Aestus Therapeutics Awarded Qualifying Therapeutic Development Project Grant for Clinical Studies of Novel Pain Treatment

North Brunswick, NJ, November 3, 2010 – Today Aestus Therapeutics, Inc. announced that it has been awarded a $244,000 grant from the U.S. Government's Qualifying Therapeutic Discovery Project ("QTDP") program. The grant, awarded for the project, “Treating neuropathic pain by means of novel mechanisms,” will help to fund clinical trials of Aestus’s novel, first-in-class treatment for chronic neuropathic pain.

Aestus, a privately held translational medicine company, has begun preparations for Phase 2 clinical trials to study the effectiveness of its novel drug compound, ATx08-001, in the treatment of postherpetic neuralgia (PHN). PHN is commonly defined as persistent pain following an outbreak of herpes zoster, or shingles. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), more than one million new cases of shingles are reported each year in the United States, many of which will lead to PHN. Currently there is no effective treatment to relieve the lingering pain of PHN which is poorly managed by current drugs. Neuropathic pain is also a common complication of cancer, diabetes, viral infections, and other diseases.

“We are grateful to the QTDP program for recognizing our research as an innovative approach to finding a new treatment for chronic pain and for supporting our efforts to help improve the quality of life for the 39 million patients worldwide with pain resulting from nerve damage,” stated Tage Honore, Ph.D., DSc, CEO and co-founder of Aestus. “We believe our approach to finding novel pathways to treat disorders of the nervous system and existing compounds to act on those pathways will lead the way in establishing a faster, more cost effective drug discovery process. We are pleased to receive the validation of this peer-reviewed award,” added Honore.

Aestus began work to identify novel pain pathways and compounds which acted on these pathways in 2005. The pre-clinical and clinical development has been supported by NIH Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grants awarded to Aestus by the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke (NINDS). These include SBIR Phase I and II grants for over $2.5 million, which currently support the Phase 2 clinical studies. Aestus is filing an Investigational New Drug (IND) application with the Food and Drug Administration for its lead therapeutic, ATx08-001, in order to begin patient recruitment for clinical trials in the near future.

In addition to its work in pain therapy, Aestus is also researching potential novel therapies for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease), schizophrenia, and epilepsy.

About Aestus

Aestus Therapeutics, Inc. is a translational medicine company focused on serious neurological diseases. Capitalizing on genomic data analysis to discover novel links between these diseases and well-studied biological pathways, Aestus identifies drug candidates already in clinical Phase 1 or later. By developing these drugs in novel disease areas such as chronic pain, ALS and schizophrenia, Aestus greatly reduces the time, cost and risk needed to deliver better and safer medicines for the benefit of patients and society.

www.aestustherapeutics.com

About QTDP project support

Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), the IRS and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have established the QTDP in accordance with Notice 2010-45 to consider and award certifications for qualified investments eligible for the credit to qualifying therapeutic discovery project sponsors. To be eligible for QTDP support, projects must show reasonable potential to result in new therapies to treat areas of unmet medical need; prevent, detect, or treat chronic or acute disease and conditions; reduce long-term health care costs in the United States; or significantly advance the goal of curing cancer within a 30-year period. In addition, preference was given to projects that showed the greatest potential to create and sustain (directly or indirectly) high quality, high-paying jobs in the United States, and advance United States competitiveness in the.
fields of life, biological, and medical sciences. Projects were selected jointly by the Treasury Department and the Department of Health and Human Services.

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