

VASTox plc
("VASTox" or "the Company")

Appointments to the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

Oxford, UK: 10 March 2005 – VASTox plc (AIM: VOX), the Oxford-based drug discovery and services business focused on chemical genomics, is pleased to announce that it has appointed three new members to its Scientific Advisory Board. They include Professor Francesco Muntoni, Professor Roger Patient and Dr Marcel van den Heuvel.

Professor Francesco Muntoni is Professor of Paediatric Neurology at Imperial College London. Professor Muntoni completed his medical training in Child Neurology and Psychiatry in 1989. Since then he has worked primarily on clinical, genetic and therapeutic aspects of childhood neuromuscular disorders initially in Italy and from 1993 in London. Originally appointed as Lecturer at the Neuromuscular Centre of the Hammersmith Hospital, he was made Head of the Unit in 1996 and Professor of Paediatric Neurology since 1998. In March 2004, Professor Muntoni was appointed Principal Investigator of a UK Government backed consortium investigating treatments for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Professor Roger Patient is Research Professor at the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, University of Oxford. He was Professor of Molecular Genetics at King's College London and Professor of Genetics at the University of Nottingham prior to his current post. Professor Patient was one of the first people, more than 10 years ago, to work on zebrafish (*Danio rerio*) in the UK and has tremendous knowledge of zebrafish systems for scientific testing. At the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, his research is focused on the genetic regulatory networks of blood and the cardiovascular system.

Dr Marcel van den Heuvel is Group Leader at the Medical Research Council Functional Genetics Unit, University of Oxford. Dr van den Heuvel completed his doctorate training at the Netherlands Cancer Institute partly in Amsterdam and partly in Palo Alto, California at Stanford University. Dr van den Heuvel has worked on fruitflies (*Drosophila melanogaster*) for more than fifteen years using them to study developmental signalling pathways. He published in Nature in 1996 on a pathway called Hedgehog, identified through his work on fruitflies. Hedgehog is now an accepted target for treatment of cancers in people. His current research analyses fruitfly homologues of genes that cause disease in humans, and has already generated a model system for the human disease Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

Professor Kay Davies CBE, FRS, Chair of the SAB of VASTox, commented:

"The appointment of Marcel, Roger and Francesco clearly strengthens the Scientific Advisory Board in multiple areas of science and technology development. By adding to our core team, we have expanded our network to ensure we maintain leadership in all our areas of interest."

Dr Steven Lee, CEO of VASTox, commented:

"I congratulate Kay on strengthening the SAB with such high calibre individuals. VASTox was created from excellence in science, and its long-term business growth

will come from leveraging its relationships in academia. These appointments demonstrate that we are committed to continually improving and strengthening our core technologies in addition to signing commercial deals.”

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Note for Picture Editors:

High resolution images are available for the media to view and download free of charge from <http://www.vismedia.co.uk>

Notes for Editors:

About VASTox

VASTox is a chemical genomics technology company that both provides services to the pharmaceutical industry, and discovers and develops proprietary novel drugs. The company's technology platform aims to use high volume, high content screening using zebrafish and fruitflies to provide a high level of predictability of the efficacy and toxicity of potential drug compounds in humans which has the potential to dramatically decrease the time and cost of drug discovery and development. VASTox was formed in January 2003, from the University of Oxford, by some of the UK's foremost scientists who have taken a highly creative approach to the problems involved in drug discovery and who have a proven record in delivering technological excellence. The company listed on the London Stock Exchange AIM in October 2004.