Prosensa Therapeutics awarded top prize for biotechnology innovation in Europe winning EuropaBio's 2011 Most Innovative Biotech SME Award

Brussels, November 8th

Today, at the EuropaBio event entitled "Biotechnology: what's in it for you", hosted at the European Parliament by Julie Girling, MEP, Prosensa Therapeutics was revealed as this year’s winner of EuropaBio’s Most Innovative European Biotech SME Award.

The winning SME fought off stiff competition from 26 other applicants from across the EU, all of which demonstrated ground-breaking research in the field of biotechnology in its healthcare, agricultural and industrial applications. The judging panel consisted of G. Steven Burrill, Founding CEO of Burrill and Company; Dr Paul Ruebig, MEP; Tom Saylor, Chair of EuropaBio’s SME Platform and CEO of Arecor as well as Nathalie Moll, Secretary General of EuropaBio.

This year's five finalists including AiCuris GmbH & CO., Biocentras, Cardio3 BioSciences and to-BBB, presented their innovative findings to the judging panel and an audience of high-level EU decision makers, CEOs and venture capitalists during the event before the Dutch based company was selected as the over-all winner. During the event, G. Steven Burrill, Founding CEO of Burrill & Company, gave a fascinating keynote address looking back on over 25 years of biotechnology research and applications and looking forward to what our world will look like in 2020 thanks to advances in this unique life enabling technology.

Prosensa Therapeutics was awarded the top prize for their efforts in developing a treatment for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) – an inherited, lethal childhood rare disease. DMD is highly debilitating and gradually weakens muscles to the effect that the child is often left wheelchair bound by the age of 12, with a mean life expectancy of just 25-30 years of age. Currently, there is no effective treatment for DMD. However, Prosensa has one of the world’s most advanced programmes to develop an innovative pipeline of products to treat DMD and its lead product is already in phase III clinical trials.

The award, a prize of €10,000 and two years free membership of EuropaBio was presented by the Judges and Daniel Calleja- Crespo, Deputy Director General DG Industry and Entrepreneurship and
EU Commission special envoy for SMEs who also addressed the event detailing the Commission’s plans for boosting European SMEs.

Commenting on the significance of Prosensa’s work, EuropaBio Chairman and Royal DSM Board Member, Stephan Tanda, said: “Prosensa Therapeutics is an outstanding example of a highly creative SME willing to tackle societal challenges with passion and perseverance. Prosensa has pioneered a very innovative solution to address an important unmet medical need—DMD, starting from funds raised predominantly through patient groups eager to find solutions to address this terrible disease. I am extremely encouraged to see a European company at the forefront of research and innovation in this field. It is imperative now that this great work is supported by appropriate policy measures by the EU so that companies like Prosensa can continue to benefit society.”

Tom Saylor, Chair of EuropaBio’s SME Platform and judging panel member added: “All of the applicants for this award were outstanding in their achievements and selecting one winner was a tough task. I would like to congratulate Prosensa Therapeutics not only for winning the award but for their extremely innovative and fascinating research. In a challenging regulatory and monetary environment, they have overcome obstacles facing SMEs in Europe to establish themselves as one of the world’s leading SMEs contributing towards a solution to DMD. At EuropaBio we will continue to work towards removing the barriers facing biotech SMEs in Europe such as access to finance, expensive and bureaucratic regulatory systems and market fragmentation”.

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