

28th April, 2005 – Press Release

Press Release

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New platform for commercialization of findings from the National Genome Research Network

Ascenion and Garching Innovation awarded contract for central coordination of technology transfer in the NGFN

Munich, 28th April, 2005 – German genome research has a new market place: the “Genome Marketplace”. It will provide a central platform where commercially viable findings from the National Genome Research Network (NGFN) are brought together and made clearly accessible to industry. The aim is to transfer the results of national human genome research into new product development more quickly and efficiently. Should this succeed, both patients and the German economy will see long-term benefits from the funds invested by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) into NGFN research projects on major human diseases. The central coordination of technology transfer in the NGFN therefore plays an important roll, and after inviting public tenders the BMBF have awarded the contract to Ascenion and Garching Innovation.

The “Genome Marketplace” concept has been developed by Ascenion and Garching Innovation and is jointly funded by the BMBF. Its goal is to co-ordinate all the players in the NGFN, as well as all associated technology transfer offices. An important innovation is that all commercially relevant findings will be accessible and searchable in a standardized format on a central internet platform. In addition, all grant holders in the NGFN commit themselves at the start of their projects to a collaboration with a particular technology transfer agency. Progress in the commercialization of each project is also recorded centrally. This creates distinct responsibilities and makes the commercialization performance in the NGFN more transparent. Should particular life-science expertise or experience be required during the commercialization process, the participating technology transfer offices can request support from Ascenion or Garching Innovation.

“This concept allows all the players involved in technology transfer in the NGFN to contribute their various skills and optimize commercialization. The central coordination will at last make commercially interesting findings from German genome research clearly visible, thereby creating a cost-efficient and reliable basis for moving up the value chain on the way to new products and processes,” said Dr Christian Stein, CEO of Ascenion GmbH. ###

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Further information

Ascenion GmbH

Ascenion is a patent management agency with a 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 license 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 GBF, GSF, MDC, DKZF*, DPZ, FMP, and IPK. Ascenion's headquarters are in Munich, with further offices in Berlin, Braunschweig and Neuherberg. More information at www.ascenion.de

* (For the DKFZ, only in relation to findings from the NGFN)

Garching Innovation GmbH

Garching Innovation GmbH (GI) is the technology transfer institution of the Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science e.V. GI was founded in 1970 as a 100% subsidiary of the Max Planck Society and currently employs 17 staff. Around 120 new projects are accepted every year, and simultaneously circa 90 new licensing contracts are signed. The license income from these contracts in 2004 was 15.5 million euros. Further core activities are supporting scientists in creating start-up companies and advising these companies in their early stages.

The National Genome Research Network (NGFN)

The NGFN comprises around 550 scientists of various disciplines from all over Germany, who are working to discover the genetic causes of major human diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease and develop new potential therapies. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has supported the NGFN since mid-2001. Initially, a total of 180 million euros was made available over three years. A second three-year phase began mid-2004.

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