



GenSight Biologics Raises €32m in a Series A Financing for Ophthalmic Gene Therapy

Paris, France, April 8th, 2013 – GenSight Biologics, a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of ophthalmic therapeutics using gene therapy, announced today the closing of a €32 million Series A financing.

The financing was co-led by Novartis Venture Fund, Abingworth LLP, Versant Ventures and Index Ventures. GenSight will use the funds to develop a gene replacement therapy for Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy (LHON) and an optogenetic therapy for retinitis pigmentosa (RP). The lead product is expected to enter the clinic in 2013 in LHON patients.

Bernard Gilly, co-founder and CEO of GenSight is a successful bio-entrepreneur, was formerly CEO of Fovea Pharmaceuticals (which was acquired by sanofi-aventis in 2009), a partner at Sofinnova Partners and CEO of Transgene, a publicly traded gene therapy company. GenSight co-founder, Professor José-Alain Sahel, is Chairman of the Vision Institute in Paris. Botond Roska, a specialist in the structure and function of neural circuits at the FMI (Basel), has been pioneering the field of optogenetics. Jean Bennett, Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Pennsylvania, and also a co-founder of GenSight, has successfully conducted gene therapy trials to treat a rare retinal degeneration. The other co-founders of GenSight are Connie Cepko Professor of Genetics at Harvard (Boston), Ernst Bamberg Professor at The Max Planck Institute (Frankfurt), Luk Vandenberghe at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Harvard Medical School (Boston) and Serge Picaud at the Vision Institute (Paris).

Bernard Gilly commented: "Gene therapy is coming of age and ophthalmology is one of the most promising indications in particular because of the safety and efficacy demonstrated in certain trials. GenSight has a unique, proprietary approach to targeting the mitochondria in LHON developed by Dr Corral-Debrinsky and Jose Sahel at the Vision Institute, and exclusive access to key intellectual property from Novartis for using optogenetics to treat RP patients. Our outstanding links to leading ophthalmology physicians and scientists on both sides of the Atlantic, our strong link with the Foundation Fighting Blindness, our partnership with AFM/Genethon and our experienced management team are key to successfully moving our products through clinical developments to proof of efficacy."

"We are delighted to be working with GenSight and the other investors to assist the company in progressing its highly innovative technology and gene-based therapeutics towards the clinic. Gene therapy represents a new frontier in targeting ophthalmic diseases, and GenSight's expertise and capabilities are outstanding," said Florent Gros of Novartis Venture Fund, who will join the board of directors, along with Dr Genghis Lloyd-Harris (Abingworth) and Dr Guido Magni (Versant).

GenSight is based in Paris, France on the campus of the Vision Institute. Please visit our website www.gensight-biologics.com

Notes for Editors

About Novartis Venture Fund

The Novartis Venture Funds manages over \$850 million in committed capital. NVF invests in companies which have the potential to change a core therapeutic field or explore new business areas that will be critical to patient care. Our primary interest is in the development of novel therapeutics and platforms as well as medical devices, diagnostics, and delivery systems. The Funds invest for financial objectives at all stages, but prefers to invest in the early-stages of company development. With ten investment professionals located in Basel, Switzerland and Cambridge, MA the team has extensive experience in pharmaceutical R&D and venture capital.

About Abingworth

Abingworth is an international investment group dedicated exclusively to the life sciences and healthcare sector. The company invests at all stages of development and has funds under management of over \$1.25 billion, with offices in London, Menlo Park (California) and Boston.

About Versant

Versant Ventures is a leading venture capital firm that specializes in investment in innovative, groundbreaking bio-pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and other life science opportunities. Founded in 1999, the firm consists of an experienced team committed to helping entrepreneurs build successful companies that impact healthcare and improve quality of life. In addition to an industry-leading biotech-focused team in Basel, Switzerland and the San Francisco Bay Area, Versant has a presence in two other geographic locations of Southern California and Minnesota.

About Index

Index Ventures is a leading global venture capital firm active in technology and biotechnology investing since 1996. From our offices in Geneva, London and San Francisco we love to discover and support the most entrepreneurial teams wherever they are looking to build market defining global businesses.

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