

News Release

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Lonza and NovImmune announce manufacturing agreement for clinical grade monoclonal antibodies

Basel and Geneva, February 20, 2004 –Lonza, Basel, and the Geneva-based drug development company NovImmune today announced an agreement for the production and supply of clinical grade monoclonal antibody drugs, all the way to market supply. NovImmune develops fully human therapeutic monoclonal antibodies, based on its direct access to both the transgenic mouse technology (humice) and the antibody display technology. This agreement provides Lonza with access to the whole pipeline of NovImmune, a potential for the manufacturing of NovImmune's own products as well as of those developed with or licensed to partners. Lonza will manufacture the products all the way to market. NovImmune gains access to Lonza's development and manufacturing capacity.

"We very much look forward to meeting the manufacturing needs of NovImmune and of its partners. The agreement will initially lead to the production of two antibodies and provision of GMP material for clinical trials. Lonza is one of the worlds' leaders in the manufacture of antibodies and is very pleased to have the opportunity to apply its experience to the products which are being developed by NovImmune", said Markus Gemuend, CEO of Lonza Group.

"Our manufacturing agreement with Lonza deals with one of the recognized bottlenecks in the development of therapeutic monoclonal antibodies" said Jack Barbut, ScD, CEO of NovImmune. "In addition to covering our own immediate manufacturing needs towards phase I and II clinical trials, this agreement offers our future licensing partners an access to manufacturing, for each of our products, all the way to market supply. This adds considerable value to NovImmune's therapeutic antibody program. NovImmune's focus on immune-related diseases and inflammation, is supported by strong immunobiology in house and consequently on unusually stringent biological validation for each of its monoclonal products. In our view, this is an important asset to minimize the risk of subsequent failure in clinical trials."

Lonza

Lonza is a life sciences driven company, headquartered in Switzerland, which generated sales of CHF 2.24 billion in 2003. It operates 18 production and R&D facilities in eight countries and employs 5660 people worldwide. Lonza is one of the leading custom manufacturers of chemical intermediates and active ingredients as well as biopharmaceuticals for the pharmaceutical and agrochemical industries. In addition, Lonza also offers organic intermediates for a wide range of applications and provides antimicrobial and associated products as well as polymer intermediates and compounds. For more information please visit the company's website at www.lonza.com.

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NovImmune

NovImmune is a Geneva-based drug development company focusing on immune related diseases, inflammation and immunosuppression. Its main products are fully human therapeutic monoclonal antibodies, directed against well validated and medically relevant targets. NovImmune will partner most of its antibody drugs after completion of phase II clinical trials. In addition, NovImmune is developing a new class of immunosuppressors and anti-inflammatory agents as low molecular weight inhibitors of MHC Class II expression, directed against highly specific and totally validated protein targets. NovImmune has concluded 10 biotech alliances, giving the company access to key technologies required to implement its drug development program.

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