



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**21 MAY 2015**

### **VISTERRA PARTNERS WITH A\*STAR TO DEVELOP VIS513, A MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY FOR DENGUE**

*- Key Development Activities of the Collaboration Will Be Conducted in Singapore -*

**Cambridge, MA and Singapore**— Visterra, Inc., a clinical-stage biotechnology company that uses its proprietary technology platform to identify unique disease targets and design novel therapeutics for infectious diseases, and the Drug Discovery & Development (D3) unit under the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR), Singapore, today announced a collaboration to further the development of VIS513, Visterra's broadly neutralizing antibody for the treatment of dengue fever.

VIS513, which was engineered using Visterra's innovative and proprietary technology, is a humanized monoclonal antibody that is designed to bind and potently neutralize all four serotypes of dengue virus. The company's preclinical studies of VIS513 in animal models have demonstrated a rapid reduction in viral titers after a single systemic administration, which supports its potential use as a single administration treatment for dengue virus infection.

The collaboration combines Visterra's expertise in therapeutic antibodies for challenging infectious diseases with D3's proficiency in bringing early stage discoveries into clinical development. D3 and Visterra will also work together with infectious disease experts at Duke-National University of Singapore (Duke-NUS) to generate additional data necessary to initiate clinical trials of VIS513. Upon completion of these activities, D3 and Visterra will advance VIS513 through proof-of-concept clinical trials in humans, which will be conducted in Singapore. Under the terms of the collaboration agreement Visterra retains all rights to develop and commercialize VIS513 globally.

"This collaboration illustrates D3's goal of bringing innovative early-stage research that addresses unmet medical needs in Singapore to proof-of-concept clinical trials in humans," said Prof Alex Matter MD, Chief Executive Officer of D3 and A\*STAR's

Experimental Therapeutics Centre (ETC). “We are encouraged by VIS513’s preclinical data, which demonstrate its potential to broadly neutralize all four dengue virus serotypes, as there is currently no specific treatment for dengue, and prevention depends solely on limiting or eradicating mosquitoes that transmit the virus. We are looking forward to working closely with Visterra and advancing VIS513 into the clinic.”

“We are delighted to enter into this collaboration with D3, which enables us to utilize the exceptional capabilities, infrastructure and emerging infectious diseases expertise in Singapore to rapidly bring our promising antibody for dengue fever, VIS513, from preclinical to clinical development,” said Brian J. G. Pereira, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of Visterra. “Visterra’s has deep roots in Singapore because of our long-standing association with the Infectious Disease Interdisciplinary Group of the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) Centre, which has made important contributions by advancing our scientific understanding of dengue fever and the potential role of antibodies to combat the virus.”

### **About Dengue Fever**

Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne viral infection found in tropical and sub-tropical regions around the world. There are four distinct, but related, serotypes of the virus that cause dengue. The virus infects cells of the human immune system and other cell types, leading to symptoms that include high fever, severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, joint pain, muscle and bone pain, rash, and mild bleeding. In severe cases, plasma leaks out of the circulatory system and can be fatal. There is currently no specific treatment for dengue and prevention depends solely on effective vector control measures. The global incidence of dengue has grown dramatically in recent decades. About half of the world's population is at risk for dengue fever and a recent study estimates that approximately 390 million people are infected each year. The World Health Organization estimates that 500,000 people with severe dengue require hospitalization each year, a large proportion of whom are children, and more than 20,000 of those affected die each year.

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## **About Visterra**

Visterra is a biotechnology company that uses its proprietary Hierotope™ Platform to identify unique disease targets and design and engineer effective therapeutics. The company's technology is powered by computational tools and techniques, the core of which is Atomic Interaction Network (AIN) analysis, which uniquely identifies an area, or epitope, on the target site that is fundamental to its structure and function. This ideal epitope, or hierotope, becomes the target against which the company designs a novel therapeutic to effectively and durably combat the disease. The company is currently focused on therapeutics for infectious diseases, and its lead product candidate, VIS410, is a broad spectrum human monoclonal antibody for the prevention and treatment of both seasonal and pandemic influenza. The company's second product candidate, VIS513, is a human monoclonal antibody for the treatment of dengue fever that has been shown to broadly neutralize all four dengue virus serotypes. Visterra was founded based on scientific work developed in the laboratory of Dr. Ram Sasisekharan and licensed from MIT. For more information, please visit [www.visterrainc.com](http://www.visterrainc.com).

## **About Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR)**

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) is Singapore's lead public sector agency that spearheads economic oriented research to advance scientific discovery and develop innovative technology. Through open innovation, we collaborate with our partners in both the public and private sectors to benefit society.

As a Science and Technology Organization, A\*STAR bridges the gap between academia and industry. Our research creates economic growth and jobs for Singapore,

and enhances lives by contributing to societal benefits such as improving outcomes in healthcare, urban living, and sustainability.

We play a key role in nurturing and developing a diversity of talent and leaders in our Agency and Research Institutes, the wider research community and industry. A\*STAR oversees 18 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research entities primarily located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis.

For more information on A\*STAR, please visit [www.a-star.edu.sg](http://www.a-star.edu.sg).

### **About A\*STAR's Drug Discovery & Development (D3) Unit**

D3 (Drug Discovery and Development) was established in 2012 to build strong bridges between basic science and clinical research and development by bringing early-stage scientific discoveries to 'proof-of-concept' clinical trials in humans and generating economic benefit through the licensing of clinical stage therapeutics. D3 builds on Singapore's existing drug discovery capabilities and strengthens the local biomedical innovation landscape. The group was founded to be a cost-effective and professional development partner able to advance and add value to early-stage projects on a 'shared-risk, shared-reward' basis. D3's primary focus is on developing drugs targeted at oncology indications and infectious diseases.

For more information about D3, please visit [www.a-star.edu.sg/d3](http://www.a-star.edu.sg/d3)