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NEWS RELEASE

Drug-enabling technology innovations get boost through OCE-CQDM Life Sciences R&D challenge

MONTREAL, Oct. 30, 2013 – Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) and the Québec Consortium for Drug Discovery (CQDM) are teaming up with Life Sciences Ontario and BiopolisQuébec to advance pharmaceutical research in the two provinces.

Having established a working partnership through the two-year-old Ontario-Québec Life Sciences Corridor initiative, OCE and CQDM are leading the \$3 million inter-provincial ‘OCE-CQDM Life Sciences R&D Challenge’ supporting industry-academic collaborations that will result in innovative tools and technologies to improve and accelerate the drug discovery process.

“This initiative will help build a competitive advantage for the sector in both provinces by combining resources and strengths across the Ontario-Québec Life Sciences Corridor,” said Dr. Tom Corr, President and CEO of OCE. “This will not only help lead to new products but pave the way for new and unique opportunities for investments, partnerships and collaborations.”

The initiative was announced by Reza Moridi, Ontario’s Minister of Research and Innovation, on Oct. 29 at OCE’s Annual General meeting and is funded in part by Ontario’s Collaboration Voucher program.

“This new industry voucher is an important step in advancing pharmaceutical research,” said Min. Moridi. “It builds on the working relationship we’ve established through the Ontario-Québec Life Sciences Corridor. And it fulfills the kind of collaborative partnerships we envisioned when the corridor was created in 2011.”

Through this challenge, OCE and CQDM will support up to four qualified projects (lasting up to three years) which undertake biopharmaceutical research leading to improvements in drug discovery technologies. The challenge is not funding new drug discovery, rather the development of cutting-edge technologies with strong and immediate impact on drug discovery.

OCE and CQDM will each provide \$125,000-\$150,000 per project (up to \$500,000 each in total) with industry partners contributing another \$500,000-\$600,000 per project (up to \$2 million in total).

As industry association partners, Life Sciences Ontario and BiopolisQuébec will promote the challenge to their members and engage in outreach to drive awareness and collaboration and host an industry-academic partnering forum on Nov. 28 to solicit project proposals and to provide a networking opportunity for potential collaborators.

“We strongly believe that this newly launched program will build powerful private/public relationships across the Ontario-Québec Life Sciences Corridor” said Diane Gosselin, president and CEO at CQDM. “This program launch is in-line with our believe that partnerships are essential to support disruptive technology that really will make a difference in delivering cost effective, safe and innovative-based medications to patients.”

"It is with great pleasure that the Quebec government reiterates its support for sectoral clusters of industrial research in our new National Policy on research and innovation. We have put in place effective measures to bring together our respective advantages in the area of research. We are happy and proud to see that much networking between Quebec and Ontario researchers", said Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, Mr. Pierre Duchesne.

“This is a terrific collaboration that will benefit life sciences companies and researchers across both provinces.” said Jason Field, Executive Director of Life Sciences Ontario. “Since signing the MOU between LSO and BiopolisQuébec in 2012, we have forged a strong relationship with our partners in Quebec. This announcement is a testament to this partnership and a significant step in the evolution of the Ontario-Quebec Life Sciences Corridor.”

“BiopolisQuébec is pleased that the agreement signed with LSO in 2012 to support the Ontario-Quebec Life Sciences Corridor is paying off. The partnership between CQDM and OCE will help promote co-operation between companies and institutions in both provinces and showcase them to the rest of the world,” says Josée Fortin, Director General at Sherbrooke Innopole, a member of the BiopolisQuébec alliance.

Full details of the challenge are available at <http://www.oce-ontario.org> / <http://cqdm.org>

About Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) Inc. (www.oce-ontario.org)

Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across key market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and secure Ontario’s global competitiveness. In doing this, OCE fosters the training and development of the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs and is a key partner with Ontario’s industry, universities, colleges, research hospitals, investors and government ministries. A champion of leading-edge technologies, best practices and research, OCE invests in sectors such as advanced health, information and communications technology, digital media, advanced materials and manufacturing, agri-food, aerospace, transportation, energy, and the environment including water and mining. OCE is a key partner in delivering Ontario’s Innovation Agenda as a member of the province’s Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE). Funded by the Government of Ontario, the ONE is made up of regional and sector-focused organizations and helps Ontario-based entrepreneurs and industry rapidly grow their company and create jobs. For more information visit www.onebusiness.ca

About CQDM

CQDM is a meeting ground for all stakeholders in biopharmaceutical research. Its principal mission is to fund research projects carried out in partnership between the academic and private sectors. An innovative Canadian initiative, CQDM has two major goals: to accelerate the drug discovery process and to develop safer and more effective drugs. CQDM is funded through

contributions from Pfizer Canada, AstraZeneca, Merck, Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd., GlaxoSmithKline Inc., Eli Lilly Canada Inc., Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc., the Business-Led Networks of Centres of Excellence (BL-NCE) and the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie du Québec. For more information: www.cqdm.org

About Life Sciences Ontario

Life Sciences Ontario (LSO) is a member-driven organization that represents and promotes the province's vibrant and diverse life sciences sector. LSO collaborates with governments, academia, industry and other life science organizations in Ontario and across Canada to promote and encourage commercial success throughout this diverse sector. We do this through advocacy, facilitation of economic development, promotion of our industry locally, nationally and internationally and by bringing life sciences stakeholders together through numerous networking events. LSO is the Voice for Life Sciences in Ontario. www.lifesciencesontario.ca

About BiopolisQuébec

BiopolisQuébec is an alliance of leading life sciences regions in the province of Québec (Greater Montréal, Québec and Sherbrooke), dedicated to the international promotion of the expertise of the life sciences sector. For more information: www.quebeclifesciences.com

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