

NEWS RELEASE



LifeArc and Metrion Biosciences extend partnership agreement to support LifeArc's neuroscience small molecule drug discovery programme

Metrion to provide in-depth ion channel target class knowledge and assay support

Cambridge, UK, 31 July 2017: Metrion Biosciences Limited (Metrion), the specialist ion channel CRO and drug discovery company, and LifeArc, the UK medical research charity previously known as MRC Technology, today announced an extension of their existing partnership, to support LifeArc's neuroscience drug discovery programme.

Under the terms of the agreement Metrion will provide validated ion channel and electrophysiology-based assays and safety profiling services, and LifeArc will conduct medicinal chemistry aimed at identifying novel modulators of an undisclosed CNS ion channel target. In addition, Metrion will contribute translational research expertise to evaluate the activity of LifeArc compounds in human neuronal networks,

Metrion will provide translational assay support by applying its extensive background knowledge in ion channel research, microelectrode array (MEA) technology, and access to its CiPA-compliant cardiac safety assays.

Dr Andrew Southan, Chief Operating Officer, Metrion Biosciences, said: "The Metrion team has a long history of developing, validating, and providing specialist ion channel assays to optimise and select development candidate molecules. We believe combining this with translational neuroscience and microelectrode array capability, as we are in this promising project with LifeArc, may be particularly successful in CNS research."

Justin Bryans, Executive Director, Drug Discovery, LifeArc, commented: "LifeArc is committed to working with cutting edge organisations such as Metrion, capitalising on our combined expertise and capabilities to advance programmes addressing human health. Our previous experience in working with the team at Metrion has been excellent, and we look forward to continuing the relationship."

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About Metrion Biosciences

Metrion Biosciences is a specialist ion-channel contract research organisation and drug discovery business. The Company provides customers with access to a range of high quality ion channel assays on a fee-for-service or collaboration basis. Metrion Biosciences' ion channel expertise includes an industry leading panel of *in vitro* cardiac ion channel safety assays, translational native cell and phenotypic assays for neurological and cardiotoxicity testing, and a range of other ion channel screening services such as cell line development and optimisation. Metrion Biosciences is able to provide tailored assay formats, data analysis and reporting solutions, effective project management and quality assured data packages.

www.metrionbiosciences.com

Twitter: @Metrion_Biosci

About LifeArc

LifeArc is the new name for MRC Technology, a medical research charity with a 25 year legacy of helping scientists and organisations turn their research into treatments and diagnostics for patients.

The new name reflects the charity's purpose: to be the arc or bridge between research and improving patients' lives.

LifeArc is pioneering new ways to turn great science into greater patient impact. It brings together a network of partners to tackle specific diseases and directly funds academic and early stage research. The current five-year focus is on antimicrobials, neuroscience, personalised oncology and respiratory projects. Work with other medical research charities and foundations outside of these therapy areas will continue, as these partners play a crucial role in helping LifeArc understand potential new areas to research in the future.

The charity has dedicated laboratories in Stevenage where around 80 scientists work on antibody and small molecule projects, while the Edinburgh lab progresses diagnostics development.

So far, LifeArc's work has helped to develop four drugs (Keytruda®, Actemra®, Tysabri® and Entyvio®) and a test for antimicrobial resistance.

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