



For immediate release
6 July 2006

SYNTAXIN WINS COLLABORATIVE DTI GRANT TO INVESTIGATE BIOPHARMACEUTICAL PROCESSING

Salisbury, UK, 6 July 2006 - Syntaxin Ltd (Syntaxin), a newly formed biopharmaceutical company focusing on the discovery and development of new medicines derived from bacterial toxins to treat chronic diseases, has been awarded a collaborative R&D grant of over £1.2 million from the UK Department for Trade and Industry. Syntaxin will be collaborating with The Advanced Centre for Biochemical Engineering (ACBE) at UCL (University College London), and the UK Health Protection Agency (HPA) to develop enhanced methods for the bioprocessing of complex proteins that can be used as biopharmaceuticals to treat neurological, respiratory and metabolic diseases.

Syntaxin will design the therapeutics to be investigated using its expertise and intellectual property in designing novel recombinant proteins and candidate biopharmaceutical agents. The ACBE is the UK focus for bioprocess research, and will apply its expertise in ultra scale-down experimentation and process modelling to rapidly explore novel bioprocess routes and their optimisation. The HPA will then undertake the scale-up of these methodologies in order to develop manufacturing processes for Syntaxin's biotherapeutic candidates.

Dr Keith Foster, Chief Scientific Officer of Syntaxin, in announcing this award, said: "Syntaxin has a product development platform that can generate a range of biotherapeutic molecules with several common features: these include a common expression vehicle, and shared protein domains. This award provides us with an excellent opportunity to work with two world-class institutions to develop new and improved manufacturing processes that we will be able to apply to our development programmes. The knowledge that we will generate through this programme will accelerate our ability to bring important new medicines for chronic diseases to the market."

Dr Roger Gilmour, Director of the HPA's centre at Porton Down said: "Process development and scale-up for the manufacture of biologics to good manufacturing practice standards is one of the key capabilities of the Agency, and we are delighted to be able to help Syntaxin develop new medicines."

-Ends-

Notes for Editors

For further enquiries contact:

Syntaxin Ltd
Dr Charles Penn (Chief Operating Officer)
Tel +44 (0)1980 619801
charles.penn@syntaxin.com

Northbank Communications
Gemma Bradley, Susan Yu, Katja Stout
Tel +44 (0)20 7886 8150
g.bradley@northbankcommunications.com

About Syntaxin Ltd

Syntaxin (www.syntaxin.com) was formed in November 2005 with a mission to discover, develop and commercialise novel pharmaceuticals for the treatment of disorders such as pain, COPD, asthma, Cystic Fibrosis and metabolic diseases. The company has strong technology and intellectual property foundations in the area of neurotoxins. As a spin-out from the UK Health Protection Agency (HPA), Porton Down, the company benefits from over 15 years of research in this field resulting in a proprietary molecular toolbox approach to create engineered toxins for control of cell secretion (including neurotransmission). These technologies have already produced products that have been tested in preclinical models of certain diseases states.

Resulting from its HPA origins, Syntaxin has an established executive management and scientific team which will be expanded this year to support new product development. The company earns substantial revenues from its first strategic alliance with Allergan Inc, a global specialty pharmaceutical and medical device company that develops and commercializes products in the ophthalmology, neurosciences, medical dermatology, aesthetics, obesity intervention and other specialty markets that deliver value to its customers, satisfy unmet medical needs, and improve patients' lives.

Syntaxin closed a £6million Series A financing in 2005 led by Abingworth Management Ltd, a leading healthcare venture firm with a proven track record in building valuable biotechnology businesses from start-up through public offering. Abingworth is working closely with the Syntaxin management team to accelerate product and commercial development opportunities.

About the Health Protection Agency

The Health Protection Agency is an independent body, formed in 2003 to protect the health and well-being of everyone in England and Wales. As well as providing a co-ordinated response to emerging chemical, radiological and biological health threats, including the threat of bioterrorism, the Agency also undertakes contract research, manufacture and service activities for industry.

The Agency's core business areas are contract research and development of vaccines against infectious diseases, process development and GMP manufacture of biologics derived from microbial fermentation and the development of novel therapeutics with healthcare benefits. In addition, a wide range of support services are offered from biosafety, through GLP immunoassay testing to *in vivo* studies and the supply of cell cultures.

About the Advanced Centre for Biochemical Engineering

The Advanced Centre for Biochemical Engineering at University College London is concerned with creating new ways of proceeding faster from discovery to bioprocess. This has become especially critical for the new generation of complex pharmaceuticals which embrace human proteins and are likely to include in the future human genes and cells. The ACBE hosts the EPSRC funded Innovative Manufacturing Research Centre (IMRC) for Bioprocessing a collaborative programme involving a range of university departments and leading international biopharmaceutical companies.

The UCL approach uses micro biochemical engineering studies, many of them automated, and models of the whole bioprocess. Together these can predict performance in some cases and identify critical process issues with others. In this way the development team can go to

the pilot plant with insight so that a few highly focused trials can be planned. Research on the DTI project at UCL will be led by Dr Paul Dalby and Professor Gary Lye.

About UCL

Founded in 1826, UCL was the first English university established after Oxford and Cambridge, the first to admit students regardless of race, class, religion or gender, and the first to provide systematic teaching of law, architecture and medicine. In the government's most recent Research Assessment Exercise, 59 UCL departments achieved top ratings of 5* and 5, indicating research quality of international excellence.

UCL is the fourth-ranked UK university in the 2005 league table of the top 500 world universities produced by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University. UCL alumni include Mahatma Gandhi (Laws 1889, Indian political and spiritual leader); Jonathan Dimbleby (Philosophy 1969, writer and television presenter); Junichiro Koizumi (Economics 1969, Prime Minister of Japan); Lord Woolf (Laws 1954, former Lord Chief Justice of England & Wales); Alexander Graham Bell (Phonetics 1860s, inventor of the telephone); and members of the band Coldplay.

DTI Technology Programme and Strategy

The UK Government's ten-year Science and Innovation Investment Framework, published in July 2004, reaffirmed the commitment to support businesses investing in new and emerging technologies. Over the period 2005-2008, £320 million is available to businesses in the form of grants to support research and development in the technology area in a programme managed by the Department of Trade and Industry. For further information please go to <http://www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme/>