March 28, 2016

Ligand Enters Into OmniAb® Platform License Agreement With ABBA Therapeutics

SAN DIEGO-- **Ligand Pharmaceuticals Incorporated (NASDAQ: LGND)** announces it has entered into a worldwide license agreement with ABBA Therapeutics AG, a Swiss biotechnology company developing innovative immuno-oncology therapies. Under the license, ABBA will be able to use the OmniRat®, OmniMouse® and OmniFlic® platforms to generate fully human mono- and bispecific antibodies. Ligand is to receive an initial access payment, and will be eligible to receive clinical milestone payments and royalties for each successful OmniAb antibody. ABBA will be responsible for all costs related to the program.

"OmniAb® will provide ABBA with industry-leading technology for generation of novel antibody therapeutics to further their therapeutic strategy," said John Higgins, Chief Executive Officer of Ligand. "This is the third OmniAb license deal since the close of the OMT acquisition and the 19th overall OmniAb Ligand partner, and continues to show the licensing power that the OmniAb franchise brings to Ligand."

About OmniAb®

OmniAb includes three transgenic animal platforms for producing mono- and bispecific human therapeutic antibodies. OmniRat® is the industry's first human monoclonal antibody technology based on rats. It has a complete immune system with a diverse antibody repertoire and generates antibodies with human idiotypes as effectively as wild-type animals make rat antibodies. OmniMouse® is a transgenic mouse that complements OmniRat and expands epitope coverage. OmniFlic® is an engineered rat with a fixed light chain for development of bispecific, fully human antibodies. The three platforms use patented technology, have broad freedom to operate and deliver fully human antibodies with high affinity, specificity, expression, solubility and stability.

About Ligand Pharmaceuticals

Ligand is a biopharmaceutical company focused on developing or acquiring technologies that help pharmaceutical companies discover and develop medicines. Our 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. Our 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. Our business model is based on doing what we do best: drug discovery, early-stage drug development, product reformulation and partnering. We partner with other pharmaceutical companies to leverage what they do best (late-stage

development, regulatory management and commercialization) to ultimately generate our revenue. Ligand's Captisol® platform technology is a patent-protected, chemically modified cyclodextrin with a structure designed to optimize the solubility and stability of drugs. OmniAb® is a patent-protected transgenic animal platform used in the discovery of fully human mono-and bispecific therapeutic antibodies. Ligand has established multiple alliances, licenses and other business relationships with the world's leading pharmaceutical companies including Novartis, Amgen, Merck, Pfizer, Celgene, Gilead, Janssen, Baxter International and Eli Lilly.

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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. These include statements regarding Ligand's license agreement with ABBA under which Ligand may receive milestone payments and royalties based upon the development and commercialization of any antibodies discovered under the license. Actual events or results may differ from our expectations. For example, there can be no assurances that ABBA will successfully develop or market any antibodies discovered under the license. 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 important risk factors affecting Ligand (including Ligand's current reliance on revenues based on sales of Promacta® and Kyprolis®, and various risks to which Ligand's Captisol® cyclodextrin operations are subject) can be found in Ligand's 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 press release, except as required by law. This caution is made under the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

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