

## Press release

### **TcLand Expression signs a licensing agreement with Inserm Transfert and initiates a strategic collaboration on the development of companion diagnostic tests for rheumatoid arthritis therapies**

**Nantes, France, July 7, 2010** – [TcLand Expression SA](#), a global leader in the field of gene expression biomarkers in allo- and auto-immunity, today announced the signature of a licensing agreement with Inserm Transfert, a private-sector technology transfer subsidiary of the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research (Inserm). The terms of the agreement include the grant of worldwide, exclusive licenses to TcLand Expression for two different patents<sup>1</sup> covering gene expression signatures which can predict responsiveness to rheumatoid arthritis (RA) therapies.

TcLand Expression is developing and clinically validating gene-expression-based biomarkers in the field of transplantation and companion diagnostic tests for use with auto-immune disease therapies. Based on the methods protected by the two Inserm patents, TcLand Expression intends to develop companion diagnostic tests for RA therapies. The signature of this agreement marks the start of close collaboration between the two organizations because TcLand Expression's researchers will cooperate with the joint Inserm/University of Rouen U905 "Physiopathology and Biotherapy of Inflammatory and Autoimmune Disease" research unit (headed by Professor Olivier Boyer).

*"This agreement is much more than a simple licensing deal because it means that our R&D division will collaborate closely with Inserm researchers on the design of companion diagnostics for treatment of RA - a severe, disabling disease which affects some 70 million people worldwide!",* commented TcLand Expression CEO Alain Huriez. *"Our company has forged a number of strategic collaborations for the development of new biomarkers in this disease area - not only with the Inserm but also with the Vall d'Hebron University Hospital Research Institute in Spain and the Lyons Public Hospitals Group in France",* he concluded.

*"TcLand Expression is an Inserm spin-out and so we are particularly delighted to help consolidate its business activity - as we have done in the past and will no doubt continue to do in the future. The company is very well positioned in the field of biomarkers and personalized medicine - the strategic themes in this collaborative exploitation of the Inserm's research work",* commented Cécile Tharaud, Inserm Transfert CEO.

*"Our combined skills will enable us to design a test which should deliver significant progress in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and the development of companion diagnostic products",* concluded Professor Olivier Boyer.

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<sup>1</sup> patent application WO2007IB02373, filed on May 15, 2007, entitled "A method for predicting responsiveness to TNF $\alpha$  blocking agents" (first-listed inventor: Jean-Philippe Salier) and patent application EP 083052522 filed on June 12, 2008, entitled "A method for predicting the response to a treatment with anakinra" (first-listed inventor: Thierry Lequerré).

TcLand Expression and its partners (Professor Pierre Miossec at Edouard Herriot Hospital in Lyons and Professor Olivier Vittecoq and Dr Thierry Lequerré at Inserm U905) have received €450,000 in funding from the French National Research Agency (*Agence Nationale de la Recherche*, ANR) for this program.

### **About rheumatoid arthritis**

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is the most common severe type of inflammatory arthritis. It affects young individuals, with a greater prevalence in women. Given that the chronic inflammation in RA leads to joint destruction and cardiovascular damage, this disease constitutes a major public health concern. Despite significant progress in the treatment of RA over the last 10 years, many patients only respond partially and true remission is only achieved in a small proportion of cases. Joint destruction cannot be halted in all patients and the repair of existing damage (let alone a cure) is still an unattainable goal. Furthermore, some patients have to stop treatment because of toxicity and adverse events. The ability to predict the response to a treatment prior to its initiation would constitute a major step forward and would optimize patient care, reduce the risk of adverse events and substantially reduce healthcare costs.

### **About TcLand Expression**

TcLand Expression is an acknowledged pioneer in the discovery, the development and the validation of gene expression biomarkers for unmet medical needs in transplantation and auto-immune disease. The company benefits from an exceptional scientific and clinical environment.

For more information, please visit our website: [www.tcland-expression.com](http://www.tcland-expression.com)

### **About Inserm Transfert**

Founded in 2000, Inserm Transfert SA is the private subsidiary of the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research (Inserm), dedicated to technology transfer (from invention disclosure to industrial partnership). Inserm Transfert manages European and International research projects, supports preclinical, clinical and post-marketing studies. Since 2009, Inserm Transfert has run a proof-of-concept fund. The company is also committed to seed financing in the biotech sector, through its dedicated fund Inserm Transfert Initiative.

For more information, please visit our website: [www.inserm-transfert.fr](http://www.inserm-transfert.fr)

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