



JDRF and Lilly Partner to Fund Research to Identify Beta Cell Biomarkers

- \$3 Million Grant Over Three Years from Lilly Foundation Could 'Fill a Major Gap' in Diabetes Science -

NEW YORK, Nov 14, 2007 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and Eli Lilly and Company announced today that they are joining together to create a \$3 million research effort to accelerate the pace of research into drugs and therapies to cure diabetes and its complications by developing biomarkers -- indicators that can measure the progress of disease and the effectiveness of therapeutics.

The project -- called the JDRF-Lilly Innovative and Academic Research and Development Grants in Diabetes Biomarkers -- will be funded by a \$3 million grant from the Lilly Foundation to JDRF over three years.

JDRF is one of the world's largest charitable funder of type 1 diabetes research; over the last year, JDRF has funded more than \$137 million in research to cure and develop therapeutics for type 1 diabetes and its complications. Lilly is a global leader in diabetes science and treatment, dating back to the development of the world's first commercially-available insulin in the 1920s, and continues to pioneer research to develop innovative medicines to address the unmet needs of people with diabetes.

The new JDRF-Lilly project will support cutting-edge research on biomarkers for pancreatic beta cell mass and function.

Biomarkers are natural features (lab values, images, or clinical features) whose detection indicates the presence of a particular disease state, or correlates with the risk or progression of a disease; for example, elevated prostate specific antigen is a molecular biomarker for prostate cancer. Two of the best-known biomarkers are cholesterol and blood pressure levels, which denote key information about cardiovascular health. In evaluating potential therapeutics, biomarkers can also serve as "surrogate endpoints" for evaluating the clinical benefit of a treatment.

"In general, the development of a range of biomarkers for both diabetes itself and its various complications would fill a major gap in science leading to a cure," said Arnold W. Donald, President and Chief Executive Officer of JDRF. "As the field of diabetes research moves from purely discovery research to the development of therapeutic cures and treatments, biomarkers will play a key role in increasing the pace of progress, and providing real benefits to people with diabetes. Lilly's grant to support beta cell mass and function research will play an important role in these efforts."

According to Dr. Paul Burn, Senior Vice President, Research, at JDRF, there are few current biomarkers for type 1 diabetes research and treatment. Biomarkers would be a powerful research tool in indicating the onset, status, and stage of diabetes; in predicting and monitoring a patient's clinical response to treatments developed as part of research funded by JDRF, Lilly, and others; and in accelerating the development of therapeutics by enabling researchers to rapidly assess the clinical outcomes of promising drug candidates.

"Biomarkers and the comprehensive information they can provide researchers are imperative to the progress of diabetes research," Dr. Burn said. "This project can rapidly advance the pace of scientific discovery and therapeutic developments for type 1 diabetes patients along multiple research pathways to finding a cure. Lilly is making a tremendous contribution to science that could, in turn, significantly improve the lives and outlooks of millions."

"Lilly's highest mission is to improve the lives of the people we serve -- and there is no group of patients with whom we have a longer and deeper relationship than people with diabetes," said Dr. John C. Lechleiter, Lilly's President and Chief Operating Officer. "Until there's a cure for diabetes, it's imperative that we continue searching for ways to improve treatment and solutions for managing this condition and its devastating complications. This research by JDRF could provide breakthroughs that would move the treatment of diabetes forward in new and exciting directions -- and maybe one day lead to a cure, the ultimate goal of diabetes research."

Grants by the JDRF-Lilly project will be available to both academic and commercial investigators. Innovative grant proposals will be evaluated through JDRF's grant review process, which includes both peer scientific review and lay review committees. For Academic Research and Development grants, JDRF will look to proactively match academic researchers with specific scientific targets. Currently, JDRF reviews thousands of research proposals annually, and funds more than 700 discovery and development projects.

About Eli Lilly and Company

Lilly, a leading innovation-driven corporation, is developing a growing portfolio of first-in-class and best-in-class pharmaceutical products by applying the latest research from its own worldwide laboratories and from collaborations with eminent scientific organizations. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., Lilly provides answers - through medicines and information -- for some of the world's most urgent medical needs. Additional information about Lilly is available at www.lilly.com.

About Lilly Diabetes

Through a long-standing commitment to diabetes care, Lilly provides patients with breakthrough treatments that enable them to live longer, healthier and fuller lives. Since 1923, Lilly has been the industry leader in pioneering therapies to help healthcare professionals improve the lives of people with diabetes, and research continues on innovative medicines to address the unmet needs of patients.

About JDRF

JDRF was founded in 1970 by the parents of children with type 1 diabetes -- a disease that strikes children, adolescents, and adults suddenly, makes them insulin dependent for life, and carries the constant threat of devastating complications. Since inception, JDRF has provided more than \$1.16 billion to diabetes research worldwide. More than 85 percent of JDRF's expenditures directly support research and research-related education. JDRF's mission is constant: to find a cure for diabetes and its complications through the support of research. For more information please visit www.jdrf.org.

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