



UniQuest Licenses Intellectual Property to Organovo for Kidney Toxicity Screening and Drug Development

October 13, 2015

BRISBANE, Australia and SAN DIEGO, Oct. 13, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- UniQuest, the main technology transfer and commercialisation company of The University of Queensland (UQ), has signed an exclusive worldwide licensing agreement with Organovo Holdings, Inc. (NYSE MKT:ONVO), a three-dimensional biology company focused on delivering scientific and medical breakthroughs using its 3D bioprinting technology, to patent applications relating to methodology for producing kidney cells from induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs).

Professor Melissa Little and her team at UQ's Institute for Molecular Bioscience developed a method of growing kidney tissue from iPSCs for potential use in drug screening, disease modelling and cell therapy.

[The research, published last week in the prestigious scientific journal *Nature*](#), has shown that this method forms an organ with all the cell types normally present in the human kidney. Previously, Professor Little and her team grew a "mini-kidney" in a dish that contained two cell types, but the team have now gone one step further to develop the method of growing more complete kidney tissue, using iPSCs.

"The mini-kidney we have been able to grow is very complex and more like the real organ," Professor Little said. "This is important for drug testing as we hope these mini-kidneys will respond to the drugs as a normal organ might."

Organovo will further develop the intellectual property with the support of Professor Little and her team for commercial applications such as kidney disease modelling, nephrotoxicity screening and discovery of compounds which may improve renal function for patients with genetic kidney disease. Separately, Organovo is developing a kidney proximal tubule tissue product using its bioprinting technology scheduled for release in 2016; products that would incorporate the newly developed technology licensed from UniQuest to provide a complete kidney tissue would be expected to be launched later.

Organovo's Chief Technology Officer, Sharon Presnell, Ph.D. commented, "We are excited to license this groundbreaking technology to enable the development of human kidney tissues that could change the landscape of drug testing and kidney research. Working with leading scientists such as Professor Little extends our leadership position in the generation and commercialization of tissues that better recreate in vivo human biology."

UniQuest CEO Dr. Dean Moss said, "This deal is anchored in world-leading induced pluripotent stem cell research by Professor Melissa Little and follows a research collaboration between The University of Queensland and Organovo, facilitated by UniQuest. We are delighted to work with Organovo so that they can further develop and commercialise the technology to accelerate the drug discovery process and enable treatments to be developed faster and at lower cost."

Under the terms of the agreement, Organovo is granted worldwide development and commercialization rights for *in vitro* applications. In addition to an upfront technology access fee, UniQuest is eligible to receive milestone and royalty payments. No specific terms of the deal were disclosed.

About Organovo Holdings Inc.

Organovo designs and creates functional, three-dimensional human tissues for use in medical research and therapeutic applications. The Company develops 3D human disease models through internal development and in collaboration with pharmaceutical and academic partners. Organovo's 3D human tissues have the potential to accelerate the drug discovery process, enabling treatments to be developed faster and at lower cost. The Company recently launched its initial product of the planned exVive3D portfolio offering, the exVive3D Human Liver Tissue for use in toxicology and other preclinical drug testing. Additional products are in development. The Company also actively conducts early research on specific tissues for therapeutic use in direct surgical applications. In addition to numerous scientific publications, the Company's technology has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time Magazine*, *The Economist*, and numerous other media outlets. Organovo is changing the shape of medical research and practice. Learn more at www.organovo.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

Any statements contained in this press release that do not describe historical facts constitute forward-looking statements as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Any forward-looking statements contained herein are based on current expectations, but are subject to a number of risks and uncertainties. The factors that could cause the Company's actual future results to differ materially from current expectations include, but are not limited to, the risks and uncertainties identified and described in more detail in the Company's filings with the SEC, including its Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the SEC on June 9, 2015 and its Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed with the SEC on August 10, 2015. You should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date that they were made. These cautionary statements should be considered with any written or oral forward-looking statements that the Company may issue in the future. Except as required by applicable law, including the securities laws of the United States, the Company does not intend to update any of the forward-looking statements to conform these statements to reflect actual results, later events or circumstances or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events.

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