Editas Medicine Licenses Genome Editing Technology from Duke University

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Exclusive Agreement Provides Access to Intellectual Property and Technology for the Development of Human Therapeutics

Cambridge, Mass., December 1, 2014 – Editas Medicine, a leading genome editing company, today announced that they have entered into an exclusive license agreement with Duke University to access intellectual property and technology related to the CRISPR/Cas9 and TALEN genome editing systems. The license allows broad utilization of the technology developed in the laboratory of Charles Gersbach, Ph.D., for the prevention or treatment of human disease.

“Charlie Gersbach is a leader in the field of genome editing and also in Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a genetically-driven disease,” said Katrine Bosley, chief executive officer, Editas Medicine. “Charlie’s deep expertise in both genome editing and in this area of biology is a tremendous asset as we begin to understand how to apply genome editing technologies to specific diseases.”

About Genome Editing

Following an explosion of high-profile publications on CRISPR/Cas9 and TALENs, genome editing has emerged as one of the most exciting new areas of scientific research. These recent advances have made it possible to modify, in a targeted way, almost any gene in the human body with the ability to directly turn on, turn off or edit disease- causing genes. Editas Medicine’s five founders have published much of the foundational work that has elevated genome editing technology to a level where it can now be optimized and developed for therapeutic use.

CRISPR (clustered, regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats)/Cas9 (CRISPR- associated protein 9) and TALENs (transcription activator-like effector nucleases) comprise novel gene editing methods that overcome the challenges associated with previous technologies. Early published research on CRISPR/Cas9, coupled with a growing body of work on TALENs, suggests the potential to pursue therapeutic indications that have previously been intractable to traditional gene therapy, gene knock- down or other genome modification techniques. The CRISPR/Cas9 system, the most recent and exciting approach to emerge, acts by a mechanism in which the Cas9 protein binds to specific RNA molecules. The RNA molecules guide the Cas9 complex to the exact location in the genome that requires repair. CRISPR/Cas9 uniquely enables highly efficient knock-out, knock-down or selective editing of defective genes in the context of their natural promoters, unlocking the ability to treat the root cause of a broad range of diseases.

About Duke University

Duke University enrolls more than 14,000 students in its undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, and its world-class faculty is helping to expand the frontiers of knowledge. The university has a strong commitment to applying knowledge in service to society, both near its Durham, North Carolina, campus and around the world. For more information, go to www.duke.edu.

About Editas Medicine

Editas is a leading genome editing company and part of a transformational new area of health care – genomic medicine. The company was founded by the pioneers and world leaders in genome editing bringing specific expertise in CRISPR/Cas9 and TALENs technologies. The company’s mission is to translate its proprietary technology into novel solutions to treat a broad range of genetically-driven diseases. For more information, visit www.editasmedicine.com.

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