Media Release – For Immediate Distribution

InSphero and Erasmus Medical Center Cancer Researcher Receive Grant to Develop Human In Vitro Model of Metastasis using the Akura™ Flow Technology Platform

Schlieren, Switzerland – May 10, 2021 InSphero AG, the pioneer of 3D cell-based assay technology today announced receipt of a grant and commencement of a project to develop an *in vitro* model of metastasis from Netherlands-based De Samenwerkende Gezondheidsfondsen (SGF), Topsector Life-Sciences & Health and ZonMw. Under the grant, InSphero will collaborate with a team from Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam led by Wytske van Weerden, Ph.D., Associate professor of Experimental Urology and an expert in prostate cancer.

"New therapies for metastasized cancer are typically tested in models of primary tumors, often established in animals that are not representative of metastatic lesions. At the same time, industry-compatible *in vitro* solutions are missing," said Olivier Frey, Ph.D., Vice President of Technology and Platforms at InSphero. "We are honored to have received this grant as it will accelerate development of a more physiologically-relevant *in vitro* model of metastatic potential that can be applied in compound screens and drug testing. Once established, we envision this model, based on our Akura™ Flow technology platform, will be evaluated in multiple cancer types.

Dr. van Weerden's lab works with fluorescently tagged patient-derived prostate cancer cells that can spread to lymph nodes, lung, liver and bone, providing a robust tool to develop a biologically relevant human measurement model.

"With this project, we plan to establish a faster and more clinically-reliable metastatic system for drug-testing," said Dr. Van Weerden. "To this end, we plan to build organoids of healthy human liver and bone and add our fluorescently-tagged prostate cancer cells to mimic circulating tumor cells to invade the micro-tissues. InSphero's Akura™ Flow systems is the ideal technology platform for this project."

The goal of the grant program is to encourage public-private partnerships to develop technologies and methods to enable human health research that is less dependent on laboratory animal research. In this round of grants, 4.6 million euros were awarded to seven public-private partnerships.

"Until now, the laboratory animal model is still often the standard within health research and in some cases even required by law," said Mark Monsma, director of DSG. "Despite the movement towards other models, their application often lags behind due to the lack of suitable alternatives. We will now change this by stimulating public-private partnerships for the development of humane measurement models. In this way, we will be able to prevent or cure illnesses better in the long term, so that more people can live healthily for longer."

For more information about InSphero's Akura™ Flow technology platform, visit this link.

About InSphero

InSphero is the pioneer of industrial-grade, 3D-cell-based assay solutions and scaffold-free 3D organ-on-a-chip technology. Through partnerships, InSphero supports pharmaceutical and biotechnology researchers in successful decision-making by accurately rebuilding the human physiology *in vitro*. Its robust and precisely engineered suite of 3D InSight™ human tissue platforms are used by major pharmaceutical companies worldwide to increase efficiency in drug discovery and safety testing. The company specializes in liver toxicology, metabolic diseases (e.g., T1 & T2 diabetes and NAFLD & NASH liver disease), and oncology (with a focus on immuno-oncology and PDX models). The scalable Akura™ technology underlying the company's 3D InSight™ Discovery and Safety Platforms includes 96 and 384-well plate formats and the Akura™ Flow organ-on-a-chip system to drive efficient innovation throughout all phases of drug development.

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