

A France-Québec partnership agreement Alsace BioValley Health cluster and CQDM develop bilateral research projects in the life sciences and health sector

Alsace BioValley, a French competitive health cluster dedicated to therapeutic innovation and CQDM (Québec Consortium for Drug Discovery) sign in Paris today an agreement on a bilateral partnership for the benefit of Alsatian and Quebec research centers and industries in the life sciences and health sector. This signature comes within the framework of the 2nd France-Québec Symposium competitive clusters and niches of excellence in Quebec in the presence of M. Jean Charest, Prime Minister of Quebec and Mrs. Christine Lagarde, Minister of Economy, finance and Industry of France.

This major agreement provides for the co-financing of R&D collaborative projects, in the health and therapeutic innovation sector. These 2 to 3 year projects, funded through public-private France-Quebec partnerships, are aimed at developing new tools to facilitate the discovery of safer and more effective drugs. *«It is the first time that a French health cluster commits to a major cooperation partnership with such a key partner in Quebec as CQDM said Nicolas Carboni, Director of Alsace BioValley». We are pleased to offer new opportunities for international cooperation to the life sciences & health industry of Alsace and Quebec, now more than ever an important source of development».*

Max Fehlmann, President and CEO of CQDM, confirms the potential of this new partnership agreement: *«CQDM welcomes the creation of a long term partnership with Alsace BioValley. We anticipate a total budget of € 3 million to finance highly innovative collaborative projects during the next 3 years. The collaboration between Quebec and Alsace promises to be extremely rich in opportunities to initiate high quality research projects with strong industrial impact».*

Concretely, CQDM and Alsace BioValley will launch over the period of 2011-2013 different thematic calls for proposals where researchers in Quebec and Alsace will be able to submit their collaborative project. The projects will be reviewed by an evaluation committee composed of international experts.

As a pilot project, a first call for proposals was launched in 2010 leading to the 2 following outstanding research projects:

- 1) Identification of new biomarkers for neuroendocrine cancers led by Caprion Proteomics (Montreal) in collaboration with the Institute of Cellular and Integrative Neurosciences (INCI), University of Strasbourg (CNRS UPR 3212).
- 2) Development of a new inducible transgenic mouse model of Alzheimer's disease, led by Biospective (Montreal), Phenopro (Strasbourg), and by the Mouse Clinic Institute (Strasbourg) (in process of being approved).

The next call for proposals will be launched next month and a Quebec/Alsace mission will be held in February 2011. The research agenda will be oriented towards the development of instrumental platforms and diagnostic tools for drug discovery.

This agreement will ultimately increase the competitiveness of Quebec and French biopharmaceutical research, a benefit that should reinforce scientific excellence in Alsace and Quebec on the International scene of therapeutic innovation.

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About CQDM

The Québec Consortium for Drug Discovery (CQDM) is a meeting ground for all stakeholders in biopharmaceutical research whose principal mission is to fund research projects carried out in partnership between the academic and hospital milieus in the public sector and the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries in the private sector. An innovative Canadian initiative, CQDM has a twofold goal: to accelerate the drug discovery process and to develop safer and more effective drugs. The CQDM funding is made possible through contributions from: Pfizer Canada, AstraZeneca Canada, Merck, the Business-Led Networks of Centres of Excellence (BL-NCE), the Ministère du Développement Économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation (MDEIE) and the Fonds de la Recherche en Santé du Québec (FRSQ).

For more information about CQDM, please go to: www.cqdm.org



About the Alsace BioValley

Alsace BioValley is a French cluster dedicated to therapeutic innovation which regroups in Alsace, all stakeholders in life sciences and health (companies, research centers, hospitals and universities). It is a unique and effective gateway to develop quickly and efficiently projects for bio-business at the European level. Alsace BioValley accompanies the growth of players in the field of Life-Health in the territory of Alsace and beyond borders. Its ambition: to make Alsace a territory of global scientific excellence, with strong infrastructures, and best competitive stakeholders, creators of employment.

For more information about Alsace BioValley, please go to: www.alsace-biovalley.com