray service in a range of applications including Gene Expression (GE), Comparative Genome Hybridisation (CGH) and Chromatin Immunoprecipitation (ChIP)

The key focus areas of OGT include:

1. **Cytogenetics products and services** for high resolution detection of chromosomal abnormalities. [CytoSure™ arrays](#) are the first oligonucleotide microarrays designed exclusively for the cytogenetics research community to achieve accurate, high resolution analysis of chromosome copy number and structural changes. [CytoSure Syndrome Plus array](#) is a 105k feature syndrome focussed array covering the whole genome and [CytoSure Chromosome X exon specific array](#) is a 44k feature array covering the X chromosome. All products include complimentary [visualisation software](#). In addition, OGT offers a rapid design service providing focussed custom arrays through access to OGT's unique oligonucleotide probe database, the [Oligome™](#)
2. **Licensing.** OGT operates an open licensing policy which has successfully provided access for a number of companies to OGT's fundamental intellectual property, particularly in the area of microarrays
3. **Digital microarrays/ Single Cell analysis.** OGT's innovative, patent-protected technology development programme is aimed at analysing genomic events at the single cell level for major applications such as stem cell and cancer biology

For further information on OGT visit <http://www.oqt.co.uk/>

For further information on EuroSyStem visit <http://www.eurosystemproject.eu/investigators.html>

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