



MEDIA RELEASE: Q-Sera Pty Ltd

Australian investors back improved blood collection tube

Australia's Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF) and Uniseed Commercialisation Fund have jointly invested \$900,000 for Q-Sera Pty Ltd to commercialise an improved blood collection tube based on intellectual property from The University of Queensland (UQ) Centre for Clinical Research.

The start-up biotechnology company will develop an improved blood collection tube for producing high quality serum in a clinical setting, based on the blood clotting properties of venom from a specific Australian snake.

The Q-Sera technology is based on the research of Dr Martin Lavin from the UQ Centre for Clinical Research, Dr Paul Masci from the UQ School of Medicine and Dr John de Jersey from the UQ School of Chemistry & Molecular Biosciences, and Dr Goce Dimeski.

MRCF Investment Manager Dr Bev Thomas said the opportunity to support Q-Sera reflected the Fund's charter to foster best practice in the commercialisation of innovation and to support Australia's emerging medical discoveries to generate returns for its investors.

"We immediately recognised the global application of the technology and its potential to improve diagnosis and ultimately patient outcomes."

"In clinical settings, particularly where urgent test results are required, the wait for the analysis of serum can delay lifesaving treatment or cause errors in patient diagnosis. By investing in Q-Sera we are working to improve the process."

Uniseed CEO Dr Peter Devine said the opportunity to add yet another uniquely Australian discovery to its biotechnology investment portfolio was particularly appealing.

"The Q-Sera research has isolated an important class of proteins from certain Australian snakes that have the ability to rapidly clot blood in a blood collection tube. The species may be native to Australia but the impact of this technology is likely to be felt worldwide," Dr Devine said.

The Q-Sera technology aims to reduce the time required to produce high quality serum in blood clotting tubes, used in biochemical and other pathology assays and involves coating blood collection tubes with a naturally occurring coagulation agent, isolated from the venom of certain Australian snakes to accelerate the clotting of blood.

Serum is produced by allowing the blood to clot, then applying centrifugation to separate the serum. Tubes currently used contain a clot activator, but they are unable to clot blood from some patients, e.g. cardiac patients taking anticoagulants such as warfarin or heparin. This limitation risks inaccurate clinical results and diagnosis.

The Q-Sera research has demonstrated successful clotting of such blood samples, providing a higher degree of confidence around patient diagnosis and patient care.

The agreement was negotiated by UniQuest, UQ's main commercialisation company, which has led commercialisation of the Q-Sera technology to-date. As a result of this investment Dr Bev Thomas of Brandon Capital Partners, Dr John Kurek of Uniseed and Dr Judy Halliday of UniQuest will join the Board of Directors of Q-Sera.

"This investment is UQ's second transaction with the MRCF and 18th with Uniseed – that's a powerful endorsement of UQ's quality of translational research," said UniQuest Managing Director, David Henderson.

"The Q-Sera deal also highlights the value that collaborations between multi-disciplinary research teams and commercial funding bodies can add to the efforts of Australian researchers working on innovative solutions to common clinical needs," Mr Henderson said.

No other terms of the agreement have been disclosed. However, as UniQuest represents a number of life sciences institutes that are members of the MRCF research community and the universities that founded Uniseed, the Q-Sera transaction is expected to help pave a promising path for future investment agreements with both funding bodies.

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About Q-Sera Pty Ltd

Q-Sera is a start-up company from the Centre for Clinical Research, The University of Queensland that will develop a new type of serum collection tube. The technology behind Q-Sera involves using a certain class of proteins from the venom of specific Australian snakes to accelerate the clotting of blood in an improved blood collection tube to produce high quality serum for biochemical analysis. The company is developing a prototype tube and proof-of-concept clinical study to demonstrate the superiority of the Q-Sera tube compared to the current commercial tubes in clotting blood from healthy volunteers and cardiac patients.

About The Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF) www.mrcf.com.au

The \$51 million Medical Research Commercialisation Fund (MRCF) Collaboration is an innovative investment collaboration established in 2007 and managed by Brandon Capital Partners (www.brandoncapital.com.au). The MRCF invests in early stage development and commercialisation opportunities emanating from its membership of 32 Australian medical research institutes and allied research hospitals, that include the Centre for Clinical Research. The MRCF IIF, LP fund is supported by AustralianSuper, StatewideSuper and the Australian Government under its IIF program. The MRCF also acknowledges the support of the State governments of Victoria, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland.

About Uniseed

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Uniseed is a \$61 million commercialisation fund operating at the University of Queensland, New South Wales and Melbourne. Apart from these three universities, Australian Super, one of Australia's largest superannuation funds, is also a member. Uniseed has made over 30 investments in technologies arising from its partner universities including Vintela (AVCAL Best Early Stage Deal 2005) and QRx-Pharma (largest biotech IPO in ASX history). www.uniseed.com

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