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GenScript Biotech and Ligand Pharmaceuticals Enter into Global OmniAb® Licensing Agreement

NANJING, China and SAN DIEGO, June 2, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- GenScript Biotech Corporation (HKG: 1548) along with its subsidiary, GenScript ProBio, and Ligand Pharmaceuticals Incorporated (NASDAQ: [LGND](#)) announced today that they have entered into a strategic licensing agreement for Ligand's OmniAb® Platform, a multi-species antibody discovery platform, to generate highly diversified, fully human antibodies that are optimized in vivo for immunogenicity, manufacturability and efficacy. Under terms of the agreement, GenScript is now able to offer its global customers access to the OmniAb rodent platforms for high-quality, rapid, fully human antibody discovery services.

"We are excited to enter into this new relationship with Ligand, which has one of the best antibody discovery platforms in the world," said Brian Min, Ph.D., CEO of GenScript ProBio. "GenScript is committed to helping our customers expand their pipelines of innovative antibody products and advance their biological drugs to market more quickly. We believe that our deep experience in antibody discovery services combined with Ligand's premier transgenic antibody discovery platform will accomplish those goals and ultimately bring better treatment options to patients."

GenScript ProBio, already a qualified OmniAb contract research organization (CRO) for antibody discovery services, is now the second contract development and manufacturing organization (CDMO) in China to secure a global license to the transgenic rodent technology of the OmniAb platform. With more than 16 years of experience in custom antibody services for various targets, GenScript ProBio provides a range of immunization methods. By combining a [single B cell screening platform](#) with transgenic rodent platforms, GenScript ProBio is capable of generating fully human therapeutic antibodies in one month, thereby significantly accelerating research and development.

"Our OmniAb technology stack provides industry partners with access to the most advanced antibody repertoires and state-of-the-art screening technologies to enable efficient discovery of next-generation novel therapeutics. At the heart of OmniAb is the Biological Intelligence™ of our proprietary and validated transgenic animals, which we are pleased to leverage in expanding our relationship with GenScript from a qualified services provider for those with access to OmniAb to a licensed partner," said John Higgins, CEO of Ligand Pharmaceuticals. "The OmniAb platform continues to be validated by the clinical progress of our license partners with recent late-stage successes and two regulatory approvals expected this year. To support the bright future we envision for our OmniAb platform, Ligand is expanding our team and capabilities within our integrated antibody discovery operations through internal investments in technology development, bolt-on acquisitions and partnering."

About the OmniAb Platform Technology Stack

The OmniAb antibody discovery platform provides Ligand's biopharmaceutical industry partners access to the world's most advanced antibody repertoires and screening technologies to enable unparalleled discovery of next-generation therapeutics. At the heart of the OmniAb platform is the Biological Intelligence™ (BI) of our proprietary transgenic animals, including OmniRat, OmniChicken and OmniMouse, each capable of generating high quality fully human antibodies that have been optimized naturally through in vivo affinity maturation. OmniFlic (transgenic rat) and OmniClic (transgenic chicken) address industry needs for bispecific antibody applications through a common light chain approach, and OmniTaur features unique structural attributes of cow antibodies for complex targets. OmniAb animals comprise the most diverse host systems available in the industry and can be optimally leveraged through AI-enhanced antigen design and immunization methods, paired with high-throughput microfluidic-based single B cell screening and deep computational analysis of next-generation sequencing datasets to identify fully human antibodies with superior performance and developability characteristics. The OmniAb suite of technologies and differentiating AI and BI features are combined to offer a highly efficient and customizable end-to-end solution for the growing antibody discovery needs of the global biopharmaceutical industry.

About Ligand Pharmaceuticals

Ligand is a revenue-generating biopharmaceutical company focused on developing or acquiring technologies that help pharmaceutical companies discover and develop medicines. Ligand's business model creates value for stockholders by providing a diversified portfolio of biotech and pharmaceutical product revenue streams that are supported by an efficient and low corporate cost structure. Ligand's goal is to offer investors an opportunity to participate in the promise of the biotech industry in a profitable, diversified and lower-risk business than a typical biotech company. Ligand's business model is based on doing what Ligand does best: drug discovery, early-stage drug development, product reformulation and partnering. Ligand partners with other pharmaceutical companies to leverage what they do best (late-stage development, regulatory management and commercialization) to ultimately generate our revenue. Ligand's OmniAb® technology platform is a patent-protected technology stack used in the discovery of fully human mono- and bispecific therapeutic antibodies. The Captisol platform technology is a patent-protected, chemically modified cyclodextrin with a structure designed to optimize the solubility and stability of drugs. Ligand's Pelican® Expression Technology is a robust, validated, cost-effective and scalable approach to recombinant protein production, and is especially well-suited for complex, large-scale protein production that cannot be made by more traditional systems. Ligand has established multiple alliances, licenses and other business relationships with the world's leading pharmaceutical companies including Amgen, Merck, Pfizer, Sanofi, Janssen, Takeda, Gilead Sciences and Baxter International. For more information, please visit www.ligand.com.

About GenScript ProBio

GenScript ProBio is the biologics CDMO segment of GenScript Biotech, proactively providing end-to-end service from drug discovery to commercialization with proactive strategies, professional solutions and efficient processes in antibody drug and gene and cell therapy to accelerate drug development for customers.

GenScript ProBio's innovative solutions for antibody drug development include antibody drug discovery (hybridoma, antibody library, fully human transgenic mice, bispecific antibodies technologies, single B cell screening technology), antibody engineering (antibody humanization, affinity maturation, Fc Engineering) and antibody characterization (analytics and bioassays). In terms of biologics development service, GenScript ProBio has built a regulatory-compliant platform, from stable cell line development, host cell license, process development, analytical development to clinical manufacturing services, providing fed-batch and perfusion process to accelerate IND process and high-quality material for clinical trials. GenScript ProBio has successfully delivered multiple CMC and GMP manufacturing projects. GenScript ProBio's total gene and cell therapy solution covers CMC of plasmid and virus for IND filing as well as clinical manufacturing and commercial manufacturing. Our quality management systems ensure phase appropriate compliance, data integrity and traceability. Toward the mission of "Innovation through Collaboration", GenScript ProBio is committed to helping customers shorten the timeline for the development of biological drugs from discovery to commercialization, significantly lowering R&D costs and building a healthier future.

Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains forward-looking statements by Ligand that involve risks and uncertainties and reflect Ligand's judgment as of the date of this release. Words such as "plans," "believes," "expects," "anticipates," and "will," and similar expressions, are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements include, without limitation, statements regarding licensees' ability to generate and discover valuable OmniAb antibodies, and the potential for and timing of regulatory approvals of our partners' product candidates. Actual events or results may differ from Ligand's expectations due to risks and uncertainties inherent in Ligand's business, including, without limitation: there can be no assurance that GenScript or Ligand's other OmniAb licensees will be able to successfully generate, discover, develop, obtain regulatory approval and commercialize OmniAb antibodies (on any particular timeline, or at all); Ligand or its partners may not be able to protect their intellectual property and patents may be challenged or invalidated; and any of Ligand's commercial partners may terminate any of its agreements or the development or commercialization of any Ligand-associated products. The failure to meet expectations with respect to any of the foregoing matters may reduce Ligand's stock price. Additional information concerning these and other risk factors affecting Ligand can be found in prior press releases available at www.ligand.com as well as in Ligand's public periodic filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission available at www.sec.gov. Ligand disclaims any intent or obligation to update these forward-looking statements beyond the date of this release, including the possibility of additional contract revenue we may receive. This caution is made under the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

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