



SENEXIS NOVEL APPROACH WINS ERBI AWARD FOR INNOVATION
Sponsor HealthTech & Medicines KTN celebrates culture of mutual support

Cambridge, UK, 30th October, 2009. Novel science caught the eye of judges for the 2009 ERBI Award for Innovation. Senexis work targeting Alzheimer's disease was seen to offer new approaches, within an exciting area of emerging science, directed at a growing area of unmet need.

Senexis CEO Mark Treherne accepted the award from sponsor Sue Dunkerton, Director of HealthTech & Medicines KTN. Sue Dunkerton comments that, through the awards, ERBI is helping to celebrate success and support the culture of innovation and continuous improvement: "To truly exploit their ideas companies need the ability to steer their way through the innovation and adoption processes. One key word is perseverance, which companies need in spades, and the East of England has an amazing source of fellow businesses and skill sets that help all stages," she says.

Mark Treherne demonstrates well that tenacity. He has over 25 year's experience in the discovery of novel treatments for diseases of central and peripheral nervous system including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. His last company Cambridge Drug Discovery was sold for £28 million in 2001. He joined Senexis in 2002 and the company has raised £6.3 million since that date.

Senexis is targeting Alzheimer's disease. There are currently no disease-modifying drugs available to treat this type of chronic degenerative condition and there is an urgent need for new treatments that target the underlying causes. Following work on a totally novel and unique therapeutic approach targeted at brain inflammation, Senexis has discovered new drug candidates that demonstrate significant efficacy within models of memory and learning. The company has filed a patent to protect this groundbreaking work.

Treherne comments that the multinational pharmaceutical sector is very interested in the potential of disease-modifying medicines. "The pharmaceutical sector is looking for new truly differentiated products and we are addressing a novel science. The prevalence of nearly all major non-infectious diseases increases with age. We have recently begun to understand the impact of aging on the turnover of proteins and this underlies many significant diseases. This is an emerging field and we are in a pole position to explore and exploit the potential of this knowledge. The quality of science and people in the region's biotech cluster is as strong as ever and the creation of a new biomed campus is

to be welcomed. Although the VC community is suffering, for areas of real unmet medical need there is always a market and corporate venturing as well as venture philanthropy is on the rise." Treherne believes that being part of a cluster that is expanding internationally is good for all the players.

Harriet Fear CEO of ERBI says that the calibre of entrants for the awards was very high "We are thrilled to be seeing new areas of science with great commercial potential. We believe celebrating success, telling strong stories and highlighting opportunities both for our members, potential members and the sector as a whole is incredibly important."

The other two short listed candidates show innovation directed at other key disease areas.

Biotica is focused on developing a treatment for patients with severe asthma. The company has developed a novel genetic engineering technology called novoPT, which enables optimisation of a family of naturally occurring products called Polyketides. Biotica is using novoPT to create analogues of FK506 that share its immunosuppressant qualities - it is shown to have benefits for asthma - but lack the systemic side effects.

Horizon Discovery is aimed at accelerating the development of niche cancer treatments. Horizon has created over 150 genetically defined human cancer cell models that enable the development of drugs and diagnostics targeted for a specific genetic profile. It uses a patented process for gene alteration that is considerably faster than the older plasmid-based technologies.

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Mark Treherne Senexis CEO (centre) accepts the 2009 ERBI Award for Innovation from sponsor Sue Dunkerton, Director of HealthTech & Medicines KTN and Barnaby Perks Marketing Director of ERBI (left)

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About ERBI

ERBI is a not-for-profit membership organisation based in Cambridge, which provides a platform for its member life science and healthcare companies to meet, interact and internationalise their businesses. Founded in 1997, it has become Europe's leading lifescience and healthcare cluster organisation.