



**February 8, 2005 – Press Release**

**Ascenion helps launch first German Primate Centre spin-off: Encepharm**

Munich and Göttingen, February 8, 2005 – With the active support of Ascenion, the German Primate Centre (DPZ) has launched its first spin-off company: Encepharm GmbH.

On a fee-for-service basis, Encepharm offers tailored research services and preclinical studies in the fields of mental illness and neurodegenerative disease. The company addresses a rapidly expanding demand in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries, where the lack of suitable research models for diseases of the central nervous system is a particular obstacle to the development of new therapies. The Encepharm team has long-standing expertise in the area and exclusive access to specific animal models developed at the DPZ for research into depression, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. These include an animal model in tree shrews that is unique world wide and has already allowed new insights into the pathophysiological mechanisms underlying stress and depression.

Numerous enquiries from industry have shown the enormous significance of this model in pharmaceutical research and development. "However, it was only through the expert assistance of Ascenion that the idea of founding a new company was born and eventually realized", said Professor Eberhard Fuchs, CEO of Encepharm. Professor Fuchs and Ascenion have developed the Encepharm business plan jointly. Furthermore, Ascenion has supported the company's founders during contract negotiations in the start-up phase and in all operational aspects. Encepharm will closely cooperate with the DPZ and may use DPZ know-how, infrastructure or services in return for an appropriate fee.

"The serviced-based business model and comprehensive co-operation agreements with the DPZ and other research institutes in Göttingen have given the founding team a 'running start' with only moderate start-up financing," explained Dr Christian Stein, CEO of Ascenion. The first contract with a Belgian pharmaceutical company has already been successfully completed. "Encepharm is therefore among the very few Biotech companies in Germany with earnings in their first year of operation. We are delighted by this successful start and will continue to support Encepharm throughout its growth phase", continued Dr Stein.

Ascenion will take a share in Encepharm. Should Ascenion subsequently sell its equity in the company, the proceeds will go to the Life-Science Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Research. The Foundation will in turn make this money available for publicly funded research projects. ###



## Contact Information

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## Notes to Editors

### **Ascenion GmbH**

Ascenion is an intellectual property (IP) asset management agency with a clear life-science focus. Ascenion supports and advises scientists and research institutions with regard to the protection and exploitation of their intellectual property (patents), and initiates and mediates licence agreements between research institutions and industry. Among Ascenion's particular strengths are start-up coaching and active investment management. Ascenion is a 100% subsidiary of the Life-Science Foundation for the Promotion of Science and Research and the exclusive commercialization partner for the DPZ, FMP, IPK, GBF, GSF, MDC and DKZF\*. Ascenion's headquarters are in Munich, with further offices in Berlin, Braunschweig and Neuherberg. More information at [www.ascenion.de](http://www.ascenion.de)

\* for the DKFZ, only in relation to findings from the NGFN

### **About Encepharm GmbH**

Encepharm was founded in September 2004 as a spin-off from the German Primate Center (DPZ). On a fee-for-service basis, Encepharm offers tailored research services and preclinical studies in the field of depression and neurodegenerative disorders. Encepharm's team has extensive expertise in the relevant disciplines and exclusive access to specific animal models that were developed at the DPZ for the investigation of depression, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. These include an animal model in tree shrews (phylogenetically regarded as intermediate between insectivores and primates) established and operated exclusively at the DPZ, enabling research into the underlying mechanisms of mental pressure and depression. Through cooperation agreements with the DPZ, the University of Göttingen and local Max-Planck-Institutes, Encepharm is able to offer the full range of services including sophisticated techniques such as magnetic resonance imaging if required for a specific research assignment. In this way Encepharm is ideally positioned to meet the strong and increasing demand of the pharma and biotech industry for research services in the field of CNS disorders that produce meaningful results and support the selection of novel therapeutic targets and drug candidates, as well as their preclinical development. The company is based in Göttingen.