NEUROME

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NEUROME, INC. SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH THE CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI) OF MICE

Three-Dimensional Images to Provide High Resolution for Studying Mice Brains

LA JOLLA, CA – Neurome, Inc. today announced an agreement with the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) to utilize the Institute's Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) technology to obtain three-dimensional images of mice brains for its neuroanatomy research.

Using MRI images captured by Dr. Russell Jacobs, a Member of the Beckman Institute at Caltech, scientists at Neurome will prepare a three-dimensional atlas, mapping out gene and protein data of mice brains to determine which genes are expressed in which neurons and within which circuitry.

"The ability to obtain high quality MRI images of mice brains is our critical first step in achieving the genomic mapping analysis which is the main goal of our company," said Dr. Floyd Bloom, Neurome's chief executive officer. "Professor Jacobs will use one of the world's most powerful magnets, which will allow us to obtain high resolution images of brains that are in fact not quite as big as the tip of a thumb. The 'micro MRI,' as we have nicknamed this procedure on mice, gives us a tremendous jump-start in being able to survey the entire brain structure in three dimensions. This will enable us to compare the MRI images to the microscope images that we collect at Neurome in our research partnership with Elan Pharmaceuticals (Elan)."

Neurome's agreement with Caltech involves three-dimensional scans of fixed mice brain samples, including among the subjects, Elan Pharmaceutical's triple cross mice (with and without the Alzheimer's gene). Neurome entered into a three-year joint venture with Elan Pharmaceuticals (a division of Elan Corporation, plc) in October 2000, utilizing Neurome's technologies to analyze Elan's mouse model of Alzheimer's disease to identify and exploit molecules and pathways relevant to diagnosis and treatment of the debilitating disease.

"Our collaboration with the Neurome team will demonstrate both the remarkable precision of high power MRI applied to mice and the new structural perspectives on brain development and aging that precision can offer when harnessed to the industrial neuroanatomy technologies developed at Neurome," Dr. Jacobs commented.

Neurome's brain research focuses on analyzing the differences of mice brains' shape and size. The company plans to use the MRI images to assist in preparing a solid baseline to compare how one mouse of the same strain, age and gender varies from its littermate and species mate partners. One of Neurome's main focus areas for future research partnerships will include studying and analyzing mice, whose genes have been manipulated by transgenic technology.

Founded in 1891, Caltech has an enrollment of some 2,000 students, and a faculty of about 290 professorial members, 54 research members and some 550 postdoctoral scholars. The Institute has more than 20,000 alumni. Caltech employs a staff of more than 2,400 on campus and 4,800 at JPL. Over the years, 29 Nobel Prizes and four Crafoord Prizes have been awarded to faculty members and alumni. Forty-seven Caltech faculty members and alumni have received the National Medal of Science; and eight alumni (two of whom are also trustees), two additional trustees, and one faculty member have won the National Medal of Technology. Since 1958, 13 faculty members have received the annual California Scientist of the Year award. On the Caltech faculty there are 78 fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; and on the faculty and Board of Trustees, 70 members of the National Academy of Sciences and 46 members of the National Academy of Engineering.

Elan Corporation, plc (Elan) is a worldwide specialty pharmaceutical and drug delivery company, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland. Elan is a world leader in drug delivery and in the discovery, development and marketing of products and services in neurology, oncology and pain management. Elan's principal research and manufacturing facilities are located in Ireland, the United States and Israel. Elan shares trade on the New York, London and Dublin Stock Exchanges.

Neurome, Inc. develops standardized, quantitative databases that accurately depict and integrate gene expression patterns in the three-dimensional context of the brain's structures, circuits and cells, and deploys these databases in primary research directed toward the discovery and development of gene targets for enhancement of brain function and treatment of brain-based disease. Neurome performs contract brain research for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, while at the same time pursuing its own in-house and collaborative research protocols. The data collected from these efforts will populate an evolving, comprehensive database available by subscription and useful on a broad level for analyses of mouse models of brain function and disease. In this regard, the application of the Neurome technologies will provide rigorous, quantitative data that are optimally suited to the measurement of subtle cell-type specific shifts in gene expression, as well as progression and prevention of degenerative events affecting specific cell classes and brain regions.

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