LifeSciences British Columbia

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British Columbia Life Sciences Sector Leads the Way in Securing Federal Research Funding -- *Four New Centres of Excellence for Commercialization Established in BC*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26th, 2007; Vancouver, BC – British Columbia's life sciences research community has once again demonstrated its stature as a true national leader in the commercialization of innovation by proving to be the most successful sector and cluster in Canada at securing recent federal funding.

Last week's announcement by the The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry saw $163 million invested towards establishing 11 new Centres of Excellence for Commercialization and Research (CECRs) across the country, with a total of four of those being in British Columbia.

The successful BC Centres of Excellence for Commercialization are:

- The Centre for Drug Research and Development (CDRD);
- CECR in the Prevention of Epidemic Organ Failure (PROOF);
- The Prostate Centre's Translational Research Initiative for Accelerated Discovery and Development (PC-TRIADD);
- Advanced Applied Physics Solutions, Inc. (AAPS).

(See Background below for additional detail on each centre)

All told, BC projects garnered a total of $59.8 million or approximately 37% of the national total, equaling that of Ontario and exceeding any other province.

Karimah Es Sabar, President of LifeSciences BC commented, "On behalf of the entire life sciences community in British Columbia, I congratulate all of the successful proponents, and thank them for the contribution they are making to our collective success. Each of these programs, and the numerous people behind them are a tremendous asset to our community, and a primary reason why BC-led research receives such national and international attention. LifeSciences BC is proud to have lent our voice in support of each of these CECR applications, as we know that each of the centres is going to bring an even greater level of success and recognition to our cluster."

The federal 2007 budget allocated $195 million over the next two years to create new Centres of Excellence for Commercialization and Research in four priority areas: environmental science and technologies, natural resources and energy, health and life sciences, and information and communication technologies. The program supports the operating and commercialization costs of the centres, and is a cornerstone of Canada's Science and Technology Strategy. One of the goals of the strategy, launched in May 2007, is to encourage more private sector investment in research and development. The strategy also emphasizes capitalizing on our people, knowledge and entrepreneurial advantages to build a stronger Canadian society and economy.

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About LifeSciences British Columbia
Life Sciences British Columbia supports and represents the biotechnology, medical device and greater life sciences community of British Columbia through leadership, advocacy and promotion of our world-class science and industry. Via active facilitation of partnering and investment into the life sciences sector, British Columbia is fast becoming a global life sciences leader. LifeSciences British Columbia is a not-for-profit, non-government, industry-funded association.

BACKGROUND

Centre for Drug Research and Development (CDRD), Vancouver, BC
The Centre for Drug Research and Development proposes to dramatically increase the probability that discoveries made by Canadian researchers become medicines that improve the health and well-being of Canadians and millions worldwide. The CDRC will provide an infrastructure in which the therapeutic potential of medical discoveries can be better validated in the academic environment, reducing the risk of failure in subsequent development. The CDRD is mobilizing the scientific disciplines from academia to conduct drug discovery in an integrated, collaborative manner. The Centre is combining this with a commercial arm to ensure that promising discoveries receive the investment necessary to become new medicines. In addition, the CDRD training model promises to produce highly-skilled workers to drive the therapeutic innovation pipeline, attract international talent to Canada, and spur growth in knowledge-based jobs and companies.
Centre Director: Ms. Natalie Dakers, CDRD

The Prostate Centre's Translational Research Initiative for Accelerated Discovery and Development (PC-TRIADD), Vancouver, BC
The Prostate Centre at Vancouver General Hospital is one of the world's most comprehensive and respected prostate cancer facilities, with an outstanding team of renowned scientists and clinicians. The Prostate Centre's Translational Research Initiative for Accelerated Discovery and Development (PC-TRIADD) integrates critical components of translational research under one organization, allowing the seamless management of the complex processes involved in discovery, preclinical development and clinical research in close partnership with national clinical trials and research networks, as well as industry. While PC-TRIADD focuses on prostate cancer, many of its services and discoveries can be applied to other cancers.
Centre Director: Dr. Martin Gleave, The Prostate Centre

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CECR in the Prevention of Epidemic Organ Failure (PROOF), Vancouver, BC
The Prevention Of Epidemic Organ Failure (PROOF) CECR will lead the way in finding practical solutions to vital organ failure and its impact on Canadians and our health care system. PROOF's team of world-class researchers, scientists and clinicians are committed to improving the standard of care and quality of life for all patients in Canada faced with heart, lung and kidney failure. PROOF believes that moving away from drug-only strategies towards biomarker-guided prevention and effective early detection of primary diseases is the best way to diminish the epidemic of vital organ failure and its socioeconomic impact.
Centre Director: Dr. Bruce McManus, University of British Columbia

Advanced Applied Physics Solutions, Inc. (AAPS), Vancouver, BC
Advanced Applied Physics Solutions Inc. is a wholly owned, not-for-profit subsidiary of TRIUMF, Canada's National Laboratory for Particle and Nuclear Physics. AAPS' mission is to improve the quality of life of people around the globe by developing technologies emerging from worldwide subatomic physics research. AAPS will collaborate with academic, government, and industry stakeholders to research and develop promising technologies to a commercially viable stage, while increasing domestic industrial capacity to ensure long-term societal and economic benefits to Canada. During its initial five years, AAPS plans to form at least six joint ventures. One of these will develop a new underground imaging system to improve productivity in the natural resource sector. Others will develop technologies with a range of applications, including medical isotope production and pollution mitigation.
Centre Director: Mr. Philip Gardner, TRIUMF