



## Press Release

### **Cenix BioScience Signs Framework Research Agreement with AstraZeneca for RNAi-Based Drug Discovery.**

*Dresden, Germany, March 19, 2008* – Cenix BioScience GmbH (Dresden), the leading specialist in advanced RNA interference (RNAi)-based research services, today announced that it has signed a framework research agreement with AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, to advance the latter's efforts in the discovery and validation of novel therapeutic drug targets.

Cenix will apply its well-established expertise in combining high throughput (HT) applications of RNAi-based gene silencing, the technology behind the 2006 Nobel Prize for Medicine, with high content phenotypic analyses in cultured human cells. The initial project will involve a HT-RNAi screen using an assay strategy co-designed with AstraZeneca scientists to discover and validate novel oncology targets. Cenix will adapt and implement multi-parametric microscopy-based assays using the Cellenger image analysis platform from Munich-based Definiens, to generate detailed insights into the cellular functions and loss-of-function phenotypes of analyzed genes. Such RNAi datasets, now widely favored throughout the industry, offer a highly predictive and cost-effective basis for discovering and prioritizing targets for therapeutic drug development in a wide range of disease fields.

"We are very excited to begin working with AstraZeneca scientists to help advance their discovery pipeline with this powerful and well-proven technology," said Dr. Christophe Echeverri, CEO/CSO of Cenix. "We look forward to driving this relationship beyond the initial pilot through to multiple projects, as we have successfully done with other major pharma partners: by exceeding expectations on scientific and strategic excellence, and delivering the most detailed and professional reporting available in this field."

#### **About Cenix BioScience GmbH**

Cenix BioScience GmbH is a pioneer and global leader in the convergence of high throughput (HT), genomics-driven applications of RNA interference (RNAi) with high content, multi-parametric cell-based assays. Founded in 1999 as the first biotechnology company specializing exclusively in HT-RNAi, Cenix has accumulated unparalleled depth and breadth of experience in this field, using human and rodent cell models to drive the discovery and validation of novel therapeutic drug targets and the analysis of drug mechanisms of action in a wide range of disease indications, including oncology, atherosclerosis, diabetes, obesity, neurodegenerative disorders and infectious diseases such as malaria. Cenix offers its unique expertise to industry and academic researchers through fully customizable research and consulting services. Please contact Cenix or visit the company's web site [www.cenix-bioscience.com](http://www.cenix-bioscience.com) for more information.

#### **About AstraZeneca**

AstraZeneca is a major international healthcare business engaged in research, development, manufacturing and marketing of prescription pharmaceuticals and supplier for healthcare services. AstraZeneca is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies with healthcare sales of US \$29.55 billion and is a leader in gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neuroscience, respiratory, oncology and infection product sales. AstraZeneca is listed in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (Global) as well as the FTSE4Good Index.

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