



Calixar and Synthelis team up to provide unique membrane protein services

Partnership will enable life sciences researchers and industry to access a comprehensive and innovative range of services to obtain currently unavailable therapeutic targets

Lyon and Grenoble, July 5, 2012 - Calixar, a company specialized in the isolation and crystallization of native and functional membrane proteins, and Synthelis, which is specialized in the production and vectorization of these same molecules, announce today that they have entered into an alliance for the production and isolation of all types of target membrane proteins. The results of this collaboration will have applications ranging from the development of antibodies to the discovery of new drugs, including the determination of the structure of these targets and vaccine formulations.

Instead of trying to produce these proteins themselves, users will be given access to state-of-the-art production and purification technologies, enabling them to concentrate on their core activities. Furthermore, thanks to the critical mass of skills and technologies made available to them, they will be assured of obtaining targets in their native conformation, thus guaranteeing the success of their programs for developing new drugs, vaccines and therapeutic antibodies.

Membrane proteins account for over 70% of current therapeutic targets. They are essential in discovering new drugs for the majority of the pathologies for which treatments are needed today: cancer, infectious diseases, neurodegenerative, metabolic and genetic diseases, and so on. As of now, however, there are fewer than ten companies specialized in this field around the world and, according to Calixar and Synthelis, none offers such a comprehensive and innovative range of services as their new alliance does.

The agreement provides for Synthelis to utilize its molecular biology know-how, deployed in multi-expression-systems and functional characterization configuration, to underpin the production phase. Calixar will be responsible for the possible upstream identification and subsequent isolation, purification, stabilization and crystallization of targeted membrane proteins. Calixar's technology has already been validated in some 20 targets (including GPCR receptors, ionic channels, transporters and viral proteins) and its unique approach makes it possible to preserve the native conformation of membrane proteins in solution after their extraction and purification from any biological system.

Alongside Calixar's results, Synthelis has validated its technology on more than 50 membrane targets. The production processes it has developed are also known to avoid the denaturation of membrane proteins while ensuring they have a high level of expression and activity. Moreover, Synthelis can produce large quantities (several mg) in two to three months, whereas traditional processes take up to a year.

"We have been undertaking joint R&D programs since the end of 2011, which has confirmed that our two companies have very complementary expertise," said the president and co-founder of Calixar, Emmanuel Dejean. "We now want our customers to benefit from this critical mass of know-how and technology, which no other company currently offers in Europe."

"Through this alliance, the two companies are strengthening every aspect of their business, not only their commercial clout, technical expertise and visibility but also their ability to innovate in their quest to find answers to complex sets of problems with great potential," said the president and co-founder of Synthelis, Bruno Tillier. "This partnership also has an impact on the research structure in the Lyon-Grenoble area as the two companies are based in the region."

The companies are going to undertake joint marketing campaigns to promote their product offer. Outside Europe, they also aim to get themselves known in North America and Asia.

About Calixar

Calixar was co-founded by Emmanuel Dejean and Pierre Falson in January 2011. It started life in the CREALYS incubator and is receiving ongoing support from Novacité, an organization encouraging and helping promising start-ups in the Lyon region. Now housed within the Institute of Biology and Protein Chemistry (CNRS-Lyon University) in Lyon, the company currently employs nine people.

About Synthelis

Synthelis was established in Grenoble in January 2011 to exploit the work of Prof. Jean-Luc Lenormand of Joseph Fourier University. The company was co-founded by Bruno Tiller and Jean-Luc Lenormand after being operationally incubated at Floralis-UJF Filiale and Grain. It is now being supported in its development by the Grenoble-based Pétale network.

For further information, go to: <http://www.membraneproteinalliance.com>

Contact Press and Analysts
Andrew Lloyd & Associates
Andrew Lloyd – Juliette dos Santos
Tel: +33 1 56 54 07 00
allo@ala.com - juliette@ala.com