FORMA Therapeutics and the University of Oxford Announce Multi-Year Collaboration to Advance the Development of Deubiquitinating Enzyme (DUB) Inhibitors for the Treatment of Neurodegenerative Diseases

FORMA expands translational footprint in Neurodegeneration with ARUK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute

WATERTOWN, Mass. and OXFORD, U.K. – May 9, 2018 – FORMA Therapeutics and the University of Oxford announced today they have entered into a collaboration and license agreement to identify, validate and develop deubiquitinating enzyme (DUB) inhibitors for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases. DUBs are a family of over a hundred proteases that play important roles in protein and cellular homeostasis, processes that are critical to normal cell function. Evidence suggests that targeting this enzyme class can provide a means to ameliorate the effects of disrupted cellular mechanisms that have been linked to the progression of serious neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s disease or Alzheimer’s disease. This group of enzymes offers an exciting opportunity for the generation of novel disease-modifying therapies.

The FORMA/Oxford collaboration brings together world class expertise in disease molecular pathology and DUB biology from University teams, including the Alzheimer’s Research UK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute (ODDI) and the Oxford Parkinson’s Disease Centre (OPDC), and FORMA’s deep expertise in small molecule drug design and development.

John Davis, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer at ODDI, stated, “We are very pleased to be expanding our initial collaboration with FORMA Therapeutics, whose world leading medicinal chemistry expertise in the DUB space will create a powerful synergy with the University of Oxford’s disease and neuronal cell biology expertise. We hope to make rapid progress towards identifying new treatment approaches and raising hope of some relief for the families coping with these dreadful conditions.”

Under the terms of the agreement, FORMA will fund a multi-year research program at the University of Oxford focusing on DUBs implicated in the pathogenesis of neurodegenerative disease. “We are excited about this collaboration with Oxford University that complements FORMA’s innovative efforts in drug discovery and are confident that scientists at Oxford will help us rapidly advance these novel approaches to progressive neurological diseases,” said Michael Ahlijanian, Head of Neurosciences at FORMA Therapeutics.

FORMA is granted the right to develop and commercialize DUB inhibitors studied under the collaboration. Steve Tregay CEO, FORMA Therapeutics said, “Collaborating with world leaders in both DUB biology and neuroscience is an important strategic expansion of our work in neurodegeneration. We are thrilled to have such a substantial collaboration with Oxford University to advance the development of therapies for diseases with such high unmet need.”

###
About FORMA

FORMA Therapeutics' scientists are passionate about discovering and developing medicines that will make a difference in oncology, inflammation & immunity, neurodegeneration, and other serious diseases. The Company's fully integrated R&D team drives discovery and early clinical development of therapeutics for qualified targets in the areas of epigenetics, protein homeostasis and metabolism. Leveraging a world class network of academic investigators, clinical experts and partners, FORMA combines deep biology insight, chemistry expertise and early clinical development capabilities, to create drug candidates providing profound patient benefit.

FORMA is headquartered in Watertown, MA near the epicenter of the Cambridge Life Sciences cluster, with operations in Watertown, MA and Branford, CT. www.formatherapeutics.com
Join our conversation on Twitter @FORMAInc.

About the ARUK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute and the Oxford Parkinson’s Disease Centre

The Alzheimer’s Research UK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute (ODDI) is a drug discovery team, founded with funding from the charity Alzheimer’s Research UK, with the objective of accelerating the translation of basic science generated within universities towards therapeutic utility. The focus of the team is upon discovering treatments for the neurodegenerative diseases underlying the dementias. Although Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause of dementia and the charity bears its name, the remit of the ODDI covers all diseases and mechanisms implicated in the different neurodegenerative diseases that contribute to dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, vascular dementia and frontotemporal dementia. The Oxford Parkinson’s Disease Centre (OPDC; www.opdc.ox.ac.uk) is an international research Centre for Parkinson's disease established in February 2010. It brings together internationally-recognised scientists with strengths in stem cell models, genetics and genomics, transgenic rodent models, the structure and function of brain cells and circuits affected in PD, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and analysis of protein biomarkers. Working closely with experts in epidemiology and clinical neurology the program is now focused on using the experimental platforms developed to identify and validate new disease modifying approaches and also match these to the patient groups most likely to benefit from them.

Media Contacts
For FORMA Therapeutics
Kari Watson or Kara Mazey, +1 781-235-3060
kwatson@macbiocom.com or kmazey@macbiocom.com
MacDougall Biomedical Communications

For Alzheimer’s Research UK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute
General Press Office, +44 0300 111 5 666
press@alzheimersresearchuk.org