FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FIND, ImmPORT, and PHRI announce collaboration to develop critical diagnostic reagents for tuberculosis

Geneva, Switzerland (May 11, 2006) – The Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), a Geneva-based non-profit organization, together with ImmPORT Therapeutics Inc., a California company with a leading technology platform for antigen discovery, and the Public Health Research Institute (PHRI), a not-for-profit research corporation in Newark, New Jersey, today announced a collaboration to identify antigens useful for the diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB).

"FIND aims to reduce disease burden in developing countries through development of affordable diagnostic tests for poverty-related diseases. ImmPORT's technology enables us to identify and screen all antigens in the genome of the TB-causing bacteria in a fraction of the time, and at a fraction of the cost, of conventional technologies" said Dr. Giorgio Roscigno, CEO of FIND. "The goal is to produce an accurate, point-of-care diagnostic test for TB based on an antibody marker test that is as easy to use as a pregnancy test."

"In response to the ever-growing threat to public health by infectious diseases, ImmPORT has developed a revolutionary technology that offers a fast and cost-effective platform for developing diagnostics and vaccines," said Dr. Xiaowu Liang, Chief Technical Officer of ImmPORT. "We are very pleased that our technology can be put to use against a serious global health concern such as tuberculosis."

Dr. David Perlin, President of PHRI, said "this collaboration represents a major commitment to create a 'next generation' diagnostic product for TB, which can help mitigate the enormous global impact of this disease. We are delighted to have ImmPORT and FIND as partners in this important endeavour."

As stated in the collaborative development agreement signed today, a multi-phase program will be supported by FIND under which antigens of diagnostic value for TB will be identified. PHRI shall make its intellectual property available for the program and will identify antibody markers of the TB-causing bacterium using ImmPORT's whole-proteome microarray chip technology platform.

Mark Perkins, Chief Scientific Officer of FIND, states "The development of a simple and accurate serodiagnostic test for tuberculosis has been tried for many years, without much success. Only a small number of antigen targets have been used in such tests and, until now, no strategic approach to identify the best antigens has ever been mounted. This project will allow us to interrogate the entire proteome of the pathogen, and hopefully to identify a small subset of antigens that can successfully identify TB."

Background on Tuberculosis:

- Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious disease spread primarily by airborne bacteria from infected individuals. It is prevalent in developing countries, and up to a third of the world's population is infected.
- TB is one of the greatest threats to health worldwide, with nearly 9 million new cases and 2 million deaths per year.
- The spread of TB has been aggravated by (i) the large numbers of people from all over the world who travel; (ii) the worldwide rise of multidrug-resistant TB strains; and (iii) the global spread of HIV whose victims suffer from markedly increased susceptibility to tuberculosis.
- Sputum microscopy, currently the most widely used method to detect tuberculosis, is cumbersome and insensitive, leaving many patients undetected. Bacterial culture is more sensitive, but takes 4-6 weeks to complete and is too complex for most settings where TB patients are screened.
- The HIV pandemic has led to a resurgence of TB as a major public health problem. Immunodeficient HIV-positive patients are particularly vulnerable to TB, which is responsible for the deaths of at least 40 per cent of patients in this group.

About FIND

The Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) is a non-profit foundation dedicated to the development and introduction of simple, accurate, reliable and accessible diagnostic tools for poverty related infectious diseases in the developing world. Since its launch at the World Health Assembly in 2003, FIND's initial focus has been on identifying new tools for the diagnosis of tuberculosis. FIND is also collaborating with the World Health Organization for development and evaluation of new diagnostic tests for human African trypanosomiasis, also known as sleeping sickness, and is planning to introduce in its project profile a program to improve diagnostics for malaria. FIND is located in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, please visit www.finddiagnostics.org.

About ImmPORT

ImmPORT is a privately held biotech company with innovative technologies that offer unprecedented advantages for rapid development of safer and more effective vaccines and diagnostics against a broad range of infectious diseases. The Company's high throughput proteome microarray chip fabrication and screening technology provides an order of magnitude improvement over current antigen/biomarker discovery technologies. The technology also has potential applications in other areas of drug discovery. For more information please visit: www.immport-inc.com.

About PHRI

PHRI's mission is to help eliminate worldwide infectious disease threats through research excellence and leadership in public health support programs. PHRI has been on the cutting edge of infectious disease research since its founding in 1941, including work with the smallpox vaccine, the identification of cancer-causing oncogenes, the discovery of the gene for toxic shock syndrome, and the identification of the multidrug-resistant TB strain "W". For more information please visit: www.phri.org.

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