



## Press release

Lausanne, 12 February 2013

### **The SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics, GeneBio and Quartz Bio Unveil a Collaboration on MegaClust**

The SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics, Geneva Bioinformatics (GeneBio) SA and Quartz Bio SA today announced the establishment of a long-term collaboration under which they will cooperate in order to develop, use and jointly promote MegaClust, the SIB platform for the analysis of flow cytometry data.

Flow cytometry is increasingly being used to assess the safety and efficacy of drugs in clinical trials. It has also become a means to identify biomarkers for patient stratification. Despite its potential, the analysis of clinical flow cytometry data remains a major hurdle for pharmaceutical companies and clinical research organisations. Clinical flow cytometry experiments generally contain a large number of samples collected from multiple sources, making the curation and manual analysis time consuming, not systematic, and therefore error-prone.

The MegaClust analysis platform is the result of a joint effort between GeneBio and Vital-IT, SIB's Bioinformatics Competence Center. MegaClust performs an automated, unbiased and thorough identification of phenotypically similar cell populations in large datasets consisting of many samples. The MegaClust technology allows reliable quantitative cross sample analyses and therefore provides a very powerful tool to stratify individuals and/or to analyze variations in cell subpopulations upon stimulations and candidate treatments. MegaClust unlocks the access to key insight on drugs mode of action and pharmacodynamics.

Quartz Bio scientists have a long-standing experience of clinical bioinformatics analysis of flow cytometry data. They are accustomed to perform quality control and statistical analyses on flow cytometry data collected in multi-center clinical trials.

The goal of this collaboration is therefore to combine Quartz Bio's expertise in clinical data analysis with the MegaClust technology to provide unprecedented unbiased in-depth analysis of flow cytometry data.

"We are very excited about this new collaboration and the high potential of synergies it generates," said Ioannis Xenarios, director of Vital-IT. "We think that the integration of MegaClust in the Quartz Bio analysis pipeline will allow us to provide our customers with a technology able to fully extract and leverage the value of their flow cytometry data. Our value proposition will be significant in the field of drug development by enabling mode of action analysis and population stratification, which are essential to the growing field of personalized medicine. This will pave the way for new avenues in the clinical bioinformatics arena."

"An increasing number of pharmaceutical companies are relying on flow cytometry biomarkers in their stratified medicine approaches, but the lack of unbiased analysis standards impairs the



value and the robustness of generated hypotheses,” said Jérôme Wojcik, founder and CEO of Quartz Bio. “Collaborating with the SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics in that field is for Quartz Bio an exciting opportunity to bridge academic with clinical research world, and offer clinical bioinformatics services of unprecedented added-value to our customers.”

MegaClust is financially supported by the Commission for Technology and Innovation (KTI/CTI), the innovation promotion agency of the Swiss Confederation.

### **About SIB**

SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics is an academic not-for-profit foundation recognized of public utility. It federates bioinformatics activities throughout Switzerland. Its two-fold mission is to provide world-class core bioinformatics resources to the national and international life science research community in key fields such as genomics, proteomics and systems biology; as well as to lead and coordinate the field of bioinformatics in Switzerland. It has a long-standing tradition of producing state-of-the-art software for the life science research community, as well as carefully annotated databases. SIB includes 38 world-class research and service groups, which gather more than 580 researchers, in the fields of proteomics, transcriptomics, genomics, systems biology, structural bioinformatics, evolutionary bioinformatics, modelling, imaging, biophysics, and population genetics in Basel, Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Lugano and Zurich. SIB's expertise is widely appreciated and its services are used by life sciences researchers worldwide.

<http://www.isb-sib.ch>

### **About GeneBio**

Geneva Bioinformatics (GeneBio) SA is a leading bioinformatics company providing the life science community with world-class solutions that bridge the gap between information gathering and knowledge generation. Established in 1997, it offers to the market a suite of software platforms and knowledgebases targeted at small molecules screening and protein research. GeneBio also acts as the Technology Transfer Office of the SIB of which it is one of the founding partners. For more information about GeneBio, please visit:

<http://www.genebio.com> / <http://megaclust.vital-it.ch>

### **About Quartz Bio**

Quartz Bio SA is a clinical bioinformatics service company specialized in exploratory biomarker data analyses for the generation of stratified medicine hypotheses. Quartz Bio provides modular data analysis services to support the major steps of the biomarker development process. These include: biomarker study design, biomarker data quality control, statistical analysis and scientific reporting. The capital of the company is entirely owned by its employees, who are scientists from diverse educational backgrounds with a common track record of 6 to 10 years clinical bioinformatics experience in the pharmaceutical sector. Quartz Bio is a spin-off of the Merck Serono enterprise partnership program.

<http://www.quartzbio.com>



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