

PRESS RELEASE

Argenta Discovery and Porsolt Join Forces to Provide Fully-integrated CNS and Pain Contract Drug Discovery Services

Harlow, UK, and Paris, France 14th May 2009 – Argenta Discovery and Porsolt today announced they have entered into an alliance to provide unparalleled CNS and pain drug discovery services and expertise on a fee-for-service basis. The collaboration enables Argenta and Porsolt to undertake fully integrated CNS and pain-focused drug discovery programmes for their clients, from hit identification to development candidate nomination. Both companies bring a wealth of ‘Big Pharma’ industry based experience and know-how in CNS and pain research. This alliance will leverage those key skills for its partners to ensure the rapid generation of high quality development candidates.

Dr. Christopher Ashton, CEO of Argenta said, "Argenta has undertaken many successful medicinal chemistry-driven CNS and pain contract drug discovery research projects, but we have been looking at ways of enhancing our capabilities in these important therapeutic areas. Argenta has partnered with Porsolt to provide clients with dedicated access to specialist CNS and pain models and expertise, offered by a world leader in the field. We have several ongoing contract research programmes in these therapeutic areas and a number of projects in the pipeline which are likely to benefit from Porsolt's support and know-how. This alliance will enable Argenta to offer an even better integrated drug discovery service in the future. We are looking forward to working with Porsolt."

Dr Mark Duxon, CEO of Porsolt added, "Porsolt is delighted to be entering into a partnership with Argenta to deliver full lead optimisation drug discovery on a contract research basis. Porsolt have recently announced a significant laboratory expansion in France and the Argenta partnership fits with our strategy of offering a diverse array of deal structure opportunities to suit the broad range of our clients' needs. Indeed, our increased business flexibility is entirely complementary to our client-oriented scientific expertise. Porsolt has always sought to deliver quality scientific solutions tailored to client needs. In this respect, we believe we have found a like minded partner in Argenta".

Where there is a client need for outsourcing fully integrated drug discovery programmes for CNS and pain targets, Argenta and Porsolt offer a seamless drug discovery platform to the pharmaceutical industry, from hit identification to drug candidate selection. Should a client not be interested in a solution of this nature, both Porsolt and Argenta will continue to operate independently, offering their stand-alone contract research services spanning all therapeutic areas and drug target classes.

About Argenta Discovery Ltd.

Argenta was founded in August 2000. Argenta's contract research division provides integrated drug discovery services, comprising medicinal chemistry, computer-aided drug design (CADD), biochemistry, *in vitro* screening, *in vitro* & *in vivo* DMPK, and non-GLP rodent toxicology (up to 7-day DRF studies) to leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies worldwide.



Porsolt & Partners Pharmacology



Argenta's industry-experienced scientists deliver rapid hit finding capabilities and have the skills to optimise early-stage compounds, quickly and effectively, into potential drug candidates.

Argenta has leading expertise in chronic respiratory diseases, including Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Asthma and Cystic Fibrosis. Argenta is undertaking a number of internal proprietary programmes with the goal of taking these to the completion of Phase IIa 'proof-of-concept' in humans.

Argenta is located in the United Kingdom and has facilities in Harlow, Welwyn Garden City, and Slough. For more information, visit www.argentadiscovery.com.

About Porsolt & Partners Pharmacology

Porsolt is a long established preclinical CRO, having started operations in 1984 under the name ITEM-Labo. Porsolt has an international reputation for expertise in patho-physiological models and customized procedures. They offer services for both efficacy and safety evaluation in a wide range of therapeutic domains including CNS and pain; the cardiovascular, respiratory, gastro-intestinal, renal and urogenital systems; and metabolic disorders (diabetes and obesity). Safety pharmacology at Porsolt covers all regulatory requirements under ICH S7A and B guidelines to full GLP compliance and goes beyond them to allow, for example, full evaluation of arrhythmogenic risk and abuse and dependence liability.

Porsolt is located in France with facilities in Paris and Laval. For additional information about the organisation, please visit www.porsolt.com

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