Vitalea Science and Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) Announce a Technological Alliance that will Eliminate Hazardous Radiation from Pharmaceutical Studies

A compact Accelerator has been developed by Paul Scherrer Institute of Switzerland with support from Vitalea Science of California that will change the way drugs are tested in clinical trials. The developed instrument, the BioMicadas, a compact particle accelerator stands to remove radioactivity from clinical drug trials.

Northern California; Zürich, Switzerland (PRWEB) September 12, 2006 -- Vitalea Science, a drug development service company located in California and PSI, the Swiss National multi-disciplinary research centre for natural sciences and technology, have forged an alliance to build and market the new generation of Accelerator Technology targeted for pharmaceutical science and clinical drug development.

The revolutionary machine, dubbed BioMICADAS, measures radioactive drugs, which are currently a mainstay of clinical development studies, at microdoses that would be safe even for studies in pregnant women and infants.

The instrument under development represents the latest triumph of the joint effort of the Paul Scherrer Institute and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) to transform a big physics tool into a compact instrument accessible to biological and pharmaceutical scientists.

Previous Accelerator instruments occupied a physical space equivalent to the size of a small house and required a level of expertise exclusive to highly trained physicists. In contrast the BioMICADAS machine can be placed into a small laboratory and maintained by scientists not schooled in nuclear physics.

“Vitalea Science is fortunate and very pleased to have earned the trust of elite Paul Scherrer Institute to bring this essential clinical drug development tool to industry,” says Dr. Stephen Dueker, President of Vitalea Science. “We have a unique understanding of the needs of the pharmaceutical industry and how this instrument can benefit mankind through bringing novel drugs safely to the patient.”

The innovative design of this instrument will invigorate human clinical drug development through reducing chemical and radiation exposures to harmlessly small levels while providing superior clinical information. Current procedures for early stage drug testing involve extensive use of animal models to test toxicity, which often have poor correlation with drug action in humans, and substantial testing with radioactive drugs in human volunteers. The BioMICADAS instrument allows the same evaluations, but at drastically reduced chemical and radiation exposures to test subjects, and bypasses the some of the uncertainties of translating from animal models to humans.

“We are physicists who continuously strive to perfect our tools for analysis,” says Dr. Hans-Arno Synal, senior physicist at the institute who is heading up the BioMICADAS development team. “This instrument represents the most compact state-of-the-art design achievable based on our current understanding of the physics of measuring atoms. While the instrument will find immediate value in the fields of carbon dating and geochronology, the application to drug development is perhaps the most exciting. Vitalea Science is our perfect partner as they have the team of biological and physical scientists necessary to validate this machine in the
pharmaceutical space.”

“Instruments must reach a point of accessibility to a broad array of users before they can have a material impact,” says Le Vuong, Chief Operating Officer of Vitalea. “We have been waiting for the day when innovation catches up with industry needs.” Clearly, that day appears to have arrived.

About Vitalea Science (http://www.vitaleascience.com)
Vitalea Science is a leading Contract Research Organization that provides ulralow detection strategies for drugs and drug candidates at microdose levels. Situated in Northern California, the company was formed by chemists and physicists from the University of California and the Department of Energy’s Lawrence Livermore National Lab in 2003.

About Paul Scherrer Institute
The Paul Scherrer Institute is the largest national research institute with on average 1,200 members of staff, and is the only one of its kind in Switzerland. PSI’s priorities lie in areas of basic and applied research, with emphasis on fields relevant to sustainable development as well as of major importance for teaching and training, but which are beyond the possibilities of a single university department. PSI develops and operates complex research installations that call for especially high standards of know-how, experience and professionalism. It is one of the world’s leading user laboratories for the national and international scientific community. Through its research, PSI acquires new basic knowledge and actively pursues its application to industry.

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