

PRESS RELEASE

## **Mirrx Therapeutics A/S secures seed financing for development of novel microRNA-blocking technology**

**Copenhagen, Denmark. February 4, 2010.** Mirrx Therapeutics today announced that it has closed on a seed financing round that will enable the company to achieve *in vivo* proof of concept for its microRNA-blocking "Blockmir" technology, as well as to strengthen its intellectual property portfolio. Blockmirs are antisense oligonucleotides that bind to a microRNA binding site on an mRNA, blocking specific unwanted microRNA:mRNA interactions without interfering with normal cellular function. SEED Capital, Inventure Capital and Vecata Invest participated in the financing round.

Explaining the rationale for the company's novel approach to targeting microRNA pathways, founder and Chief Scientific Officer Dr. Thorleif Møller said, "Targeting microRNAs directly with antisense molecules affects the activity of many genes, since microRNAs control the activity of many target mRNAs. Avoiding these unintended effects, our approach blocks single microRNA:mRNA interactions with Blockmirs. Because Blockmirs bind to a microRNA binding site on an mRNA, they prevent the microRNA from regulating only that specific mRNA, while still allowing the microRNA to control the rest of its target mRNAs."

Ole Bitsch Jensen, Investment Manager at SEED Capital, commented, "We are very excited about the investment opportunity presented by Mirrx, because the company offers a new approach for indirectly modulating microRNA through blocking the microRNA target, and has built an impressive intellectual property position for this technology. The 'Blockmir' approach may have dramatic implications for the microRNA field, due to its potential for achieving a more targeted and predictable effect, with potentially reduced risk of unintended effects on gene activity."

As a specific example for how Blockmirs may be useful, Dr. Møller explained: "MicroRNA-122 facilitates replication of hepatitis C virus (HCV) in liver cells by binding to the 5' untranslated region of the HCV transcript. It was recently demonstrated that efficient inhibition of microRNA-122 in HCV leads to long lasting suppression of HCV viremia with no evidence for viral resistance. However, recent evidence also suggests that microRNA-122 is a tumor suppressor that regulates numerous oncogenes, so direct inactivation of microRNA-122 may present serious safety issues. Our novel Blockmir technology could potentially be used to prevent microRNA-122 from facilitating HCV replication, without any interference of the normal cellular function of microRNA-122."

Mirrx Therapeutics acquired its Blockmir technology from Stealth Biotech Aps.

### **About microRNA**

MicroRNAs bind to target mRNAs to repress protein translation. More than 500 human microRNAs have been discovered so far and it is estimated that at least one third of the human genes are subject to microRNA control. Thus, one microRNA typically regulates multiple mRNAs. Recently, microRNAs have demonstrated a role in various cancers, immunological conditions, and metabolic disorders, as well as viral infections, such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection and hepatitis C (HCV) infection.

### **About Mirrx Therapeutics**

Mirrx Therapeutics is developing a novel microRNA-blocking technology, Blockmirs, which are antisense oligonucleotides that bind to a microRNA binding site on an mRNA. This unique approach blocks single microRNA:mRNA interactions, resulting in extremely targeted regulation of specific mRNAs, thereby potentially reducing unintended effects on gene activity. [www.mirrx.com](http://www.mirrx.com)

### **About SEED Capital**

SEED Capital Denmark was formed in 2004 and manages direct investments totaling above €130 million, distributed to 60 companies in all stages of the corporate lifecycle. The Company's investment focus is predominantly on early-phase, technology-based Life Science, ICT and Cleantech companies and projects with considerable business potential. [www.seedcapital.dk](http://www.seedcapital.dk)

### **About Vecata A/S**

Vecata A/S is owned by the Bagger-Sørensen family, who also owns the chewing gum companies Gumlink and Fertin Pharma located in Vejle. Vecata's investments comprise venture backed companies and existing companies with attractive growth potential. [www.vecata.com](http://www.vecata.com)

### **About Inventure Capital A/S**

Inventure Capital A/S is an early stage venture capital investor focusing on Danish investment opportunities and companies within information technology and life science. Inventure Capital funds have a capital base of more than EUR 100 mio. Inventure Capital is based in Jutland/Funen, [www.inventurecapital.dk](http://www.inventurecapital.dk)

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