



**NEWS RELEASE For immediate release**

**AmorChem invests in a novel drug for atherosclerosis.**

**Montreal, Quebec –July 23, 2014** – AmorChem is delighted to announce the closing of a transaction with Univalor for the development of a drug aiming to stop the development and progression of atherosclerosis.

Based on the work of Dr. Huy Ong and his colleagues of the Université de Montréal, this project focuses on the central role of the CD36 scavenger receptor in the clearance of oxidized lipids and in the inhibition of inflammation and formation of foam cells- all associated with the onset and progression of atherosclerosis.

“We have been following the work of Dr. Ong on CD36 in atherosclerosis for a number of years and we believe this is a very promising avenue for therapeutic intervention in this disease”, explains Dr. Elizabeth Douville, general partner at AmorChem. “Dr. Ong is an expert in the biology of this scavenger receptor and has generated a number of promising leads that we will validate in animal models of atherosclerosis.”

“Univalor is very pleased to welcome this second investment from AmorChem on CD36 research in Dr. Ong’s laboratory,” comments Laurence Rulleau, vice-president of business development at Univalor. “This demonstrates the commitment from both Univalor and AmorChem to support seed financing of early stage technologies in order to enhance value and bring discoveries closer to the industry. Our partnership with AmorChem allows the financing of early-stage technologies, filling a gap in the value chain.”

“This new agreement, regarding the results of Dr. Huy Ong from our Faculty of Pharmacy and his colleagues, continues a fruitful partnership with AmorChem”, says Geneviève Tanguay, vice-president of research, creation and innovation of Université de Montréal. “It demonstrates both the great potential of university discoveries and the central importance of the partners along the value chain.”

Atherosclerosis is the main underlying cause of ischemic heart disease and related cardiovascular complications including acute myocardial infarction and stroke. In view of the failure of statins to benefit all patients, exhaustive research efforts have unfold into different research avenues, in agreement with the increase in basic knowledge regarding lipoprotein metabolism, macrophage function and the inflammatory condition associated with atherosclerosis. Along this line, the role of macrophage scavenger receptors in clearing oxidatively modified LDL has been thoroughly investigated. Among these, CD36 was shown to play a major role in foam cell formation in both atherosclerotic mouse models and humans

“This investment confirms our continuing interest in projects coming from the Université de Montréal”, comments Dr. Inès Holzbaur, general partner at AmorChem.

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#### **ABOUT AMORCHEM L.P.**

AmorChem L.P. ([www.amorchem.com](http://www.amorchem.com)) is a venture capital fund located in Montreal focused on investing in promising life science projects originating from Quebec-based universities and research centres. The principal limited partners of this fund are Investissement-Québec, FIER Partenaires, Fonds de solidarité FTQ and Merck & Co. This fund is the latest addition to the GeneChem portfolio of funds, a fund manager in existence since 1997. AmorChem’s innovative business model involves financing research-stage projects to enable them to reach pre-clinical proof-of-concept (“POC”) in a semi-virtual mode within 18-24 months. The fund seeks to generate returns through a two-pronged exit strategy: sell projects having reached POC to large biotechnology or pharmaceutical companies; or bundle them into new spin-out companies. AmorChem using external resources will manage the projects. To that effect, AmorChem has established a strategic partnership with the Biotechnology Research Institute in order to access its R&D platforms. In addition, to enabling projects requiring small molecules as tools or drug leads, AmorChem has founded NuChem Therapeutics Inc., a medicinal chemistry contract-research company.

#### **ABOUT UNIVALOR**

Univalor is a university technology transfer organization. Since 2001, it has been commercializing scientific findings and technological innovations emanating from some 2,600 researchers at the Université de Montréal and its affiliated health centres, Polytechnique Montréal and HEC Montréal, in the areas of pure and applied sciences, engineering, information technology, management sciences, life sciences and human health. By creating links between the university and the business community, Univalor helps make businesses more competitive, generate revenue for research and, most importantly, enrich society.

#### **ABOUT UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL**

The 64,000 students and professors associated with Université de Montréal and its affiliated schools for commerce (HEC Montréal) and engineering (École Polytechnique) are recognized for the high volume and quality of their research and for their international profile. Ten per cent of the university’s students are from outside Canada, and 40% of research published by the university’s community involves international collaboration. Within Canada, Université de Montréal’s excellence is recognized by the awarding of half a billion dollars in funding; at an international level, it is consistently placed within the top 150 institutions in major world research rankings. [www.umontreal.ca](http://www.umontreal.ca)

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